

Kana + Kanji Edition

# 80/20 JAPANESE

*Learn smarter, start  
speaking today, and get to  
fluency fast!*



**RICHARD WEBB**



Kana + Kanji Edition

# 80/20 JAPANESE

*Learn smarter,  
start speaking today,  
and get to fluency fast!*

**RICHARD WEBB**

Copyright © 2016 by Richard Webb.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Although every precaution has been taken to verify the accuracy of the information contained herein, the author and publisher assume no responsibility for any errors or omissions. No liability is assumed for damages that may result from the use of information contained within.

ISBN 978-0-9953630-1-4

Published by Raw Lisard

<http://8020japanese.com>

Cover design by Scott Lee, The Unspoken Pitch, [www.theunspokenpitch.com](http://www.theunspokenpitch.com).

Interior layout by Jimmy Sevileno.

Initial funding raised with assistance from Publishizer, [www.publishizer.com](http://www.publishizer.com).

This book was made possible thanks to the generous support of the following people:

Otohei Arai  
Brian Frank  
Charlie Huang  
Minaho Imai  
Larry Letofsky  
Jonathan Luk  
Michelle Mackenzie  
Andrew Marshall  
Eri Nakada  
Annemaree O'Brien

Andrew Ooi  
Judi Powers  
Johan Reunanen  
Steve Rendell  
Petter Sund  
Guy Vincent  
Jhonatan Sneyder Salguero Villa  
Hsin-Yu Wang  
Alison Webb  
Masahiro Yamazaki

Thank you!



# Contents

<b>Introduction . . . . .</b>	<b>11</b>
The 80/20 Approach . . . . .	12
Deconstructing Japanese. . . . .	13
How To Learn A Language . . . . .	14
Creating Opportunities To Practice. . . . .	15
Speeding Up Learning . . . . .	16
Keeping Motivated . . . . .	18
The 80/20 Japanese Road Map. . . . .	21
<b>Chapter 1: The Sounds Of Japanese. . . . .</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Introduction to Japanese Grammar . . . . .</b>	<b>37</b>
2.1 Basic Japanese sentence structure. . . . .	37
2.2 Introduction to particles . . . . .	39
2.3 Particles in more depth. . . . .	42
<b>Chapter 3: General characteristics of Japanese . . . . .</b>	<b>53</b>
3.1 Politeness . . . . .	53
3.2 Unaffected by person or gender. . . . .	54
3.3 Addressing and referring to people. . . . .	54
3.4 No articles . . . . .	56
3.5 No plurals . . . . .	57
3.6 Highly dependent on context . . . . .	58
3.7 Particle omission . . . . .	60
3.8 Loanwords. . . . .	61
<b>Chapter 4: The essentials . . . . .</b>	<b>65</b>
4.1 More useful particles . . . . .	65
4.2 Polite verb tenses and expressions . . . . .	67
4.3 A couple of useful verbs . . . . .	74
4.4 Liking and wanting things. . . . .	78
4.5 Questions . . . . .	81
4.6 Other sentence-ending particles . . . . .	87
4.7 This, that and other variations. . . . .	90
4.8 Relative locations . . . . .	96
4.9 Other generally useful words . . . . .	99

<b>Chapter 5: Numbers.</b>	<b>103</b>
5.1 Number formation and pronunciation.	103
5.2 Counters.	107
5.3 Using numbers in a sentence	111
<b>Chapter 6: Expressing time</b>	<b>117</b>
6.1 Timing.	117
6.2 Period	136
6.3 Frequency	142
6.4 Using expressions of time with nouns	148
<b>Chapter 7: Adjectives, nouns and adverbs</b>	<b>149</b>
7.1 Adjective types	149
7.2 Using adjectives before nouns.	151
7.3 Adjectives at the end of informal sentences	155
7.4 Adjectives in the past tense	158
7.5 Negatives of adjectives	163
7.6 Informal questions using adjectives	168
7.7 Adjective usage summary	169
7.8 Using nouns in “to be” sentences	169
7.9 Adverbs	173
<b>Chapter 8: Verbs.</b>	<b>181</b>
8.1 Verb types	182
8.2 The present/future tense	186
8.3 The past tense	191
8.4 Verb negatives.	197
8.5 The potential tense	204
8.6 Let’s...	215
8.7 Transitive and intransitive verbs	219
<b>Chapter 9: The <math>\tau</math>-form.</b>	<b>225</b>
9.1 Converting to the $\tau$ -form.	225
9.2 Continuous tenses	229
9.3 Commands and requests.	233
9.4 Linking multiple actions together in a sequence	235
9.5 Describing the means by which an action is completed	238
9.6 The negative $\tau$ -form.	241
9.7 The $\tau$ -form of adjectives	243

<b>Chapter 10: The Magic of Noun Phrases</b>	<b>249</b>
10.1 What are noun phrases?	249
10.2 Forming noun phrases using verbs that add extra information	251
10.3 Forming noun phrases that describe the location of something	258
10.4 Forming noun phrases based around the action itself.	261
10.5 Including multiple pieces of information in a noun phrase.	266
10.6 Differentiating between noun phrases and clauses	275
<b>Chapter 11: Particles</b>	<b>281</b>
11.1 Types of particles	281
11.2 Particle/verb combinations.	295
11.3 The difference between 「は」 and 「が」	299
11.4 Combining particles	308
<b>Chapter 12: Lots and lots of expressions</b>	<b>313</b>
12.1 Very useful expressions.	313
12.1.1 Anything, something, nothing, and other similar words	313
12.1.2 Giving and receiving - あげる・くれる・もらう	318
12.1.3 Have done - したことがある	321
12.1.4 Mine, yours, old ones and new ones - 私の・古いの	322
12.2 Conditional expressions	323
12.2.1 If/when - ～たら	323
12.2.2 If - なら	325
12.2.3 If - すれば	326
12.2.4 If - すると	328
12.2.5 When - ～とき	329
12.3 て-form expressions.	331
12.3.1 The other negative て-form.	331
12.3.2 I'm glad/It's a good thing... - ～てよかった	331
12.3.3 Doing something for someone - ～てあげる・～てくれる	332
12.3.4 Doing something and coming back - ～てくる	333
12.3.5 Taking and bringing - 持っていく/くる・連れていく/くる	334
12.3.6 Doing something completely or making a mistake - ～てしまう	335
12.3.7 Doing something in preparation - ～ておく	336
12.3.8 Apologizing and thanking for specific things - ～てすみません・～てありがとう	337
12.3.9 Even if - ～ても	339
12.3.10 Giving and asking for permission - ～てもいい	339

12.3.11 Forbidding or saying what shouldn't be done - ～てはいけない/だめ . . . . .	341
12.3.12 Things that haven't been done - Another use of the present continuous tense. . . . .	342
12.4 The passive voice . . . . .	344
12.5 Other expressions . . . . .	347
12.5.1 Need to, have to . . . . .	347
12.5.2 Already, yet and still - もう・まだ . . . . .	349
12.5.3 About/concerning - ～について . . . . .	350
12.5.4 While doing - しながら . . . . .	351
12.5.5 Go and do, come and do - しに行く・しに来る . . . . .	352
12.5.6 It's easy/difficult to... - しやすい・しにくい . . . . .	353
12.5.7 Making comparisons - ～より～方が . . . . .	353
12.5.8 Should - はず・べき . . . . .	356
12.5.9 Describing an incomplete list of activities - ～たり～たりする . . . . .	359
12.5.10 Discussing plans - つもり . . . . .	360
12.5.11 Expressing uncertainty - ～かもしれません . . . . .	361
12.5.12 How to do things - やり方 . . . . .	362
12.5.13 Trying - しようとする・してみる . . . . .	363
12.5.14 Negative questions - しませんか・じゃないの? . . . . .	365
12.5.15 Before/after doing... - ～前に・～後に . . . . .	366
12.5.16 For/in order to - ～ために . . . . .	367
12.5.17 Whether or not - ～かどうか～ . . . . .	369
12.5.18 Too... - ～すぎる . . . . .	369
12.5.19 Describing how things look/appear - ～そう . . . . .	371
12.5.20 Apparently, it seems/looks like - そう・らしい・みたい・よう . . . . .	372
12.5.21 Letting or making someone do something - させる . . . . .	375
12.5.22 I have a feeling... - ～気がする . . . . .	377
12.5.23 No choice but to... - するしかない . . . . .	378
12.5.24 Turning adjectives into nouns - ～さ . . . . .	379
<b>Appendix 1: Understanding verb tenses in noun phrases . . . . .</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Verb dictionary (English - Japanese) . . . . .</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Verb dictionary (Japanese - English) . . . . .</b>	<b>393</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Non-verb dictionary (English - Japanese) . . . . .</b>	<b>401</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Non-verb dictionary (Japanese - English) . . . . .</b>	<b>413</b>
<b>Appendix 6: Hiragana Chart. . . . .</b>	<b>424</b>
<b>Appendix 7: Katakana Chart . . . . .</b>	<b>425</b>

# Introduction

Japanese is often considered one of the most difficult languages to learn. I thought this too, once upon a time, but now I know better. Yes, it is very different from English and pretty much every other language, but it is incredibly logical, flexible and has very few irregularities. With the right approach, I believe it is possible to learn to speak fluent Japanese in a very short period of time.

That's why I've written this book. I want to share with you the knowledge I have accumulated through years of formal study, over six years of living in Japan, and countless hours spent contemplating the finer points of Japanese and English linguistics.

When I first learned Japanese, I struggled with all kinds of concepts that, in retrospect, aren't very difficult at all. The problem was that I didn't know what I was doing, or what I should be learning. I had textbooks and teachers that taught me all the basic grammar and sentence patterns, and I could even put some decent sentences together, but it wasn't until I studied in Japan that I finally "got it".

The reason for that is simple - I spent a lot of time learning what to say, without properly understanding how Japanese really works. I had to figure a lot out on my own, which only came after being exposed to Japanese almost exclusively for months on end. If I had just had a better grasp of how languages work in general, and the specific things that make Japanese and English so different, I could have saved myself a lot of time and confusion.

This book is designed to give you the head start I didn't have. Wherever you are, if you want to learn to speak Japanese, this book will help you learn smarter, start speaking today, and get to fluency fast!

## The 80/20 Approach

If you haven't heard of the 80/20 rule, or Pareto Principle, it suggests that in any endeavor, 80% of the results come from 20% of the input. For a company, 80% of revenue usually comes from around 20% of its customers. In many sports, approximately 80% of the goals are scored by 20% of the players. The ratios won't always be 20% and 80%, but the point is that in anything you do, there are a few things that matter far more than everything else.

When it comes to languages, one of the most oft-cited examples of the 80/20 principle relates to vocabulary. In just about any language, the most common 1500 words or so usually account for 80% of the spoken or written language. For Japanese, the first 1000 words account for roughly 76% of the words that appear in novels.<sup>1</sup> Although this is good to know, it is somewhat misleading, and misses the point of language learning.

Firstly, many of the most common words have very little meaning on their own, like the English words “it”, “the” and “of”. These words are essential, but they mostly just supplement other, less common words that have more meaning.

Secondly, the most common words overall will not necessarily be the most useful words for you. If your goal is to discuss politics in Japanese, you'll need a very different set of vocabulary to somebody who wants to understand anime. You're much better off learning the words you need over the ones you're told you “should” know.

More importantly though, a language is not merely a collection of vocabulary. A language is a skill, or more accurately, a group of skills that you use to communicate. The most important 20% of the Japanese language is therefore not a list of the most common words, but rather the knowledge and understanding that will allow you to practice and develop these skills most efficiently and effectively. Vocabulary is of course necessary, but it is only one piece of the puzzle.

To speak fluent Japanese, the most important skill you need is the ability to understand how sentences are formed, and how the words in a sentence relate to each other. You need to develop this skill above all others because it applies to everything, and because it is the single aspect that is most different to what you already know, making it the most difficult to master.

Despite this, the usual way people are taught Japanese essentially equates to being made to remember and practice lots of different sentence patterns that apply to specific situations. This works for a while, but it is severely limiting and leads to a lot of confusion. I

---

<sup>1</sup> The Most Commonly Used Japanese Words by Frequency: <http://www.offbeatband.com/2010/12/the-most-commonly-used-japanese-words-by-frequency/>

experienced this myself, and wish I had started with a proper understanding of sentence formation, rather than having to figure it out for myself.

That's why after introducing the sounds of Japanese, this book focuses first and foremost on giving you a proper understanding of Japanese sentence structure. It does this using simple examples and highlighting the important differences between Japanese and English. This teaches you to think differently, and lays the foundation that will allow you to say anything. It's the 20% of the language that will get you 80% of the way to speaking fluent Japanese.

## **Deconstructing Japanese**

The skill of speaking Japanese can be broken down broadly into four pieces - pronunciation, listening, vocabulary and sentence building. The sounds of Japanese, which are relevant to both pronunciation and listening, are covered in Chapter 1, while the remainder of the book focuses on sentence building. In doing so, it also includes a variety of useful vocabulary.

Here is a brief introduction to each of the building blocks of spoken Japanese.

### **Pronunciation**

This is really important, and people often don't spend enough time on this. There's no point being able to speak Japanese correctly if nobody can understand what you say. You don't need to be perfect, but good pronunciation will make communication much smoother and more enjoyable, while also improving your listening skills. In the beginning especially, you should dedicate time every day just to practicing pronunciation. It takes time for the muscles in your mouth to develop the ability to make the new sounds accurately and efficiently, just like any other physical skill. The more you do it, the easier it will become.

### **Listening**

Listening is a skill in itself that takes practice. In addition to learning to recognize all the different sounds and sound combinations, it is important to get used to the natural flow of a language, and practice listening to it being spoken at a natural pace. So often, people will learn all the basics of a language, but can't keep up when they hear it spoken naturally. Focused practice on listening to naturally spoken Japanese is essential. The sooner you start, and the more you do, the better.

## **Vocabulary**

This is obviously important, but it's more than just memorization. If you ever studied a language at school, you no doubt had vocabulary tests that required you to memorize the meanings of individual words. You also no doubt forgot most of those words as soon as the test was over.

Instead of this, try to learn words that matter to you, and learn them in context. The majority of my vocabulary has come from hearing or seeing a word in the real world and making the effort to learn its meaning. This works extremely well because it lets your environment tell you which words to learn and how to use them. This doesn't mean you can't learn vocabulary through study; just be sure that when you do so, you learn words that are relevant to you, and learn them in context.

## **Sentence Building**

In order to communicate in any language, you need to be able to build and understand sentences. A solid understanding of grammar makes this process much less random and confusing. Grammar is often seen as boring, but it helps you make sense of new concepts, allows you to expand the range of ideas you can express, and if you learn the basics well, it gives you the power to self-correct and experience rapid improvement.

If you think grammar is unnecessary, and simply listening to and immersing yourself in a language is the most effective way to learn it because that's how children do it, consider this - when you learned your first language, you were constantly surrounded by it and had no way to escape, even in your thoughts. You had a fundamental need for language, a rapidly developing brain, and people around you that actively encouraged you at every step. Even so, it took you several years before you could put a coherent sentence together, let alone have an intelligent conversation.

The fact is, you can't simulate a child's circumstances, and nor do you want to. You're smarter now and your brain is more powerful. As an adult, you possess the ability to dissect and analyze new information far better than any child. Learning grammar allows you to leverage that superior analytical ability to great effect.

## **How To Learn A Language**

Since learning a language means learning a number of skills, it should be treated like any other skill. Simply reading this book from beginning to end won't magically give you the ability to speak Japanese. It will help you learn all the essential knowledge you need

to speak Japanese, but it is critical that you don't confuse the acquisition of knowledge with the acquisition of a skill.

Consider other skills. If you want to learn to play golf, simply reading about technique and studying videos of Tiger Woods is not enough. This will give you some basic knowledge that will help you improve, but you won't get better at swinging a golf club until you practice swinging a golf club. It's that simple.

Learning to speak a language is the same - you need to train your brain to think a certain way, your mouth to move a certain way, and your ears to interpret sounds a certain way. You obviously need some knowledge of the language to be able to do this, but you absolutely must put this knowledge to use by speaking and listening to Japanese.

It's not just me who thinks this. In his book *Fluent in 3 Months*, Benny Lewis says that the key ingredient that has helped him become fluent in 7 languages (and counting) is to start speaking from day one. No matter how little you know, talking to people in your target language gives you valuable experience that you can't get from study. It's also far more enjoyable than spending all of your time with your head down learning grammar and vocabulary.

As proud as I am of the quality of this book and how beneficial it will be for your Japanese language learning, it will never replace real-life experience. Make sure you practice what you learn early and often.

## **Creating Opportunities To Practice**

"But... but... I don't have anyone to practice with?"

That excuse may have worked in the past, but not any more.

First of all, Japanese people are everywhere. With few exceptions, Japanese communities can be found in most major cities around the world - you just have to put in the effort to find and connect with them. When you do, though, don't be that person that goes up to people and says they're looking for someone with whom they can practice their Japanese. I've met countless people who, within a few minutes of meeting me, asked me to help them with their English. I'm happy to help out my friends, but nobody wants to feel as though they're being used, unless they're getting something in return. Make friends first before asking for help, or just start speaking to them in Japanese so that becomes the default language. In some cases, you may be able to arrange a language exchange, where you help each other out with your language learning goals. In any case, you want to build a genuine relationship, not one that hinges purely on your need for their language skills.

If you're worried about your lack of Japanese ability, and fear being ridiculed, don't be. Easier said than done, I know, but for the most part, Japanese people are incredibly kind and will be flattered that you are trying to speak their language. In English speaking countries, non-English speakers are sometimes made to feel like they don't belong. They get treated with rudeness, impatience and are sometimes even abused. Japanese people aren't like this - they don't expect people to learn their language. They're impressed with people who can speak Japanese, even a little, and although they might be shy, they will generally want to talk to you, no matter how little sense you make.

If you live somewhere where there aren't any Japanese people, don't have the time to spend searching, or are intimidated by the prospect of approaching a Japanese community, there is, of course, the Internet. Using websites like [www.italki.com](http://www.italki.com) or [www.interpals.net](http://www.interpals.net), you can find native Japanese language tutors for as little as \$8/hour, or connect with language exchange partners for free. This gives you easy, affordable access to native Japanese speakers with whom you can practice speaking Japanese, wherever you happen to be.

Of course, when you just want to practice your listening and interpretation skills without the speaking element, it's even easier. There are countless movies, TV shows, anime, podcasts, youtube channels and streaming radio channels available online. With these, you can practice when it suits you, and by using media related to a topic you're interested in, you can ensure that you actually enjoy the process.

For a list of useful resources available to help you practice and improve your Japanese, visit [8020japanese.com/resources](http://8020japanese.com/resources).

## Speeding Up Learning

When learning a new skill, what you learn and the order in which you learn it makes a big difference. In his book *The 4-Hour Chef*, Tim Ferriss shares his methodology for rapid skill acquisition, saying you must first deconstruct the skill into manageable blocks, select the most important blocks (the 20%), and then learn those blocks in a logical sequence.

The logical sequence is the “secret sauce”. Using kickboxing students as an example, Tim notes that average students were taught a “hodgepodge of random techniques” that “leave students to assemble the puzzle themselves”. This can still produce excellent students, but success is dependent on each student's ability to assemble that puzzle. In contrast, teachers that consistently produce the best and most reliable students teach their craft in a logical sequence.

This book is that logical sequence for Japanese. Here you'll find the most important aspects of the Japanese language broken down and presented in a logical order designed to maximize learning efficiency and long-term effectiveness.

In some cases, this means that things you would normally learn first in a language learning course appear later, or not at all, simply because they are limited in overall application. Remember, this isn't a phrasebook; it's a road-map to fluency. By practicing what you learn in this book in the order it appears, you will learn the most crucial concepts first and avoid the biggest sticking points, bringing you closer to spoken fluency faster.

So now that have the material you need, what else can you do to speed up learning? In his book *The First 20 Hours*, Josh Kaufman discusses the keys to achieving rapid progress during the early stages of acquiring a new skill.

One of those keys is to learn just enough to self correct. As discussed, spending too much time studying and not enough time practicing Japanese is counter-productive, but so is not learning enough. If you learn just enough so that you will know when you make a mistake, it allows you to self-correct immediately, reinforcing correct methods.

Without this, you generally won't have that instant feedback. When speaking to a native speaker, their goal is usually just to communicate, so in most cases, they will not correct your mistakes as long as they understand what you are trying to say. Some people will help you out, and you can of course ask people the correct way to say something, but you should make it your own responsibility to be able to recognize and correct your own mistakes. I have done this since I started learning Japanese, and it has served me extremely well.

Another of the strategies Josh describes that is particularly relevant to language learning is to emphasize quantity and speed. When speaking Japanese, you should focus on saying as much as you can as quickly as you can, without trying to be perfect. The same goes for listening - instead of worrying about every single word, just try to understand as much as you can as it is being spoken. Especially in the early stages, your Japanese will rarely be perfect, even if you are careful, so give yourself the opportunity to make lots of mistakes and learn from them.

## Keeping Motivated

“The major barrier to skill acquisition isn’t intellectual... it’s emotional”

—Josh Kaufman

The biggest obstacle you will face in your quest to speak fluent Japanese is yourself. The fact is, like any new skill, learning a language is tough. What makes it tough, though, is not the content, but rather the fact that you will get frustrated and feel stupid at times. The road will seem too long, and it would be much easier to just give up and watch old episodes of *Game of Thrones* instead.

For this reason, it helps to create a system that allows you to overcome these emotional barriers that you will inevitably face. The point of this system is to keep you motivated, or at least to ensure that you keep going even when you don’t feel motivated. Here are ten things you can do to help prevent yourself from giving up or making excuses. You don’t need to implement them all, but by putting some kind of system in place, you make it harder for yourself to lose focus and quit.

### 1. Focus on small wins

Feeling like you are making progress is crucial. If all you can say to yourself is, “I’ve been doing this for days/weeks/months/years now and I’m still not even close to where I want to be”, you’ll constantly feel like a failure. Instead, enjoy the small wins, and be proud of everything you achieve. It could be something as simple as recognizing a new word that you just learned, or successfully using the correct form of a verb. Everything counts, and everything is progress, so make a habit of celebrating your successes.

### 2. Recognize that learning a new language is a rollercoaster ride

When I studied in Japan in high school, in five months I went from knowing some basic grammar and vocabulary and not much else, to being able to converse at full pace on any topic that wasn’t too technical. Everyone was amazed at the speed of my progress. Despite this, I constantly went through periods where I felt like I wasn’t getting anywhere. Invariably, though, these periods were soon followed by huge breakthroughs where I suddenly felt like I could understand absolutely everything. Of course, not long after, I’d be back down again. Then up. Then down. Then up. You get the point. So when things feel hopeless, recognize that it’s a natural part of the process, and that the next big breakthrough is just around the corner. Just keep pushing.

### 3. Set specific and realistic goals

Saying you want to be fluent in Japanese, with no timeline and no definition of what fluency is, doesn't work. As Benny Lewis says in his book *Fluent in 3 Months*, "successful language learners are those who are as specific as possible with their goals". Start by defining the level of fluency you want to achieve. I recommend starting with something small and within reach, such as the ability to hold a simple, spontaneous conversation. Don't aim for perfection, and don't expect yourself to know all the vocabulary that comes up. Once you have a defined goal, give yourself a realistic deadline to achieve it, taking into account how much time you can commit. The more achievable the goal seems, the more motivated you will be to reach it.

### 4. Use content that interests you

It will make all the difference in the world if you are interested in the content you use to practice your Japanese. When I first lived in Japan, I liked talking to people and learning from them, so that's what I did. It didn't feel like study because I enjoyed it, and it's the reason I can now speak Japanese fluently. You may not be as fortunate as I was to have that opportunity, but if you want to learn to speak Japanese, there's probably something about Japan or Japanese culture that interests you. Use that. If you just like talking to people, find people to talk to. If you like anime or other forms of Japanese pop-culture, watch it and talk to others who like it too. Whatever your interests, you can find material and someone to talk to about it if you look.

### 5. Set a schedule and stick to it

Consistency is essential to learning any new skill, especially a language. Deciding you want to learn Japanese, and committing to studying and practicing in your free time, is not really committing at all. When your free time comes around, unless you're really motivated at that exact moment, there's a fair chance you will choose to do something else instead. Schedule time to study and practice your Japanese. Meet with a language exchange partner on a weekly basis, make Wednesday nights Japanese movie night, or read this book every morning on your commute. Whatever you do, make sure you deliberately allocate time for learning. As the saying goes, failing to plan is planning to fail.

### 6. Practice for at least 20 hours

In his book *The First 20 Hours*, Josh Kaufman argues that the beginning stages of learning a new skill are the hardest because, basically, you suck at it. This means you

get frustrated, feel stupid, and in many cases, give up. One way to overcome this is to commit before you start to doing at least 20 hours of focused practice. By forcing yourself to the 20-hour point, you get yourself to a level where you feel competent enough that you won't feel like a failure and will therefore want to continue. Just make sure the twenty hours is consistent and frequent. One hour a week for twenty weeks isn't going to cut it - instead, aim to reach 20 hours in under a month.

#### 7. Set stakes to ensure accountability

If you have something to lose, such as money or reputation, you're more likely to work harder to succeed. As Tim Ferriss notes in *The 4-Hour Chef*, a goal needs consequences. Once you've set a specific and realistic goal, create a disincentive for failure. Give a friend money or the right to publicly shame you if you don't follow through. You could also use a service like [www.stickk.com](http://www.stickk.com), which punishes you for failing to reach a goal either by telling your supporters of your failure, or by giving money to a friend, foe or 'anti-charity'. Whatever you put on the line, the more it hurts, the more likely you'll stay motivated to succeed.

#### 8. The Jerry Seinfeld productivity 'secret'

Jerry Seinfeld apparently doesn't like to take credit for this method, but it is often attributed to him nonetheless. Here's what you do - buy a calendar, and commit to doing a certain amount of Japanese speaking or listening practice every day. Every day you do what you said you would do, mark that day off on the calendar with a big "X". Your only goal is to not break the chain of days that are marked off. It doesn't matter how well you perform while practicing, just that you practice for a set period of time every day and don't break the chain.

#### 9. Write or record a diary in Japanese every day

A great way to both practice as well as create a visual record of your progress is to write a diary in Japanese, or speak one into a voice recorder or video camera. Just write or say whatever you can, without worrying too much about the content. I've never been the sort of person to keep a journal, but I used this method when I first lived in Japan to practice and consolidate all of the new grammar and vocabulary I had learned. My first entry was just three lines and full of errors, but after five months I was writing a page and a half of almost error-free Japanese every day.

## 10. Have a good reason to learn Japanese

The best language students are always the ones that are either passionate about the culture of the target language, or whose circumstances require them to learn it. Countless people live abroad for years without learning a single word of the local language, simply because they don't have a strong desire to learn and can get by without it. On the other hand, some people are able to learn to speak a foreign language without ever traveling to the country it's spoken in because they want it badly enough and put in the effort. If you kinda sorta wanna learn Japanese, but are not particularly fazed if you never do, you'll have a much tougher time keeping motivated to make the effort. Find or create a good reason to learn Japanese and the battle is half won.

## The 80/20 Japanese Road Map

As stated earlier, this book is designed to help you get from zero to fluency in the shortest possible time, and the lessons in this book have been carefully ordered with that goal in mind. To give you an idea of where you are heading, and why this book has been structured the way it has, here is a basic road map for your journey to Japanese fluency.

In chapter one, you will learn the basic sounds of Japanese. These are obviously essential to learning to speak and understand spoken Japanese. Some basic words will also be introduced, such as greetings and numbers, to help you practice your pronunciation.

In chapter two, we will look at the basic structure of Japanese sentences using basic vocabulary. You will learn how the words in Japanese sentences relate to each other, and how this compares with English, laying the foundations for everything else you will learn in this book.

Chapter three covers some general characteristics of the Japanese language that affect how people communicate. This includes some fundamental differences between Japanese and English that affect everything you say or hear, as well as some key cultural aspects that are reflected in the language.

Chapter four is essentially a summary of all the major aspects of Japanese grammar, and is designed to give you enough knowledge to communicate basic ideas that are useful in everyday conversation. This includes some basic verb tenses, how to talk about your likes and dislikes, and how to ask questions. You will also learn a lot of essential vocabulary to help you put these ideas to use.

In chapter five, you will learn about numbers and counters. Numbers themselves are fairly straightforward, but they need to be converted to counters in order to use numbers in a sentence to talk about quantities. This chapter will help you do that.

Using the numbers you learned in chapter five, chapter six covers all the different kinds of expressions used to discuss time. With this knowledge, you can easily add context to any basic sentence, and ensure that even if you make other mistakes, you can accurately communicate and understand the basic timing of events.

From chapter seven onward, we start looking at the finer points of Japanese grammar, starting with adjectives, nouns and adverbs. Building on your understanding of Japanese sentence structure, this chapter focuses on the different ways that adjectives can be manipulated and used, and how this knowledge can also be applied to nouns and adverbs.

Verbs are the central part of any sentence, and the focus of chapter eight. Here, you will expand on the basic verb tenses covered in chapter four by learning the major verb forms used in both polite and informal speech. You will also learn to differentiate between two main types of verbs, greatly improving your ability to use them correctly in sentences.

Chapter nine introduces one of the most versatile verb forms in Japanese, the te-form. You will learn how to convert any verb into the te-form, as well as some of the most useful ways to use the te-form to express yourself. This includes describing actions that are ongoing, giving commands, making requests, and linking multiple actions in a sequence.

In chapter ten, the shackles come off. Here, you will learn about the concept of noun phrases, and how they can be used to form a wide range of complex, highly descriptive sentences. This chapter will truly take your understanding to the next level.

In chapter eleven, we will take a deeper look at particles, a key component of Japanese sentences first introduced in chapter two. This chapter aims to fill in any gaps in your understanding of how particles work, while also introducing some new ones and teaching you some new tricks.

By the time you reach chapter twelve, you should have a very solid understanding of Japanese sentence formation, and how each of the components interact to create meaning. This final chapter introduces more than 40 new expressions that build on everything you have learned thus far, ensuring you will always know what to say.

That's it! Hopefully this brief outline has given you a good understanding of where we are heading and how we will get there, so without further ado, let's start learning Japanese!

## Chapter 1

# The Sounds Of Japanese

The first thing to do when learning any new language is become familiar with the sounds that are used. For someone who speaks English, Japanese is relatively easy in this respect because there are fewer unique sounds than in English, and most of them are the same or very similar.

To begin with, there are only five vowel sounds. While English only has five vowels, they are each pronounced differently when used in different combinations with other letters, bringing the total number of unique vowel sounds up to around 20, depending on a person's accent. Compared with this, the five sounds in Japanese are easy to learn. Here they are in the order they appear in the “syllabary”, the Japanese equivalent of the alphabet:

あ a, like the “a” sound in “father”

い i, like the “ee” sound in “meet”

う u, like the “oo” sound in “fool”

え e, like the “e” sound in “set”

お o, like the “o” sound in “cold”

The descriptions above are only approximations of the actual sounds based on an American accent. They can be used as a guide, but sounds are of course best learned with the ears. You can find an audio-based pronunciation guide at [8020japanese.com/resources](http://8020japanese.com/resources).

Also, please note that in this *Kana + Kanji Edition of 80/20 Japanese*, English lettering, or “rōmaji”, is only shown in this chapter. For the remainder of the book, all Japanese words and sentences will be presented in Japanese characters.

### **The three sets of Japanese characters**

Japanese has three main character sets - hiragana, katakana and kanji. Hiragana and katakana - collectively known as “kana” - are phonetic scripts native to Japanese, while kanji (literally “Han characters”) are the Chinese characters used in Japanese.

Katakana is used primarily for words that have been imported from other languages, such as “テレビ” (terebi = TV). It is also sometimes used for emphasis in a similar way to when English is written in all capital letters.

The majority of non-katakana words can be written in either kanji, hiragana, or a combination of both. In standard Japanese writing, if a word can be written in kanji - either partially or wholly - it usually will be. There are, however, many words that cannot be expressed in kanji, and are therefore always written in hiragana. There are also some words that *can* be written in kanji, but are usually expressed in hiragana anyway, either because the kanji is too rare or difficult, or because hiragana is simply preferred for that particular word.

In this book, most words are written as they normally would be in regular Japanese, except in the early chapters, where some words normally written in kanji are expressed in hiragana. This is done to avoid overloading and keep the focus on the concept being discussed. In most cases where kanji *is* used, small hiragana known as “furigana” are displayed above each word showing how the word is read.

For your reference, hiragana and katakana charts are provided in Appendices 6 and 7 at the end of this book.

In the 46-tone syllabary, the above five vowels are the first five “letters”, and we will refer to them from now on as the “a-line”. In speech and writing, these are each used on their own or in combination with consonant sounds to produce other “letters”. For example, the first consonant sound is a “k” sound, but this can only be written or spoken in combination with one of the five vowel sounds. As such, the next five “letters” in the syllabary after the a-line are:

か “ka”, like the “cu” in “cut”  
 き “ki”, like the “kee” in “keep”  
 く “ku”, like the “coo” in “cool”  
 け “ke”, like the “ke” in “kettle”  
 こ “ko”, like the “co” in “cold”

From this point on, we will refer to the above five sounds as the “ka-line”, as there is no such thing in Japanese as a “k” on its own. This is the same for all other consonant sounds, with the exception of “n”, as will be explained shortly.

### Japanese Words You Already Know

If you think of any Japanese sports, company names or names of foods that you already know (and that have not been adapted for the global market), you will notice that any consonant sounds are usually separated by a vowel. The only exceptions are double letters and “n”, both of which we will cover later. Some examples include sushi, karate, karaoke, Toyota, Nissan and Honda.

In addition to the basic ka-line above, there is a simple transformation to this line that gives us a whole new set of “letters”. By adding two small lines to the upper right of each of these characters, the hard “k” sound changes into a softer “g” sound as follows:

か	ka	→	が	ga
き	ki	→	ぎ	gi
く	ku	→	ぐ	gu
け	ke	→	げ	ge
こ	ko	→	ご	go

As you can see, with just two small lines added to each character, we essentially have a new consonant sound. These altered characters, however, do not appear in the syllabary, as they are considered simply as variations of the ka-line. Why is this? Because the “k” sound and the “g” sound are essentially the same except for one small difference - the “g” sound is voiced, while the “k” sound is not.

If you’re not sure what a voiced or unvoiced sound is, say aloud the English “k” sound alone without a vowel, and compare this with what happens when you do the same with an English “g”. You should notice that your mouth moves in much the same way, but

while you don't use your voice for the "k" sound, you do for the "g". This is because "g" is a voiced consonant, whereas "k" is not.

So, in Japanese, unvoiced sounds including "k", "s", "t" and "h" can be altered to create a voiced sound that is written in a similar way to their unvoiced counterparts.

Additionally, in some cases, words that normally use the unvoiced sound (eg. the "k" sound) use the voiced sound (eg. "g") instead when combined with other words, as it may be easier to say. For example, the number "three" is "san" and the word for "floor" (of a building) is "kai", yet the third floor could be referred to as "san gai". This kind of adaptation can be seen all throughout the language.

So if we now combine the first two lines of the syllabary covered so far, it appears as follows:

あいうえお	a i u e o
かきくけこ	ka ki ku ke ko

After "k" the pattern continues, starting with "s" and followed by "t", "n", "h", "m", "y", "r" and "w". There are, however a few exceptions to this basic pattern, and some of these also have voiced alternatives like the "g" described above, so we will now look at each of these lines one by one.

#### **sa-line**

さ	sa
し	shi
す	su
せ	se
そ	so

The exception here is that the second sound is "shi", not "si". These sounds can also be altered to a voiced "z" sound as follows:

ざ	za
じ	ji
ず	zu
ぜ	ze
ぞ	zo

Again, note that the second sound is "ji", not "zi".

**ta-line**

た ta  
 ち chi  
 つ tsu  
 て te  
 と to

The exceptions here are the “i” and “u” variations, where “ti” is pronounced “chi”, and “tu” is pronounced “tsu”, as in the word “tsunami”.

The ta-line sounds can also be altered to a “d” sound, as follows:

だ da  
 ぢ ji  
 づ dzu  
 で de  
 ど do

The second sound, “ji”, is effectively the same as that from the modified sa-line above, and is rarely used. The “dzu” sound is basically a heavier version of the “tsu” sound where the “dz” is a voiced version of the unvoiced “ts” sound.

**na-line**

な na  
 に ni  
 ぬ nu  
 ね ne  
 の no

Here, there are no exceptions, and there is also no altered version.

**ha-line**

は ha  
 ひ hi  
 ふ fu  
 へ he  
 ほ ho

The third sound here is not a “hu” sound but a “fu” sound, as in Mt. Fuji. It is, however, a lighter sound than the English “f”, similar to the sound made when unsuccessfully attempting to whistle. Your bottom lip should not touch your teeth.

The ha-line is unique in that it has two alternatives - a “b” sound and a “p” sound. Firstly, the “b” sound is made by adding two lines like the others:

ば ba  
 び bi  
 ぶ bu  
 べ be  
 ぼ bo

The “p” sound is achieved by adding a small circle instead of two lines, as follows:

ぱ pa  
 ぴ pi  
 ぷ pu  
 ぺ pe  
 ぽ po

Both the “b” and “p” variations of the ha-line are straightforward and without exceptions.

**ma-line**

ま ma  
 み mi  
 む mu  
 め me  
 も mo

**ya-line**

や ya  
 ゆ yu  
 よ yo

The ya-line only has the “a”, “u”, and “o” sounds, but is otherwise quite straightforward. The “yi” and “ye” sounds died out of the language long ago. As a result of this, the Japanese currency today is pronounced “en” in Japanese, not “yen”.

**ra-line**

ら ra  
 り ri  
 る ru  
 れ re  
 ろ ro

Although there are no exceptions in the ra-line, this is unquestionably the hardest sound for native English speakers to master. It is mostly written as an “R”, but the sound itself is much lighter than the English “R”, somewhere between an “R” sound and an “L” sound, and is achieved by flicking your tongue lightly against the roof of your mouth. This is why Japanese people often struggle to distinguish between “R” and “L” when learning English - they use the same sound to cover both letters when speaking English.

Like all other sounds, the best way to learn to pronounce the ra-line correctly is to listen and practice repeatedly until your tongue builds up the necessary muscles to make the sound effortlessly.

**wa-line**

わ wa  
 を wo

This line only has the “a” and “o” variations, and the “w” sound is effectively silent in the case of “wo”. The “wo” therefore sounds the same as the “o” from the a-line, but they are used differently in writing and not interchangeable. This will become much more apparent when we start to discuss grammar.

**n**

ん n

This “n” is the only consonant that stands alone without a vowel sound attached. It is slightly different to the “n” sound produced in the na-line, although you can get away with a regular “n” sound in most cases. To get the correct sound, open your mouth slightly and say “ah”, like at the doctor’s office but not as wide, then use your tongue to close off the flow of air at the back of your throat. Doing this, you should be able to produce an “n”-like sound, almost like a humming sound. This is different from the English “n” sound and the na-line sounds, which are produced with the tongue closer to the front of your mouth.

It is important to note that this “n” sound should always be pronounced as its own syllable, and not blended into other sounds. For example, the name “Shinichi” is actually made up of the sounds shi-n-i-chi (しんいち), with the “n” sound being the lone “n”, not a part of “ni”. This name should therefore be pronounced with a distinct separation of “shin” and “ichi”.

We have now covered all of the basic sounds as they appear in the syllabary. Remembering that we don’t include the altered sounds, the complete syllabary appears as follows:

あいうえお	a i u e o
かきくけこ	ka ki ku ke ko
さしすせそ	sa shi su se so
たちつてと	ta chi tsu te to
なにぬねの	na ni nu ne no
はひふへほ	ha hi fu he ho
まみむめも	ma mi mu me mo
や ゆ よ	ya yu yo
らりるれろ	ra ri ru re ro
わ を	wa (w)o
ん	n

In addition, we have the altered sounds:

がぎぐげご	ga gi gu ge go
ざじずぜぞ	za ji zu ze zo
だぢづでど	da ji dzu de do
ばびぶべぼ	ba bi bu be bo
ぱぴぷぺぽ	pa pi pu pe po

There are, however, a couple more things to cover.

## Small や, ゆ and よ

i + small ya, i + small yu, i + small yo

The three ya-line sounds can be combined with any of the “i” characters (except for 「い」 itself from the a-line) to produce another variation of sounds. When written, the ya-line sounds are written smaller than regular characters. For example, 「き」 + 「や」 would become “kya”, as if you were saying “ki” and then “ya” but without the “i” sound.

### Japanese Punctuation Markers

As you would expect, Japanese has its own set of punctuation markers, some of which are used throughout this book. The most important ones to know are:

- 。 "maru", equivalent of a full stop or period
- 、 "tōten", equivalent of a comma
- 「 」 "kagikakko", equivalent of quotation marks
- ・ "potsu", used to separate katakana words or items in a list

In the case of the sa-line, 「し」 (shi) is the character with the “i” sound, so instead of “sya”, “syu” and “syo”, combining 「し」 with the small ya-line characters produces the sounds “sha”, “shu” and “sho”. This idea also applies to some other sounds, as you will see below.

The full list of these is as follows:

きゃきゅきょ	kya kyu kyo
ぎゃぎゅぎょ	gya gyu gyo
しゃしゅしょ	sha shu sho
じゃじゅじょ	ja ju jo
ちゃちゅちょ	cha chu cho
ぢゃぢゅぢょ	ja ju jo
にゃにゅにょ	nya nyu nyo
ひゃひゅひょ	hya hyu hyo
びゃびゅびょ	bya byu byo
ぴゃぴゅぴょ	pya pyu pyo
りゃりゅりょ	rya ryu ryo

### Small つ (double consonants)

Some words, when written in Japanese, contain a small 「つ」 inserted between other characters. When this is done, the word is pronounced with a tiny pause where the small 「つ」 occurs, followed by an accentuation of the sound that follows the small 「つ」. This must always be a consonant sound, and usually a hard, unvoiced sound (k, s, t, p). When written using English letters, the small 「つ」 is instead written as a double consonant. Examples include 「さっぽろ」 (Sapporo), 「ほっかいどう」 (Hokkaido),

「にっさん」(Nissan), and 「にっぽん」(Nippon, an alternative pronunciation of the word 「にほん」(Nihon), meaning “Japan”, and often chanted by fans at international sporting events).

### Even weighting of sounds, and no accents

When spoken, each kana character is given the same weighting, or an equal amount of time, and there is no accent placed on any of the characters. To demonstrate this, consider the city of Osaka. Many English speakers will naturally put the accent on the first “a” and draw out this sound, so it sounds something like “Osaaka”. In fact, when written in Japanese, Osaka is actually 「おおさか」(oosaka). Since each kana character is given equal time, Osaka is actually a four character word pronounced “o-o-sa-ka”, with no accent anywhere, and the “o” sound making up half of the word.

The Japanese word for “hello” is similar. This is actually written 「こんにちは」 and should therefore be pronounced “ko-n-ni-chi-wa”, with a longer “n” sound than most English speakers normally say, and no accent on the first “i” (or anywhere else).

Another example might be 「からて」(karate). Like Osaka, the second syllable is usually accented by English speakers, but in fact equal time and weight should be given to each of “ka”, “ra” and “te”: ka-ra-te.

### Elongated vowel sounds

When a sound is followed immediately by the same vowel sound, it is usually elongated as in the above example of “Osaka”. This applies whether the first of the repeated vowel sounds is paired with a consonant or not. For example, 「とおり」(tōri) meaning “street”, has an elongated “o” sound just the same as that in “Osaka”.

When written in English letters, these elongated vowel sounds are expressed with a line above the vowel: ā, ī, ū, ē, ō.

When written in hiragana, elongated vowel sounds are usually expressed using the appropriate a-line character: おいしい (oishī = delicious), じゅう (jyū = ten), etc. In the case of “o” sounds, however, the elongation of the “o” is often expressed with an 「う」 instead of an 「お」, such as in 「ありがとう」(arigatō = thanks) and 「にちようび」(nichiyōbi = Sunday).

In katakana, rather than using the a-line character, elongated vowel sounds are written with a 「ちょうおんぷ」(chōonpu), or “long sound mark”: ー. Examples of this can be seen in the words 「ケーキ」(kēki = cake), 「コーヒー」(kōhī = coffee) and 「スーパー」(sūpā = supermarket).

### Cities with elongated vowel sounds

The three most well-known cities in Japan - Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto - all have elongated vowel sounds, and as such are usually pronounced incorrectly by English speakers. The correct pronunciation of these is actually 「とうきょう」 (Tōkyō), 「おおさか」 (Ōsaka) and 「きょうと」 (Kyōto).

### Vowel sounds followed by “い”

When the vowel sounds “a”, “e” and “o” are followed immediately by 「い」, these two sounds are often blended together into one sound, resulting in something like this:

あい	“ai”, like the “i” in “kite”
えい	“ei”, like the “ay” in “say”
おい	“oi”, like the “oy” in “boy”

This also applies to any sounds that start with a consonant, so 「かい」 (kai) would sound like the “ki” in “kite”, and 「せい」 (sei) and 「ぼい」 (boi) would sound like “say” and “boy” respectively.

Note, however, that they only tend to sound like this, and will often have a faint but distinct “i” sound towards the end of the blended sound. As a pair, they are also still given the weighting of two sounds, so in the word 「えいご」 (eigo = English language) for example, the “ay” sound accounts for ⅔ of the word: e-i-go.

### Spaces

Japanese is always written without spaces between words or letters. When an entire sentence is written in either English lettering (rōmaji) or kana (ie. without kanji), however, it can be very difficult to distinguish between words. For the sake of readability, spaces are sometimes inserted artificially, including a few instances in this book.

## Exercise

Below are the numbers one through ten, some common greetings, a few colors, the days of the week, and the months of the year. Practice pronouncing these words. For this exercise only, rōmaji is provided with a hyphen (-) between each sound to assist you with your pronunciation. Be sure to stretch out any elongated vowel sounds (ō, ū etc.).

Numbers	
One	いち (i-chi)
Two	に (ni)
Three	さん (sa-n)
Four	し or よん (shi or yon)
Five	ご (go)
Six	ろく (ro-ku)
Seven	しち or なな (shi-chi or na-na)
Eight	はち (ha-chi)
Nine	きゅう (kyū)
Ten	じゅう (jū)

Greetings	
Hello	こんにちは (ko-n-ni-chi- <b>wa</b> )*
Nice to meet you	はじめまして (ha-ji-me-ma- <b>sh</b> -te)*
Good morning	おはようございます (o-ha-yō-go-za-i-ma-s)*
Good evening	こんばんは (ko-n-ba-n- <b>wa</b> )*
Goodbye	さようなら (sa-yō-na-ra)
See you later	またね (ma-ta-ne)
Good night	おやすみなさい (o-ya-su-mi-na-sa-i)
Thanks	ありがとう (a-ri-ga-tō)

Thank you	ありがとうございます (a-ri-ga-tō-go-za-i-ma-s)*
You're welcome	どういたしまして (dō-i-ta-shi-ma-sh-te)*
Excuse me	すみません (su-mi-ma-se-n)
Sorry	ごめんなさい (go-me-n-na-sa-i)

\* For “Hello” and “Good evening”, the “は” is pronounced “wa” because it is a particle. This will be explained in Chapter 2.

For “Nice to meet you” and “You’re welcome”, the “i” before the “te” at the end is usually silent.

For “Good morning” and “Thank you”, the final “u” sound is usually silent.

Colors	
Black	<small>くろ</small> 黒い (ku-ro-i)
White	<small>しろ</small> 白い (shi-ro-i)
Red	<small>あか</small> 赤い (a-ka-i)
Green	みどり (mi-do-ri)
Blue	<small>あお</small> 青い (a-o-i)
Yellow	きいろい (kī-ro-i)

Days of the week	
Monday	<small>げつようび</small> 月曜日 (ge-tsu-yō-bi)
Tuesday	<small>かようび</small> 火曜日 (ka-yō-bi)
Wednesday	<small>すいようび</small> 水曜日 (su-i-yō-bi)
Thursday	<small>もくようび</small> 木曜日 (mo-ku-yō-bi)
Friday	<small>きんようび</small> 金曜日 (ki-n'-yō-bi)
Saturday	<small>どようび</small> 土曜日 (do-yō-bi)
Sunday	<small>にちようび</small> 日曜日 (ni-chi-yō-bi)

Months of the year	
January	いちがつ 一月 (i-chi-ga-tsu)
February	にがつ 二月 (ni-ga-tsu)
March	さんがつ 三月 (sa-n-ga-tsu)
April	しがつ 四月 (shi-ga-tsu)
May	ごがつ 五月 (go-ga-tsu)
June	ろくがつ 六月 (ro-ku-ga-tsu)
July	しちがつ 七月 (shi-chi-ga-tsu)
August	はちがつ 八月 (ha-chi-ga-tsu)
September	くがつ 九月 (ku-ga-tsu)
October	じゅうがつ 十月 (jū-ga-tsu)
November	じゅういちがつ 十一月 (jū-i-chi-ga-tsu)
December	じゅうにがつ 十二月 (jū-ni-ga-tsu)

## Chapter 2

# Introduction to Japanese Grammar

The purpose of this chapter is to help you understand how the Japanese language is structured. Sentence structure in any language determines how words are used together to form meaning. The content in this chapter is quite heavy, but once you overcome the extreme differences between English and Japanese sentence structure, the language becomes much easier.

### 2.1 Basic Japanese sentence structure

#### New vocabulary

to be (am/are/is)	です*
this	これ
that	それ
car	くるま 車
red	あか 赤い
I/me	わたし 私
person	ひと 人

\* In the word 「です」, the “u” sound is usually not voiced, hence this should be pronounced “dess”.

Let's start with some basic sentences.

1. I am a person. わたし <sup>ひと</sup> 私 は 人 です。
2. This is a car. これは <sup>くるま</sup> 車 です。
3. My car is red. わたし <sup>くるま</sup> 私 の 車 は <sup>あか</sup> 赤 い です。
4. That is Taro's car. それは <sup>た ろ う</sup> 太 郎 の <sup>くるま</sup> 車 です。

Looking at these sentences, you may notice that:

- Every sentence ends in 「です」 (pronounced “dess”)
- Every sentence contains a 「は」 (pronounced “wa”)

「です」 is effectively the verb “to be”, which in the above cases takes the form “is” or “am”. In Japanese, **the verb always comes at the end of the sentence.**

「は」 is what is known as a particle (particles will be explained in greater detail later). Its purpose is to identify the topic of the sentence. In English, the topic (or subject) of a sentence is whatever comes before the main verb, which in the above cases is either “is” or “am”. In Japanese, the topic of a sentence is whatever comes before 「は」. Note that although 「は」 is usually pronounced “ha”, it is always pronounced “wa” when used as a particle.

Now that we know this, let's take another look at sentences one and two. Text with the same formatting has the same meaning.

1. I am a person. わたし <sup>ひと</sup> 私 は 人 です。
2. This is a car. これは <sup>くるま</sup> 車 です。

First of all, we can see that 「は」 has no English equivalent. This is because its entire purpose is to show that 「<sup>わたし</sup>私」 or 「これ」 is the topic of these sentences. There is no English equivalent because in English, word order alone is enough to determine the subject of a sentence.

Secondly, since 「<sup>ひと</sup>人」 means person and 「<sup>くるま</sup>車」 means car, we can see that there is no Japanese equivalent of “a”. The articles “a”, “an” and “the” simply do not exist in Japanese. This makes things simpler in some ways, but can be hard to get used to for someone used to English or similar languages, as not having these words can sometimes make a sentence feel as though it is lacking somehow.

Now let's look at sentences 3 and 4.

3. My car is red.      わたし    くるま    あか  
私の車は赤いです。
4. That is Taro's car.      た    ろう    くるま  
それは太郎の車です。

Here we can see that:

- わたし    くるま  
 私の車 = my car, and
- た    ろう    くるま  
 太郎の車 = Taro's car

Adding 「の」, another particle, indicates possession. It converts “I”, “you”, “he”, “she” and “they” into “my”, “your”, “his”, “her” and “their”, respectively. For other things like people's names, animals, places and objects, it has the same effect as adding “s” (apostrophe s).

The one-size-fits-all way of defining 「の」 would be to say it is equal to English “of”. For example, instead of “Taro's car”, 「た    ろう    くるま太郎の車」 could be thought of as “the car of Taro”. This is more versatile as there are plenty of situations in English where “s” is not normally appropriate. 「の」 can be used to connect just about any two things, where one of the two things belongs to the other in some way, such as “the back of the door”, “the color of your eyes” or even “the rain of yesterday”.

To summarize what we have learned about Japanese sentence structure so far:

- The verb comes at the end of the sentence
- The particle 「は」 defines the topic of the sentence, and has no English equivalent
- There is no “a”, “an” or “the”
- The particle 「の」 indicates possession

## 2.2 Introduction to particles

Now that you have a basic understanding of some simple sentences, we will look at the most important concept relating to Japanese sentence structure - particles. Particles are like small words that go in between other words to help a sentence make sense. They are somewhat like prepositions in English (in, at, on, from, to etc.), but only in some cases, and thinking of them as the equivalent of prepositions will likely cause you unnecessary confusion.

Put simply, **particles determine the role of each word relative to the verb.**

Understanding what this really means will make learning Japanese grammar much, much easier.

To illustrate what is meant by “the role of each word”, let’s first consider how the English language works. In English, the role of words in a sentence is determined primarily by word order. Take the following example:

John saw Jane.

From the word order, we know:

- a) John was the person who did the seeing
- b) Jane was the person who was seen

If we change the word order, it changes the meaning of the sentence. We can say “Jane saw John”, and it makes grammatical sense, but it does not mean the same thing. This is because English sentences always follow the pattern [subject] + [verb] + [object].

The *subject* of a sentence is the person/animal/thing that is performing the action described by the verb. In this case, “John” is the subject because John is the one performing the act of seeing. We know this because “John” comes before the verb “saw”.

The *object* of a sentence is the person/animal/thing that the action is performed on. In this case, “Jane” is the object because she is the one who was seen by John, and we know this because “Jane” comes after the verb “saw”.

As you can see, in English, *word order* determines the role of each word in the sentence and, in particular, how each word relates to the *verb*.

In Japanese, instead of word order, particles determine the role of each word and how they relate to the verb. Word order is important too, but not to the same extent. Word order in Japanese mainly influences the natural flow, and has more of an effect on where the emphasis lies within a sentence than on its literal meaning. Don’t worry about this too much for now - the important thing to know is that particles, not word order, determine how all the words in a sentence relate to each other.

The simple sentence “John saw Jane” could be written in Japanese as follows:

ジョンはジェーンを見ました。

Firstly, as you may have guessed, 「見ました」 is the verb “to see” in the past tense. Note that for verbs in the past tense, the “i” sound from the 「し」 is usually silent, hence this would be read as “mimashta”.

Also in this sentence are the two particles, 「は」 and 「を」. Like all particles, these ones define the role of the words that come *before* them.

In general terms:

- 「は」 defines the topic of the sentence, as we discussed earlier.
- 「を」 defines the object of the verb. Recall from chapter one that the “w” in “wo” is silent, and is therefore simply pronounced “o”.

So in the above sentence:

- 「は」 defines 「ジョン」<sup>J o h n</sup> as the topic of the sentence, meaning John is the person who performed the act of seeing
- 「を」 defines 「ジェーン」<sup>J a n e</sup> as the object of the verb “saw”, meaning Jane is the person who was seen

By putting this together, we can see that:

ジョン<sup>J o h n</sup>はジェーン<sup>J a n e</sup>を<sup>み</sup>見ました = John saw Jane

## Exercise

So far, we have seen the particles 「は」, 「の」 and 「を」. Recall that:

- 「は」 defines the topic of a sentence or clause
  - 「を」 defines the object of the verb
  - 「の」 indicates possession
1. Identify the topic of each of the following sentences. Keep in mind that the topic is one ‘thing’ and can be more than one word.
    - a) I watched the baseball game.
    - b) This apple is green.
    - c) My sister is listening to music.
    - d) The red bike is faster than the blue one.
    - e) The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog.
  2. Identify the object of the verb in each of the following sentences. Like the topic, the object can also be more than one word.
    - a) He ate a hamburger.
    - b) Alan watched TV.
    - c) I read a fascinating book.
    - d) Her older brother bought a mobile phone.
    - e) My grandfather drank a big glass of water.

3. Using the vocabulary provided, translate these phrases into Japanese.

- a) My friend
- b) His mother
- c) Her bicycle
- d) Jiro's book
- e) My friend's dog

### Vocabulary

I	わたし 私
he	かれ 彼
she	かのじょ 彼女
friend	ともだち 友達

mother	かあ お母さん
bicycle	じてんしゃ 自転車
book	ほん 本
dog	いぬ 犬

### Answers

- 1. a. I; b. this apple; c. my sister; d. the red bike; e. the quick brown fox
- 2. a. a hamburger; b. TV; c. a fascinating book; d. a mobile phone; e. a big glass of water
- 3. a. わたし ともだち かれ かあ  
私の友達; b. 彼のお母さん; c. かのじょ じてんしゃ  
彼女の自転車; d. じろう ほん  
次郎の本; e. わたし ともだち いぬ  
私の友達の犬

## 2.3 Particles in more depth

To further your understanding of particles, we will now look at 「は」, 「を」 and 「の」 in action, while also introducing a couple more common particles.

Here is the vocabulary for this section:

Verbs* (past tense)	
went	い 行きました
watched	み 見ました
came	き 来ました

Nouns	
school	がっこう 学校
movie	えいが 映画
house	いえ 家

\* For all of the verbs above, the “i” sound in 「し」 is usually silent.

We will now break down the following sentences. Particles are bolded.

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. I watched a movie.           | <sup>わたし</sup> 私 <sup>えい</sup> は <sup>が</sup> 映画 <sup>み</sup> を 見ました。                                 |
| 2. Taro went to school.         | <sup>た</sup> 太郎 <sup>ろう</sup> は <sup>がっこう</sup> 学校 <sup>い</sup> に行きました。                               |
| 3. Taro came to my house.       | <sup>た</sup> 太郎 <sup>ろう</sup> は <sup>わたし</sup> 私 <sup>いえ</sup> の 家 <sup>き</sup> に来ました。                |
| 4. I went to school with Taro.  | <sup>わたし</sup> 私 <sup>た</sup> は <sup>ろう</sup> 太郎 <sup>がっこう</sup> と 学校 <sup>い</sup> に行きました。            |
| 5. I watched a movie with Taro. | <sup>わたし</sup> 私 <sup>た</sup> は <sup>ろう</sup> 太郎 <sup>えい</sup> と <sup>が</sup> 映画 <sup>み</sup> を 見ました。 |

Notice that every noun in each sentence is followed by a particle. This is almost always true because nouns represent things, and how these things are affected by actions always needs to be defined, which is what particles are for.

Let's start by deconstructing sentence one:

1. <sup>わたし</sup> 私 <sup>えい</sup> は <sup>が</sup> 映画 <sup>み</sup> を 見ました。

Here you can see that:

- 「は」 comes after 「<sup>わたし</sup>私」. This means that 「<sup>わたし</sup>私」 is the topic.
- 「を」 comes after 「<sup>えい</sup>映画」. This means that 「<sup>えい</sup>映画」 is the object of the verb 「<sup>み</sup>見ました」.

This sentence says that I am the person who performed the act of watching, and it is a movie that I watched. In other words, “I watched a movie”.

Make sense?

Now let's compare this to sentence two.

1. <sup>わたし</sup> 私 <sup>えい</sup> は <sup>が</sup> 映画 <sup>み</sup> を 見ました。  
 2. <sup>た</sup> 太郎 <sup>ろう</sup> は <sup>がっこう</sup> 学校 <sup>い</sup> に行きました。

In sentence two, we can see that Taro is the topic, and he performed the act of going. There is, however, no 「を」. Instead 「<sup>がっこう</sup>学校」, meaning “school”, is followed by the particle 「<sup>い</sup>に」.

**The particle 「に」 defines the destination related to an action that involves movement.**

This includes actions described by verbs like go, come, move, give, send, return, etc. It is very similar to the English preposition “to”, although they are not perfectly

equivalent. Note that 「に」 also has a number of other meanings, which will be covered later.

In sentence two, we can see that 「に」 comes after 「学校」<sup>がっこう</sup>, indicating that school is the destination. Putting this together, we know that Taro is the person who went somewhere, and his destination was school, hence sentence two means, “Taro went to school”.

3. 太郎<sup>たろう</sup>は私<sup>わたし</sup>の家<sup>いえ</sup>に<sup>き</sup>来ました。

The particles we see here are 「は」, 「の」 and 「に」, so we know that:

- Taro performed the action, which in this case is “came”
- The place that he came to is 「私<sup>わたし</sup>の家<sup>いえ</sup>」

Remembering that 「の」 indicates possession, 「私<sup>わたし</sup>の家<sup>いえ</sup>」 means “my house”. This comes before 「に」, so Taro’s destination must be my house, and the full sentence therefore means, “Taro came to my house”.

Now let’s take a look at sentence four.

4. 私<sup>わたし</sup>は太郎<sup>たろう</sup>と<sup>がっこう</sup>学校<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

We can see that I (私<sup>わたし</sup>) performed the action, the action is went (行きました<sup>い</sup>), and the destination is school (学校<sup>がっこう</sup>), but we also have 「太郎と」 in there as well.

**The particle 「と」 indicates who or what else is involved in the action in the same way.**

Basically, 「太郎と」<sup>たろう</sup> means “with Taro”, making the whole sentence equivalent to, “I went to school with Taro”.

The particle 「と」 is often compared to “and” in English, but “and” is much more versatile than 「と」. 「と」 can only be used to join nouns together, whereas “and” can be used to join virtually any two phrases together that are grammatically equal. For example, you cannot use the particle 「と」 to say something like, “I went to school and watched a movie,” because the “and” in this sentence doesn’t join two nouns. For this reason, it is more appropriate to think of 「と」 as meaning “with”, even if “and” is the more natural choice when speaking English.

One alternative way to express the same meaning as sentence four, although with a slightly different emphasis, is to say, 「私<sup>わたし</sup>と太郎<sup>たろう</sup>は学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に行きました<sup>い</sup>」. Let’s compare these directly:

- a) 私<sup>わたし</sup>は<sup>は</sup>太郎<sup>たろう</sup>と<sup>と</sup>学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に<sup>に</sup>行<sup>い</sup>きました。 I went to school with Taro.
- b) 私<sup>わたし</sup>と<sup>と</sup>太郎<sup>たろう</sup>は<sup>は</sup>学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に<sup>に</sup>行<sup>い</sup>きました。 Taro and I went to school.

In option (a), 「私<sup>わたし</sup>」 is the only thing before 「は<sup>は</sup>」, so 「私<sup>わたし</sup>」 is the topic. This means the focus of the sentence is me, and Taro's presence is additional information. This is more likely to be the answer to the question, "What did you do?"

In option (b), 「私<sup>わたし</sup>と太郎<sup>たろう</sup>」 comes before 「は<sup>は</sup>」, so 「私<sup>わたし</sup>と太郎<sup>たろう</sup>」 is the topic. This means both Taro and I are the focus of the sentence equally. This is more likely to be the answer to the question, "What did you and Taro do?"

In the end, they both have essentially the same meaning. The difference in emphasis is small enough that it really doesn't make much difference, so just use whichever one makes the most sense to you.

Sentence five is similar to sentence four.

5. 私<sup>わたし</sup>は<sup>は</sup>太郎<sup>たろう</sup>と<sup>と</sup>映画<sup>えいが</sup>を<sup>を</sup>見<sup>み</sup>ました。

We can break this down as follows:

- I (私<sup>わたし</sup>) am the person who performed the action
- Taro is also involved in the action in the same way as me
- The object of the action was a movie (映画<sup>えいが</sup>)
- The action was "watched" (見<sup>み</sup>ました)

The sentence must therefore mean, "I watched a movie with Taro", and just like sentence four, this could also be rearranged to 「私<sup>わたし</sup>と太郎<sup>たろう</sup>は<sup>は</sup>映画<sup>えいが</sup>を<sup>を</sup>見<sup>み</sup>ました」.

If we ignore the particles, we can see that the important elements of the sentence are: I, Taro, movie, watched. The particles are there to define the role of each of these words, thus defining their relationship with one another. Without them, we can't be sure what actually happened. We can probably guess what happened, but what if Taro is a film director? Instead of watching a movie with Taro, maybe I actually want to say "I watched Taro's movie" (私<sup>わたし</sup>は<sup>は</sup>太郎<sup>たろう</sup>の<sup>の</sup>映画<sup>えいが</sup>を<sup>を</sup>見<sup>み</sup>ました). This uses the same key words, but the relationship between these words is different. This is why particles are so important.

### Indirect objects

In the previous section, we discussed how the object of a verb in Japanese is marked by the particle 「を」. The particle 「を」 is actually used to mark the *direct* object. In English, we also have *indirect* objects. These, however, do not exist in Japanese, so a brief explanation might be helpful.

Consider the sentence, “I sent you a letter”. In this sentence, the direct object is “a letter”, because that is what is being sent. The indirect object is “you”, because that is who the letter is being sent to. In English, the indirect object (you) is placed in between the verb (sent) and the direct object (a letter). It defines the *recipient of the action*. However, there is always another way of phrasing a sentence that uses an indirect object. In this case, that would be, “I sent a letter *to you*”. This is closer to how it would be phrased in Japanese. Here are some more examples:

I gave <b>you</b> a gift.	=	I gave a gift <b>to you</b> .
I showed <b>him</b> a picture.	=	I showed a picture <b>to him</b> .
I bought <b>her</b> a present.	=	I bought a present <b>for her</b> .
I baked <b>Emma</b> a cake.	=	I baked a cake <b>for Emma</b> .

Notice that the alternative phrases always use “to” or “for”.

In Japanese, like everything else, particles are used to define the recipient of the action. **Think of the recipient as the destination.** For “I sent you a letter”, the destination of the letter is “you”, so “you” should be marked with the particle 「に」. The sentence would therefore be:

わたし 私 は **あなた** に て がみ おく 手紙 を 送りました。  
 I you letter sent

The same applies when the English phrase uses “for”. In the example above, Emma is the recipient of the cake, and this would be expressed by saying 「エマに」. There is, however, more to it than that, as will be covered in Chapter 12.3.3. For now, focus on the examples that more clearly involve movement to a destination.

## Exercise

In this exercise, you will build simple sentences using the particles covered so far.

Complete tasks 1 - 6 for each of the sentences a - m below. Vocabulary is provided for each sentence so you can focus on the grammatical aspects of each sentence.

1. Identify the topic of each sentence and say it in Japanese followed by 「は」. Be aware that the subject can be more than one word.
2. Identify any extra people involved in the action of each sentence. Say them in Japanese followed by 「と」.
3. Identify the destination, if there is one, of the person or object in each sentence. Say it in Japanese followed by 「に」.
4. Identify the object of each sentence and say it in Japanese followed by 「を」. Keep in mind that some sentences do not have an object (including a and b).
5. Translate each of the phrases into Japanese and write them down. Check your answers on the following page.
6. Without looking at your answers from the previous questions, say each of the sentences aloud in Japanese. Check your answers as you go and if you make any mistakes, say the sentence again correctly before moving on. Once you have finished all of the sentences, go back and repeat any that you said incorrectly the first time.

a) This is a pen.

this	これ
pen	ペン
is	です

b) My name is [your name].

I / me	わたし
name	なまえ
is	です

c) I ate an apple.

I / me	わたし
ate	たべました
apple	りんご

d) You drank water.

you	あなた
drank	のみました
water	みず

e) He bought a mobile phone.

he	かれ
bought	かいました
mobile phone	ケータイ

f) She read the newspaper.

she	かのじょ
read (past tense)	よみました
newspaper	しんぶん

g) Your mother wrote a book.

you	あなた
mother	おかあさん
wrote	かきました
book	ほん

h) His father studied Japanese.

he / him	かれ
father	おとうさん
studied	べんきょう しました
Japanese (language)	にほんご

- i) My friend made sushi with Aiko.

I / me	わたし
friend	ともだち
made	つくりました
sushi	すし

- j) Her older sister listened to music with him.

she / her	かのじょ
he / him	かれ
older sister	おねえさん
listen	ききました
music	おんがく

- k) Her older brother went to my school.

she / her	かのじょ
I / me	わたし
older brother	おにいさん
went	いきました
school	がっこう

- l) He came to my house with Taro.

he / him	かれ
I / me	わたし
came	きました
house	いえ

- m) She sent a letter to her grandmother.

she / her	かのじょ
sent	おくりました
letter	てがみ
grandmother	おばあさん

- n) Our grandfather taught English to Mai and Kazutaka.

we / us	わたしたち
grandfather	おじいさん
taught	おしえました
English (language)	えいご

- o) They gave Mako's mother a souvenir.

they	かれら
gave	あげました
mother	おかあさん
souvenir	おみやげ

- p) Yutaka and I gave Kenta a jacket.

I / me	わたし
gave	あげました
jacket	うわぎ

## Answers

	Task 1	Task 2
a)	これ は	-
b)	わたし の なまえ は	-
c)	わたし は	-
d)	あなた は	-
e)	かれ は	-
f)	かのじょ は	-
g)	あなた の おかあさん は	-
h)	かれ の おとうさん は	-
i)	わたし の ともだち は	あいこ と
j)	かのじょ の おねえさん は	かれ と
k)	かのじょ の おにいさん は	-

l)	かれ は	たろう と
m)	かのじょ は	-
n)	わたしたち の おじいさん は	まい と or かずたか と
o)	かれら は	-
p)	わたし と ゆたか は or ゆたか と わたし は	わたし と or ゆたか と

	Task 3	Task 4
a)	-	-
b)	-	-
c)	-	りんご を
d)	-	みず を
e)	-	ケータイ を
f)	-	しんぶん を
g)	-	ほん を
h)	-	にほんご を
i)	-	すし を
j)	-	おんがく を
k)	わたし の がっこう に	-
l)	わたし の いえ に	-
m)	かのじょ の おばあさん に	てがみ を
n)	まい と かずたか に	えいご を
o)	まこ の おかあさん に	おみやげ を
p)	けんた に	うわぎ を

### Tasks 5 and 6

- a) これはペンです。
- b) わたしの なまえ は [your name] です。
- c) わたし は りんご を たべました。
- d) あなた は みず を のみました。
- e) かれ は ケータイ を かいました。

- f) かのじょ は しんぶん を よみました。
- g) あなた の おかあさんは ほん を かきました。
- h) かれ の おとうさんは にほんご を べんきょう しました。
- i) わたし の ともだちは あいこ と すし を つくりました。
- j) かのじょ の おねえさんは かれ と おんがく を ききました。
- k) かのじょ の おにいさんは わたし の がっこう に いきました。
- l) かれ は たろう と わたし の いえ に きました。
- m) かのじょ は かのじょ の おばあさんに てがみ を おくりました。
- n) わたしたち の おじいさんは まい と かずたか に えいご を おしえました。
- o) かれらは まこ の おかあさん に おみやげ を あげました。
- p) わたし と ゆたか は けんた に うわぎ を あげました。 OR  
ゆたか と わたし は けんた に うわぎ を あげました。

## Chapter 3

# General characteristics of Japanese

Now that you should have a basic understanding of how Japanese sentences are structured, let's go over some general characteristics, mostly related to culture, that will help you use Japanese correctly.

### 3.1 Politeness

Japanese can be spoken with varying levels of politeness; let's call these levels 'informal', 'polite', and 'super polite'. The distinction is mostly based on verb endings, so the majority of the language remains the same at all levels of politeness, especially the informal and polite levels.

As a general rule, you should only use informal speech with people with whom you are very familiar, or who are of equal or lower standing than you. This means you should use polite language with anybody that you are not close to, as well as any person who is more senior than you, either in age or rank. Politeness and respect for elders is so ingrained in Japanese culture that in many cases, Japanese people will forever use polite language with people who are older than them, even if they become good friends.

We will be focusing initially on the polite form, as this is appropriate in most circumstances. The informal form will be introduced later as it is also very important to understand, and has wide-reaching applications beyond simply defining the level of politeness. You will later see that converting between different levels of politeness is fairly straightforward once you understand the rules that apply.

## 3.2 Unaffected by person or gender

Although different levels of politeness require different verb endings, person and gender do not affect the way a verb is conjugated. For example, in English, “do” becomes “does” when the subject is a third person (ie. “I do” becomes “he does”, “Jane does”) but Japanese does not change in this way. “Do” is always 「します」 in the polite form and 「する」 in the informal form, no matter who is being talked about. Similarly, there is no gender associated with objects as in languages like Spanish and French, hence no distinction needs to be made for these.

## 3.3 Addressing and referring to people

Since politeness and respect are a central part of Japanese culture, how you refer to people is important. Let’s go over the key ways of addressing and referring to people.

### By name

With the exception of relatives and close friends, Japanese people usually refer to others by their surname. When referring to people by name (first name or surname), it is customary to add 「さん」 to the end of the person’s name as a sign of respect, eg. やまもと山本さん. This should *not* be used when you say your own name. It is also not usually required for people you are familiar with who are your age or younger, or of equal or lower status.

There are a number of other suffixes that can be added to names instead of 「さん」 depending on your relationship to the person (「さま」, 「くん」 and 「ちゃん」 are some examples), but for the sake of simplicity and to be on the safe side, always use 「さん」 until you can determine for yourself what might be an appropriate alternative.

### You

There are a few words that mean “you” in Japanese (the main ones being 「あなた」 and 「きみ」), but these are not used very often. Instead, when referring to the person you are speaking to, it is common practice to use the person’s name followed by the appropriate suffix, usually 「さん」. To say “your”, simply add 「の」 after 「さん」 like you would with any other name, eg. やまもと山本さんの. As will be explained shortly, it is also possible to leave the person’s name out of the sentence entirely if it is clear from the context who you are talking about.

## I and me

“I” and “me” can actually be said in numerous ways. Here are the most common ones you will hear:

I/me	Used by
わたし	everyone
わたくし	everyone (more formal)
ぼく	men/boys only
あたし	women/girls only (a bit ‘cutesy’, but perfectly acceptable)
おれ	men/boys only (quite masculine and informal)
うち	everyone (informal, mainly used by women/girls)
<i>one's own name</i>	children, usually girls (some adult women use it but it is considered childish and should be avoided)

Of all of these, 「わたし」 is always the safest option, and I would recommend using it until you are more familiar with the other ones. The others are listed here primarily so that you will understand them when you hear them.

## Subject/object pronouns

Just to clarify, there is no distinction between subject pronouns (I, he, she, they, who) and object pronouns (me, him, her, them, whom) like there is in English. The below two sentences demonstrate this:

I saw him.

わたし かれ み  
私 は 彼 を 見ました。

He saw me.

かれ わたし み  
彼 は 私 を 見ました。

As you can see, “I” and “me” are both 「わたし 私」, and “he” and “him” are both 「かれ 彼」.

## Family members

When it comes to family members, different words should be used depending on whether you are talking about your own family or the family of others. Below is a list of the main family member words in both the humble (your own family) and honorific

(others' families) forms. Most of these have other alternative ways of saying them, but these are the main ones for each.

English	Your own family	Someone else's family
family	家族 <small>かぞく</small>	ご家族 <small>かぞく</small>
father	父 <small>ちち</small>	お父さん <small>とう</small>
mother	母 <small>はは</small>	お母さん <small>かあ</small>
parents	両親 <small>りょうしん</small>	ご両親 <small>りょうしん</small>
older brother	兄 <small>あに</small>	お兄さん <small>にい</small>
older sister	姉 <small>あね</small>	お姉さん <small>ねえ</small>
younger brother	弟 <small>おとうと</small>	弟さん <small>おとうと</small>
younger sister	妹 <small>いもうと</small>	妹さん <small>いもうと</small>
husband	主人 <small>しゅじん</small>	ご主人 <small>しゅじん</small>
wife	妻 <small>つま</small>	奥さん <small>おく</small>
grandfather	祖父 <small>そふ</small>	お祖父さん <small>じい</small>
grandmother	祖母 <small>そぼ</small>	お祖母さん <small>ばあ</small>
child/children	子供 <small>こども</small>	お子さん <small>こ</small>
son	息子 <small>むすこ</small>	息子さん <small>むすこ</small>
daughter	娘 <small>むすめ</small>	お嬢さん <small>じょう</small>
grandchild	孫 <small>まご</small>	お孫さん <small>まご</small>

### 3.4 No articles

As explained in the previous chapter, Japanese does not have the articles “a”, “an” and “the”. This makes things simpler in some ways, but also increases the dependency on context, and can require some time for an English speaker to get used to.

For example, to say something like “I ate a donut”, you would simply say something equivalent to “I ate donut” ( わたし 私はドーナツを た 食べました ). In English, we might alternatively say “I ate the donut” to indicate that we are talking about a specific donut,

but in Japanese, this would also simply be “I ate donut”. It is assumed from context that we know which donut the speaker is referring to, but this vagueness can lead to misunderstandings, especially if you’re not used to it.

### 3.5 No plurals

For the most part, there are also no plurals in Japanese. This means that “I ate a donut” and “I ate some donuts” would both be “I ate donut” (わたし私はドーナツを食<sup>た</sup>べました). Without further specification or context, the person could be talking about one, two or fifty donuts. It is, of course, possible to use numbers or words like “many” to define quantity, but even then, the word for “donut” will always take the same form, unlike in English where we add an “s” if there is more than one.

One main situation where plurals *are* used is with living things, especially people. The simplest way to refer to a group of people or animals in the plural form is to add 「たち」 to the end of the word. Here are some examples:

English singular	Japanese singular	English plural	Japanese plural
I	<small>わたし</small> 私	we	<small>わたし</small> 私たち
You	あなた	You (plural)	あなたたち
He	<small>かれ</small> 彼	they	<small>かれ</small> 彼たち
She	<small>かのじょ</small> 彼女	they (all female)	<small>かのじょ</small> 彼女たち
Person	ひと 人	People	ひと 人たち
Friend	<small>ともだち</small> 友達	Friends	<small>ともだち</small> 友達たち
Dog	<small>いぬ</small> 犬	Dogs	<small>いぬ</small> 犬たち
Taro	<small>たろう</small> 太郎	Taro and co.	<small>たろう</small> 太郎たち

The suffix 「ら」 can also be used instead of 「たち」 in some cases, but it is generally more informal and therefore only <sup>かれ</sup>used with certain words. Two cases where 「ら」 is usually preferable to 「たち」 are 「彼<sup>かれ</sup>ら」, meaning “they”, and 「うち<sup>わたし</sup>ら」, meaning “we”. You might also hear it with some other words for “I”, like 「私<sup>わたし</sup>ら」, 「ぼくら」 or 「おれら」.

### 3.6 Highly dependent on context

When speaking Japanese, there is a lot that is left unspoken because it can be understood from context. This even includes the most important things in a sentence, like the subject. Whereas in English you might say, “I went to school today”, in Japanese, it is usually obvious that the person speaking is talking about themselves, so “I” would be omitted. This results in something literally equivalent to, “Went to school today”. Similarly, when asking the question, “Did you go to school today?”, it is usually obvious that the speaker is talking about the the person being asked, so in Japanese it would be normal to say the literal equivalent of, “Did go to school today?”.

Generally, Japanese has looser grammar rules than English, so in Japanese, it is possible to leave out certain parts of a sentence that are grammatically required in English. Here are two main examples:

1. English grammar requires every complete sentence or clause to contain (1) a subject, (2) a verb, and (3) an object if the verb takes one. Japanese clauses only require a verb, and any other words that are understood from context can be left out. In English, it is grammatically incorrect to omit words that are required, so we use pronouns like “he” or “it” to abbreviate them and avoid being repetitive.

For example, if we are talking about a pen, we can say “It fell on the floor”, or “Ben gave it to me”. In this case, we know from the context that “it” refers to the pen. In Japanese, instead of saying “it”, the word is just omitted, resulting in sentences literally equivalent to “Fell on the floor”, or “Ben gave to me”. These are, of course, grammatically incomplete sentences in English, but they are perfectly fine in Japanese.

If all the information is understood from context, the sentence can even just be a verb. For example, if we’re talking about a pen, and someone questions whether or not I gave the pen to Ben or not, I could simply say, “Gave”. This would be a grammatically complete sentence, and it communicates the message effectively since every other relevant piece of information is already understood from the context.

2. In English, determiners (words that go before nouns, like “a”, “the”, “my”, “his”, “their” etc.) are almost always required, but in Japanese they are often omitted. For example, one of the sentences from the exercise at the end of the previous chapter was:

She sent a letter to her grandmother.

彼女の彼女のばあさんに手紙を送りました。

The English sentence has two determiners - the “a” before “letter”, and the “her” before “grandmother”. As discussed above, “a” does not exist in Japanese so there is no determiner before 「手紙」. “Her grandmother” is translated above as 「彼女の彼女のばあさん」, but although this is literally correct, it is actually very unnatural. We’re already talking about 「彼女」, so repeating it is redundant, and sounds overly repetitive. It would be more appropriate to leave out 「彼女の」 because it can be assumed that the grandmother being referred to belongs to the person we are talking about, ie. 「彼女」. The more natural way to say this sentence would be:

彼女はばあさんに手紙を送りました。

This could potentially mean somebody else’s grandmother, but if that were the case, it would normally be necessary to include that information. As long as no additional information is provided or can be derived from context, we can assume that it is 「彼女のばあさん」 that is being talked about.

The dependency on context in Japanese can, and does, lead to ambiguity. Coming from English, where we are grammatically required to be specific about things, this can be confusing and frustrating at times. For the most part, though, it is obvious what a person is talking about.

Below are a few commonly used phrases where part of the information has been omitted.

English	Common phrase	Full phrase
How are you? (literally: Are you well?)	げん き お元気* ですか？	あなたはげん き 元気ですか？
I am fine/well	げん き 元気です。	わたし げん き 私は元気です。
What is your name?	な まえ なん お名前は何ですか？	あなたのな まえ なん あなたの名前は何ですか？

- \* The 「お」 at the beginning of 「お元気」 and 「お名前」 is an honorific prefix. It simply makes the word more polite, but should only be used when referring to other people, not yourself.

In the examples and exercises throughout this book, some words that would often be obvious and therefore unnecessary are shown in brackets (). It isn't wrong to include any of these words, but in many situations, it will be more natural to omit them. In real conversation, these bracketed and other words are usually left out of sentences, so try to get used to omitting them when possible.

### 3.7 Particle omission

As discussed in the previous chapter, particles are an integral part of the Japanese language. The truth is, however, that in spoken language, particles are often left out. How does this work? Just as with other words that are left out of sentences, it is only done when it is obvious which particle would otherwise be used. Take the following example:

I bought a book.  
 わたし <sup>ほん</sup>は <sup>か</sup>本を買いました。

This could be changed to:

<sup>ほん</sup>本 <sup>か</sup>を買いました。

The 「<sup>わたし</sup>私(は)」 can be removed because, as discussed previously, it is clear the speaker is talking about themselves. In addition, the 「<sup>を</sup>」 can be left out because it is clear that the book is what was bought. In other words, the role of 「<sup>ほん</sup>本」 is obvious. We are not going to get confused and think that the particle should be 「(は)」, because that would make 「<sup>ほん</sup>本」 the topic of the sentence and imply that the book went and bought something, which makes no sense. The role of 「<sup>ほん</sup>本」 is obvious, and since particles define the role of the words they follow, they become somewhat unnecessary when that role is easily identified.

Although particle omission is possible, until you can speak Japanese more fluently, try to always include all the necessary particles so as to avoid omitting the wrong ones. Just be aware that when a Japanese person is speaking, they may leave some of the particles out, and that's fine - they probably won't even realize they're doing it.

### 3.8 Loanwords

Japanese contains a lot of words that have been imported from other languages, especially English. These are known as loanwords, or 「<sup>がいらいご</sup>外来語」, and are written using katakana instead of the hiragana and kanji (Chinese characters) used for other words. The number of these words in common use is constantly increasing. Young people are using loanwords more and more, and business people will sometimes use them in order to sound more educated, even when there is a perfectly appropriate pre-existing Japanese word they could use instead.

The prevalence of these words can make it easier to learn a lot of new words quickly, but there is one hurdle - you need to get used to the Japanese pronunciation of these words. Loanwords are, for the most part, limited to the same sounds that exist in regular Japanese, so all of the vowel and consonant sounds that don't exist in Japanese have to be approximated with sounds that do exist.

There are some exceptions, though, which relate to the consonant/vowel combinations not present in Japanese. For example, since “fu” is the only “f” sound, loanwords will sometimes combine this with other vowels like “a” or “e” to make “fa” and “fe” sounds, which normally don't exist. This can be seen in words like “sofa” (sofa) and “fēsubukku” (Facebook). When these are written in Japanese, they are written as 「フ」 followed by a small 「ア」 or 「エ」, similar to the small 「や」, 「ゆ」, 「よ」 and 「っ」 described in chapter one.

Other sounds that are produced like this include “she” (シエ), such as in the word 「ミルクシェーク」 (milkshake), or “wi” (ウィ), which can be seen in words like 「ウィスキー」 (whiskey). As a basic rule, the vowel sound represented by the small kana character should just be combined with the consonant sound from the preceding character, replacing that character's usual vowel sound.

Here are some common loanwords:

restaurant	レストラン
pizza	ピザ
hamburger	ハンバーガー
sandwich	サンドイッチ
ice cream	アイスクリーム
cake	ケーキ
hot dog	ホットドッグ

motorbike	バイク
hotel	ホテル
supermarket	スーパー
convenience store	コンビニ
part-time job	アルバイト (German)
ball	ボール
sports	スポーツ

cola	コーラ
coffee	コーヒー
beer	ビール
bread	パン (Spanish)
television	テレビ
computer	コンピューター
Internet	インターネット
camera	カメラ
email	メール
bus	バス

basketball	バスケ
soccer	サッカー
tennis	テニス
volleyball	バレー (ボール)
golf	ゴルフ
passport	パスポート
visa	ビザ
pen	ペン
a swing	ブランコ (Portugese)

There are no set rules for how loanwords are adapted and pronounced in Japanese, but there is a general pattern that is fairly consistent throughout all such words. On the following page is a list of general guidelines. There is certainly no need to remember these, but you may find them useful as a point of reference.

One last thing to keep in mind is that a loanword in Japanese may not have the exact same meaning as that of the word it was derived from. For example, while English speakers will usually use the word “bike” to refer to a bicycle, 「バイク」 in Japanese means “motorbike” (the word for bicycle is 「自転車<sup>じてんしゃ</sup>」). Another example is 「ポテト」, which usually means “french fries”. There are many more words like these, and in some cases the Japanese meaning is almost nothing like the original English meaning, but for most loanwords this isn’t a problem.

### Guidelines for the pronunciation of loanwords

- The sound is what matters most, not the English spelling. For example, the vowel in “ball” is an “a”, but the sound is closest to the Japanese 「お」 sound, hence it is pronounced 「ボール」.
- “R” and “L” sounds both use the ra-line
- “B” and “V” sounds both use the ba-line
- “Th” sounds usually use the sa-line
- Long words are often shortened, eg. スーパー (supermarket), テレビ (television)
- When a word contains a hard sound like “t” or “p” it is often turned into a small 「ッ」 (a double consonant when written in romaji), followed by either the “u” or “o” sound from the appropriate line, eg. ホツトドツグ (hot dog), インターネツト (Internet), ヒップホツプ (hip hop).
- If a consonant sound does not have a vowel sound immediately following it, it will usually have an “u” sound added after it. This includes:
  - ▷ Words that have two different consonant sounds in a row. For example, the “c” in “ice cream” is followed by an “r”, so the “k” sound becomes 「ク」. This makes the full word 「アイスクリーム」.
  - ▷ Words that end in a consonant. For example, “ice cream” ends in “m”, and therefore becomes 「アイスクリーム」.

Note that although written with an “u” sound, the “u” in 「ス」 is usually silent when it comes immediately before a consonant sound. For example, 「スポーツ」 (sport/s) would be pronounced “spōtsu”, and 「レストラン」 would be pronounced “restoran”.

The general exceptions to this “u” rule are:

- ▷ “n” and “m” sounds often use 「ン」, since it exists as a consonant on its own and is close enough to “m”, eg. パン (bread), コンピューター (computer)
- ▷ “t” and “d” use an “o” sound instead of “u”, eg. パスポート (passport)
- ▷ a “t” followed by an “s” at the end of a word will use 「ツ」, eg. 「ドーナツ」 (donut/s)



## Chapter 4

# The essentials

In this chapter, you will learn the most useful words, phrases and grammar rules that you can apply to quickly expand the range of ideas you are able to express in Japanese.

### 4.1 More useful particles

Japanese has quite a large number of particles, a few of which we have already covered. We will now look at few more particles that are also very common. There are no exercises to be completed for this section, but more examples that use these particles can be found throughout this chapter and beyond.

#### New vocabulary

Nouns	
here	ここ
library	<small>としょかん</small> 図書館
park	<small>こうえん</small> 公園
pencil	えんぴつ
ramen	ラーメン
sea, beach	<small>うみ</small> 海
shop, store	<small>みせ</small> 店

Verbs (polite past tense)	
did, played	しました
sold	<small>う</small> 売りました
spoke, talked	<small>はな</small> 話しました
swam	およぎました

## で

This particle has two main applications:

1. Defines where an activity takes place.

I played soccer at the park.

(私は)公園<sup>こうえん</sup>でサッカーをしました。

They swam in the sea.

彼ら<sup>かれ</sup>は海<sup>うみ</sup>でおよぎました。

She bought a book at the store.

彼女<sup>かのじょ</sup>は店<sup>みせ</sup>で本<sup>ほん</sup>を買<sup>か</sup>いました。

Sato-san sold his car online.

佐藤<sup>さとう</sup>さんはインターネット<sup>インターネット</sup>で車<sup>くるま</sup>を売<sup>う</sup>りました。

2. Defines the means used to complete an action, like a mode of transport or a tool

I went to school by bus.

(私は)バス<sup>がっこう</sup>で学校<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

He came here by car.

彼<sup>かれ</sup>は車<sup>くるま</sup>でここ<sup>き</sup>に来ました。

She wrote a letter in pencil.

彼女<sup>かのじょ</sup>はえんぴつ<sup>てがみ</sup>で手紙<sup>か</sup>を書きました。

Suzuki-san spoke in English.

鈴木<sup>すずき</sup>さんは英語<sup>えいご</sup>で話<sup>はな</sup>しました。

## が

This particle defines the subject of the sentence or clause.

This is very similar to 「は」, which defines the topic of the sentence. The difference between 「は」 and 「が」 is probably the most difficult concept for people learning Japanese to grasp. This will be explained in detail later. For now, use 「は」 in most cases, but be aware that there are certain times when 「が」 is preferred, and that it is also possible to have both 「は」 and 「が」 in one sentence.

**も**

This particle adds the meaning of “too” or “also” when used with positive verbs, and “either/neither” when used with negative verbs.

This can be used instead of 「は」 or 「を」 to say things like, “I also did X”, or, “He didn’t do X either”. It can also be used after 「に」 to say what *else* was a destination. In both cases, there is usually at least one element in the sentence that is understood from the context, and this can, and usually is, omitted.

I watched a movie.

私は映画<sup>えいが</sup>を見<sup>み</sup>ました。

Taro watched (the movie) too.

太郎<sup>たろう</sup>も (映画<sup>えいが</sup>を) 見<sup>み</sup>ました。

—

I ate ramen.

私はラーメン<sup>らーめん</sup>を食<sup>た</sup>べました。

I also ate yakisoba.

(私は) やきそば<sup>た</sup>も食<sup>た</sup>べました。

—

He went to the park.

彼<sup>かれ</sup>は公園<sup>こうえん</sup>に<sup>い</sup>行きました。

He also went to the library.

(彼は) 図書館<sup>としょかん</sup>にも<sup>い</sup>行きました。

## 4.2 Polite verb tenses and expressions

So far, all of the verbs we have used (with the exception of 「です」) have been in the polite past tense. Verbs will be covered in detail in Chapter 8, but before getting to that, we will first look at a few tenses and expressions in the polite form that are very useful and easy to learn.

## New vocabulary

Nouns	
baseball	やきゅう
chopsticks	おはし
clothes	ふく
dinner	ばんごはん
friend(s)	ともだち 友達
fruit	くだもの
Japan	にほん 日本
party	パーティー
rain	あめ 雨
shower	シャワー
stomach	おなか
teeth	は
throat	のど
ticket	チケット
toilet	トイレ
vegetables	やさい
Time-related words	
7 o'clock	しちじ 7時
every day	まいにち 毎日
every week	まいしゅう 毎週
last week	せんしゅう 先週
Sunday	にちようび 日曜日
tomorrow	あした 明日
yesterday	きのう 昨日

Verbs (polite present tense)	
become dry	かわきます
become empty	すきます
buy	か 買います
come	き 来ます
clean	みがきます
do	します
drink	の 飲みます
eat	た 食べます
fall (rain, snow etc.)	ふります
go	い 行きます
listen	き 聞きます
make	つく 作ります
meet	あ 会います
run	はし 走ります
take (a shower)	あびます
use	つか 使います
wake up	お 起きます
watch	み 見ます

## The two main verb tenses

The two main verb tenses in Japanese are the present/future tense and the past tense. Between these two, you can talk about almost anything that has happened in the past, or that will happen in the future.

Verb tenses in Japanese are determined by the verb ending. The table below shows the endings that need to be applied to verbs in order to express them in the present/future tense and the past tense.

	Positive	Negative (eg. I didn't do...)
<b>Present/future</b>	～ます	～ません
<b>Past</b>	～ました	～ませんでした

When pronouncing these verb endings, be sure to remember the following points:

- the “u” sound at the end of 「～ます」 is usually silent, hence this should be pronounced “-mas”
- the “i” in 「ました」 is usually silent, hence this should be pronounced “-mashta”
- the “i” in 「でした」 is usually silent, hence this should be pronounced “-deshta”

「でした」, by the way, is also the past tense of 「です」. Although this means “was” when it's used as a verb on its own, when used at the end of other verbs, it simply changes the verb to the past tense without any added meaning.

Here are some examples of verbs in each of these tenses.

	Present/future	Past	Present/future negative	Past negative
<b>do</b>	します	しました	しません	ませんでした
<b>go</b>	<sup>い</sup> 行きます	<sup>い</sup> 行きました	<sup>い</sup> 行きません	<sup>い</sup> 行きませんでした
<b>come</b>	<sup>き</sup> 来ます	<sup>き</sup> 来ました	<sup>き</sup> 来ません	<sup>き</sup> 来ませんでした
<b>watch</b>	<sup>み</sup> 見ます	<sup>み</sup> 見ました	<sup>み</sup> 見ません	<sup>み</sup> 見ませんでした
<b>listen</b>	<sup>き</sup> 聞きます	<sup>き</sup> 聞きました	<sup>き</sup> 聞きません	<sup>き</sup> 聞きませんでした
<b>use</b>	<sup>つか</sup> 使います	<sup>つか</sup> 使いました	<sup>つか</sup> 使いません	<sup>つか</sup> 使いませんでした
<b>make</b>	<sup>つく</sup> 作ります	<sup>つく</sup> 作りました	<sup>つく</sup> 作りません	<sup>つく</sup> 作りませんでした
<b>eat</b>	<sup>た</sup> 食べます	<sup>た</sup> 食べました	<sup>た</sup> 食べません	<sup>た</sup> 食べませんでした
<b>drink</b>	<sup>の</sup> 飲みます	<sup>の</sup> 飲みました	<sup>の</sup> 飲みません	<sup>の</sup> 飲みませんでした

As you can see, conjugating verbs in these tenses is straightforward, and in the polite form, there are no exceptions to the rules stated above.

Just be aware, however, that verbs appear in the dictionary in the *informal* present/future tense. At the back of this book, you will find the most common Japanese verbs in the informal and polite present tenses, but if you use a dictionary to learn new words, you will need to know how to convert verbs from the informal form to the polite form. This will be covered in Chapter 8.

Of course, just as important as knowing how to say verbs in different tenses is knowing when to use them. Below is a brief explanation of when to use each of these tenses.

### Present/future tense

This is mainly used to talk about things that will occur in the future, either actively (eg. I'm going to the beach tomorrow) or passively (eg. It's going to rain tomorrow). It can include things in the distant future, such as "I will go to Japan in 3 years", or things that are about to begin immediately, like "I am going to watch a movie now".

It can also be used to talk about regular activities or habits in the present (eg. I wake up at 7am every day), usually accompanied by an indication of when such activities take place (ie. 7am every day). It is *not*, however, used to talk about actions that are taking place right now (eg. I am eating breakfast). This requires the use of the present continuous tense, which will be introduced in Chapter 9.

The following examples include some words that specify the time the action takes place, which we haven't covered yet, but this is just to give the sentences context and demonstrate the different verb tenses. Don't worry about this too much for now - just focus on the verbs. Expressions of time will be introduced in Chapter 6.

### Regular activities and habits

She wakes up at 7 o'clock every day.

かのじょ まいにちしち じ お  
彼女は毎日7時に起きます。

Ichiro plays baseball on Sundays.

いちろう まいしゅうにちよう び  
一郎は毎週日曜日にやきゅうをします。

I don't watch television.

私はテレビをみません。

She doesn't eat vegetables.

かのじょ 彼女はやさいを<sup>た</sup>食べません。

She doesn't eat fruit either.

かのじょ (彼女は)くだものも<sup>た</sup>食べません。

## Future actions

I **will meet** a friend tomorrow.

あした 明日 (私は)友達に<sup>あ</sup>会います。

I **will also go** to the library.

(私は)<sup>としょかん</sup>図書館にも<sup>い</sup>行きます。

Okubo-san **isn't coming** to the party.

おおくぼ 大久保さんはパーティーに<sup>き</sup>来ません。

Kudo-san **isn't coming** either.

くどう 工藤さんも<sup>き</sup>来ません。

## Past tense

The past tense is simply used to talk about actions that both started and finished in the past. Japanese has other ways to talk about past events, but even if it's not always the best option, the regular past tense can be used for just about anything.

It rained.

あめ 雨が<sup>ふ</sup>りました。 [literally: "Rain fell"]

He bought clothes at Harajuku last week.

せんしゅう かれ はらじゅく 先週、彼は原宿で<sup>か</sup>ぶくを買いました。

I didn't have a shower yesterday.

きのう 昨日、シャワーを<sup>あ</sup>びませんでした。

I didn't clean my teeth either.

はも<sup>み</sup>みがきませんでした。

Lastly, here are two very useful expressions that use verbs in the past tense (unlike English, which uses adjectives):

I'm hungry.

おなかが**すきました**。 [literally: "(My) stomach has emptied"]

I'm thirsty.

のどが**かわきました**。 [literally: "(My) throat has dried"]

## Two simple and useful verb expressions

In addition to the two verb tenses introduced above, we will now also look at two useful expressions: "I want to..." and "Let's..."

### I want to...

The "I want to..." expression presented below can be used any time that you want to say that you want to do something. It can only be used with verbs, so it cannot be used to say "I want sushi", or some other noun. It also can't be used to say what other people want, as it is an expression of one's own desire, not someone else's. That said, it can be used with "we" to say things like, "We want to play football".

### Let's...

This expression allows you to suggest activities by saying "Let's do...", "Let's eat...", "Let's go...", etc. This form of the verb does have other applications, in which the meaning is slightly different, but that is not important at this stage.

The table below shows how these two expressions are formed in the polite form.

	Positive	Negative
<b>I want to...</b>	～たいです	～たくないです
<b>Let's...</b>	～ましょう	<none>

One thing to note with the "I want to..." expression is that where 「を」 would normally be used to mark the object of the verb, 「が」 should be used instead. This is because this expression actually functions as an *adjective* that describes how you feel about doing something, unlike English where "want" is a verb. This is also why it needs 「です」 at the end in the polite form. Despite this, though, you will likely often hear people using 「を」 instead of 「が」.

Below are some examples of verbs in the polite form of each of these expressions.

	I want to...	I don't want to...	Let's...
do	したいです	したくないです	しましょう
go	行きたいです	行きたくないです	行きましょう
come	来たいです	来たくないです	来ましょう
watch	見たいです	見たくないです	見ましょう
listen	聞きたいです	聞きたくないです	聞きましょう
use	使いたいです	使いたくないです	使いましょう
make	作りたいです	作りたくないです	作りましょう
eat	食べたいです	食べたくないです	食べましょう
drink	飲みたいです	飲みたくないです	飲みましょう

Here are some examples of these two expressions:

I want to buy a ticket.

チケットが<sup>か</sup>買いたいです。

I want to go to the toilet/bathroom.

トイレに<sup>い</sup>行きたいです。

I don't want to eat this.

これが<sup>た</sup>食べたくないです。

I don't want to use chopsticks.

おはしが<sup>つか</sup>使いたくないです。

Let's make dinner.

ばんごはんを<sup>つく</sup>作りましょう。

Let's go to Japan.

日本に<sup>に ほん い</sup>行きましょう。

Let's run.

<sup>はし</sup>走りましょう。

Let's also run.

<sup>わたし</sup>私<sup>はし</sup>たちも走りましょう。

Lastly, note that both of these expressions can be turned into questions by adding the particle 「か」 at the end, as explained later in Chapter 4.5. When asked as questions, “I want to...” becomes “Do you want to...?” (eg. ほしいですか?), and “Let’s...” becomes, “Shall we...?” or “Shall I...?” (eg. しましょうか?).

## 4.3 A couple of useful verbs

Now that we’ve covered a few basic verb tenses and expressions, let’s have a look at a couple of verbs that are very common and quite useful to know how to use.

### New vocabulary

cat	ねこ
swimming pool	プール

table	テーブル
money	お金 <sup>かね</sup>

## します

「します」, meaning “to do”, is very handy as it can generally be used after any noun to turn it into a verb, as long as it makes sense to do so. Here are some examples:

Noun		Verb	
shopping	か <sup>もの</sup> 買い物	to go shopping	か <sup>もの</sup> 買い物します
work	しごと 仕事	to work	しごと 仕事します
cooking	りょうり 料理	to cook	りょうり 料理します
practice	れんしゅう 練習	to practice	れんしゅう 練習します
travel	りょこう 旅行	to travel	りょこう 旅行します
phone	でんわ 電話	to make a phone call	でんわ 電話します
order	ちゅうもん 注文	to place an order	ちゅうもん 注文します
reservation	よやく 予約	to make a reservation	よやく 予約します
choice	せんたく 選択	to choose	せんたく 選択します
football	フットボール	to play football	フットボールします

You can, of course, use this in other verb forms as well, like the past tense (しました), and to say “I want to...” (したいです) and “let’s do” (しましょう).

In many cases, there will actually be another, possibly more common verb with the same meaning as the 「noun + します」 combination. For example, 「はたらきます」 is an alternative word for 「<sup>しごと</sup>仕事します」 that also means “to work”. To master Japanese, you would still eventually need to learn such words, but knowing that you can just add 「します」 to the noun allows you to learn a lot of new verbs quickly.

## います・あります

We know that the verb 「です」 is roughly equivalent to “to be”, but Japanese also has the following two verbs that have a meaning close to “to be” or “there is”:

Verb	Usage
います	living things
あります	non-living things

The difference between these verbs and 「です」 is that these are used to say that things *exist*, or to describe their location. This will become more apparent shortly, but before looking at examples of 「います」 and 「あります」, you need to know this:

**The particle 「に」, when used with 「います」 or 「あります」, defines the location of something.**

This is an additional usage of 「に」 to the one described in chapter two (“The particle 「に」 defines the destination related to an action that involves movement”).

Now that you know this, consider these sentences:

- |                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1a. This is a cat.               | これはねこです。                   |
| 1b. The cat is in my house.      | ねこは私の家 <sup>いえ</sup> にいます。 |
| 1c. There is a cat in my house.  | 私の家 <sup>いえ</sup> にねこがいます。 |
| 2a. That is a pen.               | それはペンです。                   |
| 2b. The pen is on the table.     | ペンはテーブルにあります。              |
| 2c. There is a pen on the table. | テーブルにペンがあります。              |

Firstly, you can see here how 「に」 describes the location of the person, animal or object, such as in 「私の家<sup>いえ</sup>に」 (in my house) and 「テーブルに」 (on the table). It is important to note that this is only true for 「います」 and 「あります」. For other verbs, when describing the location where something takes place, the particle 「で」 should be used instead (refer back to Chapter 4.1).

Secondly, even though the verb in all of these sentences is “is” when expressed in English, its meaning is fundamentally different when 「です」 is used compared to when 「います」 or 「あります」 is used. More specifically:

- 「です」 is used when the sentence is simply describing two things as being the same, or “a = b”. For example, 「これはねこです」 means “this = cat”.
- 「います」 and 「あります」 are used to describe the **existence and/or location of something**. For example, 「私の家<sup>いえ</sup>にねこがいます」 is equivalent to, “a cat exists in my house”.

These two cannot be interchanged. For example, you cannot say 「それはペンがあります」 or 「私の家<sup>いえ</sup>にねこです」. Neither of these sentences make sense.

Third, notice that there is a fundamental difference between the meaning of the (b) sentences and the (c) sentences. In sentences 1b and 2b, there is a topic or ‘thing’ defined by 「は」, and these sentences simply state where that ‘thing’ is. In sentences 1c and 2c, however, there is no 「は」 because there is no topic of these sentences. This kind of general statement of existence is expressed in English with the words “there is”. In Japanese, the topic is left undefined, and the ‘thing’ that exists is marked with the particle 「が」.

These words can also be used to say that you or someone else **has** or **doesn’t have** something. Here are some examples:

I **have** a younger brother.

私は弟<sup>おとうと</sup>がいます。

He **doesn’t have** any children.

彼は子供<sup>かれ こども</sup>がいません。

She **has** a swimming pool at her house.

彼女<sup>かのじょ</sup>は家<sup>いえ</sup>にプールがあります。

Okada-san **doesn’t have** (any) money.

岡田<sup>おか だ</sup>さんはお金<sup>かね</sup>がありません。

**Important:** These verbs should only be used to mean “has” or “have” when the owner and the possessor are the *same person*.

Also, in all of these examples, you can see that there is both a 「は」 and a 「が」. Let's see how these sentences would appear if the 「は」 portion of the sentences were removed.

There is a younger brother.

おとうと  
弟 があります。

There are no children.

こども  
子供がいません。

There is a swimming pool at the house.

いえ  
家にプールがあります。

There is no money.

かね  
お金がありません。

All of these are simple statements of existence, where the ‘things’ being talked about do not belong to anybody specific. Even when the 「は」 portion is included, they are still just statements of existence - **they do not actually indicate possession** like the English verb “to have”.

So what does the 「は」 portion do? As always, it defines the topic of the sentence, which **provides context for everything that follows**. In the first sentence, I am talking about myself (私<sup>は</sup>), and by saying that “a younger brother exists”, the context of “me” implies that the younger brother is mine. A more literal translation would be something like, “When talking about me, there is a younger brother”.

## Exercise

- Look around you and pick five objects, animals or people. For each of these things, write down and say aloud a sentence with each of the following meanings (two sentences each).
  - The [thing] is in/on/at the [place].                      eg. The book is on the table.
  - There is a [thing] in/on/at the [place].                      eg. There is a book on the table.

2. Think of three things that you own, and three things that somebody else owns. For each of these things, write down and say aloud a sentence that means:

[person] has a [thing] (eg. I have a car).

## Answers

Your sentences should follow the patterns below. 「います」 should be used for living things, while 「あります」 should be used for all non-living things.

1.

a) [thing] は [place] にいます/あります。 eg. 本<sup>ほん</sup>はテーブルにあります。

b) [place] に [thing] がいます/あります。 eg. テーブル<sup>ほん</sup>に本があります。

2. [person] は [thing] がいます/あります。 eg. 私<sup>くるま</sup>は車があります。

## 4.4 Liking and wanting things

The concepts of 'liking' and 'wanting' are very similar in Japanese and English, but the way they are expressed differs in a fairly fundamental way. In English, we use these words as verbs, or action words, while the equivalent words in Japanese are actually adjectives, or describing words. In this section we'll look at how to express these two ideas, and how to make sense of the different approach.

### New vocabulary

like	す 好き
love	だい す 大好き
want	ほ 欲しい

cheese	チーズ
chocolate	チョコレート
motorbike	バイク

### Liking and loving things

The Japanese word for "like" is 「好き<sup>す</sup>」. The following examples show how to say that someone likes something:

I like sushi.

(私は) すしが好き<sup>す</sup>です。

He likes ramen.

かれはラーメンが好きです

Generally, simply remembering the following pattern will be enough to be able to use 「好き」 correctly:

**[person] は [thing] が好きです。**

You can do the same for things that you or someone else loves by saying 「大好き」 instead (「大」 literally means “big”), like so:

**[person] は [thing] が大好きです。**

Here are some more examples of each:

I like movies.

(私は)映画が好きです。

Imai-san likes chocolate.

今井さんはチョコレートが好きです。

She loves cheese.

かのじょはチーズが大好きです。

Arai-san loves golf.

新井さんはゴルフが大好きです。

## Wanting things

The Japanese word for “want” is 「欲しい」, and it is used in much the same way as 「好き」. You’ll recall from Chapter 4.2 that we can turn a verb into an expression meaning “I want to...” by adding 「たい」 to the verb stem. The difference between that expression and 「欲しい」 is that 「欲しい」 is used with nouns instead of verbs, so you would use 「欲しい」 to say that you want *something*, and 「たい」 to say that you want *to do something*. Just like with the “I want to...” expression, 「欲しい」 **can usually only be used for yourself**, so it cannot normally be used to talk about what *someone else* wants.

The following examples show how to say that that you want something:

I want sushi.

(私は)すしが<sup>ほ</sup>欲しいです。

I want a motorbike.

(私は)バイクが<sup>ほ</sup>欲しいです。

Generally, the following pattern can be used:

(私は) [thing] が<sup>ほ</sup>欲しいです。

## Making sense of these expressions

To get a deeper understanding of the interaction between words in these sentences, it may help to recognize that these sentence structures are much like that of the sentences where 「います」 and 「あります」 are used to mean “has”, since they too contain both 「は」 and 「が」. Just as was the case there, 「は」 defines the topic (or it is implied), and this provides context for the rest of the sentence.

For example, in 「彼はラーメンが<sup>す</sup>好きです」, we are talking about “him”, as is defined by 「は」. By saying 「ラーメンが<sup>す</sup>好きです」 to describe ramen as “likable” or “appealing”, the context of “him” makes the whole sentence mean, “He likes ramen”. A more literal translation would be something like, “In his mind, ramen is likeable”. You cannot, however, use 「好き<sup>す</sup>」 and 「大好き<sup>だいす</sup>」 to describe something as likable in a general sentence - it always has to be attributed to someone.

The same applies to sentences using 「欲しい<sup>ほ</sup>」, except that it is mostly only used by the speaker to say “I want...”. In this case, the adjective 「欲しい<sup>ほ</sup>」 has a meaning that is something like “wanted”, so the sentence 「(私は)すしが<sup>ほ</sup>欲しいです」 would therefore more literally translate to something along the lines of, “In my mind, sushi is wanted”. The meaning is still simply “I want sushi” - it’s just expressed in a way that fits in better with Japanese grammar and culture.

## Exercise

1. For yourself and four people you know, describe one thing that they like and one thing that they love. Write down and say aloud each sentence.
2. Think of five things that you want. For each, write down and say aloud that you want those things.

## Answers

1. Your sentences should follow the pattern: [person] は [thing] が好き/大好きです。
2. Your sentences should follow the pattern: (私(は)) [thing] が欲しいです。

## 4.5 Questions

Generally speaking, there are two types of questions - yes/no questions, and open questions (who, when, why etc.). Let's look at how each of these are formed in Japanese.

### New vocabulary

Nouns	
bacon	ベーコン
chair	いす
lunch	ひるごはん
post office	ゆうびんきょく 郵便局
question	しつもん 質問
sofa	ソファ
spy	スパイ
window	まど

Verbs (polite present tense)	
to ask	ききます
to break	こわします
to fix	なお直します
to open	あ開けます
to return (home)*	かえ帰ります
to sleep	ね寝ます
to turn off	け消します

- \* Japanese has a unique word for going or returning home. Rather than saying 「家に行きます」, it is normal to say 「家に帰ります」, or just 「帰ります」. This verb can also be used when a person is returning to a temporary place of lodging, such as a hotel, or a more general idea of “home”, such as a home town, country or continent.

## Yes/no questions

Turning Japanese sentences into yes/no questions is incredibly easy.

**To form a question, add the particle 「か」 to the end of the sentence.**

Here are some examples:

This is a pen.

これはペンです。

Is this a pen?

これはペンですか？

—

You ate sushi.

あなたはすしを<sup>た</sup>食べました。

Did you eat sushi?

(あなた)はすしを<sup>た</sup>食べましたか？

—

Mom went to the post office.

<sup>はは</sup>母は<sup>ゆうびんきょく</sup>郵便局<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

Did mom go to the post office?

<sup>はは</sup>母は<sup>ゆうびんきょく</sup>郵便局<sup>い</sup>に行きましたか？

## Exercise

For each of the verbs listed below, ask a question in each of the following three tenses:

- a) Past tense (Did you...?)
- b) Do you want to...?
- c) Shall I/we...?

### Verbs:

1. <sup>た</sup>食べます
2. <sup>い</sup>行きます
3. <sup>み</sup>見ます
4. <sup>き</sup>聞きます
5. <sup>か</sup>買います

## Answers

- |                              |                            |                             |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. a) ～を <sup>た</sup> 食べましたか | b) ～が <sup>た</sup> 食べたいですか | c) ～を <sup>た</sup> 食べましょうか  |
| 2. a) ～に <sup>い</sup> 行きましたか | b) ～に <sup>い</sup> 行きたいですか | c) ～に <sup>い</sup> 行きましょうか  |
| 3. a) ～を <sup>み</sup> 見ましたか  | b) ～が <sup>み</sup> 見たいですか  | c) ～を <sup>み</sup> 見ましましょうか |
| 4. a) ～を <sup>き</sup> 聞きましたか | b) ～が <sup>き</sup> 聞きたいですか | c) ～を <sup>き</sup> 聞きましょうか  |
| 5. a) ～を <sup>か</sup> 買いましたか | b) ～が <sup>か</sup> 買いたいですか | c) ～を <sup>か</sup> 買いましょうか  |

## Open questions

The structure of open questions is similar to that of yes/no questions, but you will of course need to use a question word, such as “what”, “who”, “when”, etc. Below are all the main question words you need to know, although a few others will be introduced later in this and other chapters.

what	なに / なん
where	どこ
who	だれ 誰
when	いつ
why	どうして / なんで
how	どうやって

Here are a couple of notes regarding these words:

- 「何」 can be read as both 「なに」 and 「なん」, both with the meaning of “what”. 「なん」 is usually used when it is followed by 「です」, the particle 「の」, or a counter (counters will be explained in Chapter 5). 「なに」 is used in most other situations. The different usage is mainly based on what is easier to say.
- 「どうして」 and 「なんで」 can be used interchangeably to mean “why”. 「なんで」 originated from the Kansai region and was generally not used in “standard” Japanese, but it has since spread and is now used by people from all around the country.

How these question words are used depends on a few factors. Let’s look at some example sentences.

What is this?

これは何<sup>なん</sup>ですか？

Where is Mako?

まこはどこですか？

Who is the spy?

スパイは誰<sup>だれ</sup>ですか？

When is the party?

パーティーはいつですか？

For all of these questions, the main verb is 「です」. For questions using 「です」, it is important to remember this:

**A question word cannot be used before 「は」.**

Think of it this way - an unknown factor cannot be the topic of a sentence and provide context for it. If we are asking, “What is this?”, the topic is “this”. We are talking about “this”, and asking for further information about it. Consider these two sentences:

What is this?

これは何<sup>なん</sup>ですか？

This is a pen.

これはペンです。

As you can see, when asking a question in English, we move the question word to the beginning of the sentence and make it the subject. In Japanese, the topic or subject of the sentence remains the same whether the sentence is a question or not. Question words, therefore, will usually come before 「です」 when that is the main verb.

Let's look at some more example questions.

What did you do yesterday?

きのう<sup>き</sup>、何<sup>なに</sup>をしましたか？

Where will they go?

かれ<sup>かれ</sup>らはどこ<sup>どこ</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きますか？

Who will you go with?

だれ<sup>だれ</sup>とい<sup>い</sup>ち<sup>ち</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きますか？

When shall we eat lunch?

いつ<sup>ひる</sup>昼<sup>はん</sup>ごはん<sup>た</sup>を食べ<sup>あ</sup>ましょうか？

Why did you open the window?

どうして<sup>あ</sup>まどを開<sup>あ</sup>けましたか？

How did he fix the TV?

かれ<sup>かれ</sup>彼は<sup>なほ</sup>どう<sup>なほ</sup>やって<sup>なほ</sup>テレビを直<sup>なほ</sup>しましたか？

These sentences all use a verb *other than* 「です」. When the main verb is not 「です」, some question words require a particle to follow them, while others do not. Determining whether or not a particle is needed comes down to this:

### Does the role of the thing that the question word refers to need defining?

For example, when asking “who”, “what” or “where”, the question word is referring to someone, something or somewhere that is involved in the action, so the role of that person, thing or place needs to be defined by a particle. Are you asking who did the action (誰<sup>だれ</sup>が), who it was done with (誰<sup>だれ</sup>と), or who it was done to (誰<sup>だれ</sup>を)? Are you asking where the action took place (どこ<sup>どこ</sup>で), where it began (どこ<sup>どこ</sup>から), or where the destination was (どこ<sup>どこ</sup>に)? Generally, if the question word represents *something*, whether it be physical, digital or abstract, a particle is normally needed.

Other words like “when”, “how” and “why”, on the other hand, refer to the timing, the method, or the reason for the action. They do not really affect the action itself, hence they do not have a role and no particle is necessary.

The only exception to this might be for “when”. If instead of asking when something takes place, you are asking when it begins (いつ<sup>いつ</sup>から) or when it ends (いつ<sup>いつ</sup>まで), a particle would be needed. Words relating to time, including the particles 「から」 and 「まで」, will be explained in detail in Chapter 6.

One last thing - since a question word cannot be used before 「は」, you may be wondering how you ask about the person, animal or object performing the action, such as in the question, “Who ate my bacon?”

### To ask who or what performed the action, put 「が」 after the question word.

To ask the question, “Who ate my bacon?”, you could say, 「誰<sup>だれ</sup>が<sup>が</sup>私のベーコン<sup>た</sup>を食べ<sup>た</sup>ましたか」. The basic order of the words is the same for both statements and questions, but while statements would normally use 「は」 to mark the person or thing performing the action, questions use 「が」 instead.

## Exercise

1. Translate each of the following questions into Japanese. Write down and say aloud each of your answers.
  - a) What did he buy?
  - b) What do you want to eat?
  - c) Where did she go?
  - d) Where will they play baseball?
  - e) Who will you watch the movie with?
  - f) Who used my mobile phone?
  - g) When will you return home?
  - h) When do you want to go to Fukuoka?
  - i) Why did you turn off the TV?
  - j) Why did you sleep on the sofa?
  - k) How shall we go to Kyoto?
  - l) How did he break the chair?

## Answers

1.

- a) 彼<sup>かれ</sup>は何<sup>なに</sup>を<sup>か</sup>買<sup>か</sup>いましたか？
- b) (あなたは)何<sup>なに</sup>が<sup>た</sup>食<sup>た</sup>べたいですか？
- c) 彼女<sup>かのじょ</sup>はどこ<sup>い</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きましたか？
- d) 彼ら<sup>かれ</sup>はどこ<sup>い</sup>でやきゅう<sup>い</sup>を<sup>か</sup>しますか？
- e) (あなたは)誰<sup>だれ</sup>と<sup>えい</sup>映<sup>えい</sup>画<sup>が</sup>を見<sup>み</sup>ますか？
- f) 誰<sup>だれ</sup>が私<sup>わたし</sup>のケータイ<sup>つか</sup>を使<sup>つか</sup>いましたか？
- g) (あなたは)いつ<sup>いつ</sup>家<sup>いえ</sup>に帰<sup>かえ</sup>りますか？
- h) (あなたは)いつ<sup>いつ</sup>福<sup>ふく</sup>岡<sup>おか</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きたいですか？
- i) (あなたは)どうして/なん<sup>なん</sup>で<sup>け</sup>テレビ<sup>てれび</sup>を消<sup>け</sup>しましたか？
- j) (あなたは)どうして/なん<sup>なん</sup>で<sup>ね</sup>ソファ<sup>そふあ</sup>で寝<sup>ね</sup>ましたか？
- k) どうやって<sup>きょうと</sup>京<sup>きょう</sup>都<sup>と</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きましょうか？
- l) 彼<sup>かれ</sup>はどうやって<sup>い</sup>いす<sup>いす</sup>をこわ<sup>こわ</sup>しましたか？

### The word “ask”

One potentially confusing word that relates to questions is the word “ask” itself. The Japanese word for “ask” is actually 「聞<sup>き</sup>きます」, which is the same as the word for “listen”. As you can see, these two verbs even use the same kanji. The main method of differentiating between someone saying “ask” and someone saying “listen” is in the particles. Compare the following example sentences:

He listened to her.

かれ かのじょ き  
彼は彼女を聞きました。

He asked her a question.

かれ かのじょ しつもん き  
彼は彼女に質問を聞きました。

With “listen”, the particles are simple, with the person thing being listened to being marked as the object with the particle 「を」. In the case of the word “ask”, however, the person being asked is the destination of the question, and are therefore marked by the particle 「に」. What they are asking then becomes the object of the sentence, as marked by the particle 「を」. Although it may be confusing that these two English words are expressed using the same verb in Japanese, the presence or absence of the particle 「に」 tells us which action is being described.

## 4.6 Other sentence-ending particles

In addition to the particle 「か」 explained above, there is another group of particles that are often used at the end of sentences known as Interjectory Particles. These particles do not really change the meaning of a sentence, but are used to add emotion or emphasis to an otherwise straightforward statement. Some of these are unique to certain dialects within Japan, but there are two main ones that are extremely common and used (or at least understood) everywhere.

With both of the particles below, you will probably need to hear them a lot before you can fully understand when it is appropriate to use them. Don't worry though - these are incredibly common, so if you listen to native Japanese speakers, either in person, in movies, on TV or on the radio, you will hear them all the time and will quickly get a sense of how to use them correctly.

## New vocabulary

Adjectives	
boring	つまらない
delicious	おいしい
expensive	<sup>たか</sup> 高い
good	いい
hot	<sup>あつ</sup> 暑い
interesting, funny	おもしろい

Verbs (polite present tense)	
close, shut	<sup>し</sup> 閉めます
understand	わかります

Other words	
no	いや
wallet	さいふ

## よ

This is used to make assertions, and adds a moderate level of emphasis to a sentence. It is often used when the speaker is providing new information (example 1 below), confirming that something has or will be done (2), giving an opinion, especially one of surprise (3), or expressing disagreement (4). Note that this is not an exhaustive list of possible uses.

1. I bought tickets.  
チケットを<sup>か</sup>買いました**よ**。
2. Did you close the window?  
まどを<sup>し</sup>閉めましたか？  
(Yes), I did.  
<sup>し</sup>閉めました**よ**。
3. That's expensive!  
(それは)<sup>たか</sup>高いです**よ**！
4. Japanese TV is boring  
<sup>にほん</sup>日本のテレビはつまらないです。  
No, it's interesting/funny!  
いや、おもしろいです**よ**！

These sentences would all have the same basic meaning if 「よ」 wasn't added at the end, but the 「よ」 makes each statement more assertive.

## ね

This is generally used to express agreement. It is usually used when responding to something that somebody else has said, although sometimes it is used when the speaker just assumes that the listener(s) will agree with them. It also has a kind of softening effect, which in some ways is the opposite of 「よ」. Here are some examples:

This is delicious.

これはおいしいです。

Yeah, (I agree,) it is delicious.

おいしいですね。

—

I want to go to the beach.

うみ い  
海に行きたいです。

That would be great! / Great idea!

いいですね！

—

It's so hot...

あつ  
暑いですね . . .

## よ + ね

「よ」 and 「ね」 are also often used together to form a kind of rhetorical question, where the person speaking is stating something that they believe to be true, while also seeking agreement or confirmation from the listener. This is similar to English sentence-ending expressions like “isn't it?”, “didn't you?”, etc.

You like takoyaki, don't you?

(あなたは) たこ焼きが好きですよね？

This is Asada-san's wallet, isn't it?

これは<sup>あさだ</sup>浅田さんのさいふですよね？

He understands Japanese, right?

かれ に ほんご  
彼は日本語がわかりますよね？

## 4.7 This, that and other variations

The Japanese words for “this” and “that” are very useful, but there are a few variations that you need to know and understand well. In this section, we’ll look at the different words that can be used to say “this” and “that”, as well as some other words that have a similar meaning and form.

### New vocabulary

Nouns	
bank	ぎんこう 銀行
chair	いす
coffee	コーヒー
desk	つくえ
hotel	ホテル
man	おとこ ひと 男の人
music	おんがく 音楽
song	うた 歌
tea	ちや お茶
woman	おんな ひと 女の人

Adjectives	
awful (taste)	まずい
blue	あお 青い
cool, good-looking	かっこいい
heavy	おも 重い
light	かる 軽い
pretty	きれい

Verbs (polite present tense)	
become	なります
stay (at accommodation)	と 泊まります
think (an opinion)	おも 思います

### This and that

Consider these sentences:

1. That is a car.      それは<sup>くるま</sup>車です？
2. That is a blue car.      あれは<sup>あお</sup>青い<sup>くるま</sup>車です？
3. That car is blue.      その<sup>くるま</sup>車は<sup>あお</sup>青いです？

We know that 「それ」 means “that”, but as you can see above, the word “that” is represented by 「あれ」 in sentence two and 「その」 in sentence three. Why? There are two reasons:

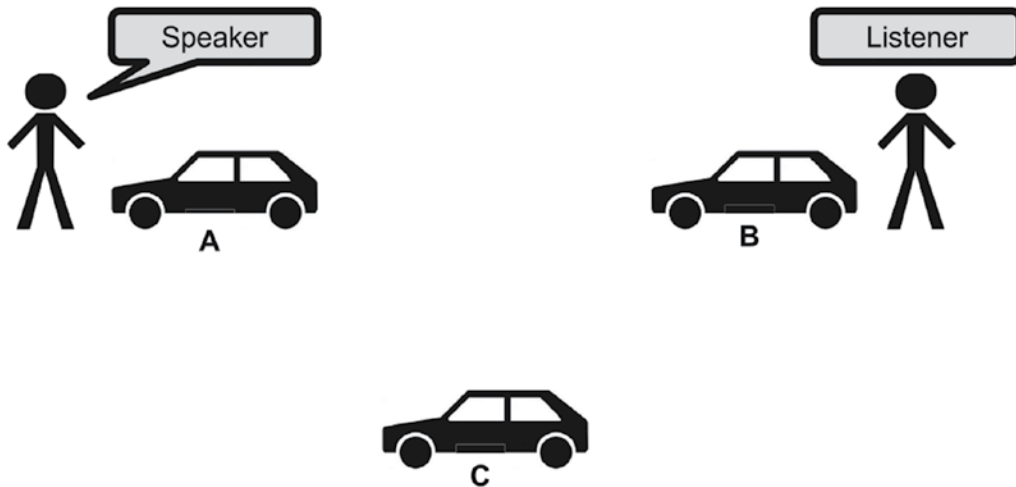
**1. The word for “that” changes according to where the object is in relation to the listener in the conversation.**

In English, “this” is used by the person speaking to refer to something near them, while “that” is used to refer to something that is not near the speaker.

In Japanese, however, there are three words instead of just two:

- 「これ」 refers to something near the speaker
- 「それ」 refers to something near the listener
- 「あれ」 refers to something that is not near the speaker nor the listener - something that is “over there”

This is best shown in a diagram:



The speaker could refer to A using 「これ」, B using 「それ」 and C using 「あれ」.

In addition to these, there is also the word 「どれ」, a question word meaning “which”, such as in the question, “Which is your car?” (あなたの車はどれですか?).

**2. Japanese distinguishes between “that” when it’s used on its own as a noun, and when it is used as a determiner, as in “that x”.**

For each of 「これ」, 「それ」, 「あれ」 and 「どれ」, there is an equivalent word that is used when you are trying to say something like “this car” or “that pen”. To create these words, simply replace the 「れ」 with 「の」, as follows:

	This / That	This X / That X
This	これ	この X
That	それ	その X
That (over there)	あれ	あの X
Which?	どれ	どの X

So, using the diagram from earlier, the speaker could talk about car A by saying 「この<sup>くるま</sup>車」, car B by saying 「その<sup>くるま</sup>車」, or car C by saying 「あの<sup>くるま</sup>車」. They could also ask “which car” by saying 「どの<sup>くるま</sup>車」.

**Important:** 「これ」, 「それ」, 「あれ」 and 「どれ」 should never be used for people. Doing so is very insulting as it implies that that person is an object, not a person. Instead, you should say “this/that/which person” by saying 「この/その/あの/どの<sup>ひと</sup>人」.

Below are some example sentences using these words:

This coffee is awful.

**この**コーヒーはまずいです。

I don't want to listen to this song.

(私は) **この**<sup>うた</sup>歌<sup>き</sup>が聞きたくないです。

That mobile phone is light.

**その**ケータイ<sup>かる</sup>は軽いです。

Let's buy that desk.

**その**つくえ<sup>か</sup>を買いましょう。

That man (over there) is cool/good-looking.

**あの**<sup>おとこ</sup>男<sup>ひと</sup>の人はかっこいいです。

That woman (over there) is pretty.

**あの**<sup>おんな</sup>女<sup>ひと</sup>の人はきれいです。

## Exercise

Look around you and pick two things that are near you, two things near an imaginary person that you will speak to, and two things that are away from both you and the imaginary person. For each thing, write and say aloud two sentences, one with each of the following meanings:

1. This/that is a [thing]. eg. This/that is a chair.
2. This/that [thing] is [adjective]. eg. This/that book is heavy.

## Answers

Your sentences should follow the patterns below. 「これ」 and 「この」 should be used for the things near you, 「それ」 and 「その」 for the things near the imaginary person, and 「あれ」 and 「あの」 for the things that are not near either of you.

1. これ/それ/あれは [thing] です。 eg. これ/それ/あれはいすです。
2. この/その/あの [thing] は [adjective] です。 eg. この/その/あの<sup>ほん</sup>本は<sup>おも</sup>重いです。

## Other variations

In addition to the above words for “this”, “that” and “which”, there are actually a few other words starting with 「こ」, 「そ」, 「あ」 and 「ど」 that all use the same underlying principle of being defined by their location relative to the speaker. Here are the main ones:

Meaning	こ	そ	あ	ど
Here/there/over there/where	ここ	そこ	あそこ	どこ
In this/that/what way	こう	そう	ああ	どう
Polite form	こちら	そちら	あちら	どちら
This/that/what kind of	こんな	そんな	あんな	どんな

Let's take a closer look at each of these.

### ここ、そこ、あそこ、どこ

This refers to a place or location, much like “here”, “there”, “over there” and “where” in English. As with other nouns, a particle is normally used to indicate the role of the place or location that is being defined. Here are some examples:

Let's eat here.

ここで<sup>た</sup>食べましょう。

I will go there.

(私は) **そこ**<sup>い</sup>に行きます。

There is a bank over there.

**あそこ**に<sup>ぎんこう</sup>銀行があります。

Where is the toilet?

トイレは**どこ**ですか？

### **こう、そう、ああ、どう**

These words are very useful, but their meaning is difficult to define in English. They generally refer to how something is, what someone has said or how something has been done, with a meaning somewhere along the lines of “in this/that way”, “like this/that”, or “as you say”. 「そう」 and 「どう」 are the two you will hear most. There is no need to use particles with these words. Here are some examples, many of which you will likely hear very often:

That's right/true/correct.

**そうです。**

Really? / Is that so?

**そうですか？**

Yes, it is. / Yes, that's right.

**そうですよ。**

Yeah, that's quite true.

**そうですね。**

Yeah, that's true, isn't it?

**そうですよね。**

Let's do that.

**そうしましょう。**

I think so. / I think that is true.

**そう**<sup>おも</sup>います。

How is the tea?

お茶は**どう**<sup>ちゃ</sup>ですか？

What's the matter?

**どう**しましたか？

What shall we do?

どうしましょうか？

What do you think?

どう<sup>おも</sup>思いますか？

### こちら、そちら、あちら、どちら

These are polite, generic words that can be used to mean “this/that/which” or “here/there/where”. Unlike 「これ」 etc., they can also be used to refer to people, as shown in the first example below.

This is Nakamoto-san.

こちら<sup>なかもと</sup>は中本さんです。

There is (some) tea on that table.

そちら<sup>ちゃ</sup>のテーブルにお茶があります。

Let's go that way (over there).

あちら<sup>い</sup>に行きましょう。

Which car did you buy?

どちら<sup>くるま か</sup>の車を買いましたか？

### こんな、そんな、あんな、どんな

These have a meaning similar to “this kind of...”, “that kind of...”, etc. They are used in sentences before nouns in much the same way as 「この」、「その」、「あの」 and 「どの」, albeit with a meaning that is more vague. When pronouncing these words, be sure to apply equal weighting to the 「ん」 sound before ending with 「な」.

I like this kind of music too.

私も<sup>おんがく す</sup>こんな音楽が好きです。

I want to stay at that kind of hotel.

そんな<sup>と</sup>ホテルに泊まりたいです。

I want to become that kind of person.

(私は)<sup>ひと</sup>あんな人になりたいです。

What kind of movies do you like?

(あなたは)<sup>えい が す</sup>どんな映画が好きですか？

## 4.8 Relative locations

So far, we have learned that 「に」 and 「で」 can be used to define the destination or the location where something exists or takes place. In this section, we will take that a step further by looking at how to say where things are, or where things are happening, relative to something else.

### New vocabulary

Nouns	
box	はこ
door	ドア
hospital	びょういん 病院
newspaper	しんぶん 新聞
refrigerator	れいぞうこ 冷蔵庫
remote control	リモコン
train	でんしゃ 電車

Verbs (polite present tense)	
play, mess around	あそ びます
put, place	お 置きます
read	よ みます

Here are some of the main words that can be used to describe the location of things relative to other things or places.

left	ひだり 左
right	みぎ 右
in front	まえ 前
behind	うし 後ろ
next to/beside	となり
on top of/above	うえ 上
underneath/below	した 下
inside	なか 中
outside	そと 外

These words can be used on their own, or in combination with other things or places using the particle 「の」. Here are some examples:

My left  
私の<sup>ひだり</sup>左

In front of the television  
テレビの<sup>まえ</sup>前

Behind the door  
ドアの<sup>うし</sup>後ろ

Next to the hospital  
病院の<sup>びょういん</sup>となり

On top of the fridge  
冷蔵庫の<sup>うえ</sup>上

Inside the train  
電車の<sup>なか</sup>中

As with all other locations, these should be used in sentences with the appropriate particle. Most commonly, the particle to use will be:

- 「に」 when it describes the destination
- 「に」 when it describes the location that something exists
- 「で」 when it describes the location that an action takes place

There is a dog to my left.  
私の<sup>ひだり</sup>左に<sup>いぬ</sup>犬がいます。

The remote control is in front of the TV.  
リモコンはテレビの<sup>まえ</sup>前にあります。

There is a ball behind the door.  
ドアの<sup>うし</sup>後ろにボールがあります。

They will play soccer next to the hospital.  
彼らは<sup>かれ</sup>病院の<sup>びょういん</sup>となりでサッカーをします。

He put the box on top of the refrigerator.

かれ 彼は<sup>れいぞうこ</sup>冷蔵庫<sup>うえ</sup>の上<sup>お</sup>には<sup>お</sup>こを置きました。

I read the paper on (inside) the train.

でんしゃ 電車<sup>なか</sup>の中<sup>しんぶん</sup>で新聞<sup>よ</sup>を読みました。

They played outside.

かれ 彼らは<sup>そと</sup>外<sup>あそ</sup>で遊びました。

You can, of course, string together multiple locations by using the particle 「の」, such as in the example below. Notice that the words describing the location appear in the reverse order to how they appear in English.

The ball is under the chair next to the TV.

ボールは<sup>テレビ</sup>テレビ<sup>の</sup>の<sup>となりの</sup>となりの<sup>いす</sup>いす<sup>の</sup>の下<sup>した</sup>にあります。

TV      next to      chair      under

## Exercise

1. Look around you and describe where some things are in relation to other things. Write down and say aloud your sentences. Try to use each of: <sup>ひだり</sup>左, <sup>みぎ</sup>右, <sup>まえ</sup>前, <sup>うし</sup>後ろ, <sup>うえ</sup>となり, <sup>した</sup>上, <sup>なか</sup>下, <sup>そと</sup>中, 外.
2. Pick three activities that you did yesterday, and describe where you did those activities, relative to a fixed location. Write down and say aloud each sentence.

## Answers

Your sentences should follow the pattern below:

1. [thing A] は [thing B] の [relative location word] にあります。
2. [fixed location] の [relative location word] で [activity in past tense]。

## 4.9 Other generally useful words

Below are some other common and useful words.

### はい - yes

There are two things to be aware of with this word:

1. It doesn't always actually mean "yes", and is often used to simply reassure the speaker that you are listening. This is important because it can easily lead to misunderstandings, so beware.
2. When a yes/no question is asked, saying 「はい」 means that what the speaker asked is true, even if it is a negative question. For example, if there was a meeting yesterday that you didn't go to, and you are asked the question, "Didn't you go to the meeting?", in English you would normally reply, "No" or "No, I didn't". In Japanese, however, you would need to say 「はい」, or 「はい、<sup>い</sup>行きませんでした」, because what they asked is true - you didn't go. Unlike English, in Japanese it is perfectly normal to match 「はい」 with a negative action. The reverse is true for 「いいえ」 below.

### いいえ - no

Keep in mind that Japanese people will often find creative and indirect ways of saying "no", since it is not a part of their culture to be direct. As a result, this word is actually not as common as you would expect.

### いや - no

This is a stronger word for no that is often used to show disagreement.

### えっと・あのう - Umm / ah

These are used as filler words when thinking about what to say next. Depending on the person, the "e" or "o" sounds in 「えっと」 are sometimes stretched out.

### でも - but

Use this at the beginning of a new sentence, as shown in the example:

I want to go to Japan. But, I don't have any money.

(私は)<sup>に</sup>日本<sup>ほん</sup>に行きたいです。**でも**、<sup>い</sup>お金<sup>かね</sup>がありません。

### が・けれども - but

These have the same meaning as 「でも」, but while 「でも」 is usually used at the beginning of a new sentence, 「が」 and 「けれども」 are generally used in the middle of a sentence to join two contrasting clauses together. Both can be polite, but 「けれども」 is more often heard in its shortened and less polite form 「けど」.

I want to go to Japan, but I don't have any money.

(私は)日本にほんに行きたいですが、お金かねがありません。

(私は)日本にほんに行きたいですけど、お金かねがありません。

### から - because / so

When you want to give a reason for something happening, such as in the sentence, “X happened, so I did Y”, you can use 「から」. Similar to 「が」 and 「けど」, this is used to join two independent clauses together into one sentence. The first clause - the one before 「から」 - should always contain the reason or cause of the second clause.

I want to eat at that restaurant, **so** I made a reservation. /

I made a reservation **because** I want to eat at that restaurant.

(私は)あのレストランで食べたいです**から**、予約よやくをしました。

### そして - and then...

This can be used at the beginning of a sentence to link activities together in a chain (another way to do this will be described in Chapter 9.4), as shown in the example:

I went to Tokyo. Then, I went to Sapporo.

東京とうきょうに行きました。**そして**、札幌さっぽろに行きました。

### ください - please

If you need to ask for something or make a selection, such as when ordering food or being offered a choice of beverages, you can simply say the ‘thing’ you’re asking for followed by 「ください」. 「ください」 is actually a verb meaning “give” in an especially polite form, which is why it fits at the end of the sentence. It’s basically a polite way of saying “Give me ...”. When saying this, the thing you are asking for can be marked with the particle 「を」, although this is often omitted.

(May I have some) tea please.

お茶ちや (を)ください。

だいじょうぶ

**大丈夫** - okay / fine

This is a very useful word that can be used to say that things are okay, or to ask if they are.

Are you okay? / Is everything okay?

だいじょうぶ

大丈夫ですか？

Yes, I'm fine. / Yes, everything's fine.

だいじょうぶ

はい、大丈夫です。

**けっこう** - no, thank you / I'm fine

If you want to decline when somebody offers you something, you can just say 「けっこうです」. 「けっこう」 literally translates as “fine” or “good”, but when used in response to an offering, a more accurate translation would be, “I’m fine, thank you”.

Would you like tea?

お茶を飲みますか？ [literally: Will you drink tea?]

No, I'm fine, thank you

いいえ、けっこうです。

いた

**痛い** - hurts / ouch

To say something hurts, say the body part followed by 「～が痛いです」. Literally, 「痛い」 is an adjective that means “painful”, but it is also the word Japanese people instinctively say when they hurt themselves, like “ouch” in English.

Ouch!

いた

痛い！

My hand hurts.

て

手が痛いです。

**とても** - very

This can be used immediately before any adjective to mean “very”.

This is very expensive.

これはとても高いです。

**たくさん - lots, many, much**

This can be used immediately before a verb to emphasize that the action was done a great amount. It should generally only be used with verbs in their positive form.

I ate lots of sushi.

すしを**たくさん**<sup>た</sup>食べました。

There are many people.

<sup>ひと</sup>人が**たくさん**います。

## Chapter 5

# Numbers

Numbers are, of course, an essential part of life. In this chapter we will look at number formation and pronunciation, the need for counters, and how to use numbers in a sentence.

### 5.1 Number formation and pronunciation

Here are the numbers zero through nine:

0	ゼロ/ まる/ れい
1	いち 一
2	に 二
3	さん 三
4	し よん 四/ 四

5	ご 五
6	ろく 六
7	しち なな 七/ 七
8	はち 八
9	きゅう 九

Firstly, zero is most commonly pronounced in effectively the same way as English, albeit with a Japanese accent. There are other pronunciations, the most common of which being 「まる」 and 「れい」, but in most situations, 「ゼロ」 will suffice.

The numbers four and seven also have two alternative pronunciations. Generally, only 「よん」 and 「なな」 are used beyond ten. There are occasional exceptions to this, but in most cases, you won't be mistaken if you use 「よん」 and 「なな」.

As shown below, the number ten is pronounced 「じゅう」, and the numbers 11 through 19 are pronounced by adding 「じゅう」 in front of the number in the “ones” column.

10	じゅう 十
11	じゅういち 十一
12	じゅう に 十二
13	じゅうさん 十三
14	じゅうよん 十四

15	じゅう ご 十五
16	じゅうろく 十六
17	じゅうなな 十七
18	じゅうはち 十八
19	じゅうきゅう 十九

Beyond this, the numbers 20 to 99 are pronounced by simply placing the number of ‘tens’ before 「十」, followed by the number of ‘ones’ (if there are any). The numbers 20 through 29 are therefore pronounced as follows:

20	に じゅう 二十
21	に じゅういち 二十一
22	に じゅう に 二十二
23	に じゅうさん 二十三
24	に じゅうよん 二十四

25	に じゅう ご 二十五
26	に じゅうろく 二十六
27	に じゅうなな 二十七
28	に じゅうはち 二十八
29	に じゅうきゅう 二十九

This pattern continues on infinitely, with new words being added at different increments, like 100 and 1000. Here are the first few incremental number words:

ten	じゅう 十
hundred	ひゃく 百
thousand	せん 千
ten-thousand	まん 万

For any number, just say each number together with its corresponding increment number. For example, the number 32,768 would be pronounced:

さん まん に せん なな ひゃくろく じゅうはち  
三万二千七百六十八

### Writing numbers in Japanese

In Japanese, numbers are almost always written using the same Hindu-Arabic numerals we use in English (0, 1, 2, 3...). Large numbers, however, will often also include the kanji of large incremental numbers to make them easier to read. For example, the number 12,345 might be written as 「1 万 2 3 4 5」. Numbers generally only appear completely in Kanji when written vertically.

Throughout this book, most numbers will be written using Hindu-Arabic numerals, since this is how they are normally written in Japanese. For the first part of this chapter, however, most numbers are written in kanji with furigana to help you better understand how numbers - particularly larger numbers - are correctly formed and pronounced.

You have probably noticed that there is a unique word for “ten thousand”, unlike English which just combines the smaller increment numbers “ten” and “thousand”. Japanese doesn’t start combining number increments in this way until after 10,000, or 「万」. The first number to do this is therefore 100,000, which is pronounced 「十 万」, which literally translates as “ten ten-thousands”.

Basically, where English introduces new words every three zeros (thousand, million, billion etc.), Japanese introduces new words every four zeros: 万 (10,000), 億 (100,000,000), etc. The number 1,000,000, for example, is therefore pronounced 「百 万」, or “100 ten-thousands”.

This probably sounds confusing and unintuitive, but it’s the natural way of counting in languages like Japanese and Chinese. To Japanese people, the English way of using a new word every three zeros is unintuitive; it’s just a different perspective.

Unfortunately, these different perspectives make life harder when working with larger numbers. To help with this, it will help to remember that:

**One million = 百 万**

By using this as a reference point, numbers like 「二 千 万」 will be much easier to figure out. Since you know that 「千」 is 10 times larger than 「百」, if you know that 「百 万」 is a million, 「二 千 万」 must equal 20 million. This should be much easier than trying to calculate  $2,000 \times 10,000$ .

Below are some example numbers and their correct pronunciation:

52	ご じゅう に 五 十 二
203	に ひゃくさん 二 百 三
436	よん ひゃくさん じゅうろく 四 百 三 十 六
7,011	なな せん じゅういち 七 千 十 一
9,745	きゅうせん なな ひゃく よん じゅう ご 九 千 七 百 四 十 五
20,001	に まん いち 二 万 一
34,567	さん まん よん せん ご ひゃくろく じゅうなな 三 万 四 千 五 百 六 十 七
456,789	よん じゅう ご まん ろく せん なな ひゃく はち じゅうきゅう 四 十 五 万 六 千 七 百 八 十 九

Raw numbers can mostly be pronounced by just saying each number and increment word in the correct order as in the examples above, but there are a few exceptions. Here are all of the special cases that you need to be aware of:

Number	Pronunciation	Special rules
100	ひゃく	Only 「ひゃく」, never 「いちひゃく」 or 「いっぴゃく」
300	さんびゃく	Not 「さんひゃく」
600	ろっぴゃく	Not 「ろくひゃく」
800	はっぴゃく	Not 「はちひゃく」
1000	せん/ いっせん	Use 「せん」 for numbers between 1000 and 1999, but 「いっせん」 for higher numbers, such as 21,000 (にまんいっせん) or 10,000,000 (いっせんまん)
3000	さんぜん	Not 「さんせん」
8000	はっせん	Not 「はちせん」
10,000	いちまん	Always 「いちまん」, not just 「まん」, even for numbers 10,000 to 19,999

The following four numbers demonstrate all of the above special cases:

1,100	せん ひゃく 千 百
3,300	さん ぜん さん びゃく 三 千 三 百
8,800	はっ せん はっ びゃく 八 千 八 百
11,600	いち まん いっ せん ろっ びゃく 一 万 一 千 六 百

## Exercise

1. Say the following numbers in Japanese:

- a) 47
- b) 123
- c) 201
- d) 3,960
- e) 4,618
- f) 50,799
- g) 65,536
- h) 701,852
- i) 812,075
- j) 9,078,384

## Answers

1.

- a) よんじゅう なな
- b) ひゃく にじゅう さん
- c) にひゃく いち
- d) さんぜん きゅうひゃく ろくじゅう
- e) よんせん ろっぴゃく じゅう はち
- f) ごまん ななひゃく きゅうじゅう きゅう
- g) ろくまん ごせん ごひゃく さんじゅう ろく
- h) ななじゅう まん いっせん はっぴゃく ごじゅう に
- i) はちじゅう いち まん にせん ななじゅう ご
- j) きゅうひゃく なな まん はっせん さんびゃく はちじゅう よん

## 5.2 Counters

While forming numbers in Japanese is quite straightforward, using them can be a little bit trickier. This is because all numbers used to define a quantity need to be used in the form of a counter, and these counters vary according to what is being counted.

For example, to say “I have two dogs” would require the number two to be used with the counter for small animals. Similarly, “I have two cars” would require the number two to be used with the counter for vehicles.

There are, in fact, a lot of different counters, some with very specific uses. Rather than trying to remember each and every one, there are a few that are more general in meaning and can be used more widely. Although there will sometimes be a more appropriate counter that you could use, it's better to use a counter that is “close enough” than none at all. The ones listed below will be enough to get you through most situations.

Counter	Usage
えん 円	Yen
さい 歳	Age
こ 個	General things
つ	General things, usually small
にん 人	People
ひき 匹	Animals

For a full list of Japanese counters, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese\\_counter\\_word](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_counter_word).

Generally, counters are added after the number to be used, although it's not always that simple. The following table shows the pronunciation for each of these counters for the numbers one through ten, as well as the associated question word meaning “how much?” or “how many?”. Counters with exceptional pronunciation are shown in bold.

Number	えん 円	さい 歳	こ 個	つ	にん 人	ひき 匹
1	いちえん	<b>いっさい</b>	<b>いっこ</b>	ひとつ	ひとり	<b>いっぴき</b>
2	にえん	にさい	にこ	<b>ふたつ</b>	ふたり	にひき
3	さんえん	さんさい	さんこ	<b>みつ</b>	さんにん	<b>さんびき</b>
4	よんえん	よんさい	よんこ	よつ	<b>よにん</b>	よんひき
5	ごえん	ごさい	ごこ	<b>いつつ</b>	ごにん	ごひき
6	ろくえん	ろくさい	<b>ろっこ</b>	<b>むつ</b>	ろくにん	<b>ろっぴき</b>
7	ななえん	ななさい	ななこ	ななつ	ななにん	ななひき
8	はちえん	<b>はっさい</b>	<b>はっこ</b>	<b>やつ</b>	はちにん	<b>はっぴき</b>
9	きゅうえん	きゅうさい	きゅうこ	<b>ここのつ</b>	きゅうにん	きゅうひき
10	じゅうえん	<b>じゅっさい</b>	<b>じゅっこ</b>	<b>とお</b>	じゅうにん	<b>じゅっぴき</b>
how many?	<b>いくら</b>	なんさい	なんこ	<b>いくつ</b>	なんにん	<b>なんびき</b>

Here is a brief explanation of each of these counters and when to use them. An explanation of how they fit into sentences will follow.

えん  
**円**

This is simply used when counting Japanese currency. Note that it is not pronounced “yen”.

さい  
**歳**

This is used to count the age of people and animals. For ages beyond ten, simply express the number as usual, but with the last number pronounced as shown in the table above. Here are some examples:

11	じゅう いっさい
12	じゅう にさい
18	じゅう はっさい
20	はたち* / にじゅっさい
85	はちじゅう ごさい

- \* For bonus points, also remember that age 20 is usually expressed as 「はたち」. <sup>は た ち</sup>二十歳 is an important age in Japan because it is the age from which people are considered adults. They even have a national holiday on the second Monday in January called “Coming of Age Day” (<sup>せいじん ひ</sup>成人の日), where everyone who has turned 20 in the past year attends a special ceremony at their local city office.

こ  
**個**

The 「個」 counter is widely used as a generic counter for non-living things. If all else fails, and you’re counting something that isn’t living, use this. Be sure to include a short pause when there is a small 「つ」, such as in 「いっこ」.

Any number beyond ten can be created using the regular number pronunciation, but with the last number pronounced as shown in the table above. For example:

11	じゅういっこ
12	じゅうにこ
20	にじゅっこ
100	ひゃっこ
123	ひゃくにじゅうさんこ
456	よんひゃくごじゅうろっこ

## つ

The 「つ」 counter is also widely used as a generic counter for non-living things, although usually not for large objects like cars or houses. It is probably more common than 「個」, but is generally used only for numbers up to nine. When there are ten items or more, 「個」 is usually used instead.

You will have surely noticed that pronunciation for the 「つ」 counter is completely different to the regular pronunciation for numbers. It may seem like a lot of effort to learn an entirely new set of numbers just for one counter, but the 「つ」 counter is quite possibly the most common counter of all, and is also very similar to the counter for days (to be introduced in Chapter 6), so it is worth the effort.

## にん 人

This counter is for people. Note that although “one” and “two” have pronunciations that differ from the regular numbers, this is not used for numbers beyond ten, so 11 people is 「じゅういちにん」, 12 people is 「じゅうににん」, etc.

In addition to being able to be used in combination with nouns that refer to people, such as friends, men, women, students etc., this can also be used as a noun by itself in reference to a group of people. For example, the word 「<sup>ふたり</sup>2人」 could be used as a counter to mean “two” in the sentence, “There are two students over there”, or it can be used as a noun to mean “two people” in the sentence, “There are two people over there”. Here are these two sentences in Japanese:

There are **two students** over there.

あそこに<sup>ふたり</sup>**2人**<sup>がくせい</sup>の**学生**がいます。

There are **two people** over there.

あそこに<sup>ふたり</sup>**2人**がいます。

## ひき 匹

This counter can generally be used for most living things that are not people. Technically, there are other counters for some living things, especially birds (<sup>わ</sup>羽) and larger animals (<sup>とう</sup>頭), but until you have time to learn those, you can get by with just 「匹」.

## 5.3 Using numbers in a sentence

Simply knowing numbers and counters is certainly helpful, but it's obviously better if you know how to use them correctly. Let's now look at how the counters introduced above can be used in a sentence.

### New vocabulary

Nouns	
box	はこ 箱
boy	おとこ 男の子
concert	ライブ
fish	さかな 魚
girl	おんな 女の子
hat	ぼうし 帽子
monkey	さる
shirt	シャツ
shoes	くつ
size	サイズ
zoo	どうぶつえん 動物園

Verbs (polite present tense)	
carry (from A to B)	はこ 運びます
catch (fishing)	つ 釣ります
introduce	しょうかい 紹介します
order	ちゅうもん 注文します
play, mess around	あそ 遊びます

### Yen and age

The yen and age counters will mostly be used on their own to say how much something costs or how old someone is, respectively. This can be done with simple sentences like this:

This is 100 yen.  
これは <sup>ひゃくえん</sup>100円です。

How much is this?  
これはいくらですか？

I am 25 years old.  
私は <sup>にじゅうごさい</sup>25歳です。

How old is he?

かれ なんさい  
彼は何歳ですか？

You can also use the particle 「で」 with the 「円」 counter to describe how much you bought or sold something for, like so:

I bought this for 3,000 yen.

(私は)これをさんぜんえん 3000 円で買いました。

He sold his phone for 20,000 yen.

かれ に まんえん 2 万円  
彼はケータイを2万円で売りました。

To understand this fully, remember that 「で」 defines the means used to complete an action. If you think of currency as the means with which a sale is made, it makes sense that 「で」 is the appropriate particle. The same, of course, applies to other currencies like dollars (ドル).

## General counters

There are two main ways in which other counters are used in a sentence. The simplest way is to **use them with the particle 「の」 immediately before the ‘thing’ that is being counted**. Below are some examples, with questions and answers for each counter. Note that full sentence answers are only provided for the sake of demonstrating the usage of counters; you wouldn't normally answer questions in this manner.

How many hamburgers did you eat?

なん こ た  
何個のハンバーガーを食べましたか？

I ate two hamburgers.

に こ た  
2 個のハンバーガーを食べました。

—

How many golf balls did you buy?

いくつ か  
いくつのゴルフボールを買いましたか？

I bought six golf balls.

む か  
6 つのゴルフボールを買いました。

—

How many friends did he go with?

かれ <sup>なん にん</sup> <sup>とも だち</sup> <sup>い</sup>  
彼は何人の友達と行きましたか？

He went with three friends.

かれ <sup>さん にん</sup> <sup>とも だち</sup> <sup>い</sup>  
彼は3人の友達と行きました。

—

How many dogs did Keiko see?

けいこは <sup>なん ひき</sup> <sup>いぬ</sup> <sup>み</sup>  
けいこは何匹の犬を見ましたか？

Keiko saw five dogs.

けいこは <sup>ご ひき</sup> <sup>いぬ</sup> <sup>み</sup>  
けいこは5匹の犬を見ました。

This same pattern can also be used for the yen and age counters, like in the following sentences:

He bought a 500 yen shirt.

かれ <sup>ごひゃく えん</sup> <sup>か</sup>  
彼は500円のシャツを買いました。

I met a 100 year-old woman.

ひゃく <sup>さい</sup> <sup>おんな</sup> <sup>ひと</sup> <sup>あ</sup>  
100歳の女の人に会いました。

The second main way to use counters in a sentence is to place the number or question word **immediately before the verb, without a particle**. Note that this is generally only used when the ‘thing’ you are counting is the object (as denoted by 「を」) of the sentence, or when you are counting the number of things that exist (as denoted by 「が」 and used with the verbs 「います」 and 「あります」). The reason for this is that since the counter is being placed immediately before the verb and without a particle, there is an inherent relationship between the number and the verb. The things being counted must therefore be directly affected by that verb. Here are some examples:

How many hamburgers did you eat?

ハンバーガーを <sup>なん こ</sup> <sup>た</sup>  
ハンバーガーを何個食べましたか？

I ate two hamburgers.

(ハンバーガーを) <sup>に</sup> <sup>こ</sup> <sup>た</sup>  
(ハンバーガーを)2個食べました。

—

How many golf balls did you buy?

ゴルフボールをいくつ<sup>か</sup>買いましたか？

I bought six golf balls.

(ゴルフボールを) 6<sup>む</sup>つ<sup>か</sup>買いました。

—

How many dogs did Keiko see?

けいこは犬を何匹<sup>いぬ なんびき</sup>見ましたか？

Keiko saw five dogs

(けいこは犬を) 5<sup>ご</sup>匹<sup>ひき</sup>見ました。

Lastly, if you have a sentence with multiple different items that each need counters attached to them, you can do this by separating each item/counter combination with the particle 「と」. When doing this, the block of words that refers to the things being counted should be kept intact, including the particles, as shown below:

There are three boys and four girls here.

ここに3<sup>さん</sup>人<sup>にん</sup>の男<sup>おとこ</sup>の子<sup>こ</sup>と4<sup>よ</sup>人<sup>にん</sup>の女<sup>おんな</sup>の子<sup>こ</sup>がいます。

ここに男<sup>おとこ</sup>の子<sup>こ</sup>が3<sup>さん</sup>人<sup>にん</sup>と女<sup>おんな</sup>の子<sup>こ</sup>が4<sup>よ</sup>人<sup>にん</sup>います。

(Give me) two hamburgers and one beer please.

2<sup>ふた</sup>つのハンバーガー<sup>ひと</sup>と1<sup>ひと</sup>つのビールをください。

ハンバーガーを2<sup>ふた</sup>つとビールを1<sup>ひと</sup>つください。

## Exercise

1. Using the counters introduced in this chapter, translate the following sentences into Japanese. Write your answers down and say them out loud.
  - a) This hat is 2000 yen.
  - b) He bought those shoes for 50,000 yen.
  - c) She is 14 years old.
  - d) He introduced his 62 year-old father.
  - e) There are three sizes.
  - f) Let's order two coffees.

- g) I bought six of these.
  - h) They carried 8 boxes to the car.
  - i) There were 10,000 people at the concert.
  - j) She played at the park with five friends.
  - k) I caught three fish.
  - l) There are 25 monkeys at the zoo.
2. Now do the same with the following questions:
- a) How much is this hat?
  - b) How much did he buy those shoes for?
  - c) How old is she?
  - d) How old is his father?
  - e) How many sizes are there?
  - f) How many coffees shall we order?
  - g) How many of these did you buy?
  - h) How many boxes did they carry to the car?
  - i) How many people were at the concert?
  - j) How many friends did she play with at the park?
  - k) How many fish did you catch?
  - l) How many monkeys are there at the zoo?

## Answers

1.

- a) この帽子は2000 円です。
- b) 彼は5 万円でその/ あのかつを買いました。OR  
彼はその/ あのかつを5 万円で買いました。
- c) 彼女は 1 4 歳です。
- d) 彼は 6 2 歳のお父さんを紹介しました。
- e) 3 つ/ 3 個のサイズがあります。OR  
サイズが3 つ/ 3 個あります。
- f) コーヒーを2 つ/ 2 個注文しましょう。OR  
2 つ/ 2 個のコーヒーを注文しましょう。
- g) これを6 個/ 6 つ買いました。

- h) 彼らは8 個/8 つの箱を車に運びました。OR  
 彼らは車に8 個/8 つの箱を運びました。OR  
 彼らは車に箱を8 個/8 つ運びました。
- i) ライブに1 万人 (が)いました。OR  
 1 万人がライブにいました。
- j) 彼女は公園で5 人の友達と遊びました。OR  
 彼女は5 人の友達と公園で遊びました。
- k) (私は) 魚を3 匹釣りしました。OR  
 (私は) 3 匹の魚を釣りしました。
- l) 動物園に2 5 匹のさるがいます。OR  
 動物園にさるが2 5 匹います。

2.

- a) この帽子はいくらですか？
- b) 彼はいくらでその/ あのくつを買いましたか？
- c) 彼女は何歳ですか？
- d) 彼のお父さんは何歳ですか？
- e) いくつ/ 何個のサイズがありますか？ OR  
 サイズがいくつ/ 何個ありますか？
- f) コーヒーをいくつ/ 何個注文しましょうか？ OR  
 いくつ/ 何個のコーヒーを注文しましょうか？
- g) これをいくつ/ 何個買いましたか？
- h) 彼らはいくつ/ 何個の箱を車に運びましたか？ OR  
 彼らは車にいくつ/ 何個の箱を運びましたか？ OR  
 彼らは車に箱をいくつ/ 何個運びましたか？
- i) ライブに何人 (が)いましたか？ OR  
 何人がライブにいましたか？
- j) 彼女は公園で何人の友達と遊びましたか？ OR  
 彼女は何人の友達と公園で遊びましたか？
- k) (あなたは) 魚を何匹釣りしましたか？ OR  
 (あなたは) 何匹の魚を釣りしましたか？
- l) 動物園に何匹のさるがいますか？ OR  
 動物園にさるが何匹いますか？

## Chapter 6

# Expressing time

It goes without saying that the ability to talk about time is incredibly valuable. In the broadest sense, there are three main ways that time can be expressed - timing (when), period (for how long), and frequency (how often). In this chapter, we will look at how to express each of these time-related concepts.

Throughout the chapter, an explanation is provided for how to use the various time-related words and expressions in sentences, but don't worry too much about learning every single rule to perfection. Over time, as you hear other people using these expressions and practice using them yourself, you will develop a natural sense for when and how they are used. If necessary, you can come back to this chapter later to refine your understanding.

### 6.1 Timing

In both Japanese and English, there are numerous words that specifically exist to describe when things take place. These words can be divided into two main categories:

1. Words that describe a point in time relative to now, eg. Today, Tomorrow
2. Words that rely on context for specificity. eg. Friday, March

The distinction between these two categories helps in determining how to put these words into sentences. Basically, if you can differentiate between these two categories,

you'll have an easier time remembering the correct way to describe the timing of actions. This will become apparent shortly.

Let's now look at each of these categories, including all the necessary vocabulary as well as how to use them in a sentence.

## New vocabulary

Nouns	
America	アメリカ
Australia	オーストラリア
breakfast	あさはん 朝ご飯
China	ちゅうごく 中国
class	じゅぎょう 授業
game/match	しあい 試合
London	ロンドン
meeting	かいぎ 会議
office	オフィス
South Korea	かんこく 韓国
university	だいがく 大学

Verbs (polite present tense)	
arrive	つきます
be born	うまれます
begin/start	はじめます
depart	しゅっぱつ 出発します
graduate	そつぎょう 卒業します
leave	でます
meet (for the first time)	であい 会います
reply	へんじ 返事します
ski	スキーします
Adjectives	
busy	いそが 忙しい

## 1. Points in time relative to now

Words in this category describe points in time relative to the present moment, meaning that depending on when they are used, the exact time being referred to varies. Here are the main words that fit into this category.

now	いま 今
later	あと 後で
yesterday	きのう 昨日
tomorrow	あした 明日

today	きょう 今日
tonight	こんや 今夜
the day before yesterday	おととい
the day after tomorrow	あさって

this week	こんしゅう 今週
last week	せんしゅう 先週
next week	らいしゅう 来週
this year	ことし 今年
last year	きょねん 去年
next year	らいねん 来年

this morning	けさ 今朝
this month	こんげつ 今月
last month	せんげつ 先月
next month	らいげつ 来月
the year before last	おとし 一昨年
the year after next	さらいねん 再来年

### Using these words in sentences

Using these words in a sentence to say when something happened or will happen is very easy - just put them at the beginning or after the 「は」 **without a particle**. Here are some examples:

I played baseball yesterday.

きのう や きゅう  
昨日、野球をしました。

I didn't eat breakfast today.

きょう あさ はん た  
今日、朝ご飯を食べませんでした。

Let's go to the beach tomorrow.

あした うみ い  
明日、海に行きましょう。

She graduated from university last week.

せんしゅうかのじょ だいがく そつぎょう  
先週、彼女は大学を卒業しました。

He will go to London next year.

かれ らいねん い  
彼は来年、ロンドンに行きます。

### Exercise

- For each of the following points in time, create a sentence that describes an activity you or someone else did or will do. Write down and say aloud each sentence. Feel free to use the “let's do...” and “I want to...” expressions for times in the future.
  - The year before last
  - Last year

- c) Last month
- d) Last week
- e) Yesterday
- f) This morning
- g) Today (before now)
- h) Today (after now)
- i) Tonight
- j) Tomorrow
- k) The day after tomorrow
- l) Next week
- m) Next month
- n) Next year
- o) The year after next

## **2. Words that rely on context for specificity**

Words in this category include the time of day, days of the week, days of the month, months, seasons and years. What makes them context-dependent is that unlike words in the previous category, when used by themselves and without context, there is no way to determine which occurrence of that time, day, month or season is being referred to. For example, while “tomorrow” always refers to the day after the present one, without context, words like “morning”, “Sunday” and “September” could refer to any morning, Sunday or September in the past, present or future.

### **Why years are context-dependent**

Although years are inherently specific, they are also included in this category because, technically, “2014” relies on the context of the Gregorian calendar. This is so ingrained in our lives that we don’t usually think about which calendar we are using, but without the context that this calendar provides, it would not be clear what “2014” actually refers to. Besides, Japan also has its own system for counting years based on the reign of the current emperor. For example, 2014 is Heisei 26. It’s not essential to learn the Japanese calendar since the Gregorian calendar is used for most things, although it does help to be aware of it. Plus, if a Japanese person asks you what year you were born and you reply using the Japanese calendar, they will most likely find it hilarious.

By adding context to these words, however, we can determine which morning, which Sunday or which September is being referred to. For example, if we say, “On Sunday”, and we are talking about something that we are going to do in the future, this context tells us that the speaker is most likely referring to the coming Sunday. If instead we were talking about things that have already happened, then the context implies that we are referring to the last Sunday gone. In both cases, the fact that the speaker is referring to the nearest Sunday in the past or future is implied by the lack of extra information. To refer to other Sundays, you will usually need to be more explicit by saying things like “On Sunday, January 5th, 2014”, or “On Sunday two weeks from now”.

Here are the main time-related words that are dependent on context:

Days of the week	
Monday	げつようび 月曜日
Tuesday	かようび 火曜日
Wednesday	すいようび 水曜日
Thursday	もくようび 木曜日
Friday	きんようび 金曜日
Saturday	どようび 土曜日
Sunday	にちようび 日曜日
what day?	なんようび 何曜日？

Seasons (季節)	
summer	なつ 夏
autumn	あき 秋
winter	ふゆ 冬
spring	はる 春
which season?	どの季節？

Months	
January	いち がつ 1 月
February	に がつ 2 月
March	さん がつ 3 月
April	し がつ 4 月
May	ご がつ 5 月
June	ろく がつ 6 月
July	しち がつ 7 月
August	はち がつ 8 月
September	く がつ 9 月
October	じゅう がつ 10 月
November	じゅういち がつ 11 月
December	じゅうに がつ 12 月
what month?	なん がつ 何月？

Other	
morning	あさ 朝
afternoon	ご 午後
middle of the day	ひる 昼
night	よる 夜
weekend	しゅうまつ 週末
beginning	はじ 初め
end	お 終わり
the first	さいしょ 最初
the last	さいご 最後
break/vacation	やす 休み

In addition to these, this category includes years, the days of the month, and the time of day, each of which have their own counters. Let's take a look at each of these now.

### Years

The Japanese counter for years is 「年」<sup>ねん</sup>, which is very simple and just needs to be added after the number of the year. Here are some examples:

2015	にせんじゅうご ねん 2015 年
2000	に せ ん ねん 2000 年
1985	せんきゅうひゃくはちじゅうご ねん 1 9 8 5 年
'99	きゅうじゅうきゅう ねん 9 9 年
what year?	なん ねん 何年 ?

One thing to note is that although in English, "1985" is normally expressed as "nineteen eighty five" rather than "one thousand nine hundred and eighty five", in Japanese, years are always expressed like any other number, just with the 「年」<sup>ねん</sup> counter added on the end. As shown above, it is also possible to abbreviate the century and just say, 「99年」.

### Days of the month

Japanese has a specific counter used for days. These are equivalent to words like "first", "second", "ninth" and "tenth", but unlike these English words, they are specific to days and therefore cannot be used for other things like placings in a race.

For the first ten days of the month, the days counter is much like the 「つ」<sup>にち</sup> counter. Beyond that, with a couple of exceptions, 「日」 is simply added to the end of the number.

1st	ついたち 1 日
3rd	みっか 3 日
5th	いつか 5 日
7th	なのか 7 日
9th	ここのか 9 日
11th	じゅう いち にち 1 1 日
13th	じゅうさん にち 1 3 日

2nd	ふつか 2 日
4th	よっか 4 日
6th	むいか 6 日
8th	ようか 8 日
10th	と う か 1 0 日
12th	じゅう に にち 1 2 日
14th	じゅうよっか 1 4 日

15th	じゅうご にち 1 5 日
17th	じゅうなな にち 1 7 日
19th	じゅうく にち 1 <b>9</b> 日
21st	にじゅういちにち 2 1 日
23rd	にじゅうさんにち 2 3 日
25th	にじゅうごにち 2 5 日
27th	にじゅうななにち 2 7 日
29th	にじゅうく にち 2 <b>9</b> 日
31st	さんじゅういちにち 3 1 日

16th	じゅうろくにち 1 6 日
18th	じゅうはちにち 1 8 日
20th	はつか <b>2 0</b> 日
22nd	にじゅうににち 2 2 日
24th	にじゅうよっか <b>2 4</b> 日
26th	にじゅうろくにち 2 6 日
28th	にじゅうはちにち 2 8 日
30th	さんじゅうにち 3 0 日
what day?	なんにち 何日？

As you can see, beyond ten, the exceptions that need to be remembered are the 14th, 19th, 20th, 24th, and 29th. For all of these, though, saying the regular number followed by 「にち」 will be understood, so there's no need to worry about these exceptions too much. That said, I recommend remembering 「はつか」 for the 20th, as Japanese people will usually be very impressed if you use this correctly. The same applies for the word 「はたち」 (age 20).

### Time of day

To express the time of day in hours and minutes, 「時<sup>じ</sup>」 is added after the number of the hour, and 「分<sup>ぶん</sup>」 is added after the number of minutes. Like most other counters, there are a couple of exceptions when it comes to pronunciation, so here is the full list with the exceptions shown in bold:

Hour	Number + 時 <sup>じ</sup>
1	いち じ 1 時
2	に じ 2 時
3	さん じ 3 時
4	よ じ <b>4</b> 時
5	ご じ 5 時

Minutes	Number + 分 <sup>ぶん</sup>
1	いっ ぶん <b>1</b> 分
2	に ぶん 2 分
3	さん ぶん 3 分
4	よん ぶん 4 分
5	ご ぶん 5 分

6	ろく じ 6 時
7	しち じ 7 時
8	はち じ 8 時
9	く じ 9 時
10	じゅう じ 1 0 時
11	じゅういち じ 1 1 時
12	じゅう に じ 1 2 時

6	ろっ ぶん 6 分
7	なな ぶん 7 分
8	はっ ぶん 8 分
9	きゅう ぶん 9 分
10	じゅう ぶん 1 0 分
half (ie. ½:30)	はん 半
other numbers	(end with above)

Now, using the above expressions of time, you can say any time of day by simply combining the hours and minutes. Here are some examples:

1:00	いち じ 1 時
2:05	に じ ご ぶん 2 時 5 分
3:10	さん じ じゅう ぶん 3 時 1 0 分
4:15	よ じ じゅう ご ぶん 4 時 1 5 分
5:30	ご じ はん / ご じ さん じゅう ぶん 5 時半 / 5 時 3 0 分
6:48	ろく じ よん じゅう はっ ぶん 6 時 4 8 分

### Using these words in sentences

To use these context-dependent time words in a sentence, they need to be coupled with a particle, usually 「に」. This brings us to a third usage for this particle:

**The particle 「に」 defines when an action takes place.**

It is quite similar to the English prepositions of time “at”, “on” and “in”.

You'll recall that the time words in category one can be used on their own without any particles. This is the main grammatical difference between the two categories, and is the reason it helps to be able to differentiate between them. If you can recognize the difference between the two categories, and remember that **relative time words are used on their own**, while **context-dependent time words are used with 「に」**, you'll be able to use them correctly.

If you need help remembering this, notice that this distinction is remarkably similar to English and its omission/inclusion of prepositions with the two categories of time words. If a time expression would use “at”, “on” or “in” in English, the equivalent expression in Japanese usually requires 「に」. Conversely, if there is no preposition of time in English, Japanese most likely doesn’t require a particle.

Here are some examples of context-dependent time words as they would appear in a sentence:

In 2001	に せ ん い ち ね ん 2 0 0 1 年 に
In January	いち が つ 1 月 に
In summer	な つ 夏 に
On the 1st	つ い た ち 1 日 に
On Monday	げ つ よ う び 月 曜 日 に
On the weekend	し ゅ う ま つ 週 末 に
At 3:30	さ ん じ は ん 3 時 半 に
At night	よ る 夜 に

These words often appear at the beginning of sentences, immediately after 「は」 (if there is one) or between 「を」 and the verb. However, since these words are paired with the particle 「に」, it is also possible to use them in different places in a sentence. Remember, the particle defines the role of the word before it, and this is more important than word order. As long as the particle is correct, its placement is not *as* important and generally only affects naturalness and flow, not so much the literal meaning.

This may leave you wondering where the most natural placement of time expressions is. Basically, it depends. As a general rule, **words that appear towards the end of a sentence are more important, or provide newer information, than those that appear near the beginning**. Placing the time between 「を」 and the verb, for example, would emphasize the time the action occurred over the action itself or the person performing it. On the other hand, if the time expression is near the beginning of the sentence, then the activity or people/things involved in the activity is the point of focus, and the timing is merely additional information.

Here are some example sentences using these time words, each with multiple options for the placement of the timing word:

Hiroshi was born in 1984.

ひろしは**1984年**に生まれました。

**1984年**にひろしは生まれました。

I went to South Korea in January.

(私は)**1月**に韓国に行きました。

**1月**に私は韓国に行きました。

Kanako bought a bicycle on Sunday.

**日曜日**にかなこは自転車を買いました。

かなこは**日曜日**に自転車を買いました。

かなこは自転車を**日曜日**に買いました。

Let's watch the soccer on the 23rd.

**23日**にサッカーを見ましょう。

サッカーを**23日**に見ましょう。

We will eat lunch at one o'clock.

(私たちは)**1時**に昼ご飯を食べます。

**1時**に私たちは昼ご飯を食べます。

(私たちは)昼ご飯を**1時**に食べます。

It is also possible to use question words in the same way. In chapter 4, we saw how 「いつ」 can be used to ask when something happened or is going to happen, but just like English, questions can be made more specific by using words like 「何時」 (what time), 「何日」 (what day of the month), etc. In such cases, since the timing is what is being questioned, the time expression is important and therefore less likely to come at the beginning of the sentence. Answers to such questions would also follow the same rule, since the timing of the activity is the new and important information.

Here are some examples of questions about specific times:

In what year was Hiroshi born?

ひろしは**何年**に生まれましたか？

In what month did you go to South Korea?

(あなたは) <sup>なんがつ</sup>何月に <sup>かんこく</sup>韓国に <sup>い</sup>行きましたか？

On what day (of the week) did Kanako buy her bicycle?

かなこは <sup>なんようび</sup>何曜日に <sup>じてんしゃ</sup>自転車を <sup>か</sup>買いましたか？

かなこは <sup>じてんしゃ</sup>自転車を <sup>なんようび</sup>何曜日に <sup>か</sup>買いましたか？

On what day (of the month) shall we watch the soccer?

<sup>なんにち</sup>何日に <sup>み</sup>サッカーを <sup>み</sup>見ましょうか？

サッカーを <sup>なんにち</sup>何日に <sup>み</sup>見ましょうか？

At what time will we eat lunch?

(私たちは) <sup>なんじ</sup>何時に <sup>ひるはん</sup>昼ご飯を <sup>た</sup>食べますか？

(私たちは) <sup>ひるはん</sup>昼ご飯を <sup>なんじ</sup>何時に <sup>た</sup>食べますか？

## Exercise

For each of the following, have a mini conversation with yourself in which you ask a question about the specific timing of an activity, and then answer it. For the sake of practice, use full sentence answers. Be sure to write them down after you have said each of them out loud.

### 1. Past activities

- In what year...?
- In what season...?
- In what month...?
- On what day of the month...?
- On what day of the week...?
- At what time...?

### 2. Future activities (use a variety of expressions, including 「～ます」, 「～ましょう」 and 「～たいです」)

- In what year...?
- In what season...?
- In what month...?
- On what day of the month...?
- On what day of the week...?
- At what time...?

## Time word combinations

In many cases, just one time word won't be enough, and you will need to use a combination. As a general rule, you can use any two time words together, regardless of category, by joining them with the particle 「の」. They need to be expressed in **descending order of size**, so years will come before seasons or months, months before weeks or days, etc. Notice in the examples below that specific times are expressed by first defining a broader period of time (often using a relative time word), and then using 「の」 to narrow down to the desired level of specificity. More literal English translations are provided in brackets where appropriate.

Yesterday afternoon

きのう きのう 午後  
昨日の午後

Tomorrow morning

あした あした 朝  
明日の朝

Last August (last year's August)

きょねん きょねん はちがつ  
去年の8月

Next summer (next year's summer)

らいねん らいねん なつ  
来年の夏

Last weekend

せんしゅう せんしゅう しゅうまつ しゅうまつ せんしゅうまつ  
先週の週末 (or 先週末)

Next Tuesday night (next week's Tuesday night)

らいしゅう らいしゅう かようび かようび よる  
来週の火曜日の夜

The end of winter

ふゆ ふゆ お  
冬の終わり

The first Monday in March

さんがつ さんがつ さいしょ さいしょ げつようび げつようび  
3月の最初の月曜日

You can use this to be more specific about the time of day too, by combining the time with the general words for morning, afternoon and night, as shown below. In this case, the inclusion of 「の」 is somewhat optional.

7:00 am	あさ 朝 (の) 7 時
11:05 am	あさ 朝 (の) 11 時 5 分
2:15 pm	ご 午後 (の) 2 時 15 分
5:30 pm	ご 午後 (の) 5 時半
8:40 pm	よる 夜 (の) 8 時 40 分
10:55 pm	よる 夜 (の) 10 時 55 分

Note that when expressing dates, such as “December 31, 2015”, there is no need to insert 「の」 in between each unit. They are, however, still expressed in descending order of size. For example:

September 4, 1997	1997 年 9 月 4 日
October 21, 2015	2015 年 10 月 21 日
March 9	3 月 9 日
June 20	6 月 20 日

Similarly, the word 「休み」, which literally means “rest” or “break”, is also often combined with other words without 「の」 to refer to a specific break, such as in the following examples:

Lunch break	ひる やす 昼休み
Summer break	なつ やす 夏休み
Spring break	はる やす 春休み

Dates and breaks can be further combined with more specific words like the time of day using 「の」, like so:

4:30 on October 21, 2015  
2015 年 10 月 21 日 の 4 時半

The morning of June 20  
6 月 20 日 の 朝

The beginning of summer break

なつやす はじ  
夏休みの初め

## Using time word combinations in sentences

You may notice that all of these combinations end with a context-dependent (category two) time word. This makes sense, because relative time words (category one) are designed to provide a specific reference point, and we never need more than one of these. Combining two such words would result in phrases like “today’s tomorrow” or “next year’s this week”. These do make sense, but they aren’t particularly useful. You may occasionally hear things like “last year’s today” (去年の今日), but this is relatively uncommon.

Since combinations of time words will almost always end with a word from category two, they generally **need to be followed by 「に」** when used in a sentence. This also means that they have the same flexibility as words from category two in terms of placement. Here are some examples:

I will watch TV at 8:30 tomorrow night.  
あした よる はち じ はん  
明日の夜 (の) 8 時半にテレビを見ます。

We left home at 6 o’clock this morning.  
(私たちは) けさ ろく じ いえ で  
今朝の6 時に家を出ました。

She was born on December 4th.  
かのじょ じゅうにがつよっか う  
彼女は12 月4 日に生まれました。

They met at the beginning of spring break.  
かれ はる やす はじ で あ  
彼らは春休みの初めに会いました。

## Exercise

- Translate each of the following sentences into Japanese. Write each sentence down, and say them aloud.
  - I skied at Hakuba last winter.
  - I didn’t eat breakfast last Thursday.
  - He arrived at the office at 8:30 this morning.

- d) She was born on April 13th.
- e) Their train departs at 3:45 on Friday afternoon.
- f) I want to go to China in the summer break.

## Answers

1.

- a) 去年の冬に白馬でスキー(を)しました。  
きょねん ふゆ はくば
- b) 先週の月曜日に朝ご飯を食べませんでした。  
せんしゅう げつようび あさはん た
- c) 彼は今朝(の)8時半にオフィスに着きました。  
かれ けさ はちじはん つ
- d) 彼女は4月13日に生まれました。  
かのじょ しがつじゅうさんにち う
- e) 彼らの電車は金曜日の午後(の)3時45分に出発します。  
かれ でんしゃ きんようび ごごさんじよんじゅうご しゅっぱつ
- f) (私は)夏休みに中国に行きたいです。  
なつやす ちゅうごく い

## Other uses of time expressions

So far in this chapter, all of the expressions of time have been used to define when an action takes place. There are, however, a couple of other ways that expressions of time are used.

### Sentences ending in 「です」

Any expression of time (including those introduced later in this chapter) can be used like any other noun in sentences where the verb is 「です」. For example:

Today is Thursday.

今日は木曜日です。  
きょう もくようび

It is Thursday (today).

(今日は)木曜日です。  
きょう もくようび

It is hot today.

今日は暑いです。  
きょう あつ

What time is it (now)?

(今は)何時ですか？  
いま なんじ

It is 12 o'clock.

12時です。  
じゅうに じ

I like Saturdays.

(私は)土曜日どようびが好きすです。

The meeting is on Wednesday.

会議かいぎは水曜日すいようびです。

The game is at 2:30.

試合しあいは2時半にじはんです。

You can see here that time words can be used before 「は」 to be the topic, before 「が」 to be the subject, or before 「です」 to be the ‘thing’ that the topic or subject is being described as.

You are probably left wondering about a few of these sentences though.

For example, what happens when the English version of a sentence uses “it”? As described in Chapter 3.6, since anything that is understood from context can be ignored, there is no need for a word like “it” in Japanese. This means that sentences like “It’s Thursday” would simply become 「木曜日もくようびです」. What this really is, though, is an abbreviated version of 「今日きょうは木曜日もくようびです」, where the 「今日きょう」 part is understood from context and is therefore omitted.

When 「今日きょうは」 is included, there are two equivalent expressions in English - “Today is Thursday” and “It is Thursday today”. These mean the exact same thing, but it is because English has the word “it” that this is possible. The non-existence of “it” in Japanese simply means that an expression like the latter is not an option. To include the word 「今日きょう」, we therefore need to recognize that it is, in fact, the topic of the sentence. This should help you understand why “It is hot today” becomes 「今日きょうは暑いあつです」.

Another question that may arise is, why is there no particle 「に」 after 「水曜日すいようび」 or 「2時半にじはん」 in the last two sentences, even though the English translation includes the prepositions “on” and “at”? The reason for this is that 「に」 is used to define the relationship between a time expression and an *action*. Although 「です」 is a verb, it does not describe an action, so it does not make sense to use 「に」. In English, you could get away with saying “The meeting is Wednesday” or “The game is 2:30”, but these aren’t really correct. In any case, these two examples have been included simply to emphasize the point that 「に」 is used to define *the timing of an action*, and does not simply mean “on”, “at” or “in”.

## Other particles

Other than 「に」, there are a few other ways that expressions of timing can be used in sentences that involve action, and these require different particles. Here are the most important ones:

### から

This defines the **starting time or place of an action**. It is very much like “from” in English, and can be used with words representing a time or place. With time expressions, 「から」 is sometimes interchangeable with 「に」, since the time that an action occurs and the time that an action starts can be the same thing (first example below). This does not apply, however, when describing the start of a recurring action such as a habit, since the action occurs multiple times but the habit only starts once (second example).

Class starts from 9 o'clock.

じゅぎょう くじ はじ  
授業は9時**から**始まります。

From tomorrow, I will study Japanese every day.

あした まいにち にほんご べんきょう  
明日**から**毎日日本語を勉強します。

I am (came) from Australia.

き  
私はオーストラリア**から**来ました。

### まで

This defines the **ending time or place of an action**. It is mostly used to refer to time with the meaning “until”. It can also be used with words representing a place to define an end point, although this is less common since 「に」 is the main particle used to define a destination.

I worked until 7 o'clock.

しちじ しごと  
7時**まで**仕事(を)しました。

Summer vacation is from June until August.

なつやす ろくがつ はちがつ  
夏休みは6月**から**8月**まで**です。

**までに**

This defines **the time by which an action is due to be completed**. It is basically the same as the English word “by” when it is used in relation to time. Since this implies a deadline, it is mostly used with expressions like, “Please do this by...”, or, “I need to do this by...”, which we have not yet covered. The below examples are provided for your reference, but do not worry if you do not recognize the verb conjugations yet - these will be introduced later.

Please reply by next Friday.

らいしゅう きんよう び へんじ  
来週 の 金曜日 **までに** 返事 してください。

I need to return home by 6 o'clock.

ろくじ かえ  
6 時 **までに** 帰ら なければ なりません。

**Exercise**

1. Translate each of the following sentences into Japanese. Write each sentence down and say them aloud.
  - a) What time is the movie?
  - b) The movie is at 7:30.
  - c) From next month, we will play baseball every Saturday.
  - d) They will be busy until next week.
  - e) From when until when was she in America?
  - f) She was in America from March until last week.
  - g) From what time until what time did you work?
  - h) I worked from 8 until 6.

**Answers**

1.

- a) えいが なんじ  
映画は何時ですか？
- b) えいが しちじはん  
映画は7時半です。
- c) らいげつ まいしゅう どようび やきゅう  
来月から毎週の土曜日に野球をします。
- d) かれ らいしゅう いそが  
彼らは来週まで忙しいです。
- e) かのじょ  
彼女はいつからいつまでアメリカにいましたか？

- f) 彼女は3月から先週までアメリカにいました。  
g) (あなたは)何時から何時まで仕事(を)しましたか?  
h) (私は)8時から6時まで仕事(を)しました。

## 6.2 Period

In this section, you will learn the main words and word combinations that describe a period of time, as well as the different ways that such words can be used.

### New vocabulary

Nouns	
course	コース
kitchen	だいどころ 台所
marathon	マラソン
project	プロジェクト
room	へや 部屋
UK	イギリス
Adjectives	
enough	じゅうぶん 十分*

Verbs (polite present tense)	
clean	そうじ 掃除します
complete	かんせい 完成します
get married	けっこん 結婚します
spend	かけます
take, cost	かかります
wait	まちます
walk	ある 歩きます
wash	あら 洗います

- \* When written in kanji, the word 「十分」, meaning “enough”, looks exactly the same as 「十分」, or “10 minutes”. These are, however, different words that are pronounced differently, and shouldn't be confused. Fortunately, since numbers are rarely actually expressed in kanji, “10 minutes” will usually be written as 「10分」, and you can therefore assume in most cases that the kanji compound 「十分」 refers to the word meaning “enough”. 「じゅうぶん」 is also sometimes written as 「充分」.

### Time counters

Describing a period or amount of time is done using time counters. These generally consist of a number combined with a variation of the time words used to express timing. These counters all end in 「間」 (which is written using the character for “interval”), although in some cases this is optional. The tables below contains all the main counters for periods of time:

	<b>Seconds</b> びょう かん ～秒 (間)	<b>Minutes</b> ぶん かん ～分 (間)	<b>Hours</b> じ かん ～時間
1	いち びょう かん 1 秒 (間)	いつ ぶん かん 1 分 (間)	いち じ かん 1 時間
2	に びょう かん 2 秒 (間)	に ぶん かん 2 分 (間)	に じ かん 2 時間
3	さん びょう かん 3 秒 (間)	さん ぶん かん 3 分 (間)	さん じ かん 3 時間
4	よん びょう かん 4 秒 (間)	よん ぶん かん 4 分 (間)	よ じ かん 4 時間
5	ご びょう かん 5 秒 (間)	ご ぶん かん 5 分 (間)	ご じ かん 5 時間
6	ろく びょう かん 6 秒 (間)	ろく ぶん かん 6 分 (間)	ろく じ かん 6 時間
7	なな びょう かん 7 秒 (間)	なな ぶん かん 7 分 (間)	なな じ かん 7 時間
8	はち びょう かん 8 秒 (間)	はっ ぶん かん 8 分 (間)	はち じ かん 8 時間
9	きゅう びょう かん 9 秒 (間)	きゅう ぶん かん 9 分 (間)	く じ かん 9 時間
10	じゅう びょう かん 10 秒 (間)	じゅうぶん かん 10 分 (間)	じゅう じ かん 10 時間
how many?	なんびょう かん 何秒 (間)	なんぶん かん 何分 (間)	なん じ かん 何時間

	<b>Days</b> か かん ～日間/～日間	<b>Weeks</b> しゅうかん ～週間	<b>Months</b> げつ かん ～か月 (間)	<b>Years</b> ねん かん ～年 (間)
1	いち にち かん 1 日 (間)	いっしゅうかん 1 週間	いつ げつ かん 1 か月 (間)	いち ねん かん 1 年 (間)
2	ふつ か かん 2 日間	にしゅうかん 2 週間	に げつ かん 2 か月 (間)	に ねん かん 2 年 (間)
3	みつ か かん 3 日間	さんしゅうかん 3 週間	さん げつ かん 3 か月 (間)	さん ねん かん 3 年 (間)
4	よっ か かん 4 日間	よんしゅうかん 4 週間	よん げつ かん 4 か月 (間)	よ ねん かん 4 年 (間)
5	いつ か かん 5 日間	ごしゅうかん 5 週間	ご げつ かん 5 か月 (間)	ご ねん かん 5 年 (間)
6	むい か かん 6 日間	ろくしゅうかん 6 週間	ろっ げつ かん 6 か月 (間)	ろく ねん かん 6 年 (間)
7	な の か かん 7 日間	ななしゅうかん 7 週間	なな げつ かん 7 か月 (間)	なな ねん かん 7 年 (間)
8	よう か かん 8 日間	はっしゅうかん 8 週間	はっ げつ かん 8 か月 (間)	はち ねん かん 8 年 (間)
9	ここのか かん 9 日間	きゅうしゅうかん 9 週間	きゅう げつ かん 9 か月 (間)	きゅう ねん かん 9 年 (間)
10	と お か かん 10 日間	じゅうしゅうかん 10 週間	じゅう げつ かん 10 か月 (間)	じゅう ねん かん 10 年 (間)
how many?	なん にち かん 何日間 ?	なん しゅうかん 何週間 ?	なん げつ かん 何か月 (間) ?	なん ねん かん 何年 (間) ?

## Using these words in sentences

There are a few ways to use these in sentences. The simplest is to use them without a particle after 「は」, or between 「を」 and the verb, like so:

I cleaned my room for 1 hour.

(私は) <sup>いち じ かん</sup> <sup>へ や</sup> <sup>そう じ</sup> 1 時間部屋を掃除しました。

(私は) <sup>へ や</sup> 部屋を <sup>いち じ かん</sup> <sup>そう じ</sup> 1 時間掃除しました。

He will travel Japan for two weeks.

かれ <sup>に しゅうかん</sup> <sup>に ほん</sup> <sup>りょう ぎょう</sup> 彼は2 週間日本を旅行します。

かれ <sup>に ほん</sup> <sup>に しゅうかん</sup> <sup>りょう ぎょう</sup> 彼は日本を2 週間旅行します。

I want to sleep for three days.

(私は) <sup>みっ か かん</sup> <sup>ね</sup> 3 日間寝たいです。

They waited for 40 minutes.

かれ <sup>よんじゅう ぶん</sup> <sup>ま</sup> 彼らは40 分待ちました。

The particle 「で」 can also be applied, since the amount of time can be thought of as a means or a tool - that is, time is something that you use to complete the action. The difference between using 「で」 and no particle is that when 「で」 is used, it implies that the activity was *completed* in that amount of time. When no particle is used, it simply means that the action was performed for that long. Compare these two sentences:

<sup>いち じ かん</sup> <sup>へ や</sup> <sup>そう じ</sup> 1 時間部屋を掃除しました。

I cleaned my room **for** 1 hour.

<sup>いち じ かん</sup> <sup>へ や</sup> <sup>そう じ</sup> 1 時間で部屋を掃除しました。

I cleaned my room **in** 1 hour.

As you can see, the first sentence states **how long I spent** cleaning my room, while the second sentence states **how long it took me** to clean my room. In other words, sentence one is a general statement, while sentence two implies there was a specific task that needed completion. Here are some more examples using 「で」:

She read the book in 45 minutes.

かの じょ <sup>よんじゅうご ぶん</sup> <sup>ほん</sup> <sup>よ</sup> 彼女は45 分で本を読みました。

He completed the project in 6 months.

かれ <sup>ろく げつ</sup> <sup>かん せい</sup> 彼は6 か月でプロジェクトを完成しました。

I want to reach the hotel in two hours.

に じ かん  
2 時間でホテルに着つきたいです。

As with words related to timing, these period of time counters can be used like any other nouns when the main verb of the sentence is 「です」. Here are some examples:

This movie is 95 minutes (long).

この映画えい がは きゅうじゅうご ぶん  
9 5 分です。

One day is enough.

いち にち じゅうぶん  
1 日は十分です。

Two weeks is 14 days.

に しゅうかん じゅうよっかかん  
2 週間は14 日間です。

## Exercise

- Translate the following sentences into Japanese. Write down each of your answers and say them aloud.
  - I walked for 3 hours.
  - She will study in the UK for 4 years.
  - He waited for 20 minutes.
  - They washed the car in 10 minutes.
  - He ran a marathon in 3 hours.
  - She fixed the door in 30 seconds.
  - How many minutes is this song?
  - This course is 3 months (long).

## Answers

1.

- さん じ かんある  
(私は) 3 時間歩きました。
- かのじょ よねんかん べんきょう  
彼女は4年間イギリスで勉強します。
- かれ にじゅうぶん ま  
彼は20分待ちました。
- かれ じゅうぶん くるま あら  
彼らは10分で車を洗いました。

- e) 彼は3時間でマラソンを走りました。  
 f) 彼女は30秒でドアを直しました。  
 g) この歌は何分ですか？  
 h) このコースは3か月(間)です。

## Extra uses

This section contains some additional ways to use expressions for periods of time, but are less important than the others. Feel free to skip this section and come back to it later.

### Using period to describe timing

Just as in English expressions like “in three days”, it is also possible in Japanese to use a period of time to describe when something happened or is going to happen. This is done by combining the period of time with the words 「後」 and 「前」, followed by 「に」, as shown in the following table:

English	Japanese	Example	
In ...	[period of time] + 後に	In 5 days	5日間後に
... ago	[period of time] + 前に	4 months ago	4か月前に

The following examples demonstrate these expressions.

We will eat lunch in 10 minutes.

(私たちは)10分後に昼ご飯を食べます。

She will go to Japan in 2 weeks.

彼女は2週間後に日本に行きます。

He left home 3 hours ago.

彼は3時間前に家を出ました。

They got married 5 years ago.

彼らは5年前に結婚しました。

**かかります・～をかけて**

Another option for describing how long an activity lasts is to use the verb 「かかります」, which when applied to a period of time means “to take”. This can be used instead of the verb that describes the action to say things like, “It took 5 minutes”. Note that when used like this, however, the action itself is not stated, and therefore needs to be clear from the context. That is, it needs to be clear what took 5 minutes. It is possible to include both 「かかります」 and the action verb to say things like “It takes 5 minutes to walk to work from my house”, but this requires the action to be converted into a noun phrase, which is a more difficult topic that will be covered in Chapter 10.

When using 「かかります」, the time expression can be marked with the particle 「が」, although this can be omitted. To understand why 「が」 is the appropriate particle, see Transitive and Intransitive Verbs in Chapter 8.7. This verb, by the way, can also be used with an amount of money to say how much something costs. The following sentences demonstrate the use of 「かかります」:

It took 5 minutes.

ご ぶん  
5 分 (が) かかりました。

They took 3 hours by car.

かれ くるま さん じ かん  
彼らは車 で 3 時間 (が) かかりました。

It will take 8 months.

はっ げつ  
8 か月 (が) かかります。

This cost 500 yen.

ごひゃく えん  
これは500 円 (が) かかりました。

The て-form (to be introduced in Chapter 7) of a similar verb, 「かけます」, can also be used in combination with the verb describing the action to put greater emphasis on the amount of time taken. This is done in the following way:

[period of time] + をかけて

This can be used at various points in a sentence, but usually appears after 「は」, or at the beginning of the sentence when there is no 「は」.

This verb is much like the English word “spent”, such as in the sentence, “I spent 3 hours cleaning my room” (3 時間さん じ かんをかけて部屋へやを掃除そうじしました). The only difference between this and “I cleaned my room for three hours” (部屋へやを 3 時間さん じ かん掃除そうじしました) is

that it places more emphasis on the amount of time spent. Like 「かかります」, this too can be used with amounts of money. Here are some examples of this expression:

I spent two hours cleaning the kitchen.

(私は) <sup>に</sup> <sup>じ</sup> <sup>かん</sup> **2 時間** <sup>を</sup> <sup>たい</sup> <sup>どころ</sup> <sup>そう</sup> <sup>じ</sup> **かけて** <sup>だい</sup> <sup>どころ</sup> **台所** <sup>を</sup> **掃除** <sup>し</sup> **ました**。

He spent 6 weeks fixing his car.

かれ <sup>ろくしゅうかん</sup> **6 週間** <sup>を</sup> <sup>くる</sup> <sup>ま</sup> <sup>なお</sup> **かけて** <sup>くる</sup> <sup>ま</sup> **車** <sup>を</sup> **直** <sup>し</sup> **ました**。

They spent 3 months traveling in Japan.

かれ <sup>さん</sup> <sup>げつ</sup> <sup>かん</sup> **3 か月間** <sup>を</sup> <sup>に</sup> <sup>ほん</sup> <sup>りょ</sup> <sup>こう</sup> **かけて** <sup>に</sup> <sup>ほん</sup> **日本** <sup>を</sup> **旅行** <sup>し</sup> **ました**。

She spent 50,000 yen buying a bicycle.

かの <sup>じょ</sup> <sup>ご</sup> <sup>まん</sup> <sup>えん</sup> **5 万円** <sup>を</sup> <sup>じてん</sup> <sup>しゃ</sup> **かけて** <sup>じてん</sup> <sup>しゃ</sup> **自転車** <sup>を</sup> **買** <sup>い</sup> **ました**。

## 6.3 Frequency

There are a few ways to describe how often an activity happens, or its frequency. There are vague words like “always” and “sometimes”, expressions using numbers such as “three times a day”, or more specialized phrases like “every day” and “every year”. Let’s take a look at each of these types of expressions.

### New vocabulary

Nouns	
abroad	<sup>かい</sup> <sup>がい</sup> 海外
alarm	アラーム
cinema/movie theatre	<sup>えい</sup> <sup>が</sup> <sup>かん</sup> 映画館
contract	<sup>けい</sup> <sup>やく</sup> 契約
home town	<sup>じ</sup> <sup>もと</sup> 地元
news	ニュース
Olympics	オリンピック
test	テスト

Verbs (polite present tense)	
hold (events etc.)	<sup>かい</sup> <sup>さい</sup> 開催します
renew	<sup>こう</sup> <sup>しん</sup> 更新します
ring	なります
win	<sup>か</sup> 勝ちます

## Vague frequency words

The simplest but least specific way to talk about how often something occurs is to use words with meanings like “always” and “sometimes”. Here are the most common words:

always	いつも
often	よく
sometimes	ときどき 時々*
occasionally	たまに
hardly ever	めったに
never	ぜんぜん 全然

\* 「タ」 is a special kanji that is used to repeat the preceding kanji rather than writing it twice. 「時々」, for example, could also be written as 「時時」, but rarely is. Other words that use this character include the 「人々」, a plural form of 「人」 meaning "people", and the Tokyo suburb of 「代々木」.

**Important:** 「めったに」 and 「ぜんぜん」 should always be used with a negative verb conjugation. Also note that 「全然」 has other uses that do not relate to time.

These words are used without particles (except for those with 「に」 already included above), and will usually appear after 「は」, or in between 「を」 and the verb. Here are some example sentences that include these words:

He always wins.  
かれはいつも勝ちます。

I often come to this restaurant.  
(私は)よくこのレストランに来ます。

I eat sushi sometimes.  
(私は)時々すしを食べます。

She watches TV occasionally.  
かのじょはたまにテレビを見ます。

They hardly ever go to the cinema.  
かれらはめったに映画館に行きません。

I never drink coffee.

私は<sup>ぜんぜん</sup>全然<sup>の</sup>コーヒーを飲みません。

## Every...

The easiest way to be more specific about how often something occurs is to use expressions that mean “every ...”. For larger units of time, there are specific words with this kind of meaning. Other units of time and non-standard frequencies can be expressed by saying the period of time followed by 「ごとに」, as will be explained shortly. Here are the most common “every ...” words:

every year	まいとし 毎年
every month	まいつき 毎月
every week	まいしゅう 毎週
every weekend	まいしゅうまつ 毎週末
every day	まいにち 毎日
every morning	まいあさ 毎朝
every evening	まいばん 毎晩
every [period of time]	[period of time] ごとに

These words can be used on their own without a particle, and will mostly appear at the beginning of a sentence, after 「は」, or between 「を」 and the verb. Here are some examples:

I play basketball every week

私は<sup>まいしゅう</sup>毎週バスケットをします。

There is a meeting every month

<sup>まいつきかいぎ</sup>毎月会議があります。

He renews his contract every year

<sup>かれ</sup>彼は<sup>まいとし</sup>毎年<sup>けいやく</sup>契約を<sup>こうしん</sup>更新します。

She watches the news every night

<sup>かのじょ</sup>彼女は<sup>まいばん</sup>毎晩ニュースを<sup>み</sup>見ます。

They can also be combined with context-dependent time words like days or months to say things like “every Monday” or “every April”. This is simply done like so:

[‘every’ word] + の + [context-dependent time word]

Saying “every Monday”, for example, would therefore be 「毎週<sup>まいしゅう</sup>の月曜日<sup>げつようび</sup>」, which could be more literally translated as “every week’s Monday”. Here are some more examples:

Every Tuesday	毎週 <sup>まいしゅう</sup> の火曜日 <sup>かようび</sup>
The third of every month	毎月 <sup>まいつき</sup> の3日 <sup>みっか</sup>
Every September	毎年 <sup>まいとし</sup> の9月 <sup>くがつ</sup>
Every morning at 7 o'clock	毎朝 <sup>まいあさ</sup> の7時 <sup>しちじ</sup>

Like other time word combinations, since these “every” combinations always end in a context-dependent time word, they should be followed by 「に」 when used in a sentence, as shown in the examples below:

I play basketball every Sunday.

私は毎週<sup>まいしゅう</sup>の日曜日<sup>にちようび</sup>にバスケットをします。

There is a meeting on the first of every month.

毎月<sup>まいつき</sup>の1日<sup>ついたち</sup>に会議<sup>かいぎ</sup>があります。

He renews his contract every April.

彼は毎年<sup>まいとし</sup>の4月<sup>しがつ</sup>に契約<sup>けいやく</sup>を更新<sup>こうしん</sup>します。

She watches the news at 6 o'clock every night.

彼女は毎晩<sup>まいばん</sup>の6時<sup>ろくじ</sup>にニュースをみ<sup>み</sup>ます。

The limitations of these words are that there is no specific ‘every’ word for smaller units like minutes and hours, and you can only use them when the frequency of something is every *one* week or every *one* month. An alternative that allows more flexibility is to combine a period of time with 「ごと」に, like so:

[period of time] + ごとに

This allows you to say things like “every hour” or “every two weeks”. This can even be used to replace the specific “every” words that start with 「毎」, so you could say

“every week” by saying 「1 週間<sup>いっしゅうかん</sup>ごとに」 instead of 「毎週<sup>まいしゅう</sup>」. The latter is preferable, but the flexibility of 「ごとに」 makes it a simple alternative that you may find easier to remember in the short term. Here are some examples of 「ごとに」 being used in a sentence:

There is a test every two weeks.

2 週間<sup>に しゅうかん</sup>ごとにテストがあります。

The alarm rings every five minutes.

アラームは5 分<sup>ご ぶん</sup>ごとになります。

He travels abroad every six months.

彼は6 か月<sup>かれ ろっ げつ</sup>ごとに海外<sup>かいがい</sup>に旅行<sup>りょこう</sup>します。

The Olympics are held every four years.

オリンピックは4 年<sup>よ ねん</sup>ごとに開催<sup>かいさい</sup>されます。<sup>2</sup>

## Number of times per...

The most flexible way to talk about frequency in specific terms is to say how many times something happens in a certain period. This is done like so:

[period of time] + に + [number of times]

This requires you to know the counter for the number of times something is done, 「回<sup>かい</sup>」. The 「回<sup>かい</sup>」 counter for the numbers one through ten is as follows:

Once	1 回 <sup>いっ かい</sup>
Twice	2 回 <sup>に かい</sup>
3 times	3 回 <sup>さん かい</sup>
4 times	4 回 <sup>よん かい</sup>
5 times	5 回 <sup>ご かい</sup>
6 times	6 回 <sup>ろっ かい</sup>
7 times	7 回 <sup>なな かい</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 「されます」 is the passive form of 「します」. Basically, 「開催<sup>かいさい</sup>します」 means “to hold”, while 「開催<sup>かいさい</sup>されます」 means “to be held”. The passive form will be explained in more detail in Chapter 12.4.

8 times	はっ かい 8 回
9 times	きゅう かい 9 回
10 times	じゅう かい 10 回
How many times?	なん かい 何回 ?

Like other counters, for numbers beyond ten, the number is pronounced as normal, except with the last digit being expressed as shown in the above table. Also, note that this is very similar to the counter for floors in a building. The floor counter, however, uses a different character when written (階), and usually has a different pronunciation for the number three (さんがい).

If we now use 「に」 to connect a number expressed using the 「回」 counter with a period of time, we can form phrases like the following:

Once every three days	みっ か かん いっ かい 3 日間に 1 回
Twice a week	いっ しゅうかん に かい 1 週間に 2 回
15 times a month	いっ げつ じゅうご かい 1 か月に 15 回
Once every 5 years	ご ねん いっ かい 5 年に 1 回
Ten times every 6 hours	ろく じ かん じゅう かい 6 時間に 10 回
How many times a day?	いち にち なん かい 1 日に何回 ?

If the period of time is one day, one week, one month or one year, it is not necessary to say the period expression in full (such as 「1年間」). Instead, the simple word for that unit of time can be used: 日, 週, 月 or 年. The following expressions are therefore valid:

Three times a day	ひ さん かい 日に 3 回
Twice a week	しゅう に かい 週に 2 回
Five times a month	つき ご かい 月に 5 回
How many times a year?	ねん なん かい 年に何回 ?

When used in a sentence, these expressions are used without a particle, and usually appear after 「は」, or between 「を」 and the verb, as shown in the following examples.

How many times a day do you brush your teeth?

(あなたは) <sup>ひ</sup>日に<sup>なんかい</sup>何回<sup>は</sup>歯<sup>みが</sup>を磨きますか？

I go to Tokyo twice every 3 months.

(私は) <sup>さん</sup>3か<sup>げつ</sup>月に<sup>に</sup>2回<sup>にかい</sup>東京<sup>とうきょう</sup>に行きます。

He plays soccer three times every two weeks.

<sup>かれ</sup>彼は<sup>に</sup>2週<sup>しゅうかん</sup>間に<sup>さん</sup>3回<sup>かい</sup>サッカーをします。

She returns to her home town twice a year.

<sup>かのじょ</sup>彼女は<sup>ねん</sup>年に<sup>に</sup>2回<sup>かい</sup>地元<sup>じもと</sup>に帰ります。

## 6.4 Using expressions of time with nouns

### New vocabulary

economic conditions	<sup>けい き</sup> 景気
rent	<sup>や ちん</sup> 家賃

It is also possible to use expressions of time in combination with other words to talk about things of that time, frequency or period. You can do this by connecting the ‘thing’ with the time expression using the particle 「の」. When used with 「<sup>いま</sup>今」, this allows you to talk about your or someone else’s current situation. Here are some examples:

His current job	<sup>かれ いま し ごと</sup> 彼の今の仕事
Current economic conditions	<sup>いま けい き</sup> 今の景気
Yesterday’s lunch	<sup>きのう ひる はん</sup> 昨日の昼ご飯
This month’s rent	<sup>こんげつ や ちん</sup> 今月の家賃
Every day’s breakfast	<sup>まいにち あさ はん</sup> 毎日の朝ご飯
The weekly meeting	<sup>まいしゅう かい ぎ</sup> 毎週の会議
A three year contract	<sup>さんねんかん けいやく</sup> 3年間の契約
A two week break/vacation	<sup>に しゅうかん やす</sup> 2週間の休み

## Chapter 7

# Adjectives, nouns and adverbs

As essential parts of language, we have used adjectives, nouns and a few adverbs throughout this book to help us understand the basics of Japanese grammar. In this chapter, we will take a closer look at each of these parts of speech so that we can use them more accurately and effectively.

The main focus of this chapter is adjectives, as they are the most varied in terms of both their usage, as well as the forms that they take. Additionally, developing a solid understanding of adjectives will actually help us better understand how nouns fit into basic sentences, while also giving us the foundation we need to understand and use adverbs.

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to use adjectives and nouns in informal speech, the past tense and the negative form, as well as further enhance your descriptions with the use of adverbs.

### 7.1 Adjective types

Adjectives in Japanese can be divided into two categories, commonly known as い-adjectives and な-adjectives. The difference between these two types purely relates to syntax, meaning they only differ in how they are used to fit into sentences.

Essentially, all い-adjectives end with the 「い」 from the a-line of the syllabary (not the other “i” sounds like 「き」 or 「し」), while most な-adjectives do not. な-adjectives

are called this because they need to be followed by 「な」 in certain situations. This will be explained shortly.

Let's first look at some examples of each adjective type.

## い-adjectives

good	いい/ よい
bad	わる 悪い
happy	うれ 嬉しい
sad	かな 悲しい
big	おお 大きい
small	ちい 小さい
delicious	おいしい
awful (taste)	まずい
hot	あつ 暑い
cold	さむ 寒い
interesting/funny	おもしろ 面白い
boring	つまらない
fun	たの 楽しい
beautiful	うつく 美しい

fast	はや 速い
early	はや 早い
slow, late	おそ 遅い
new	あたら 新しい
old	ふる 古い
ugly	みにくい
cute	かわいい
cheap	やす 安い
expensive	たか 高い
difficult	むずか 難しい
noisy	うるさい
dirty	きたな 汚い
want	ほ 欲しい
I want to...	～たい

## な-adjectives

well/spirited	げん き 元氣
strange	へん 変
easy	かんたん 簡単
quiet	しず 静か
convenient	べん り 便利

famous	ゆう めい 有名
important	たい せつ 大切
good at	じょうず 上手
bad at	へ た 下手
necessary	ひつ よう 必要

inconvenient	ふ べん 不便
pretty/clean	きれい

like	す 好き
hate	きら 嫌い

The first thing to note here is that “good” can be 「いい」 or 「<sup>よ</sup>良い」. It is usually (although not always) used as 「いい」 on its own, but becomes 「<sup>よ</sup>良い」 when it is changed to another form, like a negative or past tense. This will become more clear as we use these other forms throughout this chapter.

Secondly, as you can see, there are in fact some な-adjectives that end in 「い」. These are still classed as な-adjectives, though, because of how they are used in sentences. Unfortunately, on their own, there is no guaranteed rule that we can use to determine whether an adjective ending in 「い」 is an い-adjective or a な-adjective. For this reason, it may help to learn all な-adjectives by remembering them with the 「な」 included, for example, 「<sup>げん き</sup>元気な」, or 「きれい<sup>な</sup>」. If you do this, however, you need to be sure to remove the 「な」 when it's not needed, which will be explained below.

Also, if you recall from Chapter 4.4, the Japanese words for “like” and “want” are 「<sup>す</sup>好き」 and 「<sup>ほ</sup>欲しい」, respectively, and they are both adjectives. The “I want...” expression introduced in Chapter 4.2, as well as 「<sup>きら</sup>嫌い」, the word for “hate”, are also adjectives. These are generally treated like any other adjective, with 「<sup>す</sup>好き」 and 「<sup>きら</sup>嫌い」 being な-adjectives, and 「<sup>ほ</sup>欲しい」 and 「～たい」 being い-adjectives. They will be featured throughout this chapter to help further your understanding of their usage.

## 7.2 Using adjectives before nouns

### New vocabulary

bag	カバン
building	たてもの 建物
country	くに 国
to find	みつけます
food	た 食べ物 もの
place	ば しょ 場所
scenery	け し き 景色

Adjectives can be placed before nouns to add meaning to them, wherever they may appear in a sentence. With い-adjectives, we can just place them immediately before the noun, as shown here:

a good person	いい人
a sad person	<sup>かな</sup> 悲しい人
an interesting movie	<sup>おもしろ</sup> 面白い <sup>えい が</sup> 映画
beautiful scenery	<sup>うつく</sup> 美しい <sup>けしき</sup> 景色
the car I want	(私の) <sup>ほ</sup> 欲しい <sup>くるま</sup> 車
the movie I want to watch	(私の) <sup>み</sup> 見たい <sup>えい が</sup> 映画

For な-adjectives, however, a 「な」 needs to be added at the end of the adjective in order to connect it to the noun, like so:

a famous person	<sup>ゆうめい</sup> 有名な <sup>ひと</sup> 人
a quiet person	<sup>しず</sup> 静かな <sup>ひと</sup> 人
a strange place	<sup>へん</sup> 変な <sup>ばしょ</sup> 場所
the car I like	(私の) <sup>す</sup> 好きな <sup>くるま</sup> 車
the music I hate	(私の) <sup>きら</sup> 嫌いな <sup>おんがく</sup> 音楽

In this case, as long as you can recognize what type of adjective you are dealing with, you just need to know to include 「な」 if it is a な-adjective.

When an adjective is used before a noun as in the examples above, the combined phrase (adjective + noun) can then be used in a sentence as if it were just another noun. This is the same as English, as the examples below show:

He is a person.

彼は<sup>ひと</sup>人です。

He is an interesting person.

彼は<sup>おもしろ</sup>面白い<sup>ひと</sup>人です。

He is a strange person.

彼は<sup>へん</sup>変な<sup>ひと</sup>人です。

I watched a movie.

(私は) <sup>えい が み</sup>映画を見ました。

I watched an interesting movie.

(私は) <sup>おもしろ えい が み</sup>面白い映画を見ました。

I watched a strange movie.

(私は) <sup>へん えい が み</sup>変な映画を見ました。

This is a car

これは <sup>くるま</sup>車です。

This is the car I want.

これは <sup>ほ</sup>私の <sup>くるま</sup>欲しい車です。

This is the car I want to buy.

これは <sup>か</sup>私の <sup>くるま</sup>買いたい車です。

This is the car I like.

これは <sup>す</sup>私の <sup>くるま</sup>好きな車です。

This is the car I hate.

これは <sup>きら</sup>私の <sup>くるま</sup>嫌いな車です。

## Exercise

1. Say and write down the following phrases in Japanese.

- a) a cold night
- b) a beautiful country
- c) an ugly building
- d) the bag I want
- e) the house I want to buy
- f) a quiet restaurant
- g) a convenient shop
- h) pretty scenery
- i) the food I hate
- j) the music I like

2. Say and write down the following sentences in Japanese.

- a) I like cold nights.
- b) Japan is a beautiful country.
- c) That (over there) is an ugly building.
- d) The bag I want is expensive.
- e) I found the house I want to buy.
- f) I went to a quiet restaurant.
- g) This is a convenient shop.
- h) There is a lot of pretty scenery in Hokkaido.
- i) She made the food I hate.
- j) We listened to the music I like.

## Answers

1.

- a) 寒い夜 さむ よる
- b) 美しい国 うつく くに
- c) みにくい建物 たてもの
- d) (私の)欲しいカバン ほ
- e) (私の)買いたい家 か いえ
- f) 静かなレストラン しず
- g) 便利な店 べんり みせ
- h) きれいな景色 けしき
- i) (私の)嫌いな食べ物 きら た もの
- j) (私の)好きな音楽 す おんがく

2.

- a) 私は寒い夜が好きです。 さむ よる す
- b) 日本は美しい国です。 にほん うつく くに
- c) あれはみにくい建物です。 たてもの
- d) (私の)欲しいカバンは高いです。 ほ たか

- e) (私の)<sup>か</sup>買<sup>い</sup>たい家<sup>み</sup>を見<sup>み</sup>つけました。
- f) 私は<sup>しず</sup>静<sup>い</sup>かなレ<sup>い</sup>ス<sup>い</sup>トラ<sup>い</sup>ンに行<sup>い</sup>きました。
- g) これは<sup>べんり</sup>便<sup>みせ</sup>利<sup>み</sup>な店<sup>みせ</sup>です。
- h) 北<sup>ほっかいどう</sup>海<sup>かい</sup>道<sup>どう</sup>に<sup>けしき</sup>きれ<sup>き</sup>いな景<sup>け</sup>色<sup>しき</sup>が<sup>たくさん</sup>た<sup>く</sup>さ<sup>ん</sup>あ<sup>あ</sup>り<sup>ま</sup>す。
- i) 彼女<sup>かのう</sup>は(私の)<sup>きら</sup>嫌<sup>た</sup>いな食<sup>もの</sup>べ<sup>つく</sup>物<sup>ぶつ</sup>を作<sup>つく</sup>りました。
- j) (私<sup>わたし</sup>たちは)私<sup>わたし</sup>の<sup>す</sup>好<sup>おんがく</sup>きな音<sup>おんがく</sup>楽<sup>き</sup>を<sup>き</sup>聞<sup>き</sup>きました。

### 7.3 Adjectives at the end of informal sentences

As discussed in Chapter 3.1, Japanese has different levels of politeness. 「です」 is the polite version of “to be”, but in informal language, when a sentence ends in an adjective, the “to be” verb is different according to which type of adjective is being used.

#### New vocabulary

baby	<sup>あか</sup> 赤 <sup>ちゃん</sup> ちゃん
town	<sup>まち</sup> 町

#### な-adjectives

For な-adjectives, 「です」 is just replaced by 「だ」 to make it informal. Below are the polite and informal ways of saying different sentences using な-adjectives.

English	Polite	Informal
I am well.	私は <sup>げんき</sup> 元 <sup>き</sup> 氣 <sup>き</sup> です。	私は <sup>げんき</sup> 元 <sup>き</sup> 氣 <sup>き</sup> だ。
This is strange.	これは <sup>へん</sup> 変 <sup>へん</sup> です。	これは <sup>へん</sup> 変 <sup>へん</sup> だ。
Japanese is easy.	に <sup>ほんご</sup> 本 <sup>ご</sup> 語 <sup>ご</sup> は <sup>かんたん</sup> 簡 <sup>かん</sup> 単 <sup>たん</sup> です。	に <sup>ほんご</sup> 本 <sup>ご</sup> 語 <sup>ご</sup> は <sup>かんたん</sup> 簡 <sup>かん</sup> 単 <sup>たん</sup> だ
He is famous.	彼は <sup>ゆうめい</sup> 有 <sup>めい</sup> 名 <sup>めい</sup> です。	彼は <sup>ゆうめい</sup> 有 <sup>めい</sup> 名 <sup>めい</sup> だ。
I like sushi.	(私は) <sup>す</sup> す <sup>す</sup> しが好 <sup>す</sup> きです。	(私は) <sup>す</sup> す <sup>す</sup> しが好 <sup>す</sup> きだ。
I hate natto.	(私は) <sup>なっとう</sup> 納 <sup>き</sup> 豆 <sup>ら</sup> が嫌 <sup>きら</sup> い <sup>き</sup> です。	(私は) <sup>なっとう</sup> 納 <sup>き</sup> 豆 <sup>ら</sup> が嫌 <sup>きら</sup> い <sup>き</sup> だ。

## い-adjectives

For い-adjectives, a polite sentence can be converted into an informal sentence by simply omitting 「です」.

English	Polite	Informal
That is good.	それはいいです。	それはいい。
I am happy.	私は <sup>うれ</sup> しいです。	私は <sup>うれ</sup> しい。
He is sad.	彼は <sup>かな</sup> しいです。	彼は <sup>かな</sup> しい。
This movie is boring.	この映画はつまらないです。	この映画はつまらない。
I want sushi.	(私は)すしが <sup>ほ</sup> しいです。	(私は)すしが <sup>ほ</sup> しい。
I want to watch a movie.	(私は) <sup>えい が</sup> 映画が <sup>み</sup> たいです。	(私は) <sup>えい が</sup> 映画が <sup>み</sup> たい。

One important thing to remember here is that 「は」 is not equivalent to “is”. It may look like that in the informal sentences, but that is just your English-speaking brain recognizing a pattern and trying to tell you that words must go in a certain order. In this case, your brain is wrong. Thinking that 「は」 means “is” will likely cause you confusion when using other verbs or more complicated sentences. As always, 「は」 defines the topic of the sentence, and the remainder of the sentence is like additional information related to that topic. Nothing has changed.

What this means is that in informal sentences that end in い-adjectives, the verb has effectively disappeared. In reality, it does exist, because a complete sentence absolutely must contain a verb, and all of the above sentences are grammatically complete. The best explanation as to why it doesn't appear is that the verb “to be” is actually included in い-adjectives when they are used in this way (but only then). This is a more accurate assessment, and also explains why い-adjectives have a past tense, as you will see in the next section.

Regardless of the technical reasoning, the important thing to remember is that い-adjectives can end informal sentences without any other verb present, and that 「は」, as always, defines the topic of the sentence and does not mean “is”.

## Exercise

1. Say and write down the following sentences in informal Japanese.

- a) This is fun.
- b) That baby (over there) is cute.
- c) Japanese TV is interesting/funny.
- d) I want a new car.
- e) I want to go to Okinawa.
- f) This town is famous.
- g) Your house is clean.
- h) That man (over there) is strange.
- i) I like dogs.
- j) I hate noisy people.

## Answers

1.

- a) これは楽しい。
- b) あの赤ちゃんはかわいい。
- c) 日本にほんのテレビおもしろは面白い。
- d) (私は) 新あたしい車くるまが欲しい。
- e) (私は) 沖縄おきなわに行きたい。
- f) この町まちは有名ゆうめいだ。
- g) (あなたの) 家いえはきれいだ。
- h) あの男おとこの人ひとは変へんだ。
- i) (私は) 犬いぬが喜欢すいだ。
- j) (私は) うるさい人ひとが嫌いきらいだ。

## 7.4 Adjectives in the past tense

In English, we use the past tense of the verb “to be” to describe something in the past, for example, “That movie *was* interesting”. In Japanese, we do the same if we are using a な-adjective, but い-adjectives are treated differently. Let’s take a look at each now.

### New vocabulary

lake

みづうみ  
湖

### な-adjectives

For な-adjectives, much like we change “is” to “was” in English, we just need to change the verb from 「です」 into its past tense form, 「でした」. Note that the “i” sound in 「でした」 is usually silent, and is therefore pronounced “deshta”.

That was strange.

それは<sup>へん</sup>変でした。

He was famous.

彼は<sup>ゆうめい</sup>有名でした。

That restaurant was quiet.

あのレストランは<sup>しず</sup>静かでした。

I liked ramen.

(私は) ラーメンが<sup>す</sup>好きでした。

I hated yakisoba.

焼きそばが<sup>きら</sup>嫌いでした。

The informal version of 「でした」 is 「だった」. Everything else remains the same, hence the less polite way to express the above sentences is as follows:

That was strange.

それは<sup>へん</sup>変だった。

He was famous.

彼は<sup>ゆうめい</sup>有名だった。

That restaurant was quiet.

あのレストランは<sup>しず</sup>静かだった。

I liked ramen.

(私は)ラーメンが<sup>す</sup>好きだった。

I hated yakisoba.

<sup>や</sup>焼きそばが<sup>きら</sup>嫌いだった。

## い-adjectives

Unlike な-adjectives, い-adjectives themselves can actually be expressed in the past tense. This means that instead of changing 「です」 to 「でした」, we change the adjective itself, and leave the 「です」 as is.

To change an い-adjective into the past tense, remove the last 「い」 and add 「かった」. Make sure that you only remove one “i” sound if it is an elongated “ī”. This should be obvious when writing in kanji and hiragana, but when speaking (or if you find yourself writing in romaji), be sure to only remove the last “i” sound, and leave any other “i” sounds that precede them, such as 「し」, intact.

	Non-past tense	Past tense
good	<sup>い</sup> 良い	<sup>よ</sup> 良かった
bad	<sup>わる</sup> 悪い	<sup>わる</sup> 悪かった
happy	<sup>うれ</sup> 嬉しい	<sup>うれ</sup> 嬉しかった
sad	<sup>かな</sup> 悲しい	<sup>かな</sup> 悲しかった
interesting	<sup>おもしろ</sup> 面白い	<sup>おもしろ</sup> 面白かった
boring	つまらない	つまらなかった
I want...	<sup>ほ</sup> 欲しい	<sup>ほ</sup> 欲しかった
I want to...	～たい	～たかった

To use these in sentences, we just put them where their non-past tense equivalent would go.

That was good.

それは<sup>よ</sup>良かったです。

That movie was interesting.

あの映画は面白<sup>えい が おもしろ</sup>かったです。

He was sad.

彼は悲<sup>かな</sup>しかったです。

I wanted a dog.

犬<sup>いぬ</sup>が欲<sup>ほ</sup>しかったです。

I wanted to watch a movie.

(私は)映画<sup>えい が</sup>が見<sup>み</sup>たかったです。

Remember that since the adjective is already in the past tense, the verb 「です」 remains unchanged.

In informal speech, the 「です」 is simply left off, just as we saw with い-adjectives in the non-past tense.

That was good.

それは良<sup>よ</sup>かった。

That movie was interesting.

あの映画は面白<sup>えい が おもしろ</sup>かった。

He was sad.

彼は悲<sup>かな</sup>しかった。

I wanted a dog.

犬<sup>いぬ</sup>が欲<sup>ほ</sup>しかった。

I wanted to watch a movie.

(私は)映画<sup>えい が</sup>が見<sup>み</sup>たかった。

## Exercise

1. Convert each of these い-adjectives into the past tense.

a) いい/良<sup>よ</sup>い

b) 悪<sup>わる</sup>い

c) まずい

- d) 暑い あつ
- e) 新しい あた
- f) 古い ふる
- g) 美しい うつく
- h) みにくい
- i) うるさい
- j) かわいい

2. Say and write down each of the following sentences in Japanese in **both the polite and informal** forms.

- a) The train was inconvenient.
- b) Until last week, this town was quiet.
- c) In 1970, she was famous.
- d) I liked The Beatles.
- e) Last year, I hated him.
- f) The lake was cold.
- g) Today's lunch was delicious.
- h) The football match was fun.
- i) I wanted a new car.
- j) I wanted to sleep on the sofa.

## Answers

1.

- a) 良かった よ
- b) 悪かった わる
- c) まずかった
- d) 暑かった あつ
- e) 新しかった あた
- f) 古かった ふる
- g) 美しかった うつく
- h) みにくかった

- i) うるさかった
- j) かわいかった

2.

Polite:

- a) 電車<sup>でんしゃ</sup>は不便<sup>ふべん</sup>でした。
- b) 先週<sup>せんしゅう</sup>まで、この町<sup>まち</sup>は静か<sup>しず</sup>でした。
- c) 1970年<sup>ねん</sup>に彼女<sup>ゆうめい</sup>は有名<sup>ゆうめい</sup>でした。
- d) (私は)ビートルズ<sup>す</sup>が好き<sup>す</sup>でした。
- e) 去年<sup>きょねん</sup>、(私は)彼<sup>かれ</sup>が嫌い<sup>きら</sup>でした。
- f) 湖<sup>みずうみ</sup>は寒<sup>さむ</sup>かったです。
- g) 今日<sup>きょう</sup>の昼<sup>ひる</sup>ご飯<sup>はん</sup>はおいしかったです。
- h) フットボール<sup>しあいたの</sup>の試合<sup>しあいたの</sup>は楽し<sup>たの</sup>かったです。
- i) 新<sup>あたら</sup>しい車<sup>くるま</sup>が欲<sup>ほ</sup>しかったです。
- j) (私は)ソファで寝<sup>ね</sup>たかったです。

Informal:

- a) 電車<sup>でんしゃ</sup>は不便<sup>ふべん</sup>だった。
- b) 先週<sup>せんしゅう</sup>まで、この町<sup>まち</sup>は静か<sup>しず</sup>だった。
- c) 1970年<sup>ねん</sup>に彼女<sup>ゆうめい</sup>は有名<sup>ゆうめい</sup>だった。
- d) (私は)ビートルズ<sup>す</sup>が好き<sup>す</sup>だった。
- e) 去年<sup>きょねん</sup>、(私は)彼<sup>かれ</sup>が嫌い<sup>きら</sup>だった。
- f) 湖<sup>みずうみ</sup>は寒<sup>さむ</sup>かった。
- g) 今日<sup>きょう</sup>の昼<sup>ひる</sup>ご飯<sup>はん</sup>はおいしかった。
- h) フットボール<sup>しあいたの</sup>の試合<sup>しあいたの</sup>は楽し<sup>たの</sup>かった。
- i) 新<sup>あたら</sup>しい車<sup>くるま</sup>が欲<sup>ほ</sup>しかった。
- j) (私は)ソファで寝<sup>ね</sup>たかった。

## 7.5 Negatives of adjectives

In English, to say the negative of an adjective, we just use the word “not”, for example, “This is not good”, “That is not interesting”, etc. In Japanese, this too is done differently for な-adjectives and い-adjectives. Let’s take a look.

### な-adjectives

な-adjectives are easy, as they simply require us to add 「じゃない」 to the end of the word without changing anything else.

not healthy/well	<sup>げん き</sup> 元気じゃない
not strange	<sup>へん</sup> 変じゃない
not quiet	<sup>しず</sup> 静かじゃない
not famous	<sup>ゆう めい</sup> 有名じゃない
don’t like	<sup>す</sup> 好きじゃない
don’t hate	<sup>きら</sup> 嫌いじゃない

### い-adjectives

To convert an い-adjective into the negative, we remove the 「い」 at the end, and add 「くない」, like so:

Positive		Negative	
good	いい/ <sup>よい</sup> 良い	not good	<sup>よ</sup> 良くない
bad	<sup>わる</sup> 悪い	not bad	<sup>わる</sup> 悪くない
happy	<sup>うれ</sup> 嬉しい	not happy	<sup>うれ</sup> 嬉しくない
sad	<sup>かな</sup> 悲しい	not sad	<sup>かな</sup> 悲しくない
I want...	<sup>ほ</sup> 欲しい	I don’t want...	<sup>ほ</sup> 欲しくない
I want to...	～たい	I don’t want to...	～たくない

When the last sound before 「くない」 is 「し」, the “i” sound after the “sh” is usually silent, so 「<sup>うれ</sup>嬉しくない」 would be pronounced “ureshkunai”, and 「<sup>ほ</sup>欲しくない」 would be “hoshkunai”.

Note that these words are also subtly different from the word with the opposite meaning. For example, “not good” is not exactly the same as “bad”. Just as is the case in English, something can be neither good nor bad, but somewhere in between. The same applies for all adjectives of both types.

## Exercise

1. Say and write down each of the following negative adjectives in Japanese.

- a) not convenient
- b) not inconvenient
- c) not pretty
- d) not delicious
- e) not awful (taste)
- f) not cold
- g) not interesting/funny
- h) not fun
- i) not new
- j) not cute

## Answers

1.

- a) <sup>べん り</sup> 便利じゃない
- b) <sup>ふ べん</sup> 不便じゃない
- c) きれいじゃない
- d) おいしくない
- e) まずくない
- f) <sup>さむ</sup> 寒くない
- g) <sup>おもしろ</sup> 面白くない
- h) <sup>たの</sup> 楽しくない
- i) <sup>あた</sup> 新しくない
- j) かわいくない

## Using negative adjectives

Adjectives in their negative form can actually be used in all the same ways as adjectives in the normal, positive form. What makes life a bit easier is that both い-adjectives and な-adjectives actually become い-adjectives when they are negative. This means they all function in the same way as い-adjectives in the following ways:

- They can be placed immediately before nouns without adding 「な」
- They can be used unmodified to end sentences in informal speech
- They can be converted to the past tense by replacing the last 「い」 with 「かった」

Let's now look at each of these.

## Placing negative adjectives before nouns

When な-adjectives are placed before a noun, 「な」 needs to be inserted in between the adjective and the noun, such as in 「<sup>げん き</sup>元気<sup>ひと</sup>な人」. Negative adjectives, however, can be placed immediately before a noun unmodified, just like all い-adjectives. Here are some examples:

a not good person

<sup>よ</sup>良くない<sup>ひと</sup>人

an uninteresting movie

<sup>おもしろ</sup>面白くない<sup>えい が</sup>映画

not beautiful scenery

<sup>うつく</sup>美しくない<sup>け し き</sup>景色

the car I don't want

<sup>ほ</sup>私の<sup>く</sup>欲しくない<sup>くるま</sup>車

the bag I don't want to buy

<sup>か</sup>私の<sup>か</sup>買いたくないカバン

—

a not famous person

<sup>ゆう めい</sup>有名じゃない<sup>ひと</sup>人

a not quiet person

<sup>しず</sup>静じゃない<sup>ひと</sup>人

a not strange place

変<sup>へん</sup>じゃない場所<sup>ばしょ</sup>

the car I don't like

私の好き<sup>す</sup>じゃない車<sup>くるま</sup>

the food I don't hate

私の嫌い<sup>きら</sup>じゃない食べ物<sup>たもの</sup>

Some of the phrases above probably sound strange in English, but in Japanese they are quite natural. In English, we sometimes change the sentence around a bit to express the above ideas in a more natural way. For example, we might put “not” somewhere closer to the verb in the sentence, rather than near the adjective, or we might use what's known as a relative clause (eg. “scenery that is not beautiful”). In Japanese, simply placing the negative adjective before the noun like in the above examples is the most natural solution.

## Using negative adjectives to end sentences in informal speech

Just as い-adjectives can be used to end an informal sentence without using the word 「だ」, so too can negative adjectives. Here are some examples:

The sashimi is not bad.

刺身<sup>さしみ</sup>は悪<sup>わる</sup>くない。

This movie is uninteresting.

この映画<sup>えいが</sup>は面白<sup>おもしろ</sup>くない。

He's not famous.

彼は有名<sup>ゆうめい</sup>じゃない。

That place isn't strange.

あの場所<sup>ばしょ</sup>は変<sup>へん</sup>じゃない。

I don't like futons.

(私は)布団<sup>ふとん</sup>が好<sup>す</sup>きじゃない。

Like before, there may not appear to be any verbs in these sentences, but they do exist as a part of the い-adjective formed by the negative ending.

## Converting negative adjectives to the past tense

To form the past tense of a negative adjective, the last 「い」 is replaced by 「かった」. This means that for な-adjectives, 「じゃない」 becomes 「じゃなかった」, and the 「～くない」 ending of い-adjectives becomes 「～くなかった」. The past tense of the above sentences in the informal (and polite) form would therefore be:

The sashimi was not bad.

刺身は<sup>さし み</sup>悪<sup>わる</sup>くなかった (です)。

This movie was uninteresting.

この映画は<sup>えい が</sup>面白<sup>おもしろ</sup>くなかった (です)。

He was not famous.

彼は<sup>ゆうめい</sup>有名じゃなかった (です)。

That place was not strange.

あの場所<sup>ばしょ</sup>は変<sup>へん</sup>じゃなかった (です)。

I didn't like the futon.

(私は)<sup>ふ とん</sup>布団が<sup>す</sup>好きじゃなかった (です)。

## Exercise

- Say and write down each of the following sentences in Japanese using the designated level of politeness. Note that the first three in particular are phrased in a way that is natural in Japanese, even if they seem odd in English.
  - [polite] He bought not delicious pizza.
  - [informal] I want a not old TV.
  - [polite] We went to a not famous town.
  - [polite] They watched a movie I don't like.
  - [informal] This house isn't clean.
  - [informal] I don't like cheese.
  - [informal] He isn't sad.
  - [informal] Japanese isn't difficult.
  - [informal] My car was not expensive.
  - [informal] The test was not easy.
  - [polite] She wasn't happy.
  - [polite] It wasn't important.

## Answers

1.

- a) 彼はおいしくないピザを買いました。
- b) (私は)古くないテレビが欲しい。
- c) 私たちは有名じゃない町に行きました。
- d) 彼らは私の好きじゃない映画を見ました。
- e) この家はきれいじゃない。
- f) 私はチーズが好きじゃない。
- g) 彼は悲しくない。
- h) 日本語は難しくくない。
- i) 私の車は高くなかった。
- j) テストは簡単じゃなかった。
- k) 彼女は嬉しくなかったです。
- l) 大切じゃなかったです。(the meaning of “it” is implied through context - see Chapter 3.6)

## 7.6 Informal questions using adjectives

As was explained in Chapter 4.5, you can convert any sentence into a yes/no question by simply adding 「か」 after the verb. When speaking informally, however, questions are usually asked without 「か」, making them no different in appearance to regular statements. Instead, a questioning tone is used to indicate that a question is being asked.

For example, if you were to ask someone if they were cold, the polite way to say this is 「寒い<sup>さむ</sup>ですか？」. In informal speech, however, you would simply ask 「寒い<sup>さむ</sup>？」, using a tone that rises at the end. Normally, saying 「寒い<sup>さむ</sup>」 with a non-questioning tone would be the equivalent of saying “I’m cold”, so the tone used in this case greatly affects the meaning of the sentence.

Thankfully, it is usually obvious when a question is being asked, and you will likely be able to instinctively use the correct tone of voice when asking informal questions, so there’s no need to worry about this too much. It’s just something to be aware of.

## 7.7 Adjective usage summary

The table below summarizes how い-adjectives and な-adjectives differ in terms of usage.

	い-adjectives	な-adjectives
Before nouns	Use as is (adj + noun)	Add 「な」 (adj + 「な」 + noun)
End of informal sentences	Use as is (without 「です」)	Change 「です」 to 「だ」
Past tense		
- Polite	Replace last 「い」 with 「かった」 + 「です」	Change 「です」 to 「でした」
- Informal	Replace last 「い」 with 「かった」	Change 「です」 to 「だった」
Negative	Replace last 「い」 with 「くない」	Add 「じゃない」
- Before nouns	Use negative form as is	Use negative form as is
- End of informal sentences	Use negative form as is	Use negative form as is
- Past tense	Change 「くない」 to 「くなかった」	Change 「じゃない」 to 「じゃなかった」

## 7.8 Using nouns in “to be” sentences

### New vocabulary

birthday	たんじょうび 誕生日
brothers / siblings	きょうだい 兄弟
capital city	しゅと 首都
couple	カップル
dentist	はいしゃ 歯医者
doctor	いしゃ 医者

national holiday	しゅくじつ 祝日
necklace	ネックレス
salaried employee	サラリーマン
teacher	せんせい 先生
tourist	かんこうきゃく 観光客

Once you have mastered the different uses of adjectives, nouns are relatively straightforward. In sentences where the main verb is “to be”, nouns are treated much the same way as な-adjectives. This includes their use at the end of informal sentences,

as well as in the past tense, the negative, and the negative past tense. Let's look at some examples of each of these.

### At the end of informal sentences

When the last element in a sentence before the verb is a noun, and the verb is “to be”, we can turn a polite sentence into an informal one by changing 「です」 to 「だ」.

This is a pen.

これはペンだ。

That is my mobile phone.

それは私のケータイだ。

He is a teacher.

彼は先生だ。  
せんせい

She is a fun person.

彼女は楽しい人だ。  
たの ひと

### Past tense

Similarly, when used with a noun, “to be” can be turned into the past tense by changing 「です」 to 「でした」 in the polite form, or 「だった」 in the informal form.

Polite:

She was a good student.

彼女はいい学生でした。  
がくせい

Until 1869, Kyoto was the capital of Japan.

1869 年まで、京 都は日本の首都でした。  
ねん きょう と に ほん しゅ と

Informal:

Yesterday was my birthday.

昨日は私の誕生日だった。  
きのう たんじょうび

That was my chocolate!

それは私のチョコレートだったよ！

## Negative

The noun in a “to be” sentence can be made negative by adding 「じゃない」 after it. This can be made polite or informal by either including or excluding 「です」.

That is not my bag.

それは私のカバン**じゃない**（です）。

I am not a dentist.

私は歯<sup>は</sup>医<sup>い</sup>者<sup>しゃ</sup>**じゃない**（です）。

He is not a bad person.

彼は悪<sup>わる</sup>い人<sup>ひと</sup>**じゃない**（です）。

They are not a couple.

彼らはカップル**じゃない**（です）。

## Negative past tense

To turn a negative “to be” sentence into the past tense, change 「じゃない」 into 「じゃなかった」. Again, the inclusion or exclusion of 「です」 determines the level of politeness.

That was not our bus.

あれは私たちのバス**じゃなかった**（です）。

That man was not a doctor.

あの男<sup>おとこ</sup>は医<sup>い</sup>者<sup>しゃ</sup>**じゃなかった**（です）。

Last year was not a bad year.

去年<sup>きょねん</sup>は悪<sup>わる</sup>い1年<sup>いちねん</sup>**じゃなかった**（です）。

Yesterday was not my birthday.

昨日<sup>きのう</sup>は私の誕<sup>たん</sup>生<sup>じょう</sup>日<sup>び</sup>**じゃなかった**（です）。

## Exercise

1. Say and write down the following sentences in Japanese using the **polite** form:

- a) Yesterday was Saturday.
- b) Last year, he was my teacher.

- c) That (over there) isn't a hospital.
  - d) This isn't rain.
  - e) That wasn't my coffee.
  - f) It wasn't a party.
2. Say and write down the following sentences in Japanese using the **informal** form:
- a) This is a beautiful necklace.
  - b) She is your older sister.
  - c) They are brothers.
  - d) Takamatsu-san is a salaried employee.
  - e) They were tourists.
  - f) He was a good student.
  - g) This isn't a window.
  - h) Today is not a national holiday.
  - i) That (over there) was not a monkey.
  - j) The shirt wasn't my size.

## Answers

1.

- a) きのう き の う 土曜日 ど よ う び でした。
- b) 去年 きょねん、彼は私 わたし の先生 せんせい でした。
- c) あれは病院 びょういん じゃないです。
- d) これは雨 あめ じゃないです。
- e) それは私のコーヒーじゃなかったです。
- f) パーティーじゃなかったです。

2.

- a) これは美 うつく しいネックレスだ。
- b) 彼女はあなたのお姉 ねえ さんだ。
- c) 彼らは兄弟 きょうだい だ。
- d) 高松 たかまつ さんはサラリーマンだ。
- e) 彼らは観光客 かんこうきゃく だった。

- f) 彼はいい<sup>がくせい</sup>学生だった。
- g) これは窓<sup>まど</sup>じゃない。
- h) 今日<sup>きょう</sup>は祝<sup>しゅくじつ</sup>日じゃない。
- i) あれは猿<sup>さる</sup>じゃなかった。
- j) シャツは私のサイズじゃなかった。

## 7.9 Adverbs

### New vocabulary

airport	くうこう 空港
a bit	ちょっと
to dance	おど 踊ります
extremely (Kansai region)	めっちゃ
extremely (Kanto region)	ちょう 超
more, much, much more	もっと
museum	はくぶつかん 博物館

not very	あまり
often	よく
quite	かなり
to run	はし 走ります
teacher	せんせい 先生
workplace	しょくば 職場

Adverbs are words like “quickly”, “always” and “very” that are used to add meaning to verbs, adjectives and other adverbs. They are kind of like adjectives that can be used where adjectives can't, since adjectives can only be used with nouns. Most adverbs even derive from adjectives, and in Japanese, converting an adjective into an adverb is very easy. Here's how it's done:

Adjective type	Conversion to adverb	Example
い-adjective	Change the last 「い」 to 「く」	quick → quickly <sup>はや</sup> 速い → <sup>はや</sup> 速く
な-adjective	Remove 「な」 and add 「に」	quiet → quietly <sup>しず</sup> 静か (な) → <sup>しず</sup> 静かに

These simple conversions are all you need to know in order to use the vast majority of adverbs in Japanese. However, in addition to those that derive from adjectives, there are also a number of adverbs that are standalone words. Here are some of the most useful ones, many of which we have seen before:

a lot, many	たくさん
always	いつも
a little bit	ちょっと
more, much, much more	もっと
never, not at all	ぜんぜん 全然
quite	かなり
sometimes	ときどき 時々
very	とても
not very	あまり (with negative verb)

You may notice that a few of these are time-related words that were covered in Chapter 6. These are in fact adverbs, and they can be used in the same way that adverbs are. The same is true for many other time-related expressions. This helps explain why the particle used with some time expressions is 「に」, as that is what is used to turn な-adjectives into adverbs.

Also, when the word 「いい」 is converted to its adverb form 「よく」, in addition to meaning “well”, it can also be used to mean “often”.

## Using adverbs

Not all adverbs are as versatile as others. Some, like the word 「もっと」, meaning “more”, can be used with all three word types - verbs, adjectives and other adverbs - while others, like “quickly”, can only be used with verbs. Although this may sound confusing, there is no need to concern yourself with remembering which adverbs can be used with which word types. Generally, the only reason a given adverb might not work with a certain word type is because it doesn’t make literal sense. For example, “very” cannot be used with verbs, but you are unlikely to mistakenly use it with a verb because it makes no sense to say something like, “He very slept”. Adverbs in Japanese are the same.

That said, the placement of an adverb is affected by the type of word it is modifying. Let’s take a look.

### Modifying verbs

If an adverb is modifying a verb, it can be placed basically anywhere in the sentence, as long as it comes *before* the verb that it relates to. It also will not usually be placed before the topic-defining particle 「は」. Here are some examples:

He **quickly** ran to school. / He ran to school **quickly**.

彼は<sup>はや</sup>**速く**<sup>がっこう</sup>学校<sup>はし</sup>に走りました。

彼は学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に<sup>はや</sup>**速く**<sup>はし</sup>走りました。

She **quietly** opened the door. / She opened the door **quietly**.

彼女は<sup>しず</sup>**静かに**ドア<sup>あ</sup>を開けました。

彼女はドア<sup>しず</sup>を<sup>あ</sup>**静かに**開けました。

The placement of the adverb doesn't really affect the meaning of the sentence, although since words that appear later in Japanese sentences generally carry more weight, the adverb will be emphasized more when placed immediately before the verb it modifies.

### Modifying adjectives and adverbs

When an adverb is used to modify something other than a verb - that is, an adjective or another adverb - its possible placement is much more restricted. In almost all cases, such adverbs should be placed immediately before the adjective or adverb that they relate to. Here are some examples, with the adverb in bold and the word it modifies underlined:

[Adjective]

This bag is **quite** light.

このカバンは**かなり**<sup>かる</sup>軽いです。

[Adverb]

He **very** quickly ran to school / He ran to school **very** quickly.

彼は**とても**<sup>はや</sup>速く<sup>がっこう</sup>学校<sup>はし</sup>に走りました。

彼は学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に**とても**<sup>はや</sup>速く<sup>はし</sup>走りました。

Since adjectives and adverbs are descriptive words, adverbs that are used to modify them usually specify the degree of the description. For this reason, there are relatively few adverbs that can be used with adjectives and adverbs compared to those that can be used to modify verbs.

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of these sentences in polite Japanese.
  - a) They danced cutely.
  - b) He often goes to the cinema.
  - c) She waited quietly in front of the library.
  - d) My car was a little bit expensive.
  - e) This museum is quite interesting.
  - f) I want to go to the airport much earlier.

## Answers

1.
  - a) 彼らはかわいく踊りました。  
おど
  - b) 彼はよく映画館に行きます。  
えい が かん い
  - c) 彼女は図書館の前で静かに待ちました。OR  
としょかん まえ しず ま  
彼女は静かに図書館の前で待ちました。  
しず としよかん まえ ま
  - d) 私の車はちょっと高かったです。  
くるま たか
  - e) この博物館はかなり面白いです。  
はくぶつかん おもしろ
  - f) もっと早く空港に行きたいです。  
はや くうこう い

## Saying “very”

The most common adverb used with adjectives and other adverbs is, of course, “very”. In Japanese, however, there are two words that mean “very” - one that is used with positive statements, and one that is used with negative ones, which is like saying “not very”. Here are the words for “very” and “not very” in Japanese:

English	Japanese	Example	
very	とても	very hot	とても暑い <small>あつ</small>
not very	あまり	not very hot	あまり暑くない <small>あつ</small>

The important thing to remember here is that 「とても」 is used with adjectives in their **positive** form, while 「あまり」 must be used with adjectives in the **negative** form. As

explained above, these are usually placed immediately before the adjective or adverb that they affect.

Also, when these are used with the words 「好き」, 「嫌い」, 「欲しい」 and 「～たい」, a better English translation than “very” would be “really”, since this is what we would use with the words “like”, “hate”, and “want” in English. This is simply because these words are adjectives in Japanese, but verbs in English, and the English word “very” cannot be used directly with verbs (eg. “He very likes sushi”). In terms of actual meaning, they are the same. Here are some examples:

He really hates sushi.

彼は寿司が**とても**嫌いです。

I really want to play basketball.

(私は)バスケットが**とても**したいです。

She doesn't really like vegetables.

彼女は野菜が**あまり**好きじゃないです。

I don't really want to go to the park.

(私は)**あまり**公園に行きたくない。

There are also a couple of other words that are often used colloquially to say “very very”, “really really”, or “extremely”, although these vary from region to region. Here are the most common two words:

Very very, really really, extremely	Main region used
ちょう 超	Most of Japan, especially the Kanto region (around Tokyo)
めっちゃ	Kansai

Here are some example sentences using these words:

This is extremely delicious!

これは**超**おいしい！

I really really want to go to the beach

(私は)めっちゃ**海**に行きたい！

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of these sentences in informal Japanese.

- a) Japan is a very beautiful country.
- b) This movie is very interesting.
- c) I really want a cat.
- d) The airport was very inconvenient.
- e) This bag isn't very expensive.
- f) I don't really want a red bicycle.
- g) I don't really like cheese.
- h) I really really like ramen! (Kanto region)
- i) His house was extremely clean! (Kansai region)

## Answers

1.

- a) 日本はとても美しい国だ。  
にほん うつく くに
- b) この映画はとても面白い。  
えいが おもしろ
- c) (私は)猫がとても欲しい。  
ねこ ほ
- d) 空港はとても不便だった。  
くうこう ふ べん
- e) このカバンはあまり高くない。  
たか
- f) (私は)赤い自転車があまり欲しくない。  
あか じてんしゃ ほ
- g) (私は)チーズがあまり好きじゃない。  
す
- h) (私は)ラーメンが超好きだ!  
ちよう す
- i) 彼の家はめっちゃきれいだった!  
いえ

## Adverb + なります/します

Two particularly common verbs that are used with adverbs are 「なります」 and 「します」. Let's start by looking at an example of an adverb used with 「なります」.

The bag became light(er). / The bag got light(er).

カバンが軽くなりました。  
かる

The verb 「なります」 means “become”, and in this example, it describes a change in the bag’s weight from heavier to lighter. While normally, the adverb 「軽く」 would directly translate to English as “lightly”, when used with the verb 「なります」, it actually defines the end result of the change; that is, what the bag becomes. The adverb form of 「軽い」 is actually much like a noun followed by the particle 「に」, where the 「に」 defines the destination. In this case, the destination is 「軽い」, and the verb that causes the bag to get to that destination is 「なります」.

You’ll notice that the English translation of the above sentence could end in either the word “light” or “lighter”. The reason for this is because in most cases, Japanese doesn’t differentiate between these two concepts. It is possible to emphasize the relative nature of the word “lighter” by preceding it with the particle 「より」 to say 「より軽い」, but this is generally considered redundant in Japanese because adjectives, by their very nature, are relative terms. There is no need to explicitly say that something is “lighter”, because just by being “light”, it is implicitly lighter than whatever it is being compared to, which in this example is its previous weight. This is one of those situations where it helps to remember that Japanese is a vague language.

The same principles apply to adverbs used with the more active verb 「します」. Normally, 「します」 is the equivalent of the word “do”, but in this context it should be translated a little differently. Here’s an example:

I made the bag lighter.

(私は)カバンを軽くしました。

When used with an adverb, 「します」 is essentially a more active version of 「なります」, similar in meaning to the English word “make”. If you consider that 「なります」 is used to describe something that has changed from one state to another by itself, 「します」 is used to describe when someone or something has caused something else to change from one state to another.

The difference between 「なります」 and 「します」 is also reflected in the particles that appear in each sentence. With 「なります」, the bag performs the act of becoming lighter by itself, so the sentence only contains a subject (the bag); there is no object. The subject is marked by 「が」, and since there is no object, there is nothing to be marked by 「を」.

In contrast, the person performing the action of 「します」 is separate from the thing they are performing that action on. The person that makes the bag lighter is the subject (although in this case it is also the topic, which supersedes its role as subject and is therefore marked by 「は」), and the bag is the item that the action is being performed on and is therefore marked by 「を」.

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in polite Japanese.

- a) Sorry, I will be(come) late.
- b) He became sad.
- c) I want to become famous.
- d) The teacher will make the test more difficult.
- e) She made her room clean.
- f) I want to make the workplace fun.

## Answers

1.

- a) ごめんなさい、(私は)<sup>おそ</sup>遅くなります。
- b) 彼は<sup>かな</sup>悲しくなりました。
- c) (私は)<sup>ゆうめい</sup>有名になりたいです。
- d) 先生は<sup>せんせい</sup>テストをもっと<sup>むずか</sup>難しくします。
- e) 彼女は<sup>へや</sup>部屋をきれいにしました。
- f) (私は)<sup>しよくば たの</sup>職場を楽しくしたいです。

## Chapter 8

# Verbs

So far, we have used verbs in a number of different tenses, but the only verb we have learnt to use in informal Japanese is 「です」. In this chapter, we will look at verbs in both the informal and polite forms, and take a closer look at the different verb tenses, including one new one. We will also cover a couple of key concepts that affect how verbs are used in sentences.

There are quite a few rules to remember in this chapter, but they are mostly straightforward, and there are very few exceptions to these rules. Verbs are the central part of any sentence, so once you have mastered the topics in this chapter, you will be able to express a wide range of ideas, using both informal and polite language.

Before getting started with new verb tenses, here's a quick reminder of the verb endings for the polite verb tenses and expressions we have already covered:

	Positive	Negative (eg. I didn't do...)
<b>Present/future</b>	～ます	～ません
<b>Past</b>	～ました	～ませんでした
<b>I want to...</b>	～たいです	～たくないです
<b>Let's...</b>	～ましょう	-

## 8.1 Verb types

In order to be able to use the verb tenses introduced in this chapter, we first need to understand verb types. We have already learned a few polite verb tenses and expressions, but none of these are affected by the verb types we will look at here, so there has been no need to learn them. We need to understand them now, however, as the conjugation of informal verb tenses as well as some other tenses differs according to the verb type.

From a functional perspective, Japanese verbs are normally grouped into three categories: ru-verbs, u-verbs and irregular verbs. These names are based on the verb endings of the verbs in their dictionary form, but they can be confusing and misleading - all verbs end in “u”, and some u-verbs end in 「る」! Instead, we’re going to categorize them as: **add-on verbs**, **vowel-changing verbs**, and **irregular verbs**.

### Add-on verbs (aka ru-verbs)

Add-on verbs are easy - they consist of a stem and an ending. The stem always remains the same, and the ending changes according to the tense and degree of politeness. Below are some examples. Don’t worry about trying to learn the different tenses just yet.

	Stem	Polite present	Polite past	Informal present	Informal potential (can)
watch	み 見	み 見ます	み 見ました	み 見る	み 見られる
eat	た 食べ	た 食べます	た 食べました	た 食べる	た 食べられる
sleep	ね 寝	ね 寝ます	ね 寝ました	ね 寝る	ね 寝られる
to be/there is (living)	い	います	いました	いる	いられる

As you can see in the table above, all add-on verbs keep the same stem in all cases. A different ending is then added onto the stem for each tense and level of politeness. Notice that the ending in each tense is the same for every verb. Like all verbs, these appear in the dictionary in the informal present tense (eg. 見る<sup>み</sup>), which is why this is also called the dictionary form.

## Vowel-changing verbs (aka u-verbs)

Vowel-changing verbs are a little bit more tricky. Their stem effectively consists of two parts - a fixed part, and what we will call a “vowel-changing” part, which changes according to the tense and level of politeness to be used. In the examples below, the vowel-changing part is underlined, while the verb ending is in bold. Again, don’t worry about learning the different tenses just yet.

	Stem		Polite present	Polite past	Informal present	Informal potential (can)
	Fixed	Vowel-changing				
drink	の飲	み	の飲 <u>み</u> <b>ます</b>	の飲 <u>み</u> <b>ました</b>	の飲 <u>む</u>	の飲 <u>め</u> <b>る</b>
listen	き聞	き	き聞 <u>き</u> <b>ます</b>	き聞 <u>き</u> <b>ました</b>	き聞 <u>く</u>	き聞 <u>け</u> <b>る</b>
use	つか使	い	つか使 <u>い</u> <b>ます</b>	つか使 <u>い</u> <b>ました</b>	つか使 <u>う</u>	つか使 <u>え</u> <b>る</b>
make	つく作	り	つく作 <u>り</u> <b>ます</b>	つく作 <u>り</u> <b>ました</b>	つく作 <u>る</u>	つく作 <u>れ</u> <b>る</b>

What is happening here is that for each tense or politeness level, a different sound from the same line of the syllabary is used for the last sound in the verb stem. For example, you’ll recall from Chapter 1 that the ma-line in the syllabary is 「まみむめも」. The polite tenses of “drink” both use the “i” variation, which is 「み」 (のみます, のみました), the informal present tense uses 「む」 (のむ), and the informal potential uses 「め」 (のめる). If we were to write these in romaji, all of these variations would start with “nom” and only the vowel that follows it would change, hence why these are called “vowel-changing” verbs in this book.

The following table outlines how each tense of a vowel-changing verb is created (you don’t need to remember these yet):

Polite present	The “i” variation of the vowel-changing part is used, followed by the ending 「ます」, eg. 「の <u>み</u> ます」
Polite past	The “i” variation of the vowel-changing part is used, followed by the ending 「ました」, eg. 「の <u>み</u> ました」
Informal present	The “u” variation of the vowel-changing part is used, and nothing else is added, eg. 「の <u>む</u> 」
Informal potential	The “e” variation of the vowel-changing part is used, followed by 「る」, eg. 「の <u>め</u> る」

The stem of these verbs is usually considered to be the fixed part plus the “i” variation of the vowel-changing part, that is, 「飲<sup>の</sup>み」, 「聞<sup>き</sup>き」, etc. However, since the stem changes for different tenses, there will be times throughout this book when the vowel sound variation to be used with the stem needs to be made clear. For this, the following notation will be used: stem(<vowel>). This table shows some examples:

Notation	Example: 「飲 <sup>の</sup> みます」	Example: 「聞 <sup>き</sup> きます」
stem(a)	飲 <sup>の</sup> ま	聞 <sup>き</sup> か
stem(i)	飲 <sup>の</sup> み	聞 <sup>き</sup> き
stem(u)	飲 <sup>の</sup> む	聞 <sup>き</sup> く
stem(e)	飲 <sup>の</sup> め	聞 <sup>き</sup> け
stem(o)	飲 <sup>の</sup> も	聞 <sup>き</sup> こ

## Irregular verbs

Irregular verbs are the ones that don’t fit into either of the above two categories and have to be remembered individually. Thankfully, there are only three, and you will hear them all the time.

	Polite present	Polite past	Informal present	Informal potential (can)
do	します	しました	する	できる
go	行 <sup>い</sup> きます	行 <sup>い</sup> きました	行 <sup>い</sup> く	行 <sup>い</sup> ける
come	来 <sup>き</sup> ます	来 <sup>き</sup> ました	来 <sup>く</sup> る	来 <sup>こ</sup> れる

Looking at just these tenses, “go” and “come” don’t look particularly different from the vowel-changing verbs. They do, however, vary slightly in certain tenses, so we’ll keep them separate to reduce confusion later.

## Identifying verb types

Since the informal present tense of verbs is what appears in dictionaries, it is the most important tense to be able to identify. As discussed earlier, vowel-changing verbs are expressed in the informal present tense by using the “u” variation of the vowel-changing part of the stem (eg. 飲<sup>の</sup>む). Add-on verbs are expressed in the informal

present tense by adding 「る」 to the stem (eg. 見<sup>み</sup>る). Since all add-on verbs end in 「る」, any verb that ends in something other than 「る」 must be a vowel-changing verb (eg. 飲<sup>の</sup>む, 聞<sup>き</sup>く).

The potentially confusing part is that some vowel-changing verbs have a stem that ends with a ra-line sound. This makes the informal present tense of these verbs end in 「る」 (eg. 作<sup>つく</sup>る), so they look just like add-on verbs. Take a look at these two verbs, for example:

English	Dictionary form	Type
to change	か 変える	add-on
to return home	かえ 帰る	vowel-changing

So how do you tell them apart? Some dictionaries will tell you, referring to add-on verbs as 「る」 or 「一段<sup>いちだん</sup>」 verbs, and vowel-changing verbs as 「う」 or 「五段<sup>ごだん</sup>」 verbs. The other option is to look at other tenses. In most of the other tenses, especially the most common ones, vowel-changing verbs will use something other than the “u” variation in the stem, and this will be different to the ending added to add-on verbs. Here are those two verbs again with the polite present tense added:

	Dictionary form	Polite present tense	Type
to change	か 変える	か 変えます	add-on
to return home	かえ 帰る	かえ 帰ります	vowel-changing

In the polite present tense, we can differentiate between verb types because the vowel-changing verb keeps the ra-line sound, while the add-on verb loses the 「る」.

My recommendation is that from now on, when you learn new verbs, you start by learning the informal present tense (dictionary form) together with the polite present tense. This will give you everything you need to know to be able to convert verbs between tenses, while also being familiar with the dictionary form, which should be your default reference point for any verb.

One difficulty this creates is that in some ways, you will need to re-learn the verbs you already know to learn what type they are. The only reason this book didn't teach you the verb type together with the verb at the beginning is because learning just the simpler polite tenses allows you to practice speaking Japanese much sooner without having to worry about too many technical details.

I warn you now, though, that when you start using and hearing informal verb tenses, you will likely have difficulty trying to figure out which verb is which, since different verbs sound the same in certain tenses. It does take time to get used to, so be patient.

In order to overcome this hurdle, it will help to treat each different form of a verb as a separate word. Being proficient at converting between tenses helps particularly with new verbs, but it slows you down if you have to convert each verb every time you hear it. If instead you can remember, for example, that 「買った」 means “bought”, you don’t have to reverse-engineer it back to 「<sup>か</sup>買います」 every time you hear it to understand which verb it is. This does increase the number of words you have to remember, but since it saves you from making the conversion, it gives your brain faster access to words when you need them.

Having said that, it’s important to remember that speaking and understanding Japanese is a skill, not knowledge. The best way to improve your ability to use and identify verbs in real-time, as you say or hear them, is to practice saying and hearing them in context. Start by listening to as much informal conversation as you can and focus on identifying each verb that is used. It will be slow going at first, but this will allow you to quickly remember the different forms of the more common verbs, and develop a more intuitive ability to recognize the different forms of the verbs you are less familiar with.

Put lots of time into this, and it will make the transition to informal speech easier. The huge upside to this is that once you are comfortable with informal verb tenses, it opens up a whole new world of possible expressions, as you will learn in Chapter 10 when we look at noun phrases.

## 8.2 The present/future tense

### New vocabulary

snow

ゆき  
雪

In the previous section, we referred to the present tense on several occasions, but this is actually better described as the present/future tense. Generally, it can be used to talk about things that happen regularly or are ongoing, or things that will happen in the future, whether that be one second from now, or 100 years. Examples include:

- General statements of things that happen (eg. People make mistakes.)
- Things that happen regularly or habitually (eg. I play basketball every Sunday.)
- Things that are about to happen right now (eg. I'm going to the supermarket. See you later!)
- Things that will happen in the future (eg. I will ask him tomorrow.)

These are some examples of when the present/future tense is NOT used:

- Things that are happening right now (I am eating dinner.)
- To describe your current situation (I work for a big company. I live in Tokyo.)

You might be wondering how you can tell if something that is being talked about happens in the present or future, since both take the same form. Generally, it is obvious from context. If it's a general statement, the idea being expressed will usually sound like a general expression of fact. If a frequency for the activity is defined or implied, it must be a regular or habitual activity. In most other cases, this tense refers to the future, whether the exact timing is defined or not.

The table below shows what add-on and vowel-changing verbs look like in the present/future tense. Even though we have already covered polite tenses, they will be included throughout this chapter for the sake of comparison, and so that you can find everything in one place.

Verb type	Informal (dictionary)	Polite
Add-on	stem + る	stem + ます
Vowel-changing	stem(u)	stem(i) + ます

**Important:** The “u” sound in the 「ます」 ending is usually silent, and this should therefore be pronounced “mas”.

Below are some examples of each type, including the three irregular verbs:

Verb type	Stem	Informal (dictionary)	Polite
Add-on		stem + る	stem + ます
eat	た 食べ	た 食べる	た 食べます
watch / see / look	み 見	み 見る	み 見ます

Vowel-changing		stem(u)	stem(i) + ます
drink	の飲み	の飲む	の飲みます
listen	き聞き	き聞く	き聞きます
Irregular			
do	し	する	します
go	いき	行く	行きます
come	き来	くる	来ます

Here are some example sentences in the informal present/future tense:

It snows a lot in Hokkaido.  
ほっかいどう ゆき  
 北海道で雪がたくさん降る。

I go to school every day by train.  
まいにち でんしゃ がっこう い  
 (私は) 毎日電車で学校に行く。

I'm going to the park (from) now.  
いま こうえん い  
 (私は) 今から公園に行く。

We are getting married next year.  
らいねん けっこん  
 (私たちは) 来年結婚する。

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table:

Verb in English	Verb type	Polite future/present	Informal future/present
to be (living)	Add-on	います	
sleep	Add-on		ねる
wake up	Add-on	おきます	
give	Add-on		あげる
teach/tell	Add-on	おし 教えます	

to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing		ある
buy	Vowel-changing	か 買います	
read	Vowel-changing		よ 読む
write	Vowel-changing	か 書きます	
make	Vowel-changing		つく 作る
meet	Vowel-changing	あ 会います	
speak	Vowel-changing		はな 話す
swim	Vowel-changing	およ 泳ぎます	
use	Vowel-changing		つか 使う
understand	Vowel-changing	わかります	
play	Vowel-changing		あそ 遊ぶ
run	Vowel-changing	はし 走ります	
do	Irregular		する
go	Irregular	い 行きます	
come	Irregular		く 来る

2. Translate these sentences into informal Japanese.

- a) Suzuki-san will come (from) now.
- b) I will wake up at 6am tomorrow.
- c) I am playing baseball on Sunday.
- d) They meet at the library every Thursday.
- e) I swim at the beach 3 days a week.
- f) She sometimes teaches English to children.

3. Pick 5 activities that you do on a regular basis and describe them in informal Japanese. Be sure to include how often you perform each activity, and also try to include where the activity takes place.

4. Pick 5 activities that you are planning to do in the next week and describe them in informal Japanese. Try to include information about where and when you will do each activity.

## Answers

1.

Verb in English	Verb type	Polite future/present	Informal future/present
to be (living)	Add-on	います	いる
sleep	Add-on	<sup>ね</sup> 寝ます	<sup>ね</sup> 寝る
wake up	Add-on	<sup>お</sup> 起きます	<sup>お</sup> 起きる
give	Add-on	あげます	あげる
teach/tell	Add-on	<sup>おし</sup> 教えます	<sup>おし</sup> 教える
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	あります	ある
buy	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 買います	<sup>か</sup> 買う
read	Vowel-changing	<sup>よ</sup> 読みます	<sup>よ</sup> 読む
write	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 書きます	<sup>か</sup> 書く
make	Vowel-changing	<sup>つく</sup> 作ります	<sup>つく</sup> 作る
meet	Vowel-changing	<sup>あ</sup> 会います	<sup>あ</sup> 会う
speak	Vowel-changing	<sup>はな</sup> 話します	<sup>はな</sup> 話す
swim	Vowel-changing	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ぎます	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ぐ
use	Vowel-changing	<sup>つか</sup> 使います	<sup>つか</sup> 使う
understand	Vowel-changing	わかります	わかる
play	Vowel-changing	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊びます	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊ぶ
run	Vowel-changing	<sup>はし</sup> 走ります	<sup>はし</sup> 走る
do	Irregular	します	する
go	Irregular	<sup>い</sup> 行きます	<sup>い</sup> 行く
come	Irregular	<sup>き</sup> 来ます	<sup>く</sup> 来る

2.

- a) 鈴木<sup>すず き</sup>さんは今<sup>いま</sup>から<sup>く</sup>来る。
- b) (私は)明日<sup>あした</sup>(の)朝<sup>あさ</sup>6時<sup>ろく じ</sup>に起き<sup>お</sup>る。
- c) (私は)日曜日<sup>にちよう び</sup>に野<sup>や</sup>球<sup>きゅう</sup>をする。
- d) 彼<sup>まいしゅう</sup>らは毎<sup>もくよう び</sup>週<sup>と</sup>の木曜日<sup>しよかん</sup>に図<sup>あ</sup>書館<sup>えいご</sup>で会<sup>あ</sup>う。
- e) (私は)週<sup>しゅう</sup>に3回<sup>さんかい</sup>海<sup>うみ</sup>で泳<sup>およ</sup>ぐ。
- f) 彼女<sup>と</sup>は時<sup>とき</sup>々<sup>とき</sup>子<sup>こ</sup>供<sup>ども</sup>に英<sup>えい</sup>語<sup>ご</sup>を教<sup>おし</sup>える。

3. Each sentence should include the frequency of the activity (using phrases from chapter 6.3), the location marked by the particle 「で」 (or 「に」 if describing a destination and an action involving movement like “go” or “visit”), and the verb in the informal present/future tense.
4. Each sentence should include when the activity will take place (using phrases from chapter 6.1), the location marked by the particle 「で」 (or 「に」 if describing a destination and an action involving movement like “go” or “visit”), and the verb in the informal present/future tense.

## 8.3 The past tense

### New vocabulary

Africa	アフリカ
mall	モール
pasta	パスタ
science	か がく 科学

sound/noise	おと 音
station	えき 駅
wine	ワイン

The past tense can be used generally to describe any event that started and ended before the present moment. There are other ways to talk about events in the past, but until you learn those, the regular past tense will sufficiently cover you in just about any situation.

Converting verbs to the past tense is easy, except in the case of vowel-changing verbs in the informal form. We'll learn about that soon, but let's first look at the other forms of the past tense:

Verb type	Informal (dictionary)	Polite
Add-on	stem + た	stem + ました
Vowel-changing	(See below)	stem(i) + ました

**Important:** The “i” sound in the 「ました」 ending is usually silent, and this should therefore be pronounced “mashta”.

Here are some examples of verbs in the past tense:

Verb	Stem	Informal (dictionary)	Polite
Add-on		stem + た	stem + ました
eat	食べ	食べた	食べました
watch / see / look	見	見た	見ました
Vowel-changing		(See below)	stem(i) + ました
drink	飲み	-	飲みました
listen	聞き	-	聞きました
Irregular			
do	し	した	しました
go	行き	行った	行きました
come	来	来た	来ました

## Vowel-changing verbs in the informal past tense

As you know, the last vowel sound in the stem of a vowel-changing verb is different for different tenses and levels of politeness. In most cases, you just need to change that vowel and add something after it to convert a verb into another tense. For the informal past tense, however, **the whole ending changes according to the vowel-changing part of the verb stem.**

This means that for words like 「飲む」 and 「聞く」, instead of just changing the vowel sound, the 「む」 and 「く」, respectively, are actually removed, and a different ending is added in their place. This table shows how verbs are transformed into the informal past tense based on the last sound in the stem (shown with the “u” variation):

Verb stem(u) ending	Past tense ending
う, つ, る	った
ぶ, む, ぬ	んだ
く	いた
ぐ	いだ
す	した (pronounced “shta”)

**Important:** These only apply to vowel-changing verbs. Do not use these transformations with add-on verbs or irregular verbs.

Here are some examples of each:

English	Dictionary form	Remove the stem(u) ending	Replace with past tense ending	Informal past tense
use	つか 使 <u>う</u>	う	った	つか 使 <u>った</u>
wait	ま 待 <u>つ</u>	つ	った	ま 待 <u>った</u>
make	つく 作 <u>る</u>	る	った	つく 作 <u>った</u>
jump/fly	と 飛 <u>ぶ</u>	ぶ	んだ	と 飛 <u>んだ</u>
read	よ 読 <u>む</u>	む	んだ	よ 読 <u>んだ</u>
die	し 死 <u>ぬ</u>	ぬ	んだ	し 死 <u>んだ</u>
listen	き 聞 <u>く</u>	く	いた	き 聞 <u>いた</u>
swim	およ 泳 <u>ぐ</u>	ぐ	いだ	およ 泳 <u>いだ</u>
fix	なお 直 <u>す</u>	す	した	なお 直 <u>した</u>

Although they are tricky, it is quite important to learn how to do these transformations. You may be able to avoid using the informal past tense in basic sentences by using the much simpler polite past tense instead, but the informal tenses are used frequently in more complex sentences, including polite ones.

There are also other verb conjugations that follow this pattern. One such conjugation is what is known as the “て-form”, an extremely useful verb form that will be introduced in the next chapter. Aside from the present/future tense and the past tense, the て-form

is the most important verb conjugation in Japanese, so although it will take some practice and revision, you need to learn how to do these conversions.

Let's now look at some example sentences in the informal past tense.

I watched the football game.

(私は)フットボールの試合<sup>し あい み</sup>を見た。

He waited at the station.

彼は駅<sup>えき</sup>で待<sup>ま</sup>った。

She drank tea.

彼女はお茶<sup>ちゃ</sup>を飲<sup>の</sup>んだ。

We arrived at the hotel.

私たちはホテルに着<sup>つ</sup>いた。

They went to the mall.

彼らはモール<sup>い</sup>に行った。

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table:

Verb in English	Verb type	Polite past	Informal past
to be (living)	Add-on	いました	
sleep	Add-on	寝 <sup>ね</sup> ました	
wake up	Add-on	起 <sup>お</sup> きました	
give	Add-on	あげました	
teach/tell	Add-on	教 <sup>おし</sup> えました	
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ありました	
buy	Vowel-changing	買 <sup>か</sup> いました	
read	Vowel-changing	読 <sup>よ</sup> みました	
write	Vowel-changing	書 <sup>か</sup> きました	

make	Vowel-changing	つく 作りました	
meet	Vowel-changing	あ 会いました	
speak	Vowel-changing	はな 話しました	
swim	Vowel-changing	およ 泳ぎました	
use	Vowel-changing	つか 使いました	
understand	Vowel-changing	わかりました	
play	Vowel-changing	あそ 遊びました	
run	Vowel-changing	はし 走りました	
do	Irregular	しました	
go	Irregular	い 行きました	
come	Irregular	き 来ました	

2. Translate these sentences into informal Japanese.

- a) I ate some delicious pasta today.
- b) We watched a very funny movie yesterday.
- c) My older brother slept on the sofa.
- d) I bought a new shirt.
- e) He waited at the station for 15 minutes.
- f) I ran a marathon last year.
- g) The children played at the park this morning.
- h) He drank a lot of wine yesterday.
- i) My cat died last week.
- j) I heard a strange noise.
- k) She swam in the lake with her friends.
- l) We spoke with the teacher on Tuesday.
- m) I studied science at university.
- n) She went to Africa with her mother last year.
- o) They came to the hotel by bus.

3. Pick 5 activities that you have done recently and describe them in informal Japanese. Try to include information about where and when you did each activity.

## Answers

1.

Verb in English	Verb type	Polite past	Informal past
to be (living)	Add-on	いました	いた
sleep	Add-on	<sup>ね</sup> 寝ました	<sup>ね</sup> 寝た
wake up	Add-on	<sup>お</sup> 起きました	<sup>お</sup> 起きた
give	Add-on	あげました	あげた
teach/tell	Add-on	<sup>おし</sup> 教えました	<sup>おし</sup> 教えた
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ありました	あった
buy	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 買いました	<sup>か</sup> 買った
read	Vowel-changing	<sup>よ</sup> 読みました	<sup>よ</sup> 読んだ
write	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 書きました	<sup>か</sup> 書いた
make	Vowel-changing	<sup>つく</sup> 作りました	<sup>つく</sup> 作った
meet	Vowel-changing	<sup>あ</sup> 会いました	<sup>あ</sup> 会った
speak	Vowel-changing	<sup>はな</sup> 話しました	<sup>はな</sup> 話した
swim	Vowel-changing	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ぎました	<sup>およ</sup> 泳いだ
use	Vowel-changing	<sup>つか</sup> 使いました	<sup>つか</sup> 使った
understand	Vowel-changing	わかりました	わかった
play	Vowel-changing	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊びました	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊んだ
run	Vowel-changing	<sup>はし</sup> 走りました	<sup>はし</sup> 走った
do	Irregular	しました	した
go	Irregular	<sup>い</sup> 行きました	<sup>い</sup> 行った
come	Irregular	<sup>き</sup> 来ました	<sup>き</sup> 来た

2.

- a) 今日、(私は)おいしいパスタを食べた。  
 b) 昨日、(私たちは)とても面白い映画を見た。  
 c) 兄はソファで寝た。  
 d) (私は)新しいシャツを買った。  
 e) 彼は駅で15分待った。  
 f) 去年、(私は)マラソンを走った。  
 g) 今朝、子供たちは公園で遊んだ。  
 h) 昨日、彼はワインをたくさん飲んだ。  
 i) 先週、(私の)猫が死んだ。  
 j) (私は)変な音を聞いた。  
 k) 彼女は友達と湖で泳いだ。  
 l) (私たちは)火曜日に先生と話した。  
 m) (私は)大学で科学を勉強した。  
 n) 去年、彼女はお母さんとアフリカに行った。  
 o) 彼らはバスでホテルに来た。

3. Each sentence should include when the activity took place (using phrases from chapter 6.1), the location marked by the particle 「で」 (or 「に」 if describing a destination and an action involving movement like “go” or “visit”), and the verb in the informal past tense.

## 8.4 Verb negatives

### New vocabulary

advice	アドバイス
hair	髪の毛
present	プレゼント
seafood	シーフード
Spanish (language)	スペイン語

To say that you didn't or won't do something in English, we generally just insert the word "not" where appropriate. In Japanese, we actually need to conjugate the verb into its negative form.

## Negative present/future tense

The following table shows how verbs are adapted to the negative form in the future/ present tense:

Verb type	Informal negative present/future tense	Polite negative present/future tense
Add-on	stem + ない	stem + ません
Vowel-changing	stem(a) + ない	stem(i) + ません

For the informal negative present/future tense, there are two main exceptions to this rule for vowel-changing verbs:

1. When the the vowel-changing part of the stem is from the a-line, it is changed to 「わ」, not 「あ」. This is simply because it's easier to say. For example, for the verb 「使う」, it is much easier to say 「使わない」 than 「使あない」.
2. For the negative of the verb 「ある」, the word 「ない」 is used, *not* 「あらない」. Technically, this is a different word (as evidenced by the fact that they use different kanji, 「有る」 and 「無い」, though they are usually written in hiragana) but from a usage standpoint, 「ない」 is effectively the negative of 「ある」. In other tenses, 「ある」 changes in the same way as other vowel-changing verbs.

Here are some examples, including the irregular verbs:

Verb	Stem	Informal negative present/future tense	Polite negative present/future tense
Add-on		stem + ない	stem + ません
eat	食べ	食べない	食べません
watch / see / look	見	見ない	見ません

Vowel-changing		stem(a) + ない	stem(i) + ません
drink	の飲み	の飲 <sup>い</sup> まない	の飲 <sup>い</sup> みません
listen	き聞き	き聞 <sup>か</sup> かない	き聞 <sup>か</sup> きません
wash	あら洗い	あら洗 <sup>わ</sup> わない	あら洗 <sup>わ</sup> いません
to be/to have	あり	ない	ありません
<b>Irregular</b>			
do	し	しない	しません
go	い行き	い行 <sup>か</sup> かない	い行 <sup>か</sup> きません
come	き来	こ来 <sup>こ</sup> ない	こ来 <sup>こ</sup> ません

It is also not uncommon for people to make the informal negative form more polite by adding 「です」. For example, instead of 「行<sup>い</sup>きません」, someone might say 「行<sup>い</sup>かないです」 to say that they won't go somewhere. Either option is acceptable, but the 「～ません」 version is a little more proper.

Here are some example sentences using verbs in their informal negative present/future tense:

She doesn't eat seafood.

彼女はシーフードを食<sup>た</sup>べない。

I don't drink beer.

私はビールを飲<sup>の</sup>まない。

He never washes his hair.

彼は全然髪<sup>ぜんぜんかみ</sup>の毛<sup>け</sup>を洗<sup>あら</sup>わない。

They're not coming to the party.

彼らはパーティーに来<sup>こ</sup>ない。

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table:

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	Informal negative present/future tense
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	
sleep	Add-on	<sup>ね</sup> 寝る	
wake up	Add-on	<sup>お</sup> 起きる	
give	Add-on	あげる	
teach/tell	Add-on	<sup>おし</sup> 教える	
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	
buy	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 買う	
read	Vowel-changing	<sup>よ</sup> 読む	
write	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 書く	
make	Vowel-changing	<sup>つく</sup> 作る	
meet	Vowel-changing	<sup>あ</sup> 会う	
speak	Vowel-changing	<sup>はな</sup> 話す	
swim	Vowel-changing	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ぐ	
use	Vowel-changing	<sup>つか</sup> 使う	
understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	
play	Vowel-changing	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊ぶ	
run	Vowel-changing	<sup>はし</sup> 走る	
do	Irregular	する	
go	Irregular	<sup>い</sup> 行く	
come	Irregular	<sup>く</sup> 来る	

2. Say and write down each of the following sentences in informal Japanese.

- a) I don't have a younger brother.
- b) I'm not waking up at 6 am.
- c) He won't buy a new wallet.
- d) There isn't a TV in this house.
- e) I don't understand Spanish.
- f) She doesn't read the newspaper very much (often).
- g) They never cook.
- h) I'm not going to work today.

## Answers

1.

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	Informal negative present/ future tense
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	いない
sleep	Add-on	ねる	ねない
wake up	Add-on	おきる	起きない
give	Add-on	あげる	あげない
teach/tell	Add-on	おしえる	おしえない
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	ない
buy	Vowel-changing	かう	買わない
read	Vowel-changing	よむ	読まない
write	Vowel-changing	かく	書かない
make	Vowel-changing	つくる	作らない
meet	Vowel-changing	あう	会わない
speak	Vowel-changing	はなす	話さない
swim	Vowel-changing	およぐ	泳がない
use	Vowel-changing	つかう	使わない

understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	わからない
play	Vowel-changing	あそぶ	あそばない
run	Vowel-changing	はしる	はし走らない
do	Irregular	する	しない
go	Irregular	いく	行かない
come	Irregular	くる	こない

2.

- a) (私は) 弟 <sup>おとうと</sup> がいない。
- b) 私は朝 <sup>あさ</sup> 6 時 <sup>じ</sup> に起きない。
- c) 彼は <sup>あたら</sup> 新 <sup>さい</sup> しい財布 <sup>ふ</sup> を買 <sup>か</sup> わない
- d) この家 <sup>いえ</sup> にテレビがない。
- e) 私はスペイン語 <sup>ご</sup> がわからない。
- f) 彼女はあまり新聞 <sup>しんぶん</sup> を読 <sup>よ</sup> まない。
- g) 彼らは全然 <sup>ぜんぜん</sup> 料理 <sup>りょうり</sup> (を) しない。
- h) 今日 <sup>きょう</sup>、(私は) <sup>しごと</sup> 仕事 <sup>い</sup> に行かない。

## Negative past tense

Changing a negative verb into the past tense is very straightforward in both the informal and polite forms. Here's how it's done:

Verb type	Informal negative past tense	Polite negative past tense
Add-on	stem + なかった	stem + ませんでした
Vowel-changing	stem(a) + なかった	stem(i) + ませんでした

**Important:** The “i” sound in 「でした」 is silent, and this should therefore be pronounced “deshta”.

You can see that for the informal form, the 「ない」 from the present/future tense is simply changed to 「なかった」, just like with the 「くない」 and 「じゃない」 used to make adjectives and nouns negative. In the polite form, we just add 「でした」 to the end of the negative present/future tense.

Here are some examples of the negative past tense.

Verb	Stem	Informal negative past tense	Polite negative past tense
<b>Add-on</b>		<i>stem</i> + なかった	<i>stem</i> + ませんでした
eat	食べ <sup>た</sup>	食べ <sup>た</sup> なかった	食べ <sup>た</sup> ませんでした
watch / see / look	見 <sup>み</sup>	見 <sup>み</sup> なかった	見 <sup>み</sup> ませんでした
<b>Vowel-changing</b>		<i>stem(a)</i> + なかった	<i>stem(i)</i> + ませんでした
drink	飲 <sup>の</sup> み	飲 <sup>の</sup> まなかった	飲 <sup>の</sup> みませんでした
listen	聞 <sup>き</sup> き	聞 <sup>き</sup> かなかった	聞 <sup>き</sup> きませんでした
wash	洗 <sup>あら</sup> い	洗 <sup>あら</sup> わなかった	洗 <sup>あら</sup> いませんでした
to be/to have	あり	なかった	ありませんでした
<b>Irregular</b>			
do	し	しなかった	しませんでした
go	行 <sup>い</sup> き	行 <sup>い</sup> かなかった	行 <sup>い</sup> きませんでした
come	来 <sup>き</sup>	来 <sup>こ</sup> なかった	来 <sup>き</sup> ませんでした

Just like in the present tense, the informal negative form is sometimes made more polite by adding 「です」. For example, instead of 「食べ<sup>た</sup>ませんでした」, you could say 「食べ<sup>た</sup>なかったです」 to say that you didn't eat something. Again, either option is acceptable, but the 「～ませんでした」 version is a little more proper.

Here are some example sentences using verbs in their informal negative past tense:

She didn't eat breakfast this morning

今朝、彼女は朝ごはん<sup>あさはん</sup>を食べ<sup>た</sup>なかった。

You didn't listen to my advice

(あなたは)私のアドバイス<sup>き</sup>を聞<sup>き</sup>かなかった。

I didn't use her computer

(私は)彼女のコンピューター<sup>つか</sup>を使<sup>つか</sup>わなかった。

He didn't come to school today

今日、彼は学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に来<sup>こ</sup>なかった。

## Exercise

1. Say and write down each of the following sentences in informal Japanese.

- a) I didn't give her a present.
- b) He didn't close the door.
- c) There wasn't a toilet in that shop (over there).
- d) They didn't buy ice cream.
- e) She didn't make this bread.
- f) I didn't clean my teeth this morning.
- g) We didn't order this.
- h) They didn't go to the beach today.

## Answers

1.

- a) (私は)彼女にプレゼントをあげなかった。
- b) 彼はドアを閉め<sup>し</sup>なかった。
- c) あの店にトイレ<sup>みせ</sup>がなかった。
- d) 彼らはアイスクリーム<sup>か</sup>を買わなかった。
- e) 彼女はこのパン<sup>つく</sup>を作らなかった。
- f) 今朝<sup>けさ</sup>、私は歯<sup>は</sup>を磨<sup>みが</sup>かなかった。
- g) (私たちは)これを注文<sup>ちゅうもん</sup>しなかった。
- h) 今日<sup>きょう</sup>、彼らは海<sup>うみ</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>かなかった。

## 8.5 The potential tense

### New vocabulary

to cancel	キャンセルする
kilometers	キロ
loud/noisy	うるさい
piano	ピアノ

to play (a stringed instrument)	弾 <sup>ひ</sup> く
scary	こわ <sup>こわ</sup> い
staff	スタッフ
voice	こえ <sup>こえ</sup> 声

The potential tense allows us to talk about what a person is capable of; in other words, what they can or can't do. In English, we do this by inserting the word “can”, but Japanese requires us to conjugate the verb itself. This is fairly straightforward, but varies slightly for each verb type.

An important difference between Japanese and English is that in Japanese, the potential tense is rarely used when asking for permission or making a request. For example, in English, you might say, “Can I watch TV?” or “Can you please pass me the salt?”, but in Japanese, this would be an incorrect usage of this tense.<sup>3</sup> In Japanese, the potential tense is only ever used to describe a person's ability to perform the action.

The following table shows the rules for conjugating add-on and vowel-changing verbs into the potential tense.

Verb type	Informal (dictionary)	Polite
<b>Add-on</b>	stem + られる	stem + られます
<b>Vowel-changing</b>	stem(e) + る	stem(e) + ます

Below are some examples of each type, including the three irregular verbs:

Verb type	Stem	Informal	Polite
<b>Add-on</b>		stem + られる	stem + られます
eat	た 食べ	た 食べられる	た 食べられます
watch / see / look	み 見	み 見られる	み 見られます
<b>Vowel-changing</b>		stem(e) + る	stem(e) + ます
drink	の 飲み	の 飲める	の 飲めます
listen	き 聞き	き 聞ける	き 聞けます
<b>Irregular</b>			
do	し	できる	できます
go	い 行き	い 行ける	い 行けます
come	き 来	こ 来られる / こ 来れる	こ 来られます / こ 来れます

.....  
 3 Technically, this is incorrect English as well, since the words “may” and “would” should be used, respectively, instead of “can”, but it is common practice nonetheless.

For add-on verbs, you will often hear people leave off the 「ら」 part of the verb ending, so for example, instead of saying 「食べ<sup>た</sup>られる」, they might say 「食べ<sup>た</sup>れる」. Either is acceptable, but the version that includes 「ら」 is technically more correct.

There are a few verbs that are never used in this tense because it doesn't make much sense. For example, 「わかる」 (understand) is never used in this form because this verb already describes a capability - the ability to understand. In English, there is a subtle difference between saying “understand” and “can understand”, but these ultimately mean the same thing. In Japanese, you will never hear a person say 「わか<sup>れ</sup>る」 to mean “can understand”. Another verb not used in the potential tense is 「ある」, presumably because 「ある」 is used to mean “to be” for non-living things, and non-living things can't have abilities.

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table.

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	Informal potential tense
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	
sleep	Add-on	ね <sup>ね</sup> る	
wake up	Add-on	お <sup>お</sup> きる	
give	Add-on	あげる	
teach/tell	Add-on	おし <sup>おし</sup> える	
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	-not used-
buy	Vowel-changing	か <sup>か</sup> う	
read	Vowel-changing	よ <sup>よ</sup> む	
write	Vowel-changing	か <sup>か</sup> く	
make	Vowel-changing	つく <sup>つく</sup> る	
meet	Vowel-changing	あ <sup>あ</sup> う	
speak	Vowel-changing	はな <sup>はな</sup> す	
swim	Vowel-changing	およ <sup>およ</sup> ぐ	
use	Vowel-changing	つか <sup>つか</sup> う	

understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	-not used-
play	Vowel-changing	あそぶ	
run	Vowel-changing	はし走る	
do	Irregular	する	
go	Irregular	いく	
come	Irregular	くる	

## Answers

1.

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	Informal potential tense
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	いられる
sleep	Add-on	ねる	ねられる
wake up	Add-on	おきる	起きられる
give	Add-on	あげる	あげられる
teach/tell	Add-on	おし教える	おし教えられる
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	-not used-
buy	Vowel-changing	かう	買える
read	Vowel-changing	よむ	読める
write	Vowel-changing	かく	書ける
make	Vowel-changing	つくる	作れる
meet	Vowel-changing	あう	会える
speak	Vowel-changing	はなす	話せる
swim	Vowel-changing	およぐ	泳げる
use	Vowel-changing	つかう	使える
understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	-not used-

play	Vowel-changing	あそぶ	あそべる
run	Vowel-changing	はし走る	はし走れる
do	Irregular	する	できる
go	Irregular	行く	行ける
come	Irregular	くる	こられる / 来れる

## Using the potential tense in a sentence

These tenses can generally be used in a sentence like any other, except for one small difference:

**For verbs in the potential tense, the object of the verb is marked using the particle 「が」, not 「を」.**

This is similar to the “I want to...” expression, in which the 「を」 marking the object is also replaced by 「が」. Much like with the “I want to...” expression, it is not uncommon to hear 「を」 used incorrectly with these verbs instead of 「が」. Ultimately, you’re not going to have any problems using 「を」 with this verb tense, so don’t worry about it too much. Just be aware that 「が」 is the correct particle to use.

Also be aware that in cases where 「を」 wouldn’t normally appear, there is no need to forcibly insert 「が」 into the sentence. There doesn’t have to be a 「が」, and particles like 「に」 and 「で」 should be used in the same way they normally would. Only 「を」, where it appears, should be changed.

Here are some example sentences using this tense in a mixture of polite and informal Japanese:

I can be here (stay) until 8:00.

(私は) 8 時までここにいられる。

He can play the piano.

彼はピアノが弾けます。

They can use chopsticks.

彼らはお箸が使える。

You can make a reservation online.

インターネットで予約できます。

Can you come to tomorrow's meeting?

(あなたは) 明日<sup>あした</sup>の会議<sup>かいぎ</sup>に<sup>こ</sup>来れますか？

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in either informal or polite Japanese, as indicated.
  - a) [polite] I can eat sushi.
  - b) [informal] I can teach you English.
  - c) [polite] Can you wake up at 7am?
  - d) [polite] I can speak Japanese.
  - e) [polite] She can run 15km.
  - f) [informal] He can read kanji.
  - g) [informal] I can play until 6 o'clock.
  - h) [polite] Can you play golf?
  - i) [informal] I can go to the post office in the afternoon.
  - j) [informal] I can come by car next week.

## Answers

1.

- a) (私は)すしが食べられます。
- b) (私は)あなたに英語<sup>えいご</sup>が教えられる。
- c) 朝<sup>あさ</sup>7時<sup>しちじ</sup>に起きられますか？
- d) (私は)日本語<sup>にほんご</sup>が話<sup>はな</sup>せます。
- e) 彼女は15キロ走れます。
- f) 彼は漢字<sup>かんじ</sup>が読<sup>よ</sup>める。
- g) (私は)6時<sup>ろくじ</sup>まで遊<sup>あそ</sup>べる。
- h) (あなたは)ゴルフができますか？
- i) (私は)午後<sup>ごご</sup>に郵便局<sup>ゆうびんきょく</sup>に行ける。
- j) 来週<sup>らいしゅう</sup>、(私は)車<sup>くるま</sup>で来<sup>こ</sup>れる。

## Other forms of the potential tense

Like the other tenses, the potential tense can also be expressed in the negative, the past, and the negative past tenses. Once you know the standard form of the potential tense outlined above, these other forms are very easy, as all verb types follow the same, basic rules. The following table summarizes the changes made to the standard potential tense to form each alternative, with examples:

Potential verb form	Informal	Polite
<b>Negative (can't)</b>	Replace 「る」 with 「ない」	Change 「ます」 to 「ません」
た 食べられる	た 食べられない	た 食べられません
の 飲める	の 飲めない	の 飲めません
できる	できない	できません
<b>Past (was able to)</b>	Replace 「る」 with 「た」	Change 「ます」 to 「ました」
た 食べられる	た 食べられた	た 食べられました
の 飲める	の 飲めた	の 飲めました
できる	できた	できました
<b>Negative past (couldn't)</b>	Replace 「る」 with 「なかった」	Change 「ます」 to 「ませんでした」
た 食べられる	た 食べられなかった	た 食べられませんでした
の 飲める	の 飲めなかった	の 飲めませんでした
できる	できなかった	できませんでした

Here are some example sentences using these various forms of the potential tense.

I can't eat natto.

私は納豆<sup>なっとう</sup>が食べ<sup>た</sup>られない。

She can't speak English.

彼女は英語<sup>えいご</sup>が話<sup>はな</sup>せません。

I was able to buy a new refrigerator.

あた<sup>ら</sup>新しい冷蔵庫<sup>れいぞうこ</sup>が買<sup>か</sup>えた。

They were able to cancel their tickets.

彼らはチケットがキャンセルできました。

I couldn't sleep last night.

きのうの夜、寝られなかった。

He couldn't renew his contract.

彼は契約が更新できませんでした。

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table.

Verb in English	Dictionary Form	Polite negative potential	Informal past potential	Informal negative past potential
to be (living)	いる	いられません		
sleep	寝る		寝られた	
wake up	起きる			起きられなかった
buy	買う	買えません		
read	読む		読めた	
write	書く			書けなかった
make	作る	作れません		
speak	話す		話せた	
play	遊ぶ			遊べなかった
do	する	できません		
go	行く		行けた	
come	来る			来れなかった

2. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in either polite or informal Japanese, as indicated:

- a) [Informal] I can't play golf.
- b) [Informal] He can't eat sashimi.
- c) [Polite] I can't go to the post office today.
- d) [Polite] They can't open the window.
- e) [Informal] The staff were able to speak English.
- f) [Informal] We were able to meet at the airport.
- g) [Polite] She was able to fix my phone.
- h) [Polite] We were able to practice for 2 hours.
- i) [Informal] She couldn't buy the shoes she wanted.
- j) [Informal] I couldn't wake up this morning.
- k) [Polite] He couldn't go to work last week.
- l) [Polite] They couldn't come to the meeting.

## Answers

1.

Verb in English	Dictionary Form	Polite negative potential	Informal past potential	Informal negative past potential
to be (living)	いる	いられません	いられた	いられなかった
sleep	ねる	ねられませんか	ねられた	ねられなかった
wake up	起きる	起きられません	起きられた	起きられなかった
buy	かう	かえませんか	かえた	かえなかった
read	よむ	よめませんか	よめた	よめなかった
write	かく	書けませんか	書けた	書けなかった
make	つくる	つくれません	つくれた	つくれなかった
speak	はなす	はなせませんか	はなせた	はなせなかった
play	あそぶ	あそべませんか	あそべた	あそべなかった
do	する	できません	できた	できなかった
go	いく	行けませんか	行けた	行けなかった
come	くる	来られません	来れた	来れなかった

2.

- a) (私は)ゴルフができない。
- b) 彼は<sup>さしみ</sup>刺身が<sup>た</sup>食べられない。
- c) 今日、(私は)<sup>ゆうびんきょく</sup>郵便局 <sup>い</sup>に行けません。
- d) 彼らは<sup>まど</sup>窓が<sup>あ</sup>開けられません。
- e) スタッフは<sup>えいご</sup>英語が<sup>はな</sup>話せた。
- f) (私たちは)<sup>くうこう</sup>空港で<sup>あ</sup>会えた。
- g) 彼女は私の<sup>な</sup>ケータイが直せました。
- h) (私たちは)<sup>に じ かんれんしゅう</sup>2時間練習 <sup>な</sup>できました。
- i) 彼女は<sup>ほ</sup>欲しい<sup>くつ</sup>靴が<sup>か</sup>買えなかった。
- j) 今朝(私は)<sup>け さ</sup>起きられなかった。
- k) 先週、彼は<sup>せんしゅう</sup>仕事に<sup>しごと</sup>行けませんでした。
- l) 彼らは<sup>かいぎ</sup>会議に<sup>こ</sup>来れませんでした。

## Watching, seeing, listening and hearing

A couple of verbs to be careful of here are 「見る」 and 「聞く」. The reason for this is that in the potential tense, they refer to the person's ability to watch or listen, not whether or not they can see or hear. It is the same as the difference in English between “I can watch” and “I can see”, or between “I can listen” and “I can hear”. In both cases, the former describes what the person is able to control themselves, while the latter describes factors that are somewhat out of their control.

The table below shows the different words used to express these ideas.

Verb	Positive	Negative
can watch	<sup>み</sup> 見られる ・ <sup>み</sup> 見られます	<sup>み</sup> 見られない ・ <sup>み</sup> 見られません
can see	<sup>み</sup> 見える ・ <sup>み</sup> 見えます	<sup>み</sup> 見えない ・ <sup>み</sup> 見えません
can listen	<sup>き</sup> 聞ける ・ <sup>き</sup> 聞けます	<sup>き</sup> 聞けない ・ <sup>き</sup> 聞けません
can hear	<sup>き</sup> 聞こえる ・ <sup>き</sup> 聞こえます	<sup>き</sup> 聞こえない ・ <sup>き</sup> 聞こえません

The following sentences demonstrate how each of these is used.

I can't watch scary movies.

(私は) 怖い映画が見られません。

I can't see the TV.

(私は) テレビが見えません。

I can't listen to loud music.

(私は) うるさい音楽が聞けません。

I can't hear the teacher.

(私は) 先生が聞こえません。

These can, of course, also be expressed in the past tense. This is done in the same way as for other verbs in the potential tense, with 「～た」 and 「～ました」 endings in the positive, and 「～なかった」 and 「～ませんでした」 endings in the negative.

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in informal Japanese:

- a) We can watch this movie next week.
- b) They can see the restaurant.
- c) I can listen to music on my phone.
- d) I can hear a strange sound.
- e) She can't see the ball.
- f) He couldn't watch yesterday's soccer match.
- g) They can't hear my voice.
- h) I can't listen to this boring music.

## Answers

1.

- a) (私たちは) 来週 この映画が見られる。
- b) 彼らはレストランが見える。
- c) (私は) ケータイで音楽が聞ける。
- d) (私は) 変な音が聞こえる。
- e) 彼女はボールが見えない。

- f) 彼は昨日のサッカーの試合が見られなかった。  
 g) 彼らは私の声が聞こえない。  
 h) (私は)このつまらない音楽が聞けない。

## 8.6 Let's...

### New vocabulary

again	また
dress	ワンピース

In Chapter 4.2, we looked briefly at the polite version of the “Let’s...” expression, in which verbs end with 「～ましょう」. As was touched on at that time, this can also be turned into a question meaning “Shall we...” by adding 「か」 on the end: 「ましょうか」.

Truthfully, this expression does not literally mean “let’s...”, but rather is more accurately an expression of intent. In most cases, it just has a meaning equivalent to “Let’s do...”, but the “intent” interpretation will become more relevant later when you learn some other expressions that incorporate this one. For now, keep it simple and only use this expression when it makes sense to say “Let’s...” or “Shall we...”. Just be aware that you may hear it used in other ways in which “Let’s...” wouldn’t really be an appropriate translation.

As you would expect, there is also an informal form of this expression. The following table shows how to create the “Let’s...” expression for add-on and vowel-changing verbs in both informal and polite Japanese.

Verb type	Informal (dictionary)	Polite
Add-on	stem + よう	stem + ましょう
Vowel-changing	stem(o) + う	stem(i) + ましょう

Below are some examples of each type, including the three irregular verbs:

Verb type	Stem	Informal (dictionary)	Polite
<b>Add-on</b>		<i>stem</i> + よう	<i>stem</i> + ましょう
eat	た 食べ	た 食べよう	た 食べましょう
watch / see / look	み 見	み 見よう	み 見ましょう
<b>Vowel-changing</b>		<i>stem(o)</i> + う	<i>stem(i)</i> + ましょう
drink	の 飲み	の 飲もう	の 飲みましょう
listen	き 聞き	き 聞こう	き 聞きましょう
<b>Irregular</b>			
do	し	しょう	しましょう
go	い 行き	い 行こう	い 行きましょう
come	き 来	こ 来よう	き 来ましょう

Here are some example sentences of this expression in informal language:

Let's eat ramen today.

今日、ラーメンを<sup>きょう</sup>食べよう。

Let's drink some water.

<sup>みず</sup>水を<sup>の</sup>飲もう。

Let's go to Kyoto next year.

来年、<sup>らいねん</sup>京<sup>きょう</sup>都<sup>と</sup>に<sup>い</sup>行こう。

Shall we come here again?

またここに<sup>こ</sup>来ようか？

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table:

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	Informal "Let's..."
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	
sleep	Add-on	<sup>ね</sup> 寝る	

wake up	Add-on	<small>お</small> 起きる	
give	Add-on	あげる	
teach/tell	Add-on	<small>おし</small> 教える	
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	
buy	Vowel-changing	<small>か</small> 買う	
read	Vowel-changing	<small>よ</small> 読む	
write	Vowel-changing	<small>か</small> 書く	
make	Vowel-changing	<small>つく</small> 作る	
meet	Vowel-changing	<small>あ</small> 会う	
speak	Vowel-changing	<small>はな</small> 話す	
swim	Vowel-changing	<small>およ</small> 泳ぐ	
use	Vowel-changing	<small>つか</small> 使う	
understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	
play	Vowel-changing	<small>あそ</small> 遊ぶ	
run	Vowel-changing	<small>はし</small> 走る	
do	Irregular	する	
go	Irregular	<small>い</small> 行く	
come	Irregular	<small>く</small> 来る	

2. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in informal Japanese:

- a) Let's give her this beautiful dress.
- b) Shall we wake up at 6:30 tomorrow?
- c) Let's meet at the station tonight.
- d) Let's make okonomiyaki.
- e) Shall we use my computer?
- f) Shall we study Japanese tomorrow?
- g) Let's go by bus.
- h) Let's come to Japan again next year.

## Answers

1.

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	Informal “Let’s...”
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	いよう
sleep	Add-on	<sup>ね</sup> 寝る	<sup>ね</sup> 寝よう
wake up	Add-on	<sup>お</sup> 起きる	<sup>お</sup> 起きよう
give	Add-on	あげる	あげよう
teach/tell	Add-on	<sup>おし</sup> 教える	<sup>おし</sup> 教えよう
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	あろう
buy	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 買う	<sup>か</sup> 買おう
read	Vowel-changing	<sup>よ</sup> 読む	<sup>よ</sup> 読もう
write	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 書く	<sup>か</sup> 書こう
make	Vowel-changing	<sup>つく</sup> 作る	<sup>つく</sup> 作ろう
meet	Vowel-changing	<sup>あ</sup> 会う	<sup>あ</sup> 会おう
speak	Vowel-changing	<sup>はな</sup> 話す	<sup>はな</sup> 話そう
swim	Vowel-changing	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ぐ	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ごう
use	Vowel-changing	<sup>つか</sup> 使う	<sup>つか</sup> 使おう
understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	わかるう
play	Vowel-changing	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊ぶ	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊ぼう
run	Vowel-changing	<sup>はし</sup> 走る	<sup>はし</sup> 走ろう
do	Irregular	する	しょう
go	Irregular	<sup>い</sup> 行く	<sup>い</sup> 行こう
come	Irregular	<sup>く</sup> 来る	<sup>こ</sup> 来よう

2.

- a) 彼女にこの美しいワンピースをあげよう。  
 b) 明日(の)6時半に起きようか?  
 c) 今夜、駅で会おう。  
 d) お好み焼きを作ろう。  
 e) 私のコンピューターを使おうか?  
 f) 明日、日本語を勉強しようか?  
 g) バスで行こう。  
 h) 来年、また日本に来よう。

## 8.7 Transitive and intransitive verbs

### New vocabulary

candle	ろうそく
elevator	エレベータ
hand	て 手
lights	でんき 電気

milk	ミルク・牛乳 <small>ぎゅうにゅう</small>
stamp	きって 切手
strong	つよ 強い
wind	かぜ 風

The concept of transitive and intransitive verbs exists in English, but it is not as important as in Japanese, and you are likely not aware of it. It's important in Japanese because a large number of verbs have two alternate versions - a transitive one, and an intransitive one. In order to use the correct one, you need to understand the difference between them.

### What are transitive and intransitive verbs?

Transitive verbs are those that require an object. This means that the person or thing performing the action must be doing that action to something else. For example, if I buy a sandwich, then I am performing the act of buying on that sandwich. The sandwich is the object, and since the act of buying requires that something is bought, "buy" is a transitive verb.

Intransitive verbs, on the other hand, do not take an object. The person or thing performing the action does it alone, and nothing else is directly affected. For example, if I sleep, then I don't *sleep something* in the same way that I would *buy something*. I can "buy a sandwich", but I can't "sleep a bed". "Sleep" does not take an object, and is therefore an intransitive verb.

Some verbs are both transitive and intransitive. They can be used as either, depending on the situation. For example, the following two sentences are both grammatically correct:

I opened the door.

The door opened.

In the first sentence, "open" is used as a transitive verb, with "I" as the subject and the door as the object. I performed the act of opening on the door.

In the second sentence, however, "open" is used as an intransitive verb. This time, the door is the subject, and there is no object. The door is performing the act of opening by itself. Of course, there has to be something that caused the door to open, but all we are concerned about here is the *expression* of what happened, not what actually happened.

The important point here is that even though each sentence uses the verb "open" in a different way, the word itself stays the same.

Unfortunately, Japanese isn't quite so simple. A large number of verbs in Japanese actually have a transitive version and a separate intransitive version. "Open" is one of these. Here are our example sentences again with Japanese translations.

I opened the door.

(私が) ドアを<sup>あ</sup>開けました。

The door opened.

ドアが<sup>あ</sup>開きました。

As you can see, the first sentence uses 「開<sup>あ</sup>けました」, a transitive verb, while the second uses 「開<sup>あ</sup>きました」, which is intransitive. Although they both mean "open", and both use the same kanji when written in Japanese, these words have subtly different nuances, and cannot be interchanged. This means we need to learn what they are and when to use each alternative.

## Using transitive and intransitive verbs

The key difference between a transitive and intransitive verb is who or what is performing the action. If the person or thing is performing the action on something else, then the verb should be transitive. If instead they are performing the action by themselves, the intransitive verb should be used. Here are some examples that demonstrate this:

I <b>open</b> the door.	私がドアを <sup>あ</sup> 開ける。
The door <b>opens</b> .	ドアが <sup>あ</sup> 開く。
I <b>close</b> the window.	私が <sup>まど</sup> 窓を <sup>し</sup> 閉める。
The window <b>closes</b> .	<sup>まど</sup> 窓が <sup>し</sup> 閉まる。
I <b>drop</b> the pen.	私がペン <sup>お</sup> を落とす。
The pen <b>falls</b> .	ペンが <sup>お</sup> 落ちる。
I <b>move</b> the car.	私が <sup>くるま</sup> 車 <sup>うご</sup> を動かす。
The car <b>moves</b> .	<sup>くるま</sup> 車が <sup>うご</sup> 動く。
I <b>take/spend</b> time.	私が <sup>じ かん</sup> 時間をかける。
It <b>takes</b> time.	<sup>じ かん</sup> 時間がかかる。
I <b>raise</b> my hand.	私が手 <sup>て</sup> を <sup>あ</sup> 上げる。
The elevator <b>goes up</b> .	エレベーターが <sup>あ</sup> 上がる。
I <b>put</b> the book in the box.	私が <sup>ほん</sup> 本 <sup>はこ</sup> を箱に <sup>い</sup> 入れる。
I <b>enter</b> the room.	私が <sup>へ や</sup> 部屋に <sup>はい</sup> 入る。
I <b>turn on</b> the lights.	私が <sup>でん き</sup> 電気を <sup>つ</sup> 付ける。
The lights <b>come on</b> .	<sup>でん き</sup> 電気が <sup>つ</sup> 付く。
I <b>turn off</b> the lights.	私が <sup>でん き</sup> 電気を <sup>け</sup> 消す。
The lights <b>go out</b> .	<sup>でん き</sup> 電気が <sup>き</sup> 消える。
I <b>collect</b> stamps.	私が <sup>きって</sup> 切手を <sup>あつ</sup> 集める。
People <b>gather</b> .	<sup>ひと</sup> 人が <sup>あつ</sup> 集まる。

### Using 「は」 and 「が」

In the example sentences above, it is also possible to say 「私は」 instead of 「私が」. The 「が」 alternative was used here for the sake of easy comparison with the intransitive verb sentences. As mentioned earlier, the difference between 「は」 and 「が」 is subtle and quite complex, and will be explained in detail in Chapter 11.3.

The important thing to notice here is the particles used. Every sentence includes the subject-defining particle 「が」, and in all cases it is attached to the person or thing performing the action. The difference between each pair of sentences is whether or not there is something else that is affected by that action, as defined by 「を」.

For example, in the sentence 「私が電気を消す。」, the person speaking is saying that they are the ones turning the lights off. “I” am taking action, therefore 「私」 is followed by 「が」. By comparison, when the sentence is 「電気が消える」, the lights are turning off by themselves. The lights are taking action, so 「電気」 is followed by 「が」.

Just as importantly, there is an 「を」 in all of the sentences that use transitive verbs, but not in the ones using intransitive verbs. You’ll recall that 「を」 defines the object of a sentence - the thing being acted upon. Since intransitive verbs do not take objects, there can never be an 「を」 connected directly with an intransitive verb. By definition, only transitive verbs can be connected to the particle 「を」 because only transitive verbs take objects.

One thing to be careful of, though, is that even when there is an object, it won’t always be included in the sentence. If it is understood from context, it will likely be omitted, together with the particle 「を」. Even when that’s the case, a transitive verb should be used because what’s important is not whether the sentence contains an object, but whether or not it could.

For example, if we’re talking about the door, and questioning why it is open, I could say 「彼が開けた」. Although I have not mentioned the object or used the particle 「を」, I must use the transitive verb because the person who performed the act of opening, 「彼」, performed it on the door, as is understood from the context. If I mistakenly said 「彼が開いた」, that would imply that he himself opened, which makes no sense at all.

The exception to this is with verbs in the “I want to...” form and the potential tense. For these, the particle 「を」 should be changed to 「が」, so a sentence like, “I want to open the door”, would be 「私はドアが開けたいです」, while “I can open the door” would be 「私はドアが開けられます」. Note that in these cases, 「私」 is usually followed

by 「は」 because it's rare for 「が」 to appear twice in the same clause. Again, the choice between 「は」 and 「が」 is quite tricky and will be covered in more detail in Chapter 11.3.

In summary, when looking at transitive and intransitive verbs, the particles are important, but what matters most is that you understand the true difference between the meanings of these two verb types. Once you understand this and get used to using them, differentiating between their uses will become second nature.

## Differentiating between transitive and intransitive verbs

Although there are no specific rules for identifying these verb types, there are a few ways you can generally tell whether a verb is transitive or intransitive. Take another look at the verbs from the examples in the previous section:

Transitive		Intransitive	
open	あ開ける	open	あ開く
close	し閉める	close	し閉まる
drop	お落とす	fall	お落ちる
move	うご動かす	move	うご動く
take/spend (money, time)	かける	take (money, time)	かかる
raise	あ上げる	go up	あ上がる
put (in)	い入れる	enter	はい入る
turn on	つ付ける	come on	つく
turn off, extinguish	け消す	go off	き消える
collect	あつ集める	gather	あつ集まる

Looking at these, you may notice the following patterns:

- Transitive verbs often have an “e” sound and are add-on verbs (閉<sup>し</sup>める, かけ<sup>る</sup>, 上げ<sup>る</sup>, 集<sup>あつ</sup>める, 開<sup>あ</sup>ける, 入<sup>い</sup>れる, 付<sup>つ</sup>ける)
- Intransitive verbs often have an “a” sound (閉<sup>し</sup>まる, かけ<sup>る</sup>, 上<sup>あ</sup>がる, 集<sup>あつ</sup>まる), or are vowel-changing verbs (開<sup>あ</sup>く, 入<sup>はい</sup>る, 付<sup>つ</sup>く)
- Generally, only transitive verbs end in 「す」 (落<sup>お</sup>とす, 動<sup>うご</sup>かす, 消<sup>け</sup>す)

These are not definite rules by any means, but they can be useful when trying to identify a verb's type or for guessing one version of the verb based off the other.

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in polite Japanese. Unlike in the examples above, use the particle 「は」 to mark words representing people.

- a) She opened the window.
- b) The door didn't close.
- c) He dropped his phone in the toilet.
- d) I can't move this desk.
- e) It took 3 hours by bus.
- f) We went up to his office by elevator.
- g) He put the milk in the refrigerator.
- h) I'll turn the TV on.
- i) The candle went out by (due to) the strong wind.
- j) They gather in the library every Tuesday.

## Answers

1.

- a) 彼女は窓を開けました。
- b) ドアが閉まりませんでした。
- c) 彼はケータイをトイレに落としました。OR  
彼はトイレにケータイを落としました。
- d) (私は)この机が動かさません。
- e) バスで3時間(が)かかりました。
- f) (私たちは)エレベータで彼のオフィスに上がりました。
- g) 彼はミルク/牛乳を冷蔵庫に入れました。OR  
彼は冷蔵庫にミルク/牛乳を入れました。
- h) (私は)テレビを付けます。
- i) 強い風でろうそくが消えました。
- j) 彼らは毎週の火曜日に図書館で集まります。

## Chapter 9

# The ㇿ-form

The ㇿ-form is a special verb form that is used in a wide range of situations, such as continuous tenses, commands and requests, and when linking multiple actions together in a sequence. In this chapter, we will look at how the ㇿ-form is created, and some of the main ways in which it can be used.

When generally referring to verbs in the ㇿ-form, the following notation will be used: verb(ㇿ).

## 9.1 Converting to the ㇿ-form

### New vocabulary

die	し死ぬ
have, hold, carry, own	も持つ
live, reside	す住む
take off (clothing)	ぬ脱ぐ
take, pick up	と取る

Verbs can be converted into the ㇿ-form in much the same way as they are converted into the informal past tense. In fact, for all verb types, the only difference is that the

last sound is 「て」 or 「で」 instead of 「た」 or 「だ」. The て-form is not technically a tense, and there is only one version, with no differentiation between polite and informal.

Add-on verbs and irregular verbs in the て-form look like this:

Verb type	Dictionary form	て-form
<b>Add-on</b>	stem + る	stem + て
<b>Irregular</b>		
do	する	して
go	行く	行って
come	来る	来て

For vowel-changing verbs, we do the same transformations as for the informal past tense, but using 「て」 and 「で」 instead of 「た」 and 「だ」.

Verb stem ending	て-form ending
う, つ, る	って
ぶ, む, ぬ	んで
く	いて
ぐ	いで
す	して (pronounced “shte”)

Here are some examples:

English	Dictionary form	Stem ending	て-form ending	て-form
meet	あ <u>会</u> う	う	って	あ <u>会</u> って
hold/carry	も <u>持</u> つ	つ	って	も <u>持</u> って
take/pick up	と <u>取</u> る	る	って	と <u>取</u> って
play	あそ <u>遊</u> ぶ	ぶ	んで	あそ <u>遊</u> んで
live/reside	す <u>住</u> む	む	んで	す <u>住</u> んで
die	し <u>死</u> ぬ	ぬ	んで	し <u>死</u> んで
walk	ある <u>歩</u> く	く	いて	ある <u>歩</u> いて

take off (clothes)	<sup>ぬ</sup> 脱ぐ	ぐ	いで	<sup>ぬ</sup> 脱いで
talk	<sup>はな</sup> 話す	す	して	<sup>はな</sup> 話して

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table:

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	て-form
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	
sleep	Add-on	<sup>ね</sup> 寝る	
wake up	Add-on	<sup>お</sup> 起きる	
give	Add-on	あげる	
teach/tell	Add-on	<sup>おし</sup> 教える	
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	
buy	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 買う	
read	Vowel-changing	<sup>よ</sup> 読む	
write	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 書く	
make	Vowel-changing	<sup>つく</sup> 作る	
meet	Vowel-changing	<sup>あ</sup> 会う	
speak	Vowel-changing	<sup>はな</sup> 話す	
swim	Vowel-changing	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ぐ	
use	Vowel-changing	<sup>つか</sup> 使う	
understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	
play	Vowel-changing	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊ぶ	
run	Vowel-changing	<sup>はし</sup> 走る	
do	Irregular	する	
go	Irregular	<sup>い</sup> 行く	
come	Irregular	<sup>く</sup> 来る	

## Answers

1.

Verb in English	Verb type	Dictionary form	て-form
to be (living)	Add-on	いる	いて
sleep	Add-on	<sup>ね</sup> 寝る	<sup>ね</sup> 寝て
wake up	Add-on	<sup>お</sup> 起きる	<sup>お</sup> 起きて
give	Add-on	あげる	あげて
teach/tell	Add-on	<sup>おし</sup> 教える	<sup>おし</sup> 教えて
to be (non-living)	Vowel-changing	ある	<sup>あ</sup> 会って
buy	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 買う	<sup>か</sup> 買って
read	Vowel-changing	<sup>よ</sup> 読む	<sup>よ</sup> 読んで
write	Vowel-changing	<sup>か</sup> 書く	<sup>か</sup> 書いて
make	Vowel-changing	<sup>つく</sup> 作る	<sup>つく</sup> 作って
meet	Vowel-changing	<sup>あ</sup> 会う	<sup>あ</sup> 会って
speak	Vowel-changing	<sup>はな</sup> 話す	<sup>はな</sup> 話して
swim	Vowel-changing	<sup>およ</sup> 泳ぐ	<sup>およ</sup> 泳いで
use	Vowel-changing	<sup>つか</sup> 使う	<sup>つか</sup> 使って
understand	Vowel-changing	わかる	わかって
play	Vowel-changing	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊ぶ	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊んで
run	Vowel-changing	<sup>はし</sup> 走る	<sup>はし</sup> 走って
do	Irregular	する	して
go	Irregular	<sup>い</sup> 行く	<sup>い</sup> 行って
come	Irregular	<sup>く</sup> 来る	<sup>き</sup> 来て

## 9.2 Continuous tenses

### New vocabulary

to belong	しょぞく 所属する
company	かいしゃ 会社
to have (a pet)	か 飼う
homework	しゅくだい 宿題

HR department	じんじぶ 人事部
to love	あい 愛する
to work	はたら 働く

The first use of the て-form we will look at is to talk about actions that are currently taking place at a given moment, such as in the sentences, “I am watching TV”, or “I was watching TV at 8 o'clock yesterday”. This is done by adding the appropriate form of the verb 「います」 (いる) after the main verb in the て-form. Everything else in the sentence remains the same.

Verb tense	Informal	Polite
<b>Present continuous</b>	verb(て) + いる	verb(て) + います
<b>Past continuous</b>	verb(て) + いた	verb(て) + いました

These tenses can generally be used any time to talk about something that is in progress or continuing, in a very similar way to how they are used in English. Here are some examples in both informal and polite language:

I **am watching** TV.

私はテレビを<sup>み</sup>見ている。

私はテレビを<sup>み</sup>見ています。

He **is eating** sushi.

彼はすしを<sup>た</sup>食べている。

彼はすしを<sup>た</sup>食べています。

She **was playing** tennis.

彼女はテニスをして<sup>いた</sup>いた。

彼女はテニスをして<sup>いた</sup>いました。

They **were drinking** tea.

彼らはお茶を<sup>ちや</sup>飲<sup>の</sup>んでいた。

彼らはお茶を<sup>ちや</sup>飲<sup>の</sup>んでいました。

You can see from these examples that the ー-form of the verb is much like the “-ing” form of English verbs. They are similar, as both allow us to use certain verbs together with other verbs, but they are not exactly the same, so try not to remember them as such.

Also, there is an important difference to English that should be noted. In English, it is possible to use the present continuous tense to talk about your plans. For example, you could say, “I am eating sushi tomorrow with my friends”. Even though the verbs in this example are “am eating”, which is the present continuous tense, this sentence is clearly referring to the future, not what is happening right now. It is essentially the same as saying, “I will eat sushi tomorrow”.

*You cannot do this in Japanese.* You cannot say, 「明日、私は友達とすしを<sup>あした</sup>食<sup>ともだち</sup>べています」。 This tense is not used in this way in Japanese. Instead, you would just use the present/future tense and say, 「明日、私は友達とすしを<sup>あした</sup>食<sup>た</sup>べます」.

There are circumstances where you can use the present continuous tense to refer to something taking place in the future, but it is more like saying, “I will be eating...”. It is relatively uncommon and not worth thinking about at this stage, so we won’t go into it here. As a general rule, just don’t use the present continuous tense to talk about the future in Japanese until you are more familiar with it.

## Negative continuous tenses

Just as with other tenses, these too can be expressed in the negative form to describe things that you or someone else isn’t doing. To do this, we just change the verb 「いる」 to its negative form, like so:

Verb tense	Informal negative	Polite negative
Present continuous	verb(て) + いない	verb(て) + いません
Past continuous	verb(て) + いなかった	verb(て) + いませんでした

The examples below demonstrate the use of negative continuous tenses.

They’re not doing their homework

彼らは宿<sup>しゅくだい</sup>題をしていない。

She's not listening

彼女は<sup>き</sup>聞いていません。

He wasn't watching the game

彼は<sup>し あい</sup>試合を<sup>み</sup>見ていなかった。

I wasn't waiting

(私は)<sup>ま</sup>待っていませんでした。

## Differences between continuous tenses in English and Japanese

One area in which Japanese and English continuous tenses differ is with certain verbs that talk about the current situation. English has a group of verbs called “non-continuous” or “stative” verbs, which are often used in the regular present tense even when referring to an action that is currently in progress.

For example, it is normal to say “I live in Japan” for the present, or “I lived in Japan” for the past, even though the act of “living” in Japan is, or was, in progress. It is possible to use the continuous tense and say, “I am/was living in Japan”, but this doesn't have quite the same meaning, and isn't the standard way of expressing this basic idea in English.

However, actions that are represented by non-continuous verbs in English are usually expressed using continuous tenses in Japanese. The phrase, “I live in Japan”, in Japanese would be, 「私は<sup>にほん</sup>に<sup>す</sup>住んでいる」. To directly translate English and use the present/future tense to say, 「私は<sup>にほん</sup>に<sup>す</sup>住みます」, would instead refer to future plans to live in Japan, not the current situation.

Here are some other verbs that fall into this category, along with example sentences in a mixture of polite and informal speech.

English verb	English example	Japanese verb	Japanese example
to love	I <b>love</b> you	<sup>あい</sup> 愛する	(私はあなたを) <b>愛</b> している
to work	He <b>works</b> at the post office	<sup>はたら</sup> 働く	<sup>ゆうびんきょく</sup> 彼は郵便局で <b>働</b> いています
to own/have	I <b>have</b> a blue motorbike	<sup>も</sup> 持つ	(私は) <sup>あお</sup> 青いバイクを <b>持</b> っている

to have (a pet)	She <b>has</b> 3 dogs	か 飼う	彼女は犬を3匹飼っている <small>いぬ さん びき か</small>
to belong	They <b>belong</b> to the HR department	しよぞく 所属する	彼らは人事部に所属しています <small>じんじぶ しよぞく</small>

Ultimately, the key to using this correctly is to avoid translating from English, and instead think about whether or not the action is of an ongoing nature. For all verbs in Japanese, if the action began at some point in the past, and has not yet finished, then the present continuous tense should be used.

## Exercise

- Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in informal Japanese:
  - She is writing a book.
  - Taro is reading the newspaper.
  - I was sleeping on the sofa.
  - He was using the company's computer.
  - You're not listening to me.
  - They're not speaking (in) English.
  - He wasn't waiting at the station.
  - Miho wasn't watching.
  - She has a big dog.
  - He doesn't love her.
- Think of 5 things that other people are doing right now and describe them using polite Japanese. Try to include information about where each person is doing that activity.

## Answers

- 彼女は本を書いている。  
ほん か
  - 太郎は新聞を読んでいる。  
たろう しんぶん よ
  - (私は)ソファで寝ていた。  
ね
  - 彼は会社のコンピューターを使っていた。  
かいしゃ つか
  - あなたは私を聞いていない。  
き

- f) 彼らは英語で話していない。  
 g) 彼は駅で待っていなかった。  
 h) みほは見えていなかった。  
 i) 彼女は大きい犬を飼っている。  
 j) 彼は彼女を愛していない。

2. Each sentence should include (where possible) the location marked by the particle 「で」 (or 「に」 if describing a destination and an action involving movement like “go” or “visit”), and the verb in the て-form followed by 「います」.

## 9.3 Commands and requests

### New vocabulary

article	きじ 記事
to do ones best, work hard	がんば 頑張る
to hurry	いそ 急ぐ
phone number	でんわばんごう 電話番号

Another very common use of the て-form is in commanding and requesting people to perform actions, such as, “Come here!”, or “Come here, please”. To do this, simply end the sentence with the verb in the て-form for a command, or add 「ください」 (please) to soften it and make it a request instead. There is usually no topic or subject in these types of sentences because commands and requests, by their very nature, are usually directed at the person being spoken to, hence the person who should perform the action is obvious.

Here are some example sentences:

Look at this!  
 これを<sup>み</sup>見て！

Hurry up!  
 急いで！

Come here.  
 ここに<sup>き</sup>来て。

Do your best./Good luck.  
<sup>がんば</sup>  
**頑張**って。

Please take off your shoes.  
<sup>くつ</sup> <sup>ぬ</sup>  
 靴を**脱**いでください。

Please wait.  
<sup>ま</sup>  
**待**ってください。

Please wait a bit.  
<sup>ま</sup>  
 ちょっと**待**ってください。

A common alternative way to soften commands in colloquial speech that allows you to avoid the formality of the word 「ください」 is to add 「ね」 after the て-form verb. For example, 「ちょっと**待**ってね」 would be a casual way of saying “wait a second”, while 「<sup>がんば</sup>**頑張**ってね」 is a more relaxed way to encourage someone. You will likely hear this a lot, but remember that it should only be used in informal settings, or when the person speaking is of a higher standing than the person being spoken to.

<sup>がんば</sup>  
**頑張**って!

The word 「<sup>がんば</sup>**頑張**って」 is worth mentioning because it is very common, yet there isn't really an equivalent word in English. It is the て-form of the verb 「<sup>がんば</sup>**頑張**る」, which means something like “to do your best”, or “to work hard”. Japanese people are often told that the English translation is “to fight”, and for this reason you might occasionally hear them chanting or yelling 「ファイト！」 at sporting events.

In any case, 「<sup>がんば</sup>**頑張**って」 is usually said to a person as a form of encouragement before or during something challenging, such as a competition, an exam, or even just everyday work. Since it is often said before the event, it is sometimes translated to English as “Good luck”, although “Do your best” or “Work hard” is usually more appropriate, since effort, not luck, is what is being encouraged. In its regular form, 「<sup>がんば</sup>**頑張**る」 or 「<sup>がんば</sup>**頑張**ります」 is often said by a person about to take on a challenge, as if to say, “I will do my best”.

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in Japanese:

- a) Wake up!
- b) Please return home by 6 o'clock.
- c) Read this article.
- d) Please tell (teach) me your phone number.
- e) Close the door!
- f) Please speak in Japanese.
- g) Wash your hands over there.
- h) Please gather in the library at 3 o'clock.

## Answers

1.

- a) <sup>お</sup>起きて！
- b) <sup>ろくじ</sup>6時までに(<sup>いえ</sup>家に)<sup>かえ</sup>帰ってください。
- c) この<sup>きじ</sup>記事を読んで。
- d) <sup>でんわばんごう</sup>電話番号を<sup>おし</sup>教えてください。
- e) ドアを<sup>し</sup>閉めて！
- f) <sup>にほんご</sup>日本語で<sup>はな</sup>話してください。
- g) あそこで<sup>て</sup>手を<sup>あら</sup>洗って。
- h) <sup>さんじ</sup>3時に<sup>としょかん</sup>図書館で<sup>あつ</sup>集まってください。

## 9.4 Linking multiple actions together in a sequence

### New vocabulary

bullet train	<sup>しんかんせん</sup> 新幹線
Chinese (language)	<sup>ちゅうごくご</sup> 中国語
fine (weather)	<sup>は</sup> 晴れ
to go for a walk	<sup>さんぽ</sup> 散歩する

to quit	<sup>や</sup> 辞める
to ride	<sup>の</sup> 乗る
to sell	<sup>う</sup> 売る
to stand up	<sup>た</sup> 立つ

head	あたま 頭
to hit, bump (transitive)	ぶつける

the world	せかい 世界
to wear, put on (lower body)	はく 履く

We can use the て-form to talk about multiple actions that take place together or in a sequence. When describing multiple actions together, the て-form is used for all of the verbs except the last one. The tense used for the last verb then applies to all of the preceding verbs that appeared in the て-form. There is no limit to the number of actions that can be linked together, and this can be done in virtually any tense, as long as it makes logical sense. Here are some examples:

He went to the convenience store and bought a sandwich.

彼はコンビニに**行って**サンドイッチを**か**いました。

This morning, I woke up, ate breakfast and cleaned my teeth.

今朝、私はは**お**起きて、朝ごはんを**た**べて、歯を**は**みがきました。

I want to go to Japan and ride the bullet train.

(私は)日本に**い**って新幹線に**の**りたいです。

When the actions occurring together happen in a sequence, we can further emphasize the order of the different actions by including the particle 「から」 after the て-form of the verb. This is like saying “and then” or “before”, as shown in the examples below. Just be aware that this shouldn't be used too many times in one sentence or it becomes repetitive.

I went to the library and then I went to school.

(私は)図書館に**い**って**から**学校に行きました。

Please take your shoes off before going (entering) inside.

靴を**ぬ**いで**から**中に入ってください。

It is also possible to link sentences together when the verb is 「です」, albeit in a fairly limited way. The て-form of 「です」 is 「で」, and this can be added after a noun in place of 「です」 to allow one sentence to lead into another. Unlike other verbs, however, this does not describe actions occurring in a sequence because 「です」 only describes the state of being, not an actual action. Here are some examples of 「で」 being used in place of 「です」 to link two sentences together.

This is a pen, and that is a pencil.

これはペンで、それは鉛筆です。

Today is fine (weather), and it will rain tomorrow.

今日は晴れで、明日雨が降ります。

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in informal or polite Japanese, as indicated:

- [Informal] He stood up and hit his head.
- [Polite] She put on shoes and went to the mall.
- [Informal] We ate dinner and watched a movie, then went for a walk in the park.
- [Polite] Next year, I will go to China and study Chinese.
- [Informal] Tomorrow, we will go to Akihabara and buy a new TV.
- [Informal] They're eating yakiniku and drinking beer.
- [Polite] I want to sell my car and buy a motorbike.
- [Polite] I want to quit my job and travel the world.
- [Polite] Let's go to Shinjuku and do karaoke.
- [Informal] Let's return home and go to sleep.
- [Polite] This is my car, and that (over there) is his motorbike.

## Answers

1.

- 彼は立って頭をぶつけた。
- 彼女は靴を履いてモールに行きました。
- (私たちは)晩ご飯を食べて映画を見てから、公園で散歩した。
- 来年(私は)中国に行って中国語を勉強します。
- 明日、(私たちは)秋葉原に行って新しいテレビを買う。
- 彼らは焼肉を食べてビールを飲んでいる。
- (私は)車を売ってバイクが買いたいです。

- h) (私は)仕事<sup>しごと</sup>を辞<sup>や</sup>めて世界<sup>せかい</sup>が旅行<sup>りょこう</sup>したいです。
- i) 新宿<sup>しんじゅく</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>ってカラオケをしましょう。
- j) 家<sup>いえ</sup>に帰<sup>かえ</sup>って寝<sup>ね</sup>よう。
- k) これは私の車<sup>くるま</sup>で、あれは彼のバイクです。

## 9.5 Describing the means by which an action is completed

### New vocabulary

to be late	おく 遅れる
candy, sweets	お菓子 <sup>かし</sup>
to do exercise	うんどう 運動する
island	しま 島
to kick	け 蹴る
to lose weight	や 痩せる

to oversleep, sleep in	ね ぼう 寝坊する
to pass (a test)	ごう かく 合格する
to put on weight, get fat	ふと 太る
rich	かね も お金持ち
sick	びょう き 病気

Similarly to how we can link actions together that occur in a sequence, we can also link actions together to imply that one action enabled another to occur, or to describe the means by which an action takes place. In other words, it can be used to show cause and effect, much like saying “I did A by doing B” or “I did A and B happened”. Here are some examples:

He opened the door by kicking it.

彼はドアを蹴<sup>け</sup>って開<sup>あ</sup>けました。

They became rich by selling cameras.

彼らはカメラを売<sup>う</sup>ってお金<sup>かね</sup>持ちになりました。

She lost weight by exercising every day.

彼女は毎日運動<sup>まいにち うんどう</sup>して痩<sup>や</sup>せました。

I ate lots of candy and became sick.

お菓子<sup>かし</sup>をたくさん食<sup>た</sup>べて病<sup>びょう</sup>気<sup>き</sup>になりました。

In each of these examples, you can see that the first action leads directly to the second action, either as the means by which it occurs (eg. kicking the door open), or as its cause (eg. becoming sick due to eating lots of candy).

You'll no doubt notice that these sentences appear exactly the same as those in the previous section that showed actions in a sequence. The truth is, both instances describe actions that occur together or in a sequence; the difference just comes down to the interpretation of the effect of one action on the other.

In Chapter 2, we learned about the particle 「で」, and how it is used to define either the location where an action takes place, or the means by which an action is completed. In many ways, the て-form is like the verb version of the particle 「で」. They cannot always be used in the same ways, but if you think of the particle 「で」 as describing the means by which an action takes place, then using a verb in the て-form has the same effect. The only difference is that the means is in the form of a verb, not a noun.

One very common way in which verbs are used together like this is when describing the mode of transportation in the form of a verb. Rather than just saying something like, “I walked to the park”, in Japanese, the verb describing the movement, such as “go” or “come” is usually included as well. The following examples demonstrate this:

I walked to the park.

(私は)公園<sup>こうえん</sup>に<sup>ある</sup>歩いて<sup>い</sup>行きました。

He ran here.

彼はここに<sup>はし</sup>走<sup>き</sup>って来ました。

She rode her bike to school.

彼女は学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に自転車<sup>じてんしゃ</sup>に<sup>の</sup>乗<sup>い</sup>って行きました。

One way in which the て-form is very similar to the particle 「で」 is that it makes the word order more flexible. Normally, the verb comes at the end of a sentence or clause, but when a verb is in the て-form and used to describe the means by which an action occurs, it is no longer the main verb, and can therefore be moved around like a 「noun + で」 combination. Here are the above example sentences again with the word order rearranged:

I walked to the park.

(私は) <sup>ある</sup>歩いて<sup>こうえん</sup>公園<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

He ran here.

彼は<sup>はし</sup>走<sup>て</sup>ってここに<sup>き</sup>来ました。

She rode her bike to school.

彼女は自転車<sup>じ てん しゃ</sup>に<sup>の</sup>乗<sup>がっ</sup>って学校<sup>がっ こう</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きました。

In all of these examples, the verb in the て-form has been moved closer to the beginning of the sentence, just like might be done with the particle 「で」. If we compare the first example to similar sentences where the means of transport is a car, you can see how similar the て-form of verbs is to the particle 「で」:

<sup>くるま</sup>車<sup>こう えん</sup>で公園<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

<sup>ある</sup>歩<sup>こう えん</sup>いて公園<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

公園<sup>こう えん</sup>に<sup>くるま</sup>車<sup>い</sup>で行きました。

公園<sup>こう えん</sup>に<sup>ある</sup>歩<sup>い</sup>いて行きました。

As mentioned above, this doesn't mean that you can always use 「で」 and the て-form of verbs in the same way. For example, since nouns don't represent an action, you can't use a noun with 「で」 to form a command or a continuous tense, so while it's fine to say 「走<sup>はし</sup>ってください」 to ask someone to run, you can't say 「車<sup>くるま</sup>でください」 to tell someone to travel by car; the latter still needs a verb. Because of this, it is somewhat inaccurate to think of 「で」 and the て-form as being perfectly equal. However, being aware of their similarities should hopefully help you when forming sentences that use the て-form to describe the means by which actions take place.

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in informal or polite Japanese, as indicated:
  - a) [Polite] I overslept and was late to the meeting.
  - b) [Informal] He gained weight by eating cake every day.
  - c) [Polite] She broke her computer by dropping it.
  - d) [Informal] He took his jacket off and became cold.
  - e) [Polite] I will study lots and pass the test.
  - f) [Informal] I drank a lot of coffee and (now I) can't sleep.
  - g) [Polite] They ran to the post office.
  - h) [Informal] I want to swim to that island over there.

## Answers

1.

- a) 私は寝坊して会議に遅れました。  
 b) 彼は毎日ケーキを食べて太った。  
 c) 彼女はコンピュータを落として壊しました。  
 d) 彼は上着を脱いで寒くなった。  
 e) (私は)たくさん勉強してテストに合格します。  
 f) コーヒーをたくさん飲んで寝られない。  
 g) 彼らは郵便局に走って行きました。OR  
 彼らは走って郵便局に行きました。  
 h) あの島に泳いで行きたい。OR  
 泳いであの島に行きたい。

## 9.6 The negative て-form

### New vocabulary

to apply, put on (liquids such as creams, paints etc.)	ぬ 塗る
to forget	わす 忘れる
to sit	すわ 座る
sunscreen	ひ や ど 日焼け止め
to wear, put on (upper body)	き 着る

Verbs in the negative can also be expressed in the て-form. Although the transformation is easy, there are actually two versions of the て-form for negatives, and each have different uses. To keep things simple and avoid confusion, we will only look at one for now - the one that relates most to the て-form uses introduced in this chapter. The other will be explained in Chapter 12.3.1.

To form the first version of the negative て-form of a verb, we just add 「で」 to the end of the verb in its negative informal tense. The verb ending therefore becomes 「ないで」, such as in the following examples:

Verb	Negative	Negative て-form
する	しない	しないで
<sup>み</sup> 見る	<sup>み</sup> 見ない	<sup>み</sup> 見ないで
<sup>い</sup> 行く	<sup>い</sup> 行かない	<sup>い</sup> 行かないで
<sup>た</sup> 食べる	<sup>た</sup> 食べない	<sup>た</sup> 食べないで

This version of the negative て-form has two main uses:

- In commands and requests in the negative, eg. Please don't go over there.
- To describe actions that didn't (or will not) happen when linking actions together in a sequence, eg. He didn't eat before going to school.

Note that the negative て-form is not used with continuous tenses. As explained earlier, to describe something that is not happening, the verb should be used in the regular て-form, with the verb 「いる」 expressed in the negative. For example, to say “He is not watching TV”, you would say 「彼はテレビを<sup>み</sup>見ていない」。Much like English, there only needs to be one verb in the negative form to make the whole clause negative, and with continuous tenses, that verb should be 「いる」.

Here are some examples of the negative て-form in action:

Don't watch TV!

テレビを<sup>み</sup>見ないで！

Please don't close the door.

ドアを<sup>し</sup>閉めないでください。

He didn't eat breakfast before going to school.

彼は朝ごはんを<sup>た</sup>食べないで<sup>がっこう</sup>学校に行きました。

She went to the beach without putting on sunscreen.

彼女は日焼け止めを<sup>ぬら</sup>塗らないで<sup>うみ</sup>海に行きました。

## Exercise

1. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in polite Japanese:

- a) Don't wear that shirt.
- b) Don't give chocolate to the dog.
- c) Please don't forget your jacket.
- d) Please don't sit on this chair.
- e) He rode his bicycle without wearing shoes.
- f) She didn't wash her hands before eating pizza.
- g) I went to bed (slept) without cleaning my teeth.
- h) They didn't make a reservation before going to the restaurant.

## Answers

1.

- a) そのシャツを着<sup>き</sup>ないで。
- b) 犬<sup>いぬ</sup>にチョコレートをあ<sup>いぬ</sup>げないで。
- c) 上着<sup>うわぎ</sup>を忘<sup>わす</sup>れないでください。
- d) この椅子<sup>いす</sup>に座<sup>すわ</sup>らないでください。
- e) 彼は靴<sup>くつ</sup>を履<sup>は</sup>かないで自<sup>じ</sup>転<sup>てん</sup>車<sup>しゃ</sup>に<sup>の</sup>乗<sup>の</sup>りました。
- f) 彼女は手<sup>て</sup>を洗<sup>あら</sup>わないでピザ<sup>た</sup>を食<sup>た</sup>べました。
- g) (私<sup>は</sup>は)歯<sup>みが</sup>を磨<sup>ね</sup>かないで寝<sup>ね</sup>ました。
- h) 彼<sup>よやく</sup>らは予<sup>よやく</sup>約<sup>やく</sup>しないでレ<sup>い</sup>ス<sup>い</sup>ト<sup>い</sup>ラン<sup>い</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きました。

## 9.7 The て-form of adjectives

### New vocabulary

dark	くら 暗い
leg	あし 足
pink	ピンク (な)

sign	かんばん 看板
smelly	くさ 臭い
watch (timepiece)	とけい 時計

As we learned in Chapter 7, Japanese adjectives are different from English adjectives in one major way - they can be conjugated into different tenses. With that in mind, you probably won't be surprised to learn that adjectives also have a て-form.

Converting adjectives into the て-form is easy. For い-adjectives, we remove the last 「い」 and replace it with 「くて」. For な-adjectives, we just add 「で」 on the end instead of 「な」.

Adjective type	て-form	Example
い-adjective	Remove 「い」, add 「くて」	あつ 暑い → あつ 暑くて
な-adjective	Add 「で」 (without 「な」)	きれい → きれいで

The い-adjective conversion applies to all types of words that have been converted into a form that is the same as い-adjectives, such as verbs in the “I want to...” form with the 「～たい」 ending (eg. 行<sup>い</sup>きたくて), and negative adjectives ending in 「ない」 (eg. 良<sup>よ</sup>くなくて).

Like with verbs, the て-form of adjectives has a number of uses. Two of the main uses of the て-form of adjectives are:

- To apply multiple descriptions to something, eg. The **big, red** dog
- To describe a reason for something, eg. I can't eat this **because it's hot**.

Let's take a closer look at each of these.

## Applying multiple descriptions

Multiple adjectives can be strung together in a sentence by expressing all but the last adjective using the て-form. The following example sentences demonstrate this:

That dog (over there) is big and scary.

あの犬は<sup>いぬ</sup>大き<sup>おお</sup>くて怖<sup>こわ</sup>いです。

Japanese is easy and interesting.

日本語は<sup>にほんご</sup>簡単<sup>かんたん</sup>で面白<sup>おもしろ</sup>いです。

The small, black cat is under the table.

小さ<sup>ちい</sup>くて黒<sup>くろ</sup>い猫<sup>ねこ</sup>はテーブルの下<sup>した</sup>にいます。

Note that when doing this, the natural-sounding order of the adjectives won't always be the same as English. For example, some people may express the last example by saying 「黒くて小さい猫」, or “black, small cat”. This sounds less natural in English because we usually use adjectives of size before colors, not after, but the same isn't always true in Japanese. This is not really worth worrying about because ultimately, no matter what word order you use, if the words are correct, then the meaning will be understood. Just be aware that the order may differ from English, and as you hear and speak Japanese more, you will develop an intuitive understanding of what sounds most natural.

## Describing a reason

Adjectives can be used in the ㇿ-form to describe a reason for something. When this is done, the meaning of the sentence is much like an English sentence that includes “because”. As with other “because”-type sentences, the order of the reason and the outcome is the opposite of how it is usually expressed in English. When using the word “because” in English, it is normal to express the outcome first, followed by “because” and then the reason. In Japanese, however, the reason comes first (in the ㇿ-form), and the outcome comes after. The example sentences below, which use an adjective as a reason, should help clarify this.

I can't walk because my leg hurts.

あし いた ある  
足が痛くて歩けない。

I won't buy these shoes because they're expensive.

くつ たか か  
この靴は高くて買わない。

I couldn't see the sign because it was dark.

くら かんばん み  
暗くて看板が見えなかった。

I don't want to carry this bag because it's heavy.

このカバンはおもくて持ちたくない。

Notice that in each of these, the reason comes first, followed by the outcome. This is generally how outcomes and their reasons, of all types, are expressed in Japanese. We can, however, re-phrase these expressions using the English word “so” in order to match the word order to the Japanese sentence while still expressing the same basic idea. Here are the English sentences re-phrased:

My leg hurts so I can't walk.  
 These shoes are expensive so I won't buy them.  
 It was dark so I couldn't see the sign.  
 This bag is heavy so I don't want to carry it.

## Exercise

1. Complete the following table:

Adjective in English	Standard form	て-form	Negative て-form
good	いい・ <small>よ</small> い		<small>よ</small> くなくて
bad	<small>わる</small> い	<small>わる</small> くて	
happy	<small>うれ</small> しい		<small>うれ</small> しくなくて
sad	<small>かな</small> しい	<small>かな</small> しくて	
hot	<small>あつ</small> い		<small>あつ</small> くなくて
cold	<small>さむ</small> い	<small>さむ</small> くて	
interesting	<small>おもしろ</small> い		<small>おもしろ</small> くなくて
boring	つまらない	つまらなくて	
old	<small>ふる</small> い		<small>ふる</small> くなくて
new	<small>あたら</small> しい	<small>あたら</small> しくて	
want	<small>ほ</small> しい		<small>ほ</small> しくなくて
I want to...	～たい	～たくて	
well/spirited	<small>げん き</small> 元気 (な)		<small>げん き</small> 元気じゃなくて
strange	<small>へん</small> 変 (な)	<small>へん</small> 変で	
easy	<small>かんたん</small> 簡単 (な)		<small>かんたん</small> 簡単じゃなくて
quiet	<small>しず</small> か (な)	<small>しず</small> かで	
convenient	<small>べん り</small> 便利 (な)		<small>べん り</small> 便利じゃなくて
famous	<small>ゆう めい</small> 有名 (な)	<small>ゆう めい</small> 有名で	

like	<small>す</small> 好き (な)		<small>す</small> 好きじゃなくて
hate	<small>きら</small> 嫌い (な)	<small>きら</small> 嫌いで	

2. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in polite Japanese:

- a) She bought a pink, cute bag.
- b) They entered the dark, scary house.
- c) Your shoes are dirty and smelly.
- d) This is my new, expensive watch.
- e) I ate lots of sushi because it was delicious.
- f) I quit my job because I want to travel.
- g) I don't want to watch this movie because it's boring.
- h) He goes to that shop every day because it is convenient.

## Answers

1.

Adjective in English	Standard form	て-form	Negative て-form
good	いい・よい	よくて	よくなくて
bad	<small>わる</small> 悪い	<small>わる</small> 悪くて	<small>わる</small> 悪くなくて
happy	<small>うれ</small> 嬉しい	<small>うれ</small> 嬉しくて	<small>うれ</small> 嬉しくなくて
sad	<small>かな</small> 悲しい	<small>かな</small> 悲しくて	<small>かな</small> 悲しくなくて
hot	<small>あつ</small> 暑い	<small>あつ</small> 暑くて	<small>あつ</small> 暑くなくて
cold	<small>さむ</small> 寒い	<small>さむ</small> 寒くて	<small>さむ</small> 寒くなくて
interesting	<small>おもしろ</small> 面白い	<small>おもしろ</small> 面白くて	<small>おもしろ</small> 面白くなくて
boring	つまらない	つまらなくて	つまらなくなくて
old	<small>ふる</small> 古い	<small>ふる</small> 古くて	<small>ふる</small> 古くなくて
new	<small>あたら</small> 新しい	<small>あたら</small> 新しくて	<small>あたら</small> 新しくなくて
want	<small>ほ</small> 欲しい	<small>ほ</small> 欲しくて	<small>ほ</small> 欲しくなくて
I want to...	～たい	～たくて	～たくなくて

well/spirited	げん き 元 気 (な)	げん き 元 気 で	げん き 元 気 じゃ なく て
strange	へん 変 (な)	へん 変 で	へん 変 じゃ なく て
easy	かんたん 簡 単 (な)	かんたん 簡 単 で	かんたん 簡 単 じゃ なく て
quiet	しず 静 か (な)	しず 静 か で	しず 静 か じゃ なく て
convenient	べん り 便 利 (な)	べん り 便 利 で	べん り 便 利 じゃ なく て
famous	ゆう めい 有 名 (な)	ゆう めい 有 名 で	ゆう めい 有 名 じゃ なく て
like	す 好 き (な)	す 好 き で	す 好 き じゃ なく て
hate	きら 嫌 い (な)	きら 嫌 い で	きら 嫌 い じゃ なく て

2.

- a) 彼女はピンクでかわいいカバンを<sup>か</sup>買いました。
- b) 彼らは暗<sup>くら</sup>くて怖<sup>こわ</sup>い家<sup>いえ</sup>に入<sup>はい</sup>りました。
- c) あなたの靴<sup>くつ</sup>は汚<sup>きたな</sup>くて臭<sup>くさ</sup>いです。
- d) これは私<sup>あた</sup>ら新<sup>たか</sup>しくて高<sup>と</sup>い時<sup>けい</sup>計<sup>けい</sup>です。
- e) すしは/がおいしくて(私<sup>わたし</sup>は)た<sup>た</sup>くさん食<sup>た</sup>べました。
- f) (私<sup>わたし</sup>は)旅<sup>りょこう</sup>行<sup>こう</sup>したくて仕<sup>し</sup>事<sup>ごと</sup>を辞<sup>や</sup>めました。
- g) この映<sup>えい</sup>画<sup>が</sup>は/がつまらなくて(私<sup>わたし</sup>は)見<sup>み</sup>たくないです。
- h) あ<sup>あ</sup>の店<sup>みせ</sup>は便<sup>べん</sup>利<sup>り</sup>で(彼<sup>かれ</sup>は)毎<sup>まい</sup>日<sup>にち</sup>行<sup>い</sup>きます。

## Chapter 10

# The Magic of Noun Phrases

This chapter is where we really take things to the next level. You probably haven't heard of noun phrases before, but they are an essential part of any language, and complex noun phrases allow us to communicate with much more detail. In this chapter, we'll look at what noun phrases are, how they fit into sentences, and also cover a number of ways that noun phrases can be formed in Japanese. Once you understand everything in this chapter, you will have the foundations to understand almost anything the Japanese language will throw at you.

### 10.1 What are noun phrases?

As you know, nouns are words that represent things, whether they be physical or abstract. A noun phrase is just a sequence of words that together, as a whole, represent things in the same way that a single noun does. They are phrases that act as nouns grammatically.

The following are all noun phrases:

- car
- a car
- a blue car

- the blue car over there
- the blue car over there that's being washed by the guy wearing the red hat

These are all noun phrases because they all represent a thing - a car. "Car", in this case, is what is known as the **head noun**, and the only difference between each example is the amount of additional detail that is attached to this head noun. All of them can be used as a single block to fit into a sentence in exactly the same way as a plain old noun. Let's try it.

- I bought a car last week.
- I bought a blue car last week.
- I bought the blue car over there last week.
- I bought the blue car over there that's being washed by the guy wearing the red hat last week.

What this means is that if we know how to form noun phrases, we can add a lot more detail to our sentences. It allows us to include more information about every single noun, and then just slot that into a sentence without changing anything else. As the examples above show, it doesn't matter if we're just talking about "a car", or "the blue car over there that's being washed by the guy wearing the red hat", as long as we are using a noun phrase, we can insert it into a sentence in exactly the same way.

We have actually used some noun phrases in Japanese already, albeit very simple ones. Technically, a noun on its own is a noun phrase, but we have also created larger noun phrases when we joined two nouns together with 「の」 to say things like 「私の<sup>くるま</sup>車」 (my car). The same is true when we use an adjective (or two) before a noun, like when we say 「<sup>あお</sup>青い<sup>くるま</sup>車」 (blue car). We can also combine these two to say, 「私の<sup>あお</sup>青い<sup>くるま</sup>車」 (my blue car), and this also constitutes a single noun phrase.

There are, however, more ways to form noun phrases. Below are the main ones covered in this book:

- Determiner only - "This is my car"
- Adjective that describes a 'thing' - "This is a blue car."
- Verb that adds extra information- "This is the car that I bought."
- Verb as the action itself - "I saw him buying a car."
- Location preposition - "The car over there is blue."

We've already covered the first two, and you should have no problems using them in sentences. For the rest of this chapter, we will focus on the other three ways listed above, which will greatly increase the depth of expression you're capable of in Japanese.

## 10.2 Forming noun phrases using verbs that add extra information

### New vocabulary

colleagues	どうりょう 同僚
Japanese bar/restaurant	いざかや 居酒屋
people	ひと 人たち
reason	りゆう 理由
sake, alcohol	さけ お酒

Using verbs to create noun phrases is particularly powerful because by combining verbs with nouns, we can actually turn almost complete sentences into noun phrases. These in turn can then be inserted into other, longer sentences like any other noun or noun phrase. Consider this example:

He bought some bread at the supermarket.

If we want to talk more about the bread in this sentence, without starting a new sentence, we can convert the entire sentence into a noun phrase built around the word “bread”, and then use that noun phrase as part of a longer sentence. The above sentence converted into a noun phrase looks like this:

The **bread** (that) he bought at the supermarket

As you can see here, by taking a complete sentence and rearranging it a little, we can turn it into a noun phrase. This can then be inserted into a longer sentence like so:

I like the bread (that) he bought at the supermarket.

In Japanese, turning a basic sentence into a noun phrase is relatively easy. Here's the original sentence again with a Japanese translation using polite language:

He bought some bread at the supermarket.

彼はスーパーでパンを<sup>か</sup>買いました。

Now, this is what the equivalent noun phrase looks like:

The bread (that) he bought at the supermarket

彼がスーパーで買った<sup>か</sup>パン

To create this noun phrase, we have altered the original sentence in three ways:

- Put the head noun (パン) at the end, after the verb
- Changed the verb into the informal form (買った<sup>か</sup>)
- Changed the particle 「は」 to 「が」

Here is a quick explanation of each of these changes:

### Putting the head noun at the end

For any noun phrase, the head noun - the thing that we're talking about - is the last word in the noun phrase. This is always true, regardless of how many other words or what type of elements are included in the phrase. Even when using adjectives or other nouns, the head noun comes last. For example, if talking about a car, whether we say 「青い<sup>あお</sup>車<sup>くるま</sup>」, 「私の<sup>私の</sup>車<sup>くるま</sup>」, 「私の<sup>あお</sup>青い<sup>くるま</sup>車<sup>くるま</sup>」, or 「彼が<sup>か</sup>買った<sup>くるま</sup>車<sup>くるま</sup>」, the head noun, 「車」, always comes at the end.

### Changing the verb into the informal form

Except in rare, overly polite cases where the verb might remain in a polite tense, a verb in a noun phrase is always expressed in the informal form of whatever tense is being used. This does not, however, make the noun phrase informal. Any verbs that appear within a noun phrase are not the main verb of the sentence and are there for purely functional reasons, so politeness is not an issue. Instead, the politeness of a sentence is dependent mostly on the main verb at the end of the sentence. As long as the main verb in each clause is polite, the whole sentence will be polite too.

### Changing the particle from 「は」 to 「が」

Not all noun phrases will contain these particles, but when they do, 「が」 should always be used. The reason for this is that the particle 「は」 defines the topic of a sentence, but a noun phrase alone is not enough to form a complete sentence. If

something is not a complete sentence, it cannot have a topic, and 「は」 should not be used. Since a noun phrase is not a complete sentence, 「が」 should be used instead.

—

We can now put this into a sentence as if it were any other noun:

I like the bread that he bought at the supermarket.

私は**彼がスーパーで買ったパン**が好きです。

The bread that he bought at the supermarket is over there.

**彼がスーパーで買ったパン**はあそこにあります。

We ate the bread that he bought at the supermarket.

私たちは**彼がスーパーで買ったパン**を食べました。

As you can see here, the noun phrase can be treated as a single block, and just be followed by whichever particle is appropriate within that sentence. As mentioned above, the fact that we use the informal form of the verb inside the noun phrase does not affect the overall politeness of the sentence. The main verb - the one at the end - determines how polite a sentence is, so all of the above examples are in the polite form.

### Using different head nouns

In our example above, we took a basic sentence, extracted the word “bread”, and built a noun phrase around that word. However, there are other elements in the sentence that we can build noun phrases around. Here are some of the different noun phrases that can be created from our original sentence, “He bought some bread at the supermarket”:

- The **bread** (that) he bought at the supermarket
- The **supermarket** where he bought the bread
- The **person** who bought the bread at the supermarket
- The **reason** (why) he bought the bread at the supermarket

In the first three examples, we have extracted “the bread”, “the supermarket”, and “the person” (he), respectively, and created a noun phrases that centers on those things. In the fourth sentence, we have actually added an extra element - the reason - but the

concept is the same. In all cases, we can insert the full noun phrase into a sentence and still retain all of the extra information about the chosen element.

When we do this in English, we usually use the word “that” or question words like “where”, “who”, “why” and “which” to connect the head noun to the rest of the information. Sometimes we leave these words out to save time and because we can, but we always have the option to use one of these words because that is how English connects the verb to the head noun.

This is where Japanese is nice and easy. No matter which element you build your noun phrase around, no extra words are needed. All you have to do is make the three changes listed above: put the noun at the end, use the informal verb form, and change 「は」 to 「が」 when necessary.

Let’s take a look at how each of the alternative noun phrases above are formed in Japanese.

The **person** who bought the bread at the supermarket

スーパーでパンを買った<sup>か</sup>人<sup>ひと</sup>

The **supermarket** where he bought the bread

彼がパンを買った<sup>か</sup>スーパー

The **reason** (why) he bought the bread at the supermarket

彼がスーパーでパンを買った<sup>か</sup>理由<sup>りゆう</sup>

The structure here is basically the same as when we used “bread” as the head noun. All we have had to do is take out the head noun element (in the first sentence, 「人<sup>ひと</sup>」 is used as a substitute for the personal pronoun “he”) and put it at the end after the verb. We can now insert these noun phrases into other sentences like any other noun phrase. Let’s try it using the example where the head noun is 「人<sup>ひと</sup>」:

I don’t like the person who bought the bread at the supermarket.

私はスーパーでパンを買った<sup>か</sup>人<sup>ひと</sup>が<sup>す</sup>好きじゃないです。

The person who bought the bread at the supermarket is over there.

スーパーでパンを買った<sup>か</sup>人<sup>ひと</sup>はあそこにいます。

We saw the person who bought the bread at the supermarket.

私たちはスーパーでパンを買った<sup>か</sup>人<sup>ひと</sup>を見ました。

Reading the last example, you may notice that there are two possible interpretations. “At the supermarket” could refer to where the person bought the bread, or it could refer to where the person was seen. This ambiguity is present in both English and Japanese, and is a result of the fact that both verbs in the sentence (buy and see) can be associated with a location, and because there is a certain amount of freedom that exists with word order.

This ambiguity is sometimes avoidable, but not always. If the location refers to the main verb - in this case “see” - then the word order can be changed so that the meaning is more clear. For example, in English, we could say, “At the supermarket, we saw the person who bought the bread”. By putting “at the supermarket” at the beginning, it is separated from the noun phrase, and therefore must relate to the main verb; the ambiguity is removed.

In the example above, however, the location refers to where the person bought the bread, and must therefore be grouped together with the rest of the noun phrase that defines the bread, since noun phrases cannot be split up. The only way a sentence like this can be changed is to re-order the words within the noun phrase. However, this can't really be done in English. The best we can do is change the noun phrase to, “the person who, at the supermarket, bought the bread”, but this is obviously quite unnatural.

Fortunately, Japanese offers us a bit more freedom. Because of the flexibility in word order afforded to us by particles, it is perfectly fine to change the noun phrase to, 「パンをスーパーで買った人」. By putting the location in the middle of the noun phrase, it can no longer be interpreted as part of the main sentence, so the ambiguity is removed.

That said, you don't want to be thinking about these kinds of minor technicalities when you're speaking Japanese; that will only cause you to over-think things, which is not recommended. The point is simply that certain ambiguities will arise in Japanese, just as they do in English. The flexibility of Japanese grammar sometimes allows us to avoid these kinds of ambiguities, but like many other things, context will usually be enough to make the intended meaning clear. Just be aware that ambiguities do exist, and when context doesn't help to clarify things, you can always ask.

## Exercise

1. Convert the following sentences into different noun phrases, as indicated.

a)

I watched a movie last week.

私は先週映画を見ました。

- i. The **movie** I watched last week
- ii. The **person** who watched the movie last week
- iii. The **reason** why I watched the movie last week

b)

They are drinking sake at an izakaya.

彼らは居酒屋でお酒を飲んでいます。

- i. The **sake** they are drinking at the izakaya
- ii. The **izakaya** where they are drinking sake
- iii. The **people** drinking sake at the izakaya

c)

He will eat ramen with Yamamoto-san tomorrow.

彼は明日山本さんとラーメンを食べます。

- i. The **ramen** he will eat with Yamamoto-san tomorrow
- ii. The **person** who will eat ramen with Yamamoto-san tomorrow
- iii. The **reason** he will eat ramen with Yamamoto-san tomorrow

d)

She was reading a book at the library.

彼女は図書館で本を読んでいます。

- i. The **book** she was reading at the library
- ii. The **library** where she was reading the book
- iii. The **person** who was reading a book at the library

e)

I go to that supermarket every week.

私は毎週あのスーパーに行きます。

- i. The **supermarket** I go to every week
- ii. The **person** who goes to that supermarket every week
- iii. The **reason** I go to that supermarket every week

2. Write down and say aloud each of the following sentences in polite Japanese.

- a) The movie I saw last week was boring.
- b) The people drinking sake at the izakaya are my colleagues.
- c) The ramen he will eat with Yamamoto-san tomorrow is expensive and delicious.
- d) I really like (love) the book that she was reading at the library.
- e) He saw Takuya at the supermarket I go to every week.

## Answers

1.

a)

- i. 私が先週見た映画
- ii. 先週映画を見た人
- iii. 私が先週映画を見た理由

b)

- i. 彼らが居酒屋で飲んでいるお酒
- ii. 彼らがお酒を飲んでいる居酒屋
- iii. 居酒屋でお酒を飲んでいる人たち

c)

- i. 彼が明日山本さんと食べるラーメン
- ii. 明日山本さんとラーメンを食べる人
- iii. 彼が明日山本さんとラーメンを食べる理由

d)

- i. 彼女が図書館で読んでいた本
- ii. 彼女が本を読んでいた図書館
- iii. 図書館で本を読んでいた人

e)

- i. (私が)毎週行くスーパー
- ii. 毎週あのスーパーに行く人
- iii. (私が)毎週あのスーパーに行く理由

2.

- a) (私が)先週見た映画はつまらなかったです。  
 b) 居酒屋でお酒を飲んでいる人たちは私の同僚です。  
 c) 彼が明日山本さんと食べるラーメンは高くておいしいです。  
 d) 私は彼女が図書館で読んでいた本が大好きです。  
 e) 彼は(私が)毎週行くスーパーでたくやを見ました。

## 10.3 Forming noun phrases that describe the location of something

### New vocabulary

bed	ベッド
to chase	お追いかける
mouse	ネズミ

When you want to talk about a particular ‘thing’ and specify it by describing its location, the appropriate noun phrase can be formed in much the same way as any other noun phrase. Here is an example of how a basic sentence defining an object’s location can be turned into a noun phrase:

The bread is on the table.

パンはテーブルにあります。

The bread on the table is not delicious.

テーブルにあるパンはおいしくありません。

All that has happened here is the head noun “bread” has been moved to the end of the sentence after the verb 「ある」. If instead of bread we were talking about a living thing, the verb would be 「いる」.

The dog is over there.

犬はあそこにいます。

I gave some bread to the dog over there.

(私は) あそこにいる犬にパンをあげました。

An important difference between English and Japanese in these noun phrases is that the English noun phrases do not contain a verb, while the Japanese ones do. This is because in English, we just need to attach the location information to the noun using a preposition like “on”, “in” or “at”, such as in the phrase, “the bread on the table”. This doesn’t work in Japanese, so it would be wrong to say something like 「テーブルにパン」 and treat it as a noun phrase. The verb is necessary, so always remember to include 「ある」 or 「いる」 as appropriate.

Both of the above noun phrases, and any others like them, can also be used in the past tense, like so:

Where is the bread that was on the table?

テーブルにあったパンはどこですか？

I gave some bread to the dog that was over there.

(私は)あそこにいた犬いぬにパンをあげました。

You’ll notice that in the English sentences, we had to add “that was” in order to use these noun phrases in the past tense. Since our original phrase, “the dog over there”, doesn’t contain a verb, one needs to be added so that that verb can be conjugated in the past tense. We therefore effectively expand the original phrase to, “the dog that is over there”, and then change the verb “is” to “was”. In Japanese, however, since the verb is already included in the present tense version of the phrase, it just needs to be changed to the past tense, and everything else remains the same.

## Exercise

1. Convert the following sentences into noun phrases based around the location of the item being described. Be sure to include all of the information from the original sentence.

a)

The chair is next to the desk.

椅子いすは机つくえのとなりにあります。

the chair next to the desk

b)

The cat is under the bed.

ねこ 猫はベッドのした下にいます。

the cat under the bed

c)

There was a mobile phone here.

ここにケータイがありました。

the mobile phone that was here

d)

There is a movie theater in Umeda.

うめだ えいが かん 梅田に映画館があります。

the movie theater in Umeda

e)

The dog is outside.

いぬ そと 犬は外にいます。

the dog (that is) outside

2. Write down and say aloud each of the following sentences in polite Japanese.

- a) Please use the chair next to the desk.
- b) The cat under the bed is chasing a mouse.
- c) Where is the mobile phone that was here?
- d) Let's go to the movie theater in Umeda.
- e) The dog outside is noisy.

## Answers

1.

- a) つくえ 机のとなりにあるいす椅子
- b) ベッドのした下にいるねこ猫
- c) ここにあったケータイ
- d) うめだ 梅田にあるえいが かん映画館
- e) そと 外にいるいぬ犬

2.

- a) 机つくえのとなりいにあるす椅子つかを使つかってください。
- b) ベッドしの下したにいるねこ猫はネズミおを追おいかけています。
- c) こここにああったたケータイはどこですか？
- d) 梅田うめだにあるえい映画館がに行かんきましょう。
- e) 外そとにいるいぬ犬はうるさいです。

## 10.4 Forming noun phrases based around the action itself

### New vocabulary

boss	じょうし 上司
to know	し 知る
to learn	まな 学ぶ
mountain	やま 山
postcard	はがき

Sometimes, we want to talk about actions as if they are things. Actions are, of course, expressed using verbs, but in both Japanese and English, we need to convert these verbs into noun phrases in order to talk about the action itself. Let's start with an example:

Learning Japanese is fun.

In this sentence, the subject is “learning Japanese”, an action. However, it has been turned into a noun phrase by using what's called the *gerund* form of the verb “learn”. In Japanese, an action can be turned into a noun phrase and used in a similar way by adding 「の」 after the verb in its informal form, like so:

Learning Japanese is fun.

にほんごにをまなまなぶたののは楽しいです。

This is almost the same as when we added the noun after the verb in the previous section to build a noun phrase around the head noun “bread”. The only difference is that this time, since we want to use the action itself as the head noun, we follow the verb in its informal form with 「の」 instead of another noun like “bread”. Let’s try it again with our sentence about bread.

He bought some bread at the supermarket.

彼はスーパーでパンを<sup>か</sup>買いました。

Buying bread at the supermarket is easy.

スーパーでパンを<sup>か</sup>買う<sup>かんたん</sup>のは簡単です。

The element “he” has been removed here to make the sentence a general statement, rather than about a specific person. It can be included, but it would change the meaning to something like, “his buying bread at the supermarket”.

In any case, the important thing is that the original sentence can be easily turned into a noun phrase, where the action is the ‘thing’ being talked about, by adding 「の」 after the verb in its informal form.

An alternative to using 「の」 after the verb is to use the word 「こと」. The meaning is essentially the same, but you will likely hear 「の」 more often in spoken language. Here is the first example again, together with the 「こと」 version:

Learning Japanese is fun.

にほんご<sup>まな</sup>ぶ<sup>たの</sup>のは楽しいです。

にほんご<sup>まな</sup>ぶ<sup>こと</sup>は楽しいです。

So what’s the difference? Not much. For the most part, 「の」 and 「こと」 can be used interchangeably, although there are a few situations where only one or the other is appropriate. It is a little bit like the difference between these two sentences:

I like watching movies.

I like to watch movies.

Much like 「見る<sup>み</sup>の」 and 「見る<sup>み</sup>こと」, “watching” and “to watch” have basically the same meaning in most contexts. In some cases, they are not interchangeable (for example, you wouldn’t say “I want watching a movie” or “To watch movies is fun”), but in the majority of cases, they are. So with that in mind, we can express the same idea in two different ways in Japanese like so:

えい が み す  
映画を見るのが好きです。  
えい が み す  
映画を見ることが好きです。

However, it would not be accurate to say, for example, that the 「の」 version is equivalent to using “watching”, and the 「こと」 version is equivalent to “to watch”. They are just two similar ways of expressing the same idea, and when used in this way, 「の」 and 「こと」 are so close in meaning that it is not worth worrying about the finer details. You would be better off just using 「の」 most of the time, and as your Japanese improves, you will develop a feel for which one is more appropriate in different circumstances.

One more thing to remember with these kinds of noun phrases is that the verbs need to be in the appropriate tense. The above examples are general statements, so the dictionary form of the verb is used. When talking about a specific action, however, the verb describing that action needs to be in the tense that reflects the action’s timing. Here is an example:

I saw him eating sushi.  
(私は) 彼がすしを食べているのを見ました。

In this case, the action of ‘him’ eating sushi is ongoing, so it should be expressed in the present continuous tense. If the action is completed at the time the action described by the main verb occurs, then it should be in the past tense, like so:

I saw that he ate our sushi.  
(私は) 彼が私たちのすしを食べたのを見ました。

Here, the action being referred to occurred in the past, so the past tense is used. The finer details relating to the rules for verb tenses in noun phrases are actually fairly tricky as they are quite different from English. To avoid confusion, we won’t cover that here, but it is explained in more detail in Appendix 1: Understanding verb tenses in noun phrases.

To summarize, much like when turning a sentence into a noun phrase using a head noun such as “bread”, there are three basic rules for building a noun phrase around the action itself. These slightly different rules that relate to actions are as follows:

1. Put 「の」 or 「こと」 at the end after the verb
2. Change the verb into the informal form in the appropriate tense
3. Change the particle 「は」 to 「が」

## Exercise

1. For each of the following, translate the second sentence into Japanese using a noun phrase based on the first sentence. Express all your answers in polite Japanese, and be sure to use the correct tense when converting the first sentence into a noun phrase.

a)

I run in the mountains.

私は<sup>やま はし</sup>山で走ります。

Running in the mountains is difficult.

b)

He is making dinner.

彼は<sup>ばん はん つく</sup>晩ご飯を作っています。

I saw him making dinner.

c)

It takes 3 hours.

<sup>さん じ かん</sup>3時間(が)かかります。

I didn't know that it takes 3 hours.

d)

They are speaking in Japanese.

彼らは<sup>に ほん ご はな</sup>日本語で話しています。

I can hear them speaking in Japanese.

e)

You sent your grandmother a postcard.

(あなたは)おばあさんには<sup>おく</sup>がきを送りました。

I saw that you sent your grandmother a postcard.

f)

You got married in this park.

(あなたは)この<sup>こうえん けっこん</sup>公園で結婚しました。

I forgot that you got married in this park.

g)

She listens to music in her room.

彼女は部屋で音楽を聞きます。

She likes listening to music in her room.

h)

I write emails to my boss.

私は上司にメールを書きます。

I don't like writing emails to my boss.

## Answers

1.

- a) 山で走るのは難しいです。
- b) (私は)彼が晩ご飯を作っているのを見ました。
- c) 3時間(が)かかるのを知りませんでした。
- d) 私は彼らが日本語で話しているのが聞こえます。
- e) (私は)(あなたが)おばあさんにはがきを送ったのを見ました。
- f) (私は)あなたがこの公園で結婚したのを忘れました。
- g) 彼女は\*部屋で音楽を聞くのが好きです。
- h) 私は\*上司にメールを書くのが好きじゃないです。

- \* For g) and h), 「は」 is not changed to 「が」 because the topic of the main sentence is the same as that of the noun phrase. The 「彼女」 and 「私」 from the original sentences has effectively been dropped, since it is obvious from the context of the new sentences that that is who is being spoken about.

## 10.5 Including multiple pieces of information in a noun phrase

### New vocabulary

closet	クローゼット
France	フランス
to get to know	し <sup>あ</sup> 知り合う
magazine	ざっし <sup>し</sup> 雑誌
picture / painting	え <sup>え</sup> 絵
possible	か <sup>のう</sup> 可能

to put (an object) on, to place	お <sup>お</sup> 置く
to receive	もら <sup>う</sup> う
to remember	おぼ <sup>おぼ</sup> 覚える
steak	ステーキ
show (TV/radio)	ばんぐみ <sup>ばんぐみ</sup> 番組
[counter for items of clothing]	ちゃく <sup>ちゃく</sup> 着

With any noun phrase, it is possible to include as much or as little description as you want - there is no real limit. How this is done, though, depends on what the extra information actually relates to. There are three basic scenarios where additional information can be added:

- Adding multiple descriptions to a single head noun
- Adding extra detail related to an action
- Stacking noun phrases within noun phrases

Let's now take a look at each of these.

### Adding multiple descriptions to a single head noun

If we look at the different ways of forming noun phrases introduced in this chapter, plus the ones covered earlier in this book, they can be broken down into two main groups: those that focus on a 'thing', and those that focus on an action. For now, we are interested in the noun phrases that are focused on a 'thing', such as the following:

- This bread
- The delicious bread
- The bread that he bought at the supermarket
- The bread on the table

When talking about a particular thing, we will sometimes want to describe it in greater detail, which requires us to combine multiple descriptions together into a single noun phrase. For example, we can take all of the noun phrases about bread above, and combine them into a single, more detailed noun phrase like this one:

This delicious bread on the table that he bought at the supermarket

When doing this in Japanese, it will help to recognize that there are three word types that can be used to manipulate the head noun:

- Determiners, such as 「この」 or 「私の」
- Adjectives
- Verbs, including 「ある」 and 「いる」

In English, we can also use location prepositions to add information, but since this is done using the verbs 「ある」 and 「いる」 in Japanese, they can be treated the same as other verbs.

Let's now look at our noun phrases about bread, and see how we can combine them into a single, more descriptive noun phrase. Here are the individual noun phrases:

This bread

このパン

The delicious bread

おいしいパン

The bread that he bought at the supermarket

彼がスーパーで買ったパン

The bread on the table

テーブルにあるパン

We already know how to combine the first two:

This delicious bread

このおいしいパン

As a general rule, whenever you have an adjective (eg. おいしい), it will usually be the last item before the head noun. This means that when you have another item like a determiner (eg. この), this will come *before* the adjective, as in the example above.

The other important rule is that when combining different noun phrases together, the descriptive parts of each one (that is, everything before the head noun 「パン」) should be used as they are - they don't need to be changed in any way. We can see this here, with both 「この」 and 「おいしい」 being used unchanged.

Both of these rules are also true for verb-based descriptions. Let's start by combining just the adjective description with the location description:

The delicious bread on the table

テーブルにあるおいしいパン

Notice here that:

1. The adjective comes immediately before the noun
2. The descriptions are unchanged from when they were used on their own

If we now want to add in 「この」 as well, the best place to put it is after the verb but before the adjective, like so:

This delicious bread on the table

テーブルにあるこのおいしいパン

When adding in the last piece of information (that he bought the bread at the supermarket), we have a choice: it can go either before or after the location description. Since these are both expressed using verbs in Japanese, they can really be used in any order, along with any other verb-based description we care to include. This means that both of the following are acceptable:

This delicious bread on the table that he bought at the supermarket

テーブルにある、彼がスーパーで買った<sup>か</sup>このおいしいパン

彼がスーパーで買った<sup>か</sup>、テーブルにあるこのおいしいパン

One thing to be aware of is that it helps to include a comma, or a pause when spoken, in between each verb-based description to make it clear that these are separate descriptions relating to the same head noun. Without the pause, the middle part of the second phrase above would become 「彼がスーパーで買ったテーブルにある…」, which could be interpreted to mean that 'he' bought the *table* at the supermarket, not the bread. The pause or comma helps to clarify that these are separate descriptions.

To summarize, the three types of descriptions that can be attached to a head noun should be used in the following order:

Verbs → Determiners → Adjectives

This is not a rule that is set in concrete, and you will certainly hear people use different word ordering - such is the flexibility of the Japanese language! However, if you use these elements in this order, your sentences will usually sound natural.

### **Adding extra detail when describing an action**

For noun phrases focused on actions, adding extra information is quite straightforward, and is actually nothing that we haven't already covered. Basically, all of the information relating to the action can just be included in the sentence before it is converted to a noun phrase with 「の」 or 「こと」. Consider these examples:

Eating bread

パンを<sup>た</sup>食べるの

Eating this bread

このパンを<sup>た</sup>食べるの

Eating delicious bread

おいしいパンを<sup>た</sup>食べるの

Eating bread at home

<sup>いえ</sup>家でパンを<sup>た</sup>食べるの

For all of these, the extra information is just included in the part that leads up to the verb, either using different particles, or by expanding on the nouns that exist within it, like 「おいしいパン」. Up until 「の」, it is just like a regular sentence; there is nothing special done to the verb itself. This means that to add all of these pieces of information together into one noun phrase, we would just treat it like a regular sentence, and then add 「の」:

I eat this delicious bread at home.

(私は<sup>いえ</sup>家でこのおいしいパンを<sup>た</sup>食べる。

Eating this delicious bread at home

<sup>いえ</sup>家でこのおいしいパンを<sup>た</sup>食べるの

This can then be used in another sentence in the same way as any other noun phrase, like this:

I like eating this delicious bread at home.

私は家でこのおいしいパンを食べるのが好きです。

## Stacking noun phrases within noun phrases

Since all sentences can be turned into noun phrases, and these noun phrases can then be inserted into longer sentences which can themselves be turned into noun phrases, we can, in theory, build a never ending chain of noun phrases within noun phrases within noun phrases. Of course, we don't want to do this too much or we end up with ridiculous sentences like this one:

This is the car that my friend bought from the tall man whose mother lives in the green house with the white front door that I made using materials I was given by my old roommate who always wears a purple suit to work.

It is, however, quite common to have two or three noun phrases nested within each other. To do this, we can just take any noun within a sentence or other noun phrase and use a more detailed noun phrase in its place. Here is an example of how to do this:

He likes bread.

彼はパンが好きです。

+

The bread that is on the table

テーブルにあるパン

=

He likes the bread that is on the table

彼はテーブルにあるパンが好きです。

+

The table that I bought last week

私が先週買ったテーブル

=

He likes the bread that is on the table that I bought last week

彼は私が先週買ったテーブルにあるパンが好きです。

Realistically, most noun phrases that are used inside other noun phrases will be based on an adjective or location because nesting verb-based noun phrases within each other quickly becomes a mouthful, and usually isn't necessary. For example, in a situation where someone would use the sentence above, it would probably be obvious which table the bread in question is on. If not, a simple description like "the table over there" or "the blue table" would be sufficient. Nevertheless, in both Japanese and English, it is possible, and occasionally necessary, to create or understand sentences like the one above, and now you know how!

## Exercise

1. For each question below, translate each noun phrase into Japanese. The last phrase in each set combines the other individual noun phrases together.

a)

- i. clothes
- ii. dirty clothes
- iii. the clothes they are washing
- iv. the dirty clothes they are washing

b)

- i. these shoes
- ii. old shoes
- iii. the shoes that I'm wearing
- iv. these old shoes that I'm wearing

c)

- i. that (TV) show
- ii. an interesting show
- iii. the show he is watching
- iv. that interesting show he is watching

d)

- i. four steaks
- ii. big steaks
- iii. the steaks that he bought
- iv. the steaks in the refrigerator
- v. the four big steaks in the refrigerator that he bought

e)

- i. my shirts
- ii. five shirts
- iii. white shirts
- iv. the shirts in your closet
- v. my five white shirts in your closet

2. For each of the following, say aloud and write down the second sentence in polite Japanese. Use the first sentence as the basis for building the noun phrase to be used in your translation.

a)

Honda-san is going to Sapporo today.

きょう ほん だ さっぽろ い  
今日、本田さんは札幌に行きます。

I forgot that Honda-san is going to Sapporo today.

b)

I play soccer with my friends at the park on weekends.

しゅうまつ ともだち こうえん  
週末に友達と公園でサッカーをします。

I like playing soccer at the park with my friends on weekends.

c)

I received a beautiful painting from her 10 years ago.

じゅうねんまえ うつく え  
10年前に彼女に/から 美しい絵をもらいました。

I remember I received a beautiful painting from her 10 years ago.

d)

He learned Japanese without going to Japan.

に ほん い に ほん ご まな  
彼は日本に行かないで日本語を学びました。

It's possible to learn Japanese without going to Japan.

e)

He was wearing a blue shirt at the party on Wednesday.

すいよう び あお き  
水曜日に彼はパーティーで青いシャツを着ていました。

I saw him wearing a blue shirt at the party on Wednesday.

f)

She is reading a magazine next to the convenience store over there.

彼女はあそのコンビニのとなりで雑誌ざっしをよんでいます。

I can see her reading a magazine next to the convenience store over there.

3. Say aloud and write down each of the following sentences in polite Japanese.

- a) I forgot to give him the expensive wine that I bought in France last month.
- b) I ate a delicious lunch at a new restaurant in Namba with some friends that I met (got to know) at university.
- c) I remember seeing her put her wallet on the table in the kitchen.

## Answers

1.

a)

i. 服ふくii. 汚きたない服ふくiii. 彼らあが洗あらっている服ふくiv. 彼らあが洗あらっている汚きたない服ふく

b)

i. この靴くつii. 古ふるい靴くつiii. 私はが履はいている靴くつiv. 私はが履はいているこの古ふるい靴くつ

c)

i. あの番組ばんぐみii. 面白おもしろい番組ばんぐみiii. 彼みが見みている番組ばんぐみiv. 彼みが見みているあの面白おもしろい番組ばんぐみ

d)

- i. 4つのステーキ
- ii. 大きいステーキ
- iii. 彼が買ったステーキ
- iv. 冷蔵庫にあるステーキ
- v. 彼が買った、冷蔵庫にある4つの大きいステーキ, OR  
冷蔵庫にある、彼が買った4つの大きいステーキ

e)

- i. 私のシャツ
- ii. 5つのシャツ・5着のシャツ
- iii. 白いシャツ
- iv. あなたのクローゼットにあるシャツ
- v. あなたのクローゼットにある、私の5つ/5着の白いシャツ

2.

- a) (私は) 今日本田さんが札幌に行くのを忘れました。
- b) (私は) 週末に友達と公園でサッカーをするのが好きです。
- c) (私は) 10年前に彼女に/から美しい絵をもらったのを覚えています。
- d) 日本に行かないで日本語を学ぶのは可能です。
- e) (私は) 水曜日に彼がパーティーで青いシャツを着ているのを見ました。
- f) (私は) 彼女があそこのコンビニのとなりで雑誌を読んでいるのが見えます。

3.

- a) (私は) 先月フランスで買った高いワインを彼にあげるのを忘れました。
- b) (私は) 大学で知り合った友達と難波にある新しいレストランでおいしい昼ご飯を食べました。
- c) (私は) 彼女が財布を台所にあるテーブルに置くのを見たのを覚えています。

## 10.6 Differentiating between noun phrases and clauses

### New vocabulary

day	ひ 日
sky	そら 空

If we zoom out from the individual words in a sentence, there are three main types of word clusters in Japanese: noun phrases, independent clauses and conditional clauses. The reason we want to understand these is because each particle in Japanese is limited in terms of the types of clusters they can be attached to, and it's not uncommon to hear even advanced Japanese speakers make fundamental mistakes with regards to their use of particles.

You already know about noun phrases, so here is a quick explanation of the other two.

**Independent clauses** are basically phrases that describe a subject doing an action. This includes when the subject is omitted from the sentence or when the action is simply 'being'. It is essentially any phrase that is able to stand on its own as a complete sentence. In Japanese, this includes any phrase that ends in 「だ」 or 「です」, another verb, or an い-adjective. To clarify, the reason い-adjectives are included is because when used in their informal form at the end of a sentence, い-adjectives effectively include the word 「だ」 or 「です」, as was explained in Chapter 7.3.

Although independent clauses can stand alone as complete sentences, we can also use multiple independent clauses in a single sentence by joining them together with connective words like “and”, “but” or “so”. Here is an example:

I want to go to the park but it is raining.  
 こうえん<sup>い</sup>に行きたいですが、あめ<sup>ふ</sup>が降っています。

This sentence consists of two independent clauses, linked by the particle 「が」, meaning “but”.

A **conditional clause** is, as the name suggests, a clause that expresses a condition using words like “if” and “when”. For example, “If you go to the park” is a conditional clause because it describes the condition that affects some other action. Conditional clauses, in both Japanese and English, usually do not stand on their own as individual sentences because the condition needs to be related to some other action. Also, some

Japanese conditional clauses actually take on the form of a noun phrase, meaning there is a certain amount of overlap between these two types of word clusters. We have not covered conditional clauses yet, but the most common ones will be introduced in Chapter 12.2.

Now that we've got our definitions out of the way, let's look at why they are important.

A big mistake many people learning Japanese make is that they often use independent clauses in the same way as noun phrases, which generally doesn't work. More specifically, particles like 「は」 (topic), 「が」 (subject), 「を」 (object), 「で」 (location, means) and 「に」 (destination, location) can only be used with noun phrases. Using them after either type of clause described above (except where a conditional clause takes the form of a noun phrase) would be incorrect.

This is the same in English; generally, subjects and objects of a sentence must be noun phrases, and it is incorrect to use verbs and adjectives in the form of independent clauses in these roles. You would not, for example, say “Every week, I watch he plays soccer”, because the object - “he plays soccer” - is in the form of an independent clause. For this sentence to be correct, “He plays soccer” needs to be converted to the noun phrase “him play soccer”. The same principle applies in Japanese.

The whole purpose of this chapter is to help you turn independent clauses into noun phrases so you can correctly use them together with these particles when forming complex sentences. Let's look at some examples of what happens when we form such sentences without first converting clauses into noun phrases, or when we do the conversion but use the resulting noun phrase incorrectly.

## **I like eating sushi.**

### Mistaken Japanese sentence

すしを<sup>た</sup>食べる<sup>す</sup>が好きです ≈ I like eat sushi

### Why it's wrong

「すしを<sup>た</sup>食べる」 is an independent clause, but the particle 「が」 defines the subject of a clause, which can only be a noun. In both English and Japanese, the “eat sushi” part needs to be converted into a noun phrase before it can be used in this way. In English, it needs to be changed to “eating sushi” or “to eat sushi”, while in Japanese, it needs to be changed to 「すしを<sup>た</sup>食べるの」 or 「すしを<sup>た</sup>食べること」.

Correct sentence

I like eating sushi. / I like to eat sushi.

すしを<sup>た</sup>食べる<sup>す</sup>のが好きです。

すしを<sup>た</sup>食べる<sup>す</sup>ことが好きです。

**Please stop watching television.**Mistaken Japanese sentence

テレビを<sup>み</sup>見るをやめてください ≈ Please stop watch television

Why it's wrong

Similar to the previous example, 「テレビを<sup>み</sup>見る」 is an independent clause that needs to be converted into a noun phrase before it can be used as the object of a sentence, as defined by 「を」. This can be done by adding 「の」 (「こと」 is less appropriate in this case).

Correct sentence

Please stop watching television.

テレビを<sup>み</sup>見る<sup>の</sup>をやめてください。

**It's a hot day, but I want to play outside**Mistaken sentence

暑い<sup>あつ</sup>日<sup>ひ</sup>が、外<sup>そと</sup>で遊び<sup>あそ</sup>たいです ≈ Hot day, but I want to play outside

Why it's wrong

In this case, the opposite mistake has been made. 「暑い<sup>あつ</sup>日<sup>ひ</sup>」 is a noun phrase, but the particle 「が」, when used to mean “but”, should only be used after an independent clause. The part before 「が」 needs to be able to stand on its own as a complete sentence, which means it needs a verb. We can solve this problem by simply adding 「だ」 or 「です」 after 「日<sup>ひ</sup>」 (option 1 below). Another option is to turn the noun phrase back into a basic clause by removing 「日<sup>ひ</sup>」, although when doing this, we either need to add 「です」 to make the first clause polite (option 2), or remove 「です」 from the second clause to make it informal (option 3). This is to ensure that the politeness of the whole sentence is consistent.

Correct sentence

It's a hot day, but I want to play outside.

(1) 暑い<sup>あつ</sup>日<sup>ひ</sup>ですが、外<sup>そと</sup>で遊び<sup>あそ</sup>たいです。

It's hot, but I want to play outside.

(2) 暑い<sup>あつ</sup>ですが、外<sup>そと</sup>で遊び<sup>あそ</sup>たいです。

(3) 暑い<sup>あつ</sup>が、外<sup>そと</sup>で遊び<sup>あそ</sup>たい。

Ultimately, the difference between noun phrases and clauses affects the particles that we can use with them. There are certain particles that can only be used after nouns or noun phrases, and others that can only be used after independent clauses. A few can be used with both, but many of the most common particles only have one use, so in order to use them correctly, you need to know what word types can be used with each particle. In the next chapter, we will take a closer look at many of the most common particles, including which word or phrase types they can be used with.

**Exercise**

1. For each of the following phrases, identify whether they are noun phrases or independent clauses.

a) ゴルフをする

b) 彼<sup>か</sup>が書<sup>ほん</sup>いた本

c) あの窓<sup>まど</sup>を閉<sup>し</sup>めなかつた人<sup>ひと</sup>

d) 私<sup>わが</sup>は海外<sup>かいがい</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きたい

e) かわい<sup>ねこ</sup>い猫

f) 外<sup>そと</sup>で待<sup>ま</sup>っているの

g) ドア<sup>あ</sup>を開<sup>あ</sup>けよう

h) 私<sup>が</sup>が学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に歩<sup>ある</sup>くの

i) 彼<sup>が</sup>らがカメ<sup>つか</sup>ラを使<sup>つか</sup>っている

j) 彼<sup>が</sup>が仕<sup>し</sup>事<sup>ごと</sup>をやめ<sup>し</sup>たこと

k) 彼女<sup>が</sup>にあげ<sup>が</sup>たいネッ<sup>が</sup>クレス

l) 空<sup>そら</sup>が青<sup>あお</sup>い

## Answers

1.

- a) Independent clause
- b) Noun phrase
- c) Noun phrase
- d) Independent clause
- e) Noun phrase
- f) Noun phrase
- g) Independent clause
- h) Noun phrase
- i) Independent clause
- j) Noun phrase
- k) Noun phrase
- l) Independent clause



## Chapter 11

# Particles

We have used a number of different particles throughout this book so far. This chapter aims to give you a deeper understanding of particles so that you can confidently use the correct ones in any given situation. This will include a brief explanation of the different types of particles and the most common particles of each type, a look at certain particle/verb combinations to be aware of, a detailed analysis of the difference between 「は」 and 「が」, and a brief overview of some useful particle combinations. There are quite a large number of particles, with varying degrees of usefulness, so not all of them will be covered in this chapter. Instead, our focus will be on the particles that are most useful in daily conversation.

### 11.1 Types of particles

#### New vocabulary

amusement park	ゆうえん ち 遊園地
to be careful	き つ 気を付ける
to be found	み つか 見つかる
city	と し 都市
to decide	き 決め 決める

Japanese food	わ しょく 和食
key	かぎ 鍵
model	モデル
previous	まえ 前の
to search	さが 探す

to do	やる
elephant	ゾウ
good (skillful or tasty)	うまい
half	はんぶん 半分

smartphone	スマホ
to throw out	す 捨てる
warm	あたたか 暖かい

In Chapter 2, the following broad definition was given for particles:

Particles determine the role of each word relative to the verb.

This isn't actually entirely accurate. This is an over-simplified definition, and there are in fact different types of particles that relate to words in different ways. We won't go into the details of all the different types of particles, and there is no need to remember the different types, but a brief explanation of the main types of particles should help you to use them correctly, and clear up any confusion you may have over how different particles can be used. Note that some particles fit into multiple categories - sometimes with very different meanings, and sometimes with very similar ones.

## Case markers

These are the main particles, and are really the ones that fit the general definition from Chapter 2 above; that is, they define the role of each word relative to the verb. They include key particles like 「が」, 「を」, 「に」 and 「で」, and are the ones that define the core components of each sentence. Below is a summary of the most important case markers. Bare in mind, however, that some of these particles have other uses that fall into other particle categories.

**が** defines the subject, or the person or thing that is doing the action described by the relevant verb. The subject must always be expressed as a noun phrase.

**を**, pronounced “o”, defines the object, or the person or thing that the action is being done to. This object must also always be expressed as a noun phrase.

**に** defines the destination of an action that involves movement (or the origin if using a passive verb, as will be explained in Chapter 12.4). It can also define the location that something is in when using verbs like 「ある」 and 「いる」. The destination or location must always be expressed as a noun phrase.

**で** defines the location where an action takes place. This location must always be expressed as a noun phrase.

**と** defines who or what else is involved in an action, much like the English preposition “with”. Since this person or thing is involved in the action in the same way as the subject, it too must always be expressed as a noun phrase. Also see Parallel markers below.

**と** can also be used to define a quotation. Since any expression can be quoted, the quotation can take the form of any phrase type, including noun phrases and clauses, although clauses are more common. See Chapter 11.2 for a detailed explanation of how to use quotations.

**へ**, pronounced “e”, defines the destination of an action that involves movement, very much like 「**に**」. There are a few situations where one is preferable over the other, although for the most part, they are interchangeable. As with 「**に**」, the destination defined by 「**へ**」 must always be expressed as a noun phrase.

**から** defines the starting point or origin in terms of either time or location. Whether the starting point refers to a time or location, it must always be expressed as a noun phrase. (Note: Apart from frequencies, most time expressions that do not already end in a particle are noun phrases).

**より** defines the starting point or origin, much like the particle 「**から**」 above. The difference between the two is negligible, although 「**から**」 is much more common, and also more flexible. Like 「**から**」, 「**より**」 should also only be used after noun phrases.

**より** can also be used to make comparisons. This is done by placing it after the noun or clause that is the basis for comparison. The part of the sentence that comes after 「**より**」 should be a descriptive phrase that includes either an adjective or an adverb. Here are some examples:

Elephants are bigger than dogs.

ゾウは犬<sup>いぬ</sup>**より**<sup>おお</sup>大きいです。

This car is faster than the previous model.

この車<sup>くるま</sup>は前<sup>まえ</sup>のモデル<sup>はや</sup>**より**速いです。

She can dance better than me.

彼女は私<sup>わたし</sup>**より**うま<sup>おど</sup>く踊れます。

## Parallel markers

These are basically used to join two or more words or phrases together. This group includes the particle 「の」 as it is used to say things like 「私の車」 or 「太郎の本」. When two phrases, usually noun phrases, are joined together with parallel markers, they are effectively grouped together to become a single phrase, which can then be inserted into a sentence like any other single phrase. Here is a summary of the most common parallel markers:

**の** indicates a relationship of possession. When two words or phrases are joined together by the particle 「の」, the thing after 「の」 belongs to the thing before it. Both sides of 「の」 must take the form of noun phrases.

**か** can be used to list alternatives, much like the English word “or”. It can be used with either noun phrases or clauses, but all of the alternatives listed must be of the same phrase type; that is, noun phrases with noun phrases, or clauses with clauses, not a combination of both. Also, when used with clauses especially, 「か」 should be used after every alternative, including the last one.

I want to go to Tokyo or Osaka.

東京 **か** 大阪に行きたいです。

I can't decide whether to go to Tokyo or go to Osaka.

東京に行く **か** 大阪に行く **か** 決められません。

In the second example above, the English sentence could be expressed much more simply, but it is written like this because this is the natural way to express this kind of idea in Japanese. This is mainly because there is no word in Japanese that takes the meaning of “whether”, so the two (or more) options need to be expressed in full as actions, each followed by the particle 「か」.

**と** is used to list multiple people or things and join them together into a single noun phrase. This noun phrase can then be used in a sentence like any other noun phrase, being marked by particles like 「は」, 「が」, 「を」 and 「に」, or even the case marker version of 「と」.

This is very similar to, although slightly different from, the case marker particle 「と」. The case marker version, as described above, defines somebody or something that is *also* performing the action, like the English word “with”. It defines the relationship between that person or thing and the *verb*; that is, who else is doing the action. The

parallel marker version simply joins noun phrases together into a single noun phrase like the word “and”, which can then be used like any other noun phrase.

The following example uses the case marker version of 「と」:

I went to Tokyo with Yamazaki-san.

私は<sup>やまざき</sup>山崎さんと<sup>とうきょう</sup>東京<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

In this case, the 「と」 relates directly to the verb 「<sup>い</sup>行きました」. Here is an example using the parallel marker 「と」:

I went to Tokyo and Osaka.

私は<sup>とうきょう</sup>東京と<sup>おおさか</sup>大阪<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

In this case, 「<sup>とうきょう</sup>東京と<sup>おおさか</sup>大阪」 have been joined together to become a single noun phrase. The 「と」 does not relate directly to the verb - it simply joins the two place names together to form a single noun phrase. This, as a whole, is then defined as the destination and linked to the verb by the particle 「<sup>い</sup>に」. We can also use it with other particles, like so:

Tokyo and Osaka are big cities.

<sup>とうきょう</sup>東京と<sup>おおさか</sup>大阪は<sup>おお</sup>大きい<sup>とし</sup>都市です。

Both versions of 「と」 are also often used together, such as in this example, where the first 「と」 is a parallel marker, and the second 「と」 is a case marker:

I went to Tokyo with Yamazaki-san and Kawaguchi-san.

私は<sup>やまざき</sup>山崎さんと<sup>かわぐち</sup>川口さんと<sup>とうきょう</sup>東京<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

Like the case marker version, the parallel marker version of 「と」 should only be used to join noun phrases.

There is no real need to be able to differentiate between each version of 「と」. They are simply highlighted here to help you understand why sometimes 「と」 is used to form a list, with the words on either side of 「と」 being ‘equal’ (eg. <sup>とうきょう</sup>東京と<sup>おおさか</sup>大阪), while at other times, 「と」 just marks another person or thing that is involved in the action (eg. 私は<sup>やまざき</sup>山崎さんと<sup>とうきょう</sup>東京<sup>い</sup>に行きました).

や is used to link things together to form an incomplete list. It is much like the parallel marker 「と」, but because it indicates that the list is incomplete, it adds a meaning that is similar to the words “like”, “such as” or “et cetera” in English. In most cases, the last

item in a list of things separated by 「や」 will be followed by the particle 「など」. Here is an example:

I bought coffee, tea, milk, etc. / I bought things like coffee, tea and milk.

コーヒー<sup>ちや</sup>やお茶<sup>ぎゅうにゅう</sup>や牛乳<sup>か</sup>などを買いました。

In the above sentence, the speaker is implying that they bought several other things as well, most likely things that would normally be associated with coffee, tea and milk. There is no limit to the number of items that can be listed with 「や」, although since the entire purpose of 「や」 and 「など」 is to be a little bit vague and avoid including unnecessary detail, the number of items listed will usually be limited to two or three. Both 「や」 and 「など」 should only be used with noun phrases.

し is used to list multiple activities (verbs) or characteristics (adjectives), while placing emphasis on how many different activities or characteristics there are. Because of this inherent emphasis, each activity or characteristic description normally contains the particle 「も」, meaning “also” (see Binding Particles below for a more detailed explanation of 「も」). Here are some examples:

They went shopping and also saw a movie.

彼らは買い物<sup>か</sup>もしたし、映画<sup>えいが</sup>も見た。

Noguchi-san is here, and so is Sato-san.

ここに野口<sup>のぐち</sup>さん<sup>も</sup>いるし、佐藤<sup>さとう</sup>さん<sup>も</sup>います。

As for this restaurant, the scenery is pretty and the food is delicious.

このレストランは景色<sup>けしき</sup>もきれいだし、料理<sup>りょうり</sup>もおいしい。

As in the above examples, 「し」 should only be used after an independent clause. This can be expressed in either the polite or informal form, although the informal form is more common, and is still sufficiently polite as long as the sentence ends with a polite verb, such as in the second example above.

## Sentence-ending particles

These are added to the end of a sentence in order to alter it in some way. By far the most important of these to know is 「か」 as it is used to turn a phrase into a question. Another common one is yet another usage of the particle 「の」, as explained below. Most other sentence ending particles are just colloquialisms that add a bit of emotion

to the original sentence. They are far less common, and would be better to learn as you come across them in regular conversation. As you would expect, sentence-ending particles should generally be placed at the end of an independent clause. Here are the most common ones:

**か** turns a sentence into a question. The sentence can be in any tense and any level of politeness.

**の** can be placed at the end of a sentence to help emphasize a particular word or phrase within that sentence.

For example, in informal situations, it is possible to ask a question without using 「か」 by just speaking with a questioning intonation. However, when the person asking the question is surprised or excited about what they are asking, they can express this feeling by speaking in an excited way and adding the particle 「の」 at the end. Here is an example of a basic question, expressed both with and without 「の」.

Are you going to Japan?

(あなたは) 日本<sup>に ほん</sup> に行<sup>い</sup>く ?

Are you going to Japan!?

(あなたは) 日本<sup>に ほん</sup> に行<sup>い</sup>く **の** !?

When written in text, the only way to differentiate between these sentences in English is through the use of exclamation marks, so the difference is not completely obvious. When spoken, however, the added emphasis in the question ending in 「の」 is clear.

For non-questions, the same basic rule applies, with 「の」 adding emphasis to a particular word or phrase in the sentence. In addition to the use of 「の」, the part of the sentence being emphasized should be stressed when spoken. Here are some examples, with the emphasized words underlined:

I went!

私<sup>い</sup>が行<sup>い</sup>った**の** !

He threw out my blue shirt!

彼は私の<sup>あお</sup>青いシャツを<sup>す</sup>捨<sup>す</sup>てた**の** !

Statements like these can also be followed by 「だ」 or 「です」, although in such cases, the 「の」 is usually abbreviated to just 「ん」. Here are the above examples again with 「だ」 and 「です」 added.

I went!

私が行ったんだ！

私が行ったんです！

He threw out my blue shirt!

彼は私の青いシャツを捨てたんだ！

彼は私の青いシャツを捨てたんです！

These kinds of expressions are also often used in combination with 「よ」, which further strengthens the emphasis. In such cases, the use of 「だ」 or 「です」 after 「の」 is still optional, although 「のよ」 at the end of a sentence sounds quite feminine, and is generally only used by females. As such, if using 「の」 and 「よ」 together in informal settings, males should end their sentences with 「んだよ」.

I went!

[Informal] 私が行ったんだよ！

[Feminine] 私が行ったのよ！

[Polite] 私が行ったんですよ！

He threw out my blue shirt!

[Informal] 彼は私の青いシャツを捨てたんだよ！

[Feminine] 彼は私の青いシャツを捨てたのよ！

[Polite] 彼は私の青いシャツを捨てたんですよ！

To ask polite questions that carry the emphasis that 「の」 brings, the ending should simply be changed to 「んですか」, as these examples show:

Are you going to Japan!?

日本に行くんですか!?

Did he throw out your blue shirt!?

彼はあなたの青いシャツを捨てたんですか!?

One important rule to be aware of in relation to this use of 「の」 is that when it comes after a noun or な-adjective, this word should be followed by a 「な」. While normally a sentence ending in a noun or な-adjective would be followed by 「だ」 or 「です」, this effectively needs to be changed to 「な」 in order to be followed by 「の」. The following examples demonstrate this:

This is a pen.

これはペンだ。

Is this a pen!?

[Informal] これはペンなの!?

[Polite] これはペンなんですか!?

—

That's right.

そうです。

That's right.

[Informal] そうなんだよ。

[Feminine] そうなのよ。

[Polite] そうなんですよ。

The following table summarizes the different ways that 「の」 can be used at the end of a sentence to add emphasis:

Setting	Original verb	Emphasized statement	Question
Informal	だ	なの・なんだ・なんだよ・なのよ (feminine)	なの?
	Other	の・んだ・んだよ・のよ (feminine)	の?
Polite	です	なんです・なんですよ	なんですか?
	Other	んです・んですよ	んですか?

**な** can be used to form a very strong negative command. By putting 「な」 at the end of a sentence in the informal, non-negative present tense, you can command or order someone to *not* do the action described by the sentence.

Don't come here!

ここに<sup>く</sup>来るな!

Don't close the door!

ドアを<sup>し</sup>閉めるな!

The most important thing to remember with this kind of expression is that despite being a negative command, the verb is in the positive form. Also note that you *cannot* form a positive command by using 「な」 after a verb in its negative form.

## Interjectory particles

As explained in Chapter 4.6, these particles are used to add emotion or emphasis to an otherwise straightforward sentence. They normally appear at the end of a sentence, although they can also be inserted into a sentence anywhere there is a pause. Here are the most common ones:

**よ** is used to make assertions, and adds a moderate level of emphasis to a sentence. It is often used when the speaker is providing new information, confirming that something has or will be done, giving an opinion, or expressing disagreement.

**ね** is generally used to express agreement, and has a kind of softening effect on the overall sentence.

## Conjunctive particles

In English, a conjunction is a word like “so” or “but” that is used to connect two separate clauses together. In Japanese, there is a group of particles that take on this role. Included in this group are particles that we have already learned, like 「が」 when used to mean “but”, and 「から」 when used to mean “so” or “because”.

Conjunctive particles should generally be placed at the end of a clause. Although they are usually followed by a connected clause, the second clause is not mandatory, as long as the context allows it. For example, if someone asks you why you did something, you could explain with a sentence that just ends in 「から」 or 「からです」, much like you might answer a question by saying, “Because ...” in English. The explanations below will further clarify this.

**が** is used to connect two contrasting clauses, much like the English words “but” or “though”. This can be used in between two clauses of a contrasting nature, or at the end of a single clause if the contrasting idea is understood from context, like in the second example below:

I want to go to Japan **but** I don't have any money.

(私は) 日本<sup>にほん</sup>に行きたいです**が**、お金<sup>かね</sup>がありません。

I can't go to Japan. I want to go, **though**...

日本<sup>にほん</sup>に行けません。行きたいです**が**...

Sometimes, 「が」 is also used as a way to lead one phrase into another, even if the ideas expressed in each clause are not of a contrasting nature. Here are a couple of examples:

Excuse me. How much is this?

すみません**が**、これはいくらですか？

I'm starting; is that okay (good)?

これから**はじ**まります**が**、いいですか？

**けれども** is also used to connect two contrasting clauses. It is interchangeable with 「が」, and is very often used in its shortened and less polite form 「けど」. 「けれども」 is also quite common, and is more polite than 「けど」.

**から** connects two clauses together, with the first providing an explanation or reason for the second, similar to the English words “because” and “so”. The important difference between 「から」 and “because” is that within a sentence, “because” appears before the reason, whereas 「から」 always comes after it. This makes “so” a more accurate direct translation of 「から」.

The reason clause is often expressed in the informal form, even in polite language, with the last verb in the sentence making the whole sentence polite.

I can't go to Japan **because** I don't have any money. /

I don't have any money **so** I can't go to Japan.

(私は) お金がない**から** 日本に行けません。

In the following example, the second clause is omitted by person B because it is understood from context.

A: Why don't you go to Japan?

A: どうして日本に行きませんか？

B: Because I don't have any money.

B: お金がない**から**です。

**ので** also connects a reason clause with a result clause, and is essentially a more polite version of 「から」. However, it is almost always used after a verb in the informal form, as there is usually a clause that follows it that would be expressed with the appropriate level of politeness. When placed after a clause ending in a noun or な-adjective, 「な」 should be used instead of 「だ」, as shown in the second example below:

I can't go to Japan **because** I don't have any money.  
 お金<sup>かね</sup>がない**ので**日本<sup>にほん</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>けません。

This is a new car, so please be careful.  
 これは新<sup>あた</sup>しい車<sup>くるま</sup> **なので**、気<sup>き</sup>を付<sup>つ</sup>けてください。

**のに** connects two clauses together, taking on a meaning similar to “even though” in English. It is usually only used after independent clauses ending in a verb in its informal form, and like 「**ので**」, when the clause before it ends in a noun or な-adjective, 「**な**」 should be used instead of 「**だ**」. Here are some examples:

He bought a new TV **even though** he doesn't have any money.  
 彼はお金<sup>かね</sup>がない**のに**、新<sup>あた</sup>しいテレビ<sup>か</sup>を買<sup>か</sup>った。

**Even though** I looked for my keys for an hour, I didn't find them.  
 1 時間<sup>いちじかん</sup>鍵<sup>かぎ</sup>を探<sup>さが</sup>した**のに**、見<sup>み</sup>つかりませんでした。

**Even though** it's my computer, she is always using it.  
 私のコンピュータ**なのに**、いつも彼女<sup>つか</sup>が使<sup>つか</sup>っている。

## Binding particles

These are quite possibly the most confusing group of particles because they can be used either in place of or together with other particles, particularly case markers, to change the inherent meaning of a sentence. They can be placed after various word types depending on the particle, but will most often be found after noun phrases or other particles. We will start by looking at 「**も**」, because although it is not the most important binding particle, it is probably the easiest to understand.

**も**, as discussed in Chapter 4.1, can be used instead of a particle like 「**を**」 to add the meaning of “also” to a sentence, such as in this example from earlier:

I ate ramen.  
 (私は) ラーメン<sup>た</sup>を食<sup>た</sup>べました。

I **also** ate yakisoba.  
 (私は) 焼きそば<sup>た</sup> **も**食<sup>た</sup>べました。

It can also be used in the place of the subject marker 「が」, or after other particles like 「に」, 「で」, and 「から」. These kinds of particle combinations will be explained in Chapter 11.4.

**は** defines the topic of a sentence, which is actually a concept that doesn't exist in English grammar. The topic is the main thing that is being talked about, and it provides context, or additional context, for everything that follows in the sentence. The most difficult part about 「は」 is that the topic of a sentence is often the same as the subject, meaning that either 「は」 or 「が」 could be used after a given word in many situations. There is, however, a difference between defining a certain word as the topic as opposed to the subject, so it is important to understand the difference between these two concepts. This will be explained in detail in Chapter 11.3.

**でも** is much like the English word “even” as it appears in sentences like, “Even I can do that”. Let's take a look:

I can do that.

私はそれができます。

**Even** I can do that.

私**でも**それができます。

In this example, you can see that by replacing 「は」 with 「でも」, the meaning of “even” is added. This is quite similar to the way 「も」 can be used to replace other particles to add the meaning of “also”. It keeps the fundamental message of the sentence – that ‘I’ can do ‘that’ – while implying that other people are capable too. Here are some more examples:

**Even** my grandfather has a smartphone.

(私の)おじいちゃん**でも**スマホを持<sup>も</sup>っているよ。

**Even** today is warmer than yesterday.

きょう**でも**きのうよりあたたかいです。

One similar but slightly different usage of 「でも」 is to imply that something is just one option among many. For example, a common question asked by someone hosting a visitor might be:

お茶<sup>ちゃ</sup>でも飲<sup>の</sup>みますか？

This is a polite way of asking a person if they would like to drink some tea, but the use of 「でも」 implies that tea is just one of a number of possible options. It is more open than a simple yes/no question, giving the visitor the option to request something other than tea. Of course, even if the question were just, 「お茶を飲みますか?」, the visitor could still ask for something other than tea, but by using 「でも」, the host is more obviously indicating that other options are available. Here are some more examples of this, including some cases where 「でも」 is combined with other particles:

Shall we watch a movie (or something)?

映画<sup>えいが</sup>でも<sup>み</sup>見ましょうか?

I want to eat Japanese food (or something).

和食<sup>わしょく</sup>でも<sup>た</sup>食べたいです。

しか is similar to the English adverb “only”. It often takes the place of the particles 「が」 and 「を」, and can also be used after other particles like 「に」, 「で」 and the case marker version of 「と」. The most important thing about 「しか」 is that it is only ever used with verbs in their negative form, despite having a positive meaning in relation to the thing that it marks. Here is an example:

I only have 100 yen.

(私は) 100 円<sup>ひゃく えん</sup>しか<sup>も</sup>持っていない。

In this sentence, I am saying that I have 100 yen, yet the verb is expressed in the negative form. Rather than translate 「しか」 as “only”, it may be better to think of it as “apart from”. We could then express the English sentence as, “Apart from 100 yen, I don’t have anything”. This puts the verb in its negative form, making it more equivalent to the Japanese sentence, even if it is a less natural English translation. It is still not perfect, but it fairly accurately expresses the same idea.

Here are some more example sentences using 「しか」, including some that combine 「しか」 with other particles:

I only did half of my homework.

(私は) 宿題<sup>しゅくだい</sup>の半分<sup>はんぶん</sup>しかやらなかった。

I only want to go to that new amusement park.

(私は) あの<sup>あたら</sup>新しい<sup>ゆうえん</sup>遊園地<sup>ち</sup>にしか<sup>い</sup>行きたくない。

These shoes can only be bought here.

この靴<sup>くつ</sup>はここ<sup>こ</sup>でしか<sup>か</sup>買え<sup>か</sup>ません。

## 11.2 Particle/verb combinations

### New vocabulary

air conditioner	エアコン
roof	やね 屋根
to say	い 言う
to stand	た 立つ
to visit	ほうもん 訪問する

The fundamental rule of particles is that they relate directly to the word or phrase that comes *before* them. That does not mean, however, that they are not affected by what comes *after* them. In particular, certain verbs should only be used with certain particles, and the appropriate particle is not always what you might expect.

For example, in English, the verb “to ride” looks like any other transitive verb. A sentence like “I rode the train” has the same fundamental structure as the sentence, “I opened the door”. However, in Japanese, the correct way to say each of these is 「電車<sup>でんしゃ</sup>に<sup>の</sup>乗りました」 and 「ドア<sup>を</sup>閉めました」, respectively. The appropriate particle to be used with the verb ride is 「に」, not 「を」, even though the train is what is being ridden in the same way that the door is what is being closed.

The reason for this is that the act of riding, as Japanese treats it, is actually the movement from being off something to being on it, so the particle 「に」 is used to define the destination of this movement. 「乗る」 can be used to simply describe somebody as currently being on a particular mode of transport, but even then, the appropriate particle is 「に」.

There are several other interesting particle/verb combinations like this one that may, at first, seem unintuitive coming from English. While not an exhaustive list by any means, here are some of the more common verbs that use somewhat unexpected particles.

## の 乗る

English meaning: to ride

Particle to use: に (not を)

Reasoning: As noted above, the mode of transport being ridden is the destination of the movement defined by 「乗る」.

Examples:

He is riding the bus.

彼はバス<sup>の</sup>に乗っています。

Get on the train please.

でんしゃ<sup>の</sup>電車に乗ってください。

## あ　　で　あ　　ほうもん 会う・出会う・訪問する

English meaning: to meet / to meet for the first time / to visit

Particle to use: に (not を)

Reasoning: Like 「乗る」, the person being met or visited is the destination of the act of meeting. In English, the person being met or visited is the object of the appropriate verb, but in Japanese, they are always the destination of that action.

Examples:

I will meet my friend tomorrow.

あした<sup>の</sup>明日 (私は) 友達<sup>の</sup>に会います。

I met her (for the first time) at a party.

(私は) パーティーで彼女<sup>の</sup>に出会いました。

She visited her grandmother yesterday.

きのう<sup>の</sup>昨日 (彼女は) おばあさん<sup>の</sup>に訪問しました。

## わかる

English meaning: to understand

Particle to use: が (not を)

Reasoning: This is actually an intransitive verb in Japanese, so it does not take an object. Unlike English, where the thing being understood is expressed as the *object* of the verb “understand” (eg. I understand Japanese), in Japanese, the thing being

understood is the *subject* of the verb 「わかる」 (eg. 日本語<sup>にほんご</sup>がわかります). On a grammatical level, this makes 「わかる」 more similar to the passive verb phrase “to be understood”, because in a sentence like, “Japanese is understood”, the thing being understood is defined as the subject of the sentence.

Ultimately, all this means is that instead of marking the thing being understood with 「を」, 「が」 should be used instead. The person by whom it is understood is either implied by context, or can be specified by making them the topic of the sentence marked by 「は」.

Examples:

I understand Japanese.

(私は)日本語<sup>にほんご</sup>がわかります。

He doesn't understand how to use the air conditioner.

彼はエアコンの使い方<sup>つかいかた</sup><sup>4</sup>がわかりません。

## おも 思う・言う

English meaning: think / say

Particle to use: と (not を)

Reasoning: In Japanese, anything that is thought or said is generally expressed in the form of a quotation, and 「と」 is the particle that marks such a quotation. While in English we would often say things like, “He said he wants to buy a new car”, in Japanese, what the person thought or said is expressed as a quotation, so the sentence sounds more like, “He said, ‘I want to buy a new car’”. This will not always be obvious, however, since the subject of the sentence being quoted (ie. “I want to buy a new car”) will often be omitted. Regardless, things that people think or say are almost always expressed as quotations in Japanese, so 「と」 should be the particle used.

Examples (quotation is underlined):

I think Japanese is easy.

(私は)日本語<sup>にほんご</sup>は簡単<sup>かんたん</sup>だ<sup>おも</sup>と思います。

He was saying that he wants to buy a new car.

彼は (私は)新<sup>あた</sup>しい車<sup>くるま</sup>が買<sup>か</sup>いたい<sup>い</sup>と言<sup>い</sup>っていました。

.....<sup>うが</sup>がた  
4 「使い方」 means “how to use”, as will be explained in Chapter 12.5.12

### Pronunciation of 「<sup>い</sup>言う」

As a side note, the verb 「<sup>い</sup>言う」 is often pronounced as 「ゆう」, even when conjugated in other forms. This makes things like 「<sup>い</sup>言っていました」 often sound like 「ゆっていました」. The reason for this is simply that in its dictionary form, 「<sup>い</sup>言う」 sounds a lot like 「ゆう」, and this sound has been carried over into other forms of the verb. Technically it might be considered incorrect, but in spoken language, this pronunciation is extremely common.

### <sup>すわ</sup>座る・<sup>た</sup>立つ

English meaning: sit / stand

Particle to use: に (not で)

Reasoning: For most actions, the place where the action takes place is marked by the particle 「で」, but for verbs like 「<sup>すわ</sup>座る」 and 「<sup>た</sup>立つ」, the place where a person is sitting or standing is treated as the destination of that action. Much like 「<sup>の</sup>乗る」, 「<sup>すわ</sup>座る」 refers to the movement of going from a non-sitting position to a sitting position, so whatever the person is sitting on is the destination. The same applies to 「<sup>た</sup>立つ」.

Although 「で」 seems the more appropriate particles in this case, it would actually define what body part is used to sit or stand, so 「<sup>あし</sup>足で<sup>た</sup>立つ」 would indicate that somebody is standing on their legs/feet.

Examples:

He is sitting on the sofa.

彼はソファに<sup>すわ</sup>座っています。

Please don't sit on the table.

テーブルに<sup>すわ</sup>座らないでください。

I am standing on the roof.

私は屋根に<sup>た</sup>立っています。

Please stand over there.

あそこ<sup>た</sup>に立ってください。

### 11.3 The difference between 「は」 and 「が」

One of the most difficult concepts to understand in Japanese is the difference between the particles 「は」 and 「が」. It is not uncommon for people to study Japanese for years, and even speak the language to a considerable degree of fluency, and still not really know when to use 「は」 and when to use 「が」. Hopefully, the explanation that follows will help clarify the roles of these two particles.

#### Understanding the difference between 「は」 and 「が」

Most books and other resources, this one included, state that 「は」 defines the topic of a sentence, while 「が」 defines the subject. This is accurate, but it doesn't really tell us much, or help us differentiate between them. The difference is also much more complicated than just these simple definitions, although it does give us a good starting point.

So what's the difference between the topic and subject?

- The topic is what is being talked about in that sentence.
- The subject is the person or thing that performs the action described by the verb.

The confusion between these two stems from the fact that what is being talked about, and the person performing the action, are often the same thing. Take the following example:

Taro went to the supermarket  
たろう 太郎はスーパーいに行きました。

Here, Taro is the one who is being talked about, and he is also the one performing the act of “going”. This means that either 「は」 or 「が」 could be used in this case, although changing 「は」 to 「が」 would change the emphasis of the sentence.

Essentially, 「が」 places the emphasis of a sentence on the subject, so it should only be used when the subject represents new or important information. If we care most about who did something, then 「が」 should be used to emphasize that point. If, however, we care more about other factors like what they did, where they did it, or why, then 「は」 should be used to take the emphasis away from the “who”.

The following example, which is easily translated into English with a comparable difference in meaning, helps to illustrate this point:

He is a spy.

彼はスパイです。

He is the spy.

彼がスパイです。

The first sentence, where 「は」 is used, is just stating a simple fact - that the specified person is a spy. This sentence would normally be used to answer the question, “What is he?” We already know about the person ‘he’, but want to know more about him. This new information comes after 「は」.

By contrast, in the second sentence, there is an implication that we already know that a spy is present. In English, the word ‘the’ implies that the existence of a spy is known, and by saying that ‘he’ is the spy, we are answering the question, “Who is the spy?” In this case, the fact that ‘he’ is the spy is the new information, hence it is followed by 「が」.

This same idea applies to other sentences, even if the difference may not be as obvious in English. Consider these sentences:

Taro went to the supermarket.

太郎はスーパーに行きました。

Taro went to the supermarket.

太郎がスーパーに行きました。

The first sentence defines Taro as the topic, and is a basic statement telling us that he went to the supermarket. It answers the question, “What did Taro do?”, or possibly “Where did Taro go?”

The second sentence, on the other hand, defines Taro as the subject. As was the case with the spy example, the use of 「が」 puts the emphasis on the fact that Taro is the one who went to the supermarket, making this an appropriate answer to the question, “Who went to the supermarket?” In English, the word order remains the same, so the difference between these two statements is not as obvious. The different emphasis therefore needs to be expressed in English by stressing the word “Taro”.

One common situation where the difference between 「は」 and 「が」 is particularly important is when making choices. In Japanese, when someone gives you a choice between a number of options, asking you which you would like, the normal way to respond to this directly translates as saying which option is “good”. However, particle choice is crucial. Compare these two sentences:

This is good.

これはいいです。

*This* is good.

これがいいです。

Again, the sentence using 「は」 is just a basic statement describing the attributes of “this”. The 「が」 version, however, places the emphasis on the thing referred to as “this”, implying that that is what the speaker wants. Without 「が」, there is no such emphasis, and it is still unclear as to which you want to choose. In fact, depending on intonation, 「これはいいです」 can actually mean that you *don't* want that thing, a bit like saying, “I’m fine (without this) thanks”. Although only a subtle difference, this example shows how important the choice between 「は」 and 「が」 can sometimes be.

### The subject is not always the topic

To summarize what we have covered so far, 「が」 is used to mark the subject when it contains new or important information. If we are more concerned about other pieces of information, 「が」 should be replaced by 「は」 so that the subject is re-defined as the topic. This removes the emphasis away from the “who”, and instead just provides context for the rest of the sentence.

This helps us to choose between 「は」 and 「が」 when it's possible to use either, but the truth is, there are many times when the thing being talked about in a sentence (the topic) is not the person doing the action (the subject).

One particularly common situation where the topic and subject are different is when talking about things we like and hate. Consider the following sentence:

I like sushi.

私はすしが好きです。

Unlike our previous examples, in this sentence, the topic and the subject are different things. The topic, or the thing we are talking about, is 「私」, which provides context for the rest of the sentence. Within that context, the subject, 「すし」, is then described as performing the act of being (です), and what it is being is liked.

As this example shows, the topic, as defined by 「は」, is not always the person or thing that is performing the action. In fact, 「は」 can define any number of things as the topic of a sentence, including the object, destinations, locations, or virtually anything else. This may sound confusing, but as you will soon see, the rules we applied when choosing between 「は」 and 「が」 are the same in other cases too.

## Re-defining 「は」 in English

In order to go any further, we need to have a clear understanding of how 「は」 can be expressed in English. We already know that it is the topic of a sentence, and that this means it is the thing that is being talked about, but we need a better way to express it.

The best way to directly translate 「は」 into English would be with a phrase like, “When talking about...”. This can be applied in almost any situation involving 「は」, and as long as we accept that our English sentence might sound a bit funny or even be grammatically wrong, we will be able to come up with direct translations that accurately represent whatever is being said in Japanese. Let’s try a few examples from earlier:

When talking about Taro, went to the supermarket.

太郎<sup>たろう</sup>はスーパー<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

When talking about him, is a spy.

彼はスパイです。

When talking about me, sushi is liked.

私は<sup>す</sup>しが好きです。

The English sentences above are obviously a little bit odd, but by having 「は」 translated as, “When talking about”, we can effectively create the appropriate context in the same way that 「は」 creates context in Japanese.

## Using 「は」 in place of 「を」

Now that we have a way to express 「は」 in English, let’s try using it as a replacement for the object particle 「を」:

When talking about this chair, bought.

この椅子<sup>いす</sup>は<sup>か</sup>買いました。

Here, the topic has been defined as 「この椅子<sup>いす</sup>」, which in a normal sentence would actually be the object marked by 「を」. The difference here is the same as was the case when 「は」 replaced 「が」. By defining 「この椅子<sup>いす</sup>」 as the topic, it is considered to be old or unimportant information, and the emphasis shifts to what comes *after* 「は」. The new or important information is therefore the fact that the chair was bought. Again, by defining 「この椅子<sup>いす</sup>」 as the topic, the speaker is simply clarifying the context for the rest of the sentence.

Note, however, that in the above example, nobody has been defined as the person who bought the chair. As we know, this implies that the person speaking is most likely talking about themselves, so there is no need to clarify this with 「私は」. The speaker could include this if they wanted to, but it really isn't necessary; we already know that they are answering the question, "Did you buy this chair?"

What happens, though, if we change the question to, "Who bought this chair?" The answer would obviously need to include a reference to a person, but which particle should we use with that person? Let's try it:

Who bought this chair?

だれ <sup>い す</sup> 誰 <sup>か</sup> が この椅子 <sup>い す</sup> を 買 <sup>か</sup> いましたか？

When talking about this chair, he bought.

この椅子 <sup>い す</sup> は 彼 <sup>か</sup> が 買 <sup>か</sup> いました。

The particle to use after 「彼」 is, of course, 「が」. As the person who performed the act of buying, "he" is the subject, and since this is new and important information, it should be marked with 「が」. At the same time, because 「この椅子」 was specified in the question, the person answering already knows what item they are talking about, so they can replace 「を」 with 「は」 in order to take the emphasis away from the chair, and place it somewhere else.

Ultimately, 「を」 follows the same rules as 「が」 in that it is used to mark new or important information. Like 「が」, if the thing being defined by 「を」 as the object is already understood from context, and we want to emphasize a different part of the sentence, 「を」 can be changed to 「は」 to create this effect.

One thing that you may have noticed about the question above is that the question word 「誰」 is marked by 「が」. Given what we know about 「が」, this makes perfect sense because the important piece of information that is being asked about in that question is "who". Since question words almost always represent the information being sought, this information must be important, and should therefore be marked by 「が」 when it is the subject, or 「を」 when it is the object.

## Combining 「は」 with other particles

This basic principle of using 「は」 to change the emphasis of a sentence can also be applied to other particles, although in a slightly different way. 「は」 can be used together with particles like 「に」, 「で」, 「と」, 「から」 and 「まで」 to define the topic of

a sentence as the destination, location, companion or something else. Let's look at an example:

When talking about 'to the meeting', went.

かい ぎ かい い  
会議には行きました。

This is a little bit more awkward to express in English with the phrase, "When talking about", but the effect in Japanese is the same. The only difference is that the particle 「に」 needs to be kept in order for the relationship between the destination and the verb to be clear. If 「に」 were not included, it would still be quite obvious that the meeting is the destination of the verb 「行きました」, and you will sometimes hear people say a phrase like this without 「に」, but in most cases, it is best to leave 「に」 in to ensure clarity. This combining of particles, by the way, should never be done with 「が」 or 「を」.

In every other way, however, the use of 「は」 here is the same as before. By placing 「は」 after 「かい ぎ かい い」, it implies that "to the meeting" is old or unimportant information, and that the emphasis should instead be on the fact that the person went, answering the question, "Did you go to the meeting?" We can also change this around to answer a different question, such as "Who went to the meeting?"

Who went to the meeting?

だれ かい ぎ かい い  
誰が会議に行きましたか？

When talking about 'to the meeting', Usui-san went.

かい ぎ うす い かい い  
会議には臼井さんが行きました。

Like before, the important information in this sentence is the person performing the action, and this is marked by 「が」. Meanwhile, the known information - that the destination is the meeting - is marked by 「に」 as a way to clarify that that is what is being talked about. A more simple way to answer the above question would be to simply say, 「うす い かい い」, since the destination is already known, but by including 「かい ぎ かい い」 and marking it with 「は」, it removes any possibility of confusion. This usually isn't necessary, but in some cases, where, for example, a number of different destinations are being discussed, including it ensures that the listener knows which destination is being referred to.

Other particles can also be combined with 「は」 in the same way with the same effect. More such combinations will be covered in Chapter 11.4.

## Using 「は」 to express contrast

One way that 「は」 is often used in everyday conversation is to highlight a contrast in relation to certain actions. This is done by using 「は」 in the same way as has been described so far, so it isn't really anything new. The only difference is that multiple clauses are used together and each one is given a different topic. Here is a basic example with a natural English translation:

I went to the party, but Takashi didn't go.

私はパーティーに行ったが、たかしは行かなかった。

This is quite straightforward, but for the sake of clarity, here is the English translation again using our alternative expression for 「は」:

When talking about me, went to the party, but when talking about Takashi, didn't go.

By defining a different topic in each clause, we are able to compare the actions of each of those topics, while placing the emphasis of each clause on the action and whether or not it was performed. In doing so, the contrast between the actions of the two people is highlighted.

Now let's look at an example that's not so straightforward:

I like sushi, but I don't like sashimi.

すしは好きですが、刺身は好きじゃないです。

The alternative English translation for this would be:

When talking about sushi, is liked, but when talking about sashimi, is not liked.

Normally, when talking about the things we like, the thing being described as liked is marked by the particle 「が」. As you know, this is because in such cases, that is the new and important piece of information. When we want to highlight the contrasting nature of two things, however, the important part of each clause is not the food, but whether or not that food is liked. It is, of course, important that the food being described in each clause is made clear, but the emphasis of this sentence should be on the part describing it as liked or not liked; that is where the contrast lies.

Here is another example:

I bought bread, but I didn't buy milk.

パンは買ったけど、牛乳は買わなかった。

Here, 「を」 has been replaced by 「は」 in both clauses so as to contrast the statuses of bread and milk. Again, the use of 「は」 shifts the emphasis of each clause onto the action.

It's also possible to use 「は」 to highlight a contrast like this without actually mentioning a second object or action. Consider this example:

I bought bread.

パンは買った。

In a sentence like this, it is implied that there are some things that have not been bought. There is still a sense of contrast, except because only one thing has been mentioned, it is not completely clear what it is being contrasted with. In most cases, however, the thing that hasn't been bought will be understood from context, such as in this conversation:

A: Did you buy bread and milk?

A: パンと牛乳を買った？

B: I bought bread.

B: パンは買った。

In this case, without saying so, person B is implying that they did not buy milk. The same idea applies when talking about things we like:

A: Do you like sushi, sashimi, etc.?

A: すしや刺身などは好きですか？

B: I like sushi.

B: すしは好きです。

Similar to the previous example, the implication here is that person B does not like sashimi, or at least does not like it as much as sushi.

Even when someone asks a question about just one thing, it is quite natural to use 「は」 in the answer. Remember, 「が」 puts the emphasis on whatever comes before it, so if you were asked if you liked sushi, replying with 「すしが好きです」 would be placing the emphasis on the 「すし」, when really, the new and more important information is the fact that you like it. Using 「は」 to talk about things in a contrasting way is just one more way of using 「は」; it does not mean it can only be used in such situations.

## Choosing particles in noun phrases

One important thing to remember about noun phrases is that they should never contain the particle 「は」. The reason for this is that 「は」 is used to define the topic of a clause, and since noun phrases are one piece that exist within a clause, and not really a clause themselves, they cannot have a topic. Let's look at an example:

I broke the chair that Mari bought

私はまりが買った椅子を壊しました。

The noun phrase within this sentence is 「買った椅子」. The 「が」 in a noun phrase like this should never be replaced by 「は」 because that would result in Mari being defined as the topic for the entire clause, not just the noun phrase. This is how such a sentence would look:

私はまりは買った椅子を壊しました。

In this mistaken sentence, Mari has become the topic for the whole sentence. She has effectively become linked to the verb 「壊しました」, implying that she is the one that broke the chair. The original topic, 「私」, is effectively meaningless, and Mari is no longer directly linked with the act of buying the chair. The result is an unnatural sentence with a confusing meaning.

You may be wondering, then, how you would contrast a chair that Mari bought with one bought by someone else. The key is to remember that you are comparing the chairs, not the people. The 「は」 should therefore be placed after the word 「椅子」, which comes at the end of the noun phrase, as shown below:

I like the chair that Mari bought, but I don't like the chair that Kenta bought

まりが買った椅子は好きですが、けんたが買った椅子は好きじゃないです。

In both sides of this sentence, the noun phrases describing the chairs are defined as the topic, with the noun phrases only containing the particle 「が」, not 「は」.

The same rule should be applied to all particles. That is, 「は」 should never appear inside a noun phrase - not as a replacement of 「が」 or 「を」, nor in combination with other particles like 「に」, 「で」 and 「と」.

## In summary

The difficulty in understanding the difference between 「は」 and 「が」 is not really about choosing one or the other; it is about understanding the true meaning of 「は」. While particles like 「が」, 「を」, 「に」 and 「で」 have specific purposes that directly connect a noun phrase to a verb, 「は」 is a special particle that can be substituted or inserted into a sentence to provide context for the rest of the sentence, and change where the emphasis lies.

The most important things to remember in relation to these particles are that:

- Using 「は」 is like saying, “When talking about...”
- Important or new information should come after 「は」
- Phrases marked by 「が」 and 「を」 contain new or important information
- Replacing 「が」 or 「を」 with 「は」 removes the emphasis from the phrases they mark and shifts it towards the back of the sentence
- The same applies when 「は」 is used together with other particles, like 「に」, 「で」 and 「と」; and
- 「は」 should never appear inside a noun phrase

## 11.4 Combining particles

### New vocabulary

airplane	ひこうき 飛行機
date (romantic)	デート
to end	お 終わる
festival	まつ 祭り

Germany	ドイツ
tour	ツアー
United Kingdom	イギリス
the way (route)	みち 道

So far, most of our examples and exercises have used only one particle to mark each word or phrase. As briefly introduced in the previous section, it is also possible to combine particles together to express different relationships.

There are a lot of possible particle combinations, but we will focus on the most common ones. Specifically, we will look at some of the possible combinations involving the particles 「の」, 「も」 and 「は」

## Particles combined with 「の」

Particles are often combined with 「の」 as a shorter way of creating a descriptive noun phrase. In English, for example, a sentence like “The train coming from Shinjuku” could have the verb removed to become, “The train from Shinjuku”. In Japanese, the particle 「の」 is often used to shorten sentences in this way. Here are some of the more common particle combinations involving 「の」:

**からの** can be used to describe something as being from somewhere or someone. Since 「から」 can be used to define the origin of something like the word “from”, we can use 「からの」 to talk about something that is from a particular person or place, like so:

The train from Shinjuku

しんじゆく 電車  
新宿 **からの** 電車

A souvenir from Takuya

たくや **からの** お土産

**までの** can be used in a similar way to 「からの」 to describe something specific that ends at a certain time. Expressions that use 「までの」 usually sound odd when translated directly to English because in English, a verb would normally be needed for the sentence to sound natural (as shown in brackets below), but they are perfectly fine without the verb in Japanese.

The festival (that ran) until yesterday was fun.

きのう まつ たの  
昨日 **までの** 祭りは楽しかったです。

This is the tour (that runs) until Friday.

これは きんようび **までの** ツアーです。

**への** is used to describe something by its destination. While normally 「に」 can be used to define the destination of a motion, 「への」 is basically always used to describe things by their destination, since 「にの」 sounds quite awkward.

I don't know the way to Tokyo.

(私は) とうきょう みち **への** 道がわかりません。

My present to her was expensive.

私の彼女への プレゼントは たか かったです。

**との** can be used to describe an event based on the other person or people involved in the event.

My date with her is on Saturday.

(私の)彼女とのデートは土曜日です。

Our contract with that company ends tomorrow.

(私たちの)あの会社との契約は明日終わります。

**での** is usually used to define something by the place where it occurs.

Let's go to the festival at the park.

公園での祭りに行きましょう。

Concerts (held) outside are fun.

外でのライブは楽しい。

## Particles combined with 「も」

While 「も」 can replace particles like 「が」 and 「を」 to add the meaning of “also”, with other particles, it is necessary to keep the original particle and use it together with 「も」 so that the role of the preceding word is still clear. For example, when defining an ‘also’ destination, keeping 「に」 and saying 「にも」 ensures that it is clear that this is marking the destination of the action.

Additionally, when using 「も」, it is possible to string multiple words together, separated only by 「も」 and the other particle, to emphasize the number of things in the list. This is shown in some of the examples below.

**にも** is used to define an “also” destination.

I went to France last year. I also went to the UK.

去年、フランスに行きました。イギリスにも行きました。

Yesterday, I rode a train, a bus and a plane.

昨日、電車にもバスにも飛行機にも乗りました。

**でも** is used to describe where else something can or does take place. The combination of 「で」 and 「も」 could be viewed as simply another usage of the particle 「でも」, but in

this case, by thinking of it as two separate particles combined, the role each word has in the sentence should be more clear.

Let's swim in the pool. Let's also swim in the sea.

プールで泳ぎましょう。海<sup>うみ</sup>でも泳ぎましょう。

(You) can buy bread at the supermarket and also at the convenience store

パンはスーパーでもコンビニ<sup>か</sup>でも買えます。

## Particles combined with 「は」

As was introduced in Chapter 11.3, the topic-defining particle 「は」 can be used with many more things than just a person or object. It can be a location, a destination, a companion, or any other noun phrase. Much like 「も」, however, things like destinations and locations still need to be defined as such using the particles 「に」 and 「で」, even when 「は」 is added.

The addition of 「は」 after another particle takes the emphasis away from the word that it marks, and pushes it towards the back of the sentence. Like other uses of 「は」, it is similar to saying, “When talking about...”, as this sets up the context for the rest of the sentence in the same way as 「は」. The main difference of 「は」 being combined with another particle, however, is that instead of the topic just being a thing, like “I” or “Japan”, the thing being talked about would be translated to English as a prepositional phrase, such as “to me”, or “in Japan”. The examples provided below should help clarify this.

**には** defines the topic of a sentence as the destination of an action involving movement, or the location of something when using 「ある」 and 「いる」.

When talking about ‘to Germany’, I haven’t been.

(私は)ドイツ<sup>い</sup>には行ったことはありません。<sup>5</sup>

When talking about ‘in here’, there are lots of people.

ここ<sup>ひと</sup>には人がたくさんいます。

**では** turns the location where something takes place, or the means by which the action is done, into the topic of the sentence.

When talking about ‘at my hotel’, the food is cheap.

私のホテル<sup>た</sup>では、食<sup>もの</sup>べ物<sup>やす</sup>は安いです。

<sup>5</sup> The expression “have done” referring to past experience will be introduced in Chapter 12.1.3.

By bus, it takes one hour.

バスでは<sup>いち じ かん</sup>1 時間かかります。

**とは** defines the topic of a sentence as the person or thing with whom the action is performed.

With him, I play tennis every week.

彼とは、毎週<sup>まいしゅう</sup> テニスをします。

As for her, she plays with the dog, but she doesn't play with the cat.

彼女は、犬<sup>いぬ</sup>とは遊びますが、猫<sup>ねこ</sup>とは遊びません。

**からは** defines the topic of a sentence as the point of origin of an action involving movement.

From her, I received a bicycle.

彼女からは、自転車<sup>じてんしゃ</sup>をもらいました。

From here, it will take one hour, but from your house, it will take two hours.

ここからは<sup>いち じ かん</sup>1 時間かかるけど、あなたの家<sup>いえ</sup>からは<sup>に じ かん</sup>2 時間かかる。

## Chapter 12

# Lots and lots of expressions

At this point, we have covered all of the fundamental rules of the Japanese language. You can talk about things in the past, present and future, and can describe them in great detail. In this chapter, you will learn a wide range of additional expressions. The expressions are grouped where appropriate and presented in order of general usefulness, but there is no need to learn them in this order, so feel free to pick and choose the expressions you want to learn.

### 12.1 Very useful expressions

The first set of expressions we will look at are not related to each other in any particular way. They are all just very common expressions.

#### 12.1.1 Anything, something, nothing, and other similar words

##### New vocabulary

bathroom	ふろば 風呂場
to need	い 要る
to respect	そんけい 尊敬する

seat	せき 席
things	もの 物

Words like “anything” and “something” are expressed in Japanese by combining question words, such as 「何」<sup>なに</sup> and 「誰」<sup>だれ</sup>, with certain particles. Although there is a general pattern for this, it can be a little bit confusing because the meanings of these words can change depending on whether they are used with a positive verb or a negative verb. For example, 「誰も」<sup>だれ</sup> means “everybody” when used with a positive verb, but means “nobody” when used with a negative verb.

Let’s take a look at each question word and the different words that can be formed by combining them with particles.

Where	どこ
anywhere	どこでも
somewhere	どこか
everywhere	どこも (positive verb)
nowhere / not anywhere	どこも (negative verb)

When used in sentences, these words each behave slightly differently. 「どこか」 should be treated like a noun, and should be followed by whichever other particle is necessary to define its role in the sentence. The other words, however, should be treated as a noun that already has a particle attached. This means that when used in a sentence, 「どこか」 will often be followed by 「が」 or 「で」, while the other words will be followed immediately by a verb. The examples below demonstrate this:

You can buy water anywhere.

水は<sup>みず</sup>どこでも<sup>か</sup>買えます。

He went somewhere.

彼はどこか<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

Let’s wait somewhere.

どこか<sup>ま</sup>で待ちましょう。

I searched everywhere.

どこも<sup>さが</sup>探しました。

There are no seats anywhere.

どこも<sup>せき</sup>席がない。

As you can see, 「どこか」 acts like any other noun, while 「どこでも」 and 「どこも」 are followed immediately by the verb without any other particle.

There is, however, one more consideration. In these combinations, the particles 「でも」 and 「も」 can only really take the place of 「が」 or 「を」. When using 「どこでも」 and 「どこも」 with a verb that has a destination, for example, the particle 「に」 needs to be inserted in between 「どこ」 and the other particle. Here are some examples of this:

You can go anywhere in Japan by bullet train.

新幹線しんかんせんで日本に ほんのどこいにでも行けます。

I don't have a car, so I can't go anywhere.

私は車くるまがないからどこいにも行けない。

He has been everywhere.

彼はどこいにも行ったことがあります。

With a couple of exceptions, the same rules apply to the other words introduced below.

What	<small>なに</small> 何
anything	<small>なん</small> 何でも
something	<small>なに</small> 何か
everything / all of	すべて、 <small>ぜん ぶ</small> 全部
nothing / not anything	<small>なに</small> 何も (negative verb only)

Although you may occasionally hear 「なに何も」 used with a positive verb to mean “everything”, 「ぜん ぶすべて」 and 「なん全部」 are far more common. Like 「なに何か」, they should always be followed by the appropriate particle. Otherwise, these words follow the same rules as the words based on 「どこ」, as shown below:

He can do anything.

彼はなん何でもできる。

Let's buy something.

なに何かかを買いましょう

I gave her all of my things.

(私は) ものすべての物を彼女にあげました。

I don't want to do anything.

私は<sup>なに</sup>何もしたくない。

There is nothing inside the box.

箱<sup>はこ</sup>の中<sup>なか</sup>に<sup>なに</sup>何もありません。

I can become anything.

私は<sup>なに</sup>何にでもなれます。

Who	<sup>だれ</sup> 誰
anybody	<sup>だれ</sup> 誰でも
somebody	<sup>だれ</sup> 誰か
everybody	<sup>だれ</sup> 誰も (positive verb)
nobody / not anybody	<sup>だれ</sup> 誰も (negative verb)

Again, these words are used in sentences in the same way as the other words, but for one exception; the word 「<sup>だれ</sup>誰も」 can also be defined as the subject followed by 「が」 when used with a positive verb. This simply defines everybody as the people performing the action, as the examples below show.

Note that the word “everybody” can also be expressed as 「みんな」 in informal settings or 「皆さん」 in polite conversation. The difference between these and 「<sup>だれ</sup>誰も」 is that 「<sup>だれ</sup>誰も」 refers to everyone in general, while 「みんな」 and 「<sup>みな</sup>皆さん」 usually refer to everyone within a specific group of people.

Anybody can learn Japanese.

<sup>だれ</sup>誰でも<sup>に</sup> <sup>ほん</sup>日本語<sup>ご</sup>が<sup>まな</sup>学べる。

Somebody is listening to music.

<sup>だれ</sup>誰かが<sup>おんがく</sup>音楽<sup>き</sup>を聞いている。

Everybody knows that.

それは<sup>だれ</sup>誰も<sup>し</sup>が知っている。

Everybody respects her.

<sup>だれ</sup>誰も<sup>そんけい</sup>が彼女を尊敬している。

There is nobody here.

ここに<sup>だれ</sup>誰もいない。

He gave presents to everybody.

彼は<sup>だれ</sup>誰にもプレゼントをあげた。

She didn't ask anybody.

彼女は<sup>だれ</sup>誰にも<sup>き</sup>聞かなかった。

When	いつ
any time	いつでも
sometime	いつか
always	いつも
never	<sup>ぜんぜん</sup> 全然

As time-related phrases, these are a little different to the others. All of these are essentially adverbs, and can therefore be inserted into a sentence anywhere that makes sense, and without the use of an additional particle.

Please come any time.

いつでも<sup>き</sup>来てください。

Let's meet again sometime.

またいつか<sup>あ</sup>会いましょう。

He is always eating ramen.

彼はいつもラーメンを<sup>た</sup>食べている。

He never cleans the bathroom.

彼は<sup>ぜんぜん</sup>全然風呂場を<sup>そうじ</sup>掃除しない。

Which	どれ
whichever / any one of them	どれでも
one of them	どれか
all of them	どれも (positive verb)
none / not any of them	どれも (negative verb)

These are all straightforward, following the same usage rules as the words based on 「どこ」. They are rarely combined with other particles like 「に」, however, since it doesn't often make sense to do so.

Any one of them is fine.

**どれでも**いいよ。

Please give one of them to him.

**どれか**を彼にあげてください。

All of them are delicious.

**どれも**おいしい。

I don't need any of them.

(私は)**どれも**<sup>い</sup>要らない。

## 12.1.2 Giving and receiving - あげる・くれる・もらう

### New vocabulary

a bit more	もうちょっと
boyfriend	<sup>かれ</sup> し 彼氏
to give (towards you)	くれる
guitar	ギター
headphones	イヤホン
salt	<sup>しお</sup> 塩
text book	テキスト

In Japanese, the verbs used for giving and receiving can be a little bit confusing, so they require special attention. The reason for this is because the word “give” is actually different depending on the direction that the act of giving is occurring.

### Giving - 「あげる」 and 「くれる」

The two words meaning “to give” are 「あげる」 and 「くれる」. 「あげる」 is used when the direction of the giving is going away from yourself, or between two third parties. 「くれる」 is used when the giving is coming towards yourself. Consider these sentences:

I give the book to her.  
He gives the book to her.  
She gives the book to me.

In the first two sentences, the verb to use in Japanese would be 「あげる」, while in the third sentence, 「くれる」 is appropriate. It is actually exactly the same as for the verbs “go” and “come”. Consider these sentences:

I go to her.  
He goes to her.  
She comes to me.

In both English and Japanese, we use either “go” or “come” based on the direction of the movement relative to ourselves. The default option is “go”, but in the case where the movement is towards us, “come” is used instead.

In Japanese, this exact same principle applies to the verbs meaning “to give”. Basically, when the action is giving, the default verb to use should be 「あげる」, but in the case where the direction of the giving is towards us, 「くれる」 should be used instead. Here are some examples:

I will give you a present tomorrow.  
(私は)明日 (あなたに)プレゼントを**あげる**。

She gave him a new guitar.  
彼女は彼に**新しい**ギターを**あげました**。

Daisuke gave me his headphones.  
だいすけは (私に)イヤホン**をくれました**。

Let's give them some food.  
彼らに**食べ物**を**あげよう**。

I want to give this to my friend.

(私は)これを友達<sup>ともだち</sup>にあげたいです。

Ayumi didn't give me anything.

あゆみは(私に)何も<sup>なに</sup>くれなかった。

Compared to 「あげる」, 「くれる」 is a bit more limited in how it is used, especially given the polite and indirect nature of Japanese culture. For example, you would never use 「くれる」 in its て-form to form the command 「くれて」. Instead, you would use the extremely forceful and impolite form 「くれ!」, or the more polite 「ください」, which is actually a form of the super-polite equivalent of 「くれる」, 「くださる」. Here are some examples:

Please give me the salt

<sup>しお</sup>塩をください。

Give me your wallet!

<sup>さいふ</sup>財布をくれ!

Also, since 「くれる」 is invariably used for the actions of other people, when talking about the future, it is often used as part of less certain expressions, such as “He said he would give me ...” or “I think she will give me ...”. This is because we can only speculate about the future actions of other people, and Japanese does not really allow concrete statements to be made about uncertain things. Here are some examples:

He said he would give me his text book.

彼は(私に)テキストを<sup>い</sup>くれると言いました。

I think she will give me her camera.

彼女は(私に)カメラを<sup>おも</sup>くれると思います。

They might give us a bit more time.

(彼らは)もうちょっと時間<sup>じかん</sup>をくれるかもしれません<sup>6</sup>。

Interestingly, the use of 「くれる」 is not limited to when you yourself are the recipient. As long as the receiver is closer to you compared with the giver, 「くれる」 is the more appropriate verb to use. For example, if you are talking to Taro about something that somebody else gave him, you should still use 「くれる」 to describe the act of giving because Taro is closer to you than the person who gave that something to Taro.

.....  
6 See Chapter 12.5.10

As for that shirt, did Maiko give it to you?

そのシャツはまいこがくれたの？

### Receiving - 「もらう」

When it comes to receiving, things are much more straightforward, but a little bit of care is still required with regards to particles. In the English sentence, “Taro received a book from Maiko”, it is important to recognize that Taro is the subject of the sentence; he is the one performing the act of receiving. In Japanese, the same rule applies, and the person receiving the item should be marked by 「が」 or 「は」, like so:

Taro received a book from Maiko.

<sup>たろう</sup>太郎はまいこに<sup>ほん</sup>本をもらいました。

What you may find confusing here is the use of the particle 「に」. 「に」 is normally used to mark the destination of an action involving movement, but because the verb 「もらう」 carries a passive meaning, the opposite is true. That means the origin of the act of giving, which in this case is Maiko, is marked by the particle 「に」. It is possible to use the particle 「から」 in this situation, and you are free to use this if you find it less confusing, but you will no doubt hear 「に」 used commonly by other people. Here are some more examples:

I received a letter from my mom.

私は母<sup>はは</sup>に / から<sup>てがみ</sup>手紙をもらいました。

She received a necklace from her boyfriend.

彼女は彼氏<sup>かれし</sup>に / からネックレスをもらいました。

The only time other than with the verb 「もらう」 (or its super-polite counterpart 「いただく」) that the meaning of 「に」 is reversed in this way is when regular verbs are expressed in the passive form. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 12.4. In all other cases of actions that involve movement, 「に」 defines the destination.

### 12.1.3 Have done - したことがある

This expression is used to talk about experience, and is often compared to the English expression “I have done...”. It is formed in the following way:

[verb in informal past tense] + ことがある

The final verb, 「ある」, is mostly expressed in the present tense, but can also be expressed in the past tense to describe something that had or hadn't been done at a specific time in the past. Here are some examples:

I have been to Japan.

私は日本<sup>にほん</sup>に<sup>い</sup>行ったことがあります。

I haven't ridden a plane.

私は飛行機<sup>ひこうき</sup>に<sup>の</sup>乗ったことはありません。

One year ago, I hadn't been abroad.

1年前<sup>いちねんまえ</sup>、(私は)<sup>かいがい</sup>海外に<sup>い</sup>行ったことがなかった。

The 「こと」 in these expressions turns the act of going to Japan, etc., into a noun phrase that describes experience performing that action. By combining this with the verb 「ある」, this expression states that that experience exists. Since an experience can only exist if it has already occurred, the verb before 「こと」 should always be in the past tense.

#### 12.1.4 Mine, yours, old ones and new ones - 私<sup>わたし</sup>の・古<sup>ふる</sup>いの

##### New vocabulary

pass, hand over (something)

わた  
渡す

As you know, the particle 「の」 is used to indicate possession of an item, but it is also possible to use 「の」 to indicate possession without actually specifying what the item is. In English, we do this using words like “mine” and “yours”. In Japanese, we just leave off the word that would otherwise come after 「の」, so instead of saying 「私のペン」, we would simply say 「私の」. The following examples should help clarify this:

This is **mine**.

これは**私の**です。

That car is **his**.

あの車<sup>くるま</sup>は**彼の**だ。

This is **Hiroki's**.

これは**ひろきの**です。

A similar effect can be created with adjectives. Instead of referring to the old book as 「<sup>ふる</sup>古い<sup>ほん</sup>本」, if it is clear that a book is what is being spoken about, then the thing being described - in this case 「<sup>ほん</sup>本」 - can be replaced by 「の」. This results in a phrase similar to the English expression, “the old one”. Here are some examples:

Please pass me the old one.

<sup>ふる</sup>古い<sup>の</sup>を (私に) <sup>わた</sup>渡してください。

Where's the new one?

<sup>あた</sup>新しい<sup>の</sup>はどこですか？

Which is the one you like?

(あなたが) <sup>す</sup>好きな<sup>の</sup>はどれ？

As in the last example, な-adjectives should retain the 「な」 when the original noun is replaced by 「の」.

## 12.2 Conditional expressions

Conditional expressions in English are basically expressions that use the words “if” and “when” to describe a condition that affects another action. In Japanese, there are a number of different conditional expressions, each with different uses. In some cases these are interchangeable, but in many situations, one expression will sound more natural than the others. We will now take a look at the main conditional expressions in Japanese, but keep in mind that it is better not to worry too much about the subtle differences between each expression. Over time, you will get a natural feel for when to use each one.

### 12.2.1 If/when - ～たら

#### New vocabulary

bored, free	<sup>ひま</sup> 暇
bus stop	<sup>てい</sup> バス停
dishes	<sup>しょ</sup> 食 <sup>き</sup> 器
to lend	<sup>か</sup> 貸す

Probably the most flexible conditional expression is 「～たら」. It can be used to say “if X happens” or “when X happens”, and it can be used to talk about your own actions, the actions of other people, or just actions that occur on their own (intransitive verbs). It can also be used to talk about things in both the past and the future.

The 「～たら」 expression is formed in a similar way to the て-form and the informal past tense, as shown in the following table:

Verb type		Formation of ～たら ending	Example
Add-on		stem + たら	た 食べたら
Vowel-changing	う, つ, る	～ったら	か 買ったら
	ぶ, む, ぬ	～んだら	あそ 遊んだら
	く	～いたら	き 聞いたら
	ぐ	～いだら	およ 泳いだら
	す	～したら	はな 話したら
Irregular	する	したら	-
	いく	行ったら	-
	くる	きたら	-

For verbs in the negative form, the 「ない」 ending is simply changed to 「なかったら」. For verbs expressed in the continuous form, the 「～ている」 ending is changed to 「～ていたら」.

Essentially, it is the same as the informal past tense, but with 「ら」 added on the end. Here are some examples of 「～たら」 being used in a sentence:

If you go to the supermarket, please buy some milk.

(あなたが) スーパーに <sup>い</sup>行ったら、<sup>ぎゅうにゅう</sup>牛乳を <sup>か</sup>買って下さい。

If I buy a car, I can go to the beach every weekend.

(私は) 車 <sup>くるま</sup>を <sup>か</sup>買ったら、<sup>まいしゅうまつ</sup>毎週末 <sup>い</sup>海に行けます。

When I opened the door, there was a dog.

(私が) ドアを <sup>あ</sup>開けたら、<sup>いぬ</sup>犬がいました。

When I grow up (become big), I want to become a doctor.

(私は)大きくなったら、医者になりたいです。

If the train doesn't come, what shall we do?

電車が来なかったら、どうしよう？

When I was waiting at the bus stop, I saw Suzuki-san.

バス停で待っていたら、鈴木さんを見ました。

The 「～たら」 ending can also be added to the end of adjectives and nouns. For い-adjectives, this is done by adding 「ら」 after the adjective expressed in its past tense. な-adjectives and nouns should be followed by 「だったら」, which is the 「～たら」 form of the verb 「です」. Here are some examples:

If you are cold, I will lend you a jacket.

寒かったら、上着を貸してあげる<sup>7</sup>よ。

If you are bored, please wash the dishes.

暇だったら、食器を洗ってください。

If tomorrow is his birthday, let's buy him a present today

明日が彼の誕生日だったら、今日プレゼントを買ってあげましょう。

## 12.2.2 If - なら

### New vocabulary

online	ネットで
to return (something)	かえ 返す
vending machine	じ どうはんばい き 自動販売機
(what) on earth	いったい (なに)

The particle 「なら」 is similar to the word “if”, but is only really used when it is certain or almost certain that the specified activity did or will occur. It is similar in meaning to

.....  
7 The て-form followed by 「あげる」 is used to indicate a favor is being done. This is explained in detail in Chapter 12.3.3.

the English expression, “If it is the case that...” when used with verbs, or “In the case of...” when used with nouns.

In a sentence, 「なら」 can be added either directly after a noun phrase, or directly after a clause expressed in the informal form. The clause can be in any tense that makes logical sense. Here are some examples:

If (it is the case that) you will return it by Friday, I will lend you my car.  
 金曜日までに返してくれるなら、車を貸してあげる<sup>8</sup>よ。

If we are going to buy it online, let's order it soon/quickly.  
 (私たちは)ネットで買うなら、早く注文しよう。

If it is the case that you didn't go to school today, what on earth did you do?  
 今日学校に行かなかったなら、いったい何をしましたか？

In the case of this vending machine, there is water.  
 この自動販売機なら水があるよ。

### 12.2.3 If - すれば

#### New vocabulary

cash	げんきん 現金
to pay	はら 払う

This conditional expression is mostly used to talk about future actions in a hypothetical way, where it is not yet known whether or not the action will occur. For this reason, it is not used in the way that “when” is used in English, and should only be used to mean “if”.

This expression is formed using the “e” sound variation for vowel-changing verbs followed by 「ば」. For add-on verbs, 「れば」 is added after the stem. The following table shows how each verb type is converted to the 「すれば」 expression:

.....  
 8 The て-form followed by 「くれる」 or 「あげる」 is used to indicate a favor is being done. This is explained in detail in Chapter 12.3.3.

Verb type	If
Add-on	stem + れば
Vowel-changing	stem(e) + ば

Below are some examples of each type, including the three irregular verbs:

Verb type	Stem	If
Add-on		stem + れば
eat	食べ	食べれば
watch / see / look	見	見れば
Vowel-changing		stem(e) + ば
drink	飲み	飲めば
listen	聞き	聞けば
Irregular		
do	-	すれば
go	-	行けば
come	-	来れば

For verbs in the negative form, 「ない」 is changed to 「なければ」. For verbs expressed in the continuous present/future tense, 「～ている」 is changed to 「～ていれば」.

Here are some examples of this expression:

If we pay cash, will it become cheaper?

現金で<sup>げん きん</sup>払<sup>はら</sup>えば、安<sup>やす</sup>くなりますか？

If you don't have a ticket, you can't enter.

チケットが<sup>はい</sup>なければ入れません。

If you are carrying a bag, please put it over there.

カバンを<sup>も</sup>持<sup>も</sup>っていれば、あそこ<sup>お</sup>に置いてください。

This expression is commonly used for discussing the best course of action. This is done by saying 「いい」 after the verb expressed in this form. Here are some examples of both questions and answers using 「すればいい」:

Q: Should I wait here? (literally: If I wait here, is that good?)

Q: ここで<sup>ま</sup>待てばいいですか？

A: No, you should go over there. (literally: No, if you go over there, that is good.)

A: いいえ、あそこに<sup>い</sup>行けばいいです。

—

Q: What should I do when I arrive at Ikebukuro station?

Q: 池袋駅<sup>いけぶくろえき</sup>に着いたら、どう<sup>つ</sup>すればいいですか？

A: Please wait in front of the station.

A: 駅<sup>えき</sup>の前<sup>まえ</sup>で待<sup>ま</sup>ってください。

## 12.2.4 If - すると

### New vocabulary

definitely	ぜっ <sup>ぜ</sup> たい <sup>たい</sup> 絶対に
instruction manual	せつ <sup>せ</sup> めい <sup>めい</sup> しょ <sup>しょ</sup> 説明書
left hand side	ひだり <sup>ひだり</sup> がわ <sup>がわ</sup> 左側
straight	まっ <sup>ま</sup> すぐ <sup>すぐ</sup>
to get sunburnt	ひ <sup>ひ</sup> や <sup>や</sup> 日焼けする

The particle 「と」 can be used after a verb in the informal present/future tense to describe what will happen if a certain action is performed. It is similar to both 「～たら」 and 「なら」 (when used for future actions), as well as 「すれば」, but 「と」 implies a slightly stronger connection between the first action and the second. For this reason, it is often used when giving instructions, or when the consequences of the first action are undesirable. Here are some examples:

If you eat (your) vegetables, you will become strong.

野菜<sup>やさい</sup>を<sup>を</sup>食<sup>た</sup>べると強<sup>つよ</sup>くなるよ。

If you open the window, it will get hot.

窓<sup>まど</sup>を開<sup>あ</sup>けると暑<sup>あつ</sup>くなりますよ。

If you go straight, there will be a convenience store on the left hand side.

まっすぐ<sup>い</sup>行くと、<sup>ひだりがわ</sup>左側にコンビニがあります。

If I drink coffee at night, I become unable to sleep.

(私は)夜に<sup>よる</sup>コーヒーを<sup>の</sup>飲むと<sup>ね</sup>寝られなくなります。

As these examples show, 「と」 is used to describe a direct link between one action and another. Because of this link, this expression is particularly common when describing the negative implications of not doing a certain action, such as in these examples:

If we don't put on sunscreen, we will definitely get sunburnt.

(私たちは)<sup>ひ</sup>日<sup>や</sup>焼<sup>ど</sup>け止<sup>ぬら</sup>めを<sup>ぜったい</sup>塗らないと、<sup>ひ</sup>絶対に日<sup>や</sup>焼<sup>や</sup>けするよ。

If you don't read the instructions, you will break it.

<sup>せつめいしょ</sup>説明書を<sup>よ</sup>読<sup>こわ</sup>まない<sup>9</sup>と壊<sup>9</sup>してしまうよ。

If we don't leave now, we will be late.

<sup>いま</sup>今<sup>で</sup>出<sup>お</sup>ないと<sup>く</sup>遅<sup>く</sup>れてしまいますよ。

## 12.2.5 When - ~とき

### New vocabulary

garbage	<sup>ごみ</sup> ごみ
policeman	<sup>けいさつかん</sup> 警察官

to put out, to take out	<sup>だ</sup> 出す
weather	<sup>てんき</sup> 天気

The word 「とき」 is a noun that can be used like any other noun to form a noun phrase that takes the meaning of, “When...”. Literally, 「時」 means “time”, so you can think of this expression as meaning, “At the time of...”. However, when used as described here to mean “when”, 「とき」 should always be written in hiragana, not kanji. This expression can be formed in the following ways:

[informal verb] + とき

[い-adjecive] + とき

[な-adjecive] + なとき

[noun] + のとき

9 See Chapter 12.3.6 for an explanation of the 「～てしまう」 expression.

Here are some examples:

When I went to Japan, I ate lots of sushi.

(私は/が)日本<sup>にほん</sup>に<sup>い</sup>行ったとき、すしをたくさん<sup>た</sup>食べました。

When you leave the house, please take out the garbage.

(あなたが)家<sup>いえ</sup>を<sup>で</sup>出るとき、ごみを出<sup>だ</sup>してください。

When the weather is good, we ride our bicycles to the park.

天気<sup>てんき</sup>が<sup>い</sup>いいとき、(私たちは)公園<sup>こうえん</sup>に自転車<sup>じてんしゃ</sup>に<sup>の</sup>乗って<sup>い</sup>行きます。

When it's quiet, I like to read the newspaper.

静<sup>しず</sup>かなとき、新聞<sup>しんぶん</sup>を<sup>よ</sup>読むのが好き<sup>す</sup>だ。

When I was a child, I wanted to become a policeman.

(私は/が)子供<sup>こども</sup>のとき、警察官<sup>けいさつかん</sup>になりた<sup>た</sup>かったです。

When he was a student, he ate ramen every day.

彼は<sup>がくせい</sup>学生<sup>がくせい</sup>のとき、毎日<sup>まいにち</sup>ラーメン<sup>た</sup>を食べ<sup>た</sup>た。

When a noun is followed by 「のとき」, as in the last two examples, an equivalent English sentence would normally include the verb “was”, but there is no need for such a verb in the Japanese sentence.

Sometimes, a noun phrase ending in 「とき」 will be followed by the particle 「に」. When this is done, the overall meaning of the sentence does not really change, but the addition of 「に」 puts greater emphasis on the timing of the activity, giving it more importance. If, for example, we re-phrase the second example above to say 「家を出るときに」, the implication would be that the person must take out the garbage when they leave the house, not at some other time. The following examples demonstrate this:

Please take out the garbage when you leave the house, (not now).

(今<sup>いま</sup>じゃなくて)、家<sup>いえ</sup>を<sup>で</sup>出るときに<sup>に</sup>ごみを出<sup>だ</sup>してください。

Please do that when I'm not here.

それは私が (ここに) **いないとき**にやっ<sup>て</sup>てください。

Let's go to the park in our free time. (literally: “when we are free”)

暇<sup>ひま</sup>なとき<sup>に</sup>公園<sup>こうえん</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きましょう。

I will call you when it is my lunch break.

昼休<sup>ひるやす</sup>みのとき<sup>に</sup>電話<sup>でんわ</sup>します。

## 12.3 て-form expressions

The て-form of verbs forms the basis of several common expressions in Japanese. In this section, we will look at some of the more common ones.

### 12.3.1 The other negative て-form

Before looking at the different expressions that make use of the て-form, we need to take another look at the negative て-form. In chapter 9.6, it was mentioned that there are two alternative て-forms for verbs in the negative, and the 「～ないで」 version was introduced. The other version is much like the て-form of adjectives, with the informal 「～ない」 ending being changed to 「～なくて」, as shown below:

Verb	Negative	Negative て-form
する	しない	しなくて
<sup>み</sup> 見る	<sup>み</sup> 見ない	<sup>み</sup> 見なくて
<sup>い</sup> 行く	<sup>い</sup> 行かない	<sup>い</sup> 行かなくて
<sup>た</sup> 食べる	<sup>た</sup> 食べない	<sup>た</sup> 食べなくて

The difference between 「～なくて」 and 「～ないで」 is that 「～なくて」 has quite a descriptive feel, while 「～ないで」 has a more active connotation. This is consistent with the fact that the 「～なくて」 ending is the same as the negative て-form ending for adjectives. The implications of this will become more apparent over time as you become more familiar with the many different uses of the て-form, some of which are introduced below. To help you reach that point, the explanation of the て-form expressions that follow include guidelines for which negative て-form, if any, should be used with each.

### 12.3.2 I'm glad/It's a good thing... - ～てよかった

#### New vocabulary

to charge (a battery)	<sup>じゅうでん</sup> 充電する
horrible	<sup>ひど</sup> 酷い
sunglasses	サングラス

One very common colloquial expression is to add 「よかった」 after a verb in the て-form. This is used when the person speaking is relieved or glad that a certain action was or was not taken. Here are some examples:

Today's weather is horrible, so it's a good thing we went yesterday.

今日の天気は酷いから、昨日行ってよかったです。

I'm glad I charged my phone this morning.

今朝ケータイを充電してよかった。

Negative verbs should be expressed with the 「～なくて」 ending, like so:

It's a good thing I didn't forget my sunglasses.

サングラスを忘れなくてよかった。

I'm glad there isn't a test today.

今日テストがなくてよかった。

In some cases, such as the last example, it may seem odd that 「よかった」 is expressed in the past tense, even though the verb refers to something in the future. 「よかった」 should, however, always be in the past tense in expressions like this because no matter when the action takes place, the knowledge about whether or not the action will take place is a known fact that has been decided in the past.

### 12.3.3 Doing something for someone - ～てあげる・～てくれる

In English, when we talk about doing something for someone, we will often include words like “for you” or “for him” to show that a favor is being done. In Japanese, the same sentiment is expressed by adding the words for giving and receiving at the end of the sentence (see Chapter 12.1.2 for a detailed explanation of these words), like so:

[verb in て-form] + あげる/くれる

[negative verb with 「～ないで」 ending] + あげる/くれる

The “give” verbs can be expressed in any tense that makes sense. Here are some examples:

I bought him a book.

(私は) 彼に本を買ってあげた。

He is going to make dinner for her.

彼は彼女に晩ごはんをつくってあげる。

She didn't send me a postcard.

彼女ははがきを送ってくれなかった。

They didn't forget me.

彼らは私を忘れないでくれた。

It does not matter whether or not the person receiving the favor is explicitly defined; as long as someone is doing something for someone, then a giving or receiving word should be added at the end of the sentence to reflect that generosity. In the second example above, it is perfectly fine to omit 「彼女に」 if it is understood from context who the dinner was made for, but whether it is included or not, the verb 「あげる」 should always be added at the end as long as there is a recipient of the action.

The use of 「あげる」 and 「くれる」 can also make it unnecessary to include other information. In the third example above, the Japanese sentence does not include a word meaning “me”, but because the sentence ends in 「くれる」, it is clear that the postcard was sent in the direction of the person speaking. The Japanese sentence could also potentially be interpreted as “She didn't send us a postcard”, but in most cases, it will be obvious from the context whether the speaker means “me” or “us”.

#### 12.3.4 Doing something and coming back - ~てくる

In Japanese, when talking about going somewhere for a specific purpose and then coming back, it is common practice to add 「くる」 in an appropriate form at the end of the sentence (usually in hiragana when written). Here is an example:

I'm going to the supermarket (and then coming back).

(私は) スーパーにい行ってきます。

You will recall from Chapter 9.4 that it is possible to string multiple activities together in a sequence by expressing all but the last verb in the て-form. That is exactly what is happening in this expression; one action is being performed, and after that, the person will come back to where they started. This may seem unnecessary, and indeed it is possible to express the same idea without 「くる」, but it is extremely common, and almost sounds unnatural when it is left out.

Adding 「くる」 also has the added effect of implying that the person must go somewhere else to perform the action, which helps to clarify exactly what the person

will do. In English, we will often say things like, “I will go and...”, but in Japanese, this can effectively be substituted for, “I will do ... and come back”. The following examples demonstrate this:

I went and bought a newspaper (and then came back).

新聞<sup>しんぶん</sup>を<sup>か</sup>買ってきました。

Let's go and eat lunch (and then come back).

昼<sup>ひる</sup>ご飯<sup>はん</sup>を<sup>た</sup>食べてこよう。

Go and have a look (and then come back).

<sup>み</sup>見てきて。

In all of these examples, the meaning of “go” in the English sentences is effectively replaced by 「～てくる」. Although they are different literally, the meaning is the same.

### 12.3.5 Taking and bringing - <sup>も</sup>持っていく/くる・<sup>つ</sup>連れていく/くる

In Japanese, there are no words that directly translate as “take” or “bring”, so these concepts are expressed by combining the word 「持<sup>も</sup>つ」, meaning to hold or carry, with the verbs 「いく」 (go) and 「くる」 (come). Here are some examples:

He brought his computer.

彼はコンピューターを<sup>も</sup>持ってきました。

I will take my guitar.

(私は)ギターを<sup>も</sup>持っていきます。

Negative verbs should be expressed using the 「ないで」 version of the negative て-form, followed by 「いく」 or 「くる」, like so:

Did you come without your camera!?

カメラを<sup>も</sup>持たないできたの!?

In most cases, however, it sounds more natural to use the regular て-form 「持<sup>も</sup>って」, and instead express 「いく」 or 「くる」 in the negative of the appropriate tense. Here is the above sentence re-written in this way:

Didn't you bring your camera!?

カメラを<sup>も</sup>持ってこなかったの!?

Although this second sentence uses the verb 「くる」 in the negative form, it does not mean “didn’t come”. The negative verb ending applies to the whole phrase, and since 「持つ<sup>も</sup>てくる」 as a whole means “bring”, the verbs in this sentence translate as “didn’t bring”. As is the case in English, for sentences like this, the second option above is usually more natural than the first.

Importantly, the word 「持つ<sup>も</sup>」 should only be used for things that are physically carried from one place to the other. To say that you brought or took a person or animal somewhere, the word 「連れて<sup>つ</sup>る」 should be used instead, like so:

I brought my dog.

犬<sup>いぬ</sup>を連れて<sup>つ</sup>きました。

Please take him to the hospital.

彼<sup>ひょういん</sup>を病院<sup>つ</sup>に連れて<sup>つ</sup>ってください。

Won’t you bring your wife?

奥<sup>おく</sup>さんを連れて<sup>つ</sup>きませんか？<sup>10</sup>

### 12.3.6 Doing something completely or making a mistake - ～てしまう

When the word 「しまう」 is used after a verb in the て-form, it emphasizes that the action has been completed in full. It can be used simply for this emphasis, but in most cases, it implies that the completion of that action is regrettable in some way. The following examples demonstrate this:

I ate all the chocolate.

チョコレート<sup>ぜんぶ</sup>を全部<sup>た</sup>食べてしまった。

I dropped my mobile phone.

ケータイを<sup>お</sup>落としてしまった。

I was late to the meeting.

会議<sup>かいぎ</sup>に遅<sup>おく</sup>れてしまいました。

All of the above sentences could be expressed without the addition of 「しまう」, but its inclusion adds that feeling of regret that the speaker has, as though what happened was unintended and the result is undesirable.

.....  
10 Negative questions are explained in Chapter 12.5.14

### 12.3.7 Doing something in preparation - ~ておく

#### New vocabulary

floor	ゆか 床
to hang out to dry	ほ 干す
laundry	せんたくもの 洗濯物

The word 「おく」 is used after a verb in the て-form to say that the action is being done deliberately in preparation for something, without necessarily specifying exactly what that something is. Here are some examples:

I bought tickets yesterday (in preparation).

きのう チケットを **か** 買っておきました。

It will rain later so please close the windows (in preparation for when it rains).

あと あめ ふ 後で雨が降りますから、まど し 窓を閉めておいてください。

Let's ask now (in preparation for later).

いま き 今聞い**て**おきましょう。

When a verb is expressed in the negative て-form (ないで), the addition of 「おく」 still indicates that something is being prepared for, but instead, the person is being very deliberate about not doing that particular action. Here are some examples:

It will rain later, so please don't hang out the laundry.

あと あめ ふ 後で雨が降りますから、せんたくもの ほ 洗濯物を干さないでおいてください。

I dropped this on the floor, so it would be better not to eat it.

これは ゆか お 床に落としてしまったので、た 食べないでおいた方が**いい**<sup>11</sup>。

.....<sup>11</sup>  
11 The 「方がいい」 expression is explained in chapter 12.5.5

### 12.3.8 Apologizing and thanking for specific things - ～てすみません・～てありがとう

#### New vocabulary

cracker(s)	クラッカー
glasses (eye)	メガネ
graduation ceremony	そつぎょうしき 卒業式

As you know, the words 「すみません」 and 「ごめんなさい」 can be used on their own to apologize, but they can also be used in a sentence to apologize for a specific action. This is done by expressing the action with a verb in the て-form, and following it with the appropriate apology word.

Sorry/excuse me for being late.

おそ  
遅おそくなってすみません。

Sorry I broke your (eye) glasses.

(あなたの)メガネをこわ壊こわしてごめんなさい。

Since the action being apologized for is likely regrettable, this is often combined with the 「～てしまう」 expression, with 「しまう」 also being expressed in the て-form. The following examples demonstrate this:

Sorry/excuse me for being late.

おそ  
遅おそくなってしまってすみません。

Sorry I broke your (eye) glasses.

(あなたの)メガネをこわ壊こわしてしまってすみません。

For negative verbs, the 「なくて」 ending is normally used for apologies, as shown in the following examples:

Sorry I can't go to your graduation ceremony.

(あなたの)そつぎょうしき卒業式いに行けなくてごめんなさい。

Sorry there aren't any of the crackers you like.

(あなたの)す好きなクラッカーがなくてごめんね。

### Being late

There are three common ways that the concept of “being late” is expressed in Japanese. The first two use the verbs 「遅れる」 and 「遅刻する」, which both mean “to be late”. The third combines the adjective 「遅い」, meaning “late” or “slow”, with the verb 「なる」 to become 「遅くなる」. This could be translated literally to mean “become late”, but it has essentially the same meaning as 「遅れる」 and 「遅刻する」, hence these three expressions are mostly interchangeable.

The same general rules apply for thanking someone with 「ありがとう(ございます)」. The only difference is that when thanking someone, the word 「くれる」 (or the more polite 「くださる」) would normally be added in between the main verb and 「ありがとう」, since an expression of thanks usually means that a favor has been done. This, however, is still optional. Here are some examples:

Thanks for buying milk.

ぎゅうにゅう か  
牛乳を買ってありがとう。

Thank you for listening.

き  
聞いてくださってありがとうございます。

Thanks for washing the car.

くるま あら  
車を洗ってくれてありがとう。

The other difference between thanking and apologizing is that for thanking, negative verbs are usually expressed with the 「ないで」 ending, as shown below:

Thank you for not buying that ugly sofa.

あのみにくいか  
あの醜いソファを買わないでくれてありがとう。

Thank you for not turning on the light.

でんき  
電気を付けないでくれてありがとう。

### 12.3.9 Even if - 〜ても

#### New vocabulary

to appear (in a match, on TV, etc.)	で 出る
to be on time	ま 間にあ 合う
still, yet	まだ

Adding the particle 「も」 after a verb or adjective in the て-form turns the phrase into an expression that means “even if...”. This is essentially the verb-based equivalent of the binding particle 「でも」 introduced in Chapter 11.1. Here are some examples:

Even if we leave now, we won't be on time for the meeting.

(私たちは)今<sup>いま</sup>出<sup>で</sup>ても、会議<sup>かいぎ</sup>に間<sup>ま</sup>に合<sup>あ</sup>いません。

Even if tomorrow is cold, I will definitely go for a walk.

明日<sup>あした</sup>が寒<sup>さむ</sup>くても、絶対<sup>ぜったい</sup>に散歩<sup>さんぽ</sup>します。

For verbs in the negative form, the 「なくて」 ending should be used, as shown below:

Even if you don't want to eat ice cream, I do (want to eat it).

(あなたは)アイスが食<sup>た</sup>べたくなくとも、私は食<sup>た</sup>べたいです。

Even if he doesn't appear (in the match), we can still win.

彼<sup>かれ</sup>が(試合<sup>しあい</sup>に)出<sup>で</sup>なくとも、私たちはまだ勝<sup>か</sup>てるよ。

### 12.3.10 Giving and asking for permission - 〜てもいい

#### New vocabulary

not allowed, naughty	だめ ・ ダメ
----------------------	---------

One particularly common usage of 「〜ても」 is to say 「〜てもいい」, meaning “(you) may”. As you know, the word 「いい」 means “good” or “okay”, so this expression could more literally be translated as, “Even if you do ..., it is okay”. In most cases, 「いい」 will be followed by 「よ」 (or 「ですよ」 in polite speech) to soften it, since granting permission is usually something done with some level of compassion. Here are some examples:

You may enter.

<sup>はい</sup>  
入ってもいい (よ)。

You may go home when you have finished.

<sup>お</sup>終わったら<sup>かえ</sup>帰ってもいいです。

This phrase can also be used to ask for permission by adding 「か」 to the end of the sentence to form a question, or even just using a questioning tone.

May I sit here?

ここに<sup>すわ</sup>座ってもいいですか？

May I watch TV?

テレビを<sup>み</sup>見てもいい？

In English, a question like this would normally be answered with just “yes” or “no”, but in Japanese, questions are mostly answered by explicitly repeating the verb used in either its positive or negative form, depending on the answer. The words for “yes” or “no” can also be included, but they are rarely used alone.

For these questions, an appropriate response would be 「(はい)、いいですよ」 for yes, or 「(いいえ)、だめですよ」 for “no”. The word 「だめ」, which is sometimes written in katakana (ダメ) for emphasis, roughly translates to English as “not allowed” or “naughty”, and can also be used on its own to tell someone they’ve done something wrong. The following example conversations demonstrate how each of these responses may be given in Japanese:

May I sit here?

ここに<sup>すわ</sup>座ってもいいですか？

Yes you may.

(はい)、いいですよ。

—

May I watch TV?

テレビを<sup>み</sup>見てもいい？

You may not.

ダメだよ。

This expression is also commonly used for negative verbs, which take the form of 「なくても」. Here are some examples:

You don't have to wait for me.

私を<sup>ま</sup>待たなくてもいいですよ。

Is it okay if I don't go to school today?

今日、<sup>きょう</sup>学校<sup>がっこう</sup>に<sup>い</sup>行かなくてもいい？

### 12.3.11 Forbidding or saying what shouldn't be done - ～てはいけない/だめ

#### New vocabulary

photograph	<sup>しゃしん</sup> 写真
scissors	はさみ
shrine	<sup>じんじゃ</sup> 神社
to take (a photograph/video)	<sup>と</sup> 撮る
to touch	<sup>さわ</sup> 触る
unacceptable	いけない・いけません

The opposite of giving someone permission to do something is to forbid it, or to tell them it shouldn't be done. In Japanese, this can be expressed using the て-form followed by 「はいけない」 or 「はだめ」:

[verb in て-form] + はいけない/だめ

[negative verb with 「なくて」 ending] + はいけない/だめ

「だめ」, as described earlier, has a meaning similar to “not allowed” or “naughty”, and 「いけない」 (or 「いけません」 in the polite form) is essentially the same. The only real difference is that 「だめ」 is quite harsh, while 「いけない」 and 「いけません」 are much softer, somewhat like the word “unacceptable”. For this reason, 「だめ」 is rarely used in polite settings, with 「いけません」 being used instead.

The reason that the particle used here is 「は」 and not 「も」 is because 「も」 has the underlying meaning of “also”. Saying 「～てもだめ」 would mean that that activity is

*also* not allowed, so without context, the implication is that most other activities in the world are not allowed either, which is an overly negative assumption. By using 「は」 instead, the specified activity is being explicitly singled out, implying that it is the exception. The only time 「も」 would be used with 「だめ」 or 「いけない」 would be in a situation where several things are all being described as forbidden together. This is because in such a context, each activity being described would *also* not be allowed.

Here are some examples of this expression:

In Japan, you are not allowed to wear shoes inside the house.

日本では、家の中で靴を履いてはいけません。

You may not take photographs inside the shrine.

神社の中で写真を撮ってはいけません。

Don't run with scissors. (literally: You may not carry scissors and run.)

はさみを持って走ってはいけません。

Colloquially, 「ては」 is often contracted into 「ちゃ」, as shown in the following examples:

If you don't do your homework, you may not watch TV.

宿題をしないとテレビを見ちゃいけない。

You can't touch that!

それを触っちゃダメだよ！

This expression can also be used with verbs in the negative て-form. The result is a double negative (eg. “You may not not do your homework”) that effectively means “I/you must”. This is actually quite common, and will be explained with examples in Chapter 12.5.1.

### 12.3.12 Things that haven't been done - Another use of the present continuous tense

Although the present continuous tense is normally used to refer to actions that are or were happening at a given moment, the negative form of the present continuous tense is actually also often used to talk about things that a person hasn't done yet, but still could.

Where the negative of the *regular past* tense is used to say, “I didn't do X”, the negative of the *present continuous* tense can be used to say, “I haven't done X”. The

difference between “didn’t do” and “haven’t done” is that the former implies that the opportunity to do X has passed. “Haven’t done”, on the other hand, implies that X could still be done at some point in the future.

In Japanese, the same differentiation can be made by saying either 「X をしなかった」 or 「X をしていない」.

The reason for this is because in the present, the state of having not done X is still continuing, but could change. In such a situation, the present continuous tense can be used. In contrast, if it is no longer possible to do X because the opportunity has passed, then the regular past tense is preferable.

This is probably a bit confusing, so let’s look at an example.

If someone asked you, “Did you buy milk?”, and you had, you could simply state that by saying 「買った<sup>か</sup>」. However, if you hadn’t bought milk, instead of using the past tense and saying 「買わなかった<sup>か</sup>」, it would be more appropriate to say, 「買ってない<sup>か</sup>」. This is because the state of not having bought milk is still continuing; in time, your answer might change. It’s the same as saying “No, I haven’t”, as opposed to “No, I didn’t”.

If, however, the question gave a specific time frame, for example, “Did you buy milk yesterday?”, then you would need to say 「買わなかった<sup>か</sup>」 because yesterday has finished, and the fact that you did not buy milk yesterday cannot change - your answer will always be “No, I didn’t”.

Basically, if the action hasn’t been performed, but the opportunity to perform the action is still alive given the context, the negative present continuous tense should be used. Here are some more examples:

Have you thrown out the garbage?

ごみを捨て<sup>す</sup>てた？

No I haven’t.

捨て<sup>す</sup>てていない。

—

Have you received the postcard I sent you?

私が送<sup>おく</sup>ったはがきをもらいましたか？

No, I haven’t.

いいえ、もらっていません。

—

I exercised yesterday, but I haven't exercised today.

きのううんどうしましたが、今日はうんどうしていません。

Remember that this only applies to the *negative* form. In the positive, if something has been done, then the action has been completed so the past tense is used.

## 12.4 The passive voice

### New vocabulary

battery	でん ち 電池
to include (intransitive)	ふく 含む
steel	てつ こう 鉄鋼

In both Japanese and English, it is possible to flip many sentences around and express them in a passive way. Consider these sentences:

He saw me.

I was seen by him.

Both sentences refer to the same event, but the first uses what is known as the active voice, while the second uses the passive voice. These two voices essentially allow us to describe the same event from two different perspectives. In terms of meaning, the main difference is that the focus of a passive sentence is on the action itself, rather than the person performing the action. That is, in the second sentence, we are more concerned with the fact that I was seen, rather than who it was that saw me.

The passive voice also allows us to talk about an action without actually specifying who performed it. For example, we could just say “I was seen”, without actually specifying who it was that saw me. Again, the focus in this case is on the action rather than the person who performed it.

From a grammatical standpoint, the key difference between the above two example sentences is that the subject and object of the verb “to see” have been swapped. As you can see, the word referring to “he/him” is the subject in the active sentence, but the object of the passive sentence. The reverse is true for “I/me”. In English, we also need to insert the verb “to be” in order to form a passive sentence, while also changing the main verb to the appropriate form (the past participle).

To see the changes that need to be made in Japanese, let's look at an example:

He saw me.

彼は私を見ました。

I was seen by him.

私は彼に見られました。

Firstly, as you can see, the subject/topic has changed from 「彼」 to 「私」. This is the same as English.

Like English, the verb form also changes, with 「見ました」 being converted to its passive form, 「見られました」. The following table shows how to change add-on and vowel-changing verbs into the passive form:

Verb type	Passive form
Add-on	stem + られる
Vowel-changing	stem(a) + れる

Below are some examples of each type, including the three irregular verbs:

Verb type	Passive meaning	Passive form
Add-on		stem + られる
eat	to be eaten by	食べられる
watch / see / look	to be seen by	見られる
Vowel-changing		stem(a) + れる
say	to be told by	言われる
listen	to be heard by	聞かれる
Irregular		
do	to be done by	される
go	to be gone by*	行かれる
come	to be come by*	来られる

\* Some verbs, such as 「いく」 and 「くる」 do not make much sense in the passive form on their own, but they can make sense when combined with other verbs. One such example would be 「持っていられる」, which means “to be taken by”.

The third and possibly more confusing change is that the particle following 「彼」 has become 「に」. As stated above, in English, the passive voice is formed by swapping the subject and the object. In Japanese, the object becomes the subject, but the original subject is treated differently. Instead of becoming the object of the sentence, the original subject is treated as the origin of that action. With the verb “to see” for example, if something “was seen”, or 「見られました」, then the person who did the seeing is where that act of seeing originated.

This may sound confusing, but it explains why 「に」 is the particle to use. As you know, 「に」 is normally used to mark the destination of an action involving movement. For passive verbs, however, this role is reversed, and 「に」 is used instead to mark the origin. The following example, using the verb 「言う」, shows this more clearly.

He told me to stop. (literally: He said to me, “stop!”)

彼は私に「やめて！」と言いました。

I was told by him to stop.

私は彼に「やめて！」と言われました。

In this case, 「に」 is used in both the active and passive sentences, but their roles are different. In the active sentence, it marks the destination of the action; that is, who “stop!” is being said to. In the passive sentence, however, it marks the origin of the action, or in other words, where the call of “stop!” originated.

Although most verbs do not have this element of direction when used in the active voice, in the passive voice, there is always a direction that applies to the action, with the person performing the action being the origin. As such, whenever the person or thing performing the action is included in a passive sentence, the particle 「に」 is used. Here are some more examples:

The cake was eaten by somebody!

ケーキがだれかに食べられた！

I was asked a difficult question by him.

(私は) 彼にむずかしい質問を聞かれました。

I was brought here by Yamamoto-san.

私は山本さんにここに連れてこられました。

Although the above sentences may seem unnatural in English, these kinds of ideas are often expressed in the passive form in Japanese. This is because Japanese people tend to feel more comfortable using indirect language. By using the passive form, the speaker can easily speak from the perspective of themselves, rather than talk directly about the actions of others.

The passive form is also useful when you want to talk about a particular action without mentioning who that action was performed by, either because you don't know, or because it's not important. The following examples demonstrate this:

It says (is written) here that it closes at 3 o'clock.

ここに、3 時に閉まると書かれています。

Batteries are included.

電池は含まれています。

He is riding a bicycle made from steel.

彼は鉄鋼で作られた自転車に乗っています。

In summary, to form the passive voice in Japanese, three things need to be changed:

1. The object of the original, active sentence becomes the subject
2. The verb is changed to its passive form, and
3. The subject of the active sentence, if included, is marked by the particle 「に」 to define the action's origin

## 12.5 Other expressions

### 12.5.1 Need to, have to

#### New vocabulary

to go/come and pick up

むか  
迎えに行く / 来る

Japanese does not have a single word that takes the meaning of “need to” or “have to” in the same way that English does. Instead, this concept is expressed using a double negative to say that it is unacceptable to not perform the desired action. This is done

by combining any of 「しなければ」, 「しないと」 or 「しなくては」 with the words 「ならない」, 「いけない」 or 「だめ」. The following is a complete list of ways to say, “I must do...”:

- しなければならない
- しなければいけない
- しなければだめ
- しないとにならない
- しないとといけない
- しないとだめ
- しなくてはならない
- しなくてはいけない
- しなくてはだめ

Although all of the above options are possible, some are more common than others. The main ones to use are:

- しなければならない
- しないとといけない

All of these should, of course, be expressed in the polite form in polite situations. The most commonly used polite option is:

- しなければなりません

Here are some example sentences using the more common expressions from above:

I need to go to the post office.

ゆうびんきょく 郵便局 <sup>い</sup>に行かなければならない。

ゆうびんきょく 郵便局 <sup>い</sup>に行かないといけない。

ゆうびんきょく 郵便局 <sup>い</sup>に行かなければなりません。(polite)

We have to pick up Noriko in the afternoon.

ごご 午後 <sup>むか</sup>にのりこを <sup>い</sup>迎えに行かなければならない。

ごご 午後 <sup>むか</sup>にのりこを <sup>い</sup>迎えに行かないといけない。

ごご 午後 <sup>むか</sup>にのりこを <sup>い</sup>迎えに行かなければなりません。

These expressions can also form part of noun phrases that describe things that have to have something done to them, such as in the following examples:

There is something (a thing) I have to go and buy.

<sup>か</sup> <sup>い</sup> <sup>もの</sup>  
買いに行かないといけない物がある。

I hate that I have to do homework every day!

<sup>まいにちしゅくだい</sup> <sup>きらい</sup>  
毎日宿題をしないといけないのが嫌い！

## 12.5.2 Already, yet and still - もう・まだ

### New vocabulary

already	もう
---------	----

In English, the adverbs “already”, “yet” and “still” are used to emphasize whether or not something has or has not happened. Consider these sentences:

I have already eaten lunch.

I’m already eating lunch.

I am still eating lunch.

I haven’t eaten lunch yet.

In Japanese, these same ideas can be expressed, but instead of having three words, there are only two - 「まだ」 and 「もう」. Essentially, 「もう」 is the same as “already”, while 「まだ」 is the equivalent of both “yet” and “still”. Let’s look at the above four sentences in Japanese:

I have **already** eaten lunch.

(私は) <sup>ひる</sup> <sup>はん</sup> <sup>た</sup>  
**もう** 昼ご飯を食べました。

I am **already** eating lunch.

(私は) <sup>ひる</sup> <sup>はん</sup> <sup>た</sup>  
**もう** 昼ご飯を食べています。

I am **still** eating lunch.

(私は) <sup>ひる</sup> <sup>はん</sup> <sup>た</sup>  
**まだ** 昼ご飯を食べています。

I haven’t eaten lunch **yet**.

(私は) <sup>ひる</sup> <sup>はん</sup> <sup>た</sup>  
**まだ** 昼ご飯を食べていません。

「もう」 is quite simple as it is usually always “already”, but 「まだ」 can be a little more confusing as its English meaning changes according to the verb tense. Just remember that if it is used with an action that has not happened yet, it means “(not) yet”, and if it refers to an action that has started but is still ongoing, it means “still”.

### 12.5.3 About/concerning - ～について

#### New vocabulary

about...	～について
culture	ぶん 文化
to email, to send an email	メールする
explanation	せつめい 説明する
particle	じょ し 助詞

With verbs involving discussion like “talk” and “ask”, you will often need to specify what the discussion is about, or what it is concerning. This is expressed in Japanese by adding 「について」 after the topic being discussed. The following examples demonstrate this:

I don't want to talk about money.

お金<sup>かね</sup>について<sup>はな</sup>話したくないです。

I emailed him about tomorrow, but he didn't reply.

明日<sup>あした</sup>について<sup>へん</sup>彼にメールしたけど、返事<sup>じ</sup>してくれなかった。

This expression can also be used with nouns by modifying it to 「についての」, as shown below:

I read an interesting article about Japanese culture.

日本<sup>にほん</sup>の文化<sup>ぶん 文化</sup>について<sup>おもしろ</sup>の面白<sup>き</sup>い記事<sup>じ</sup>を読<sup>よ</sup>みました。

I didn't understand his explanation about particles.

彼の助詞<sup>じょ し</sup>について<sup>せつめい</sup>の説明<sup>せつめい</sup>がわからなかった。

### 12.5.4 While doing - しながら

「～ながら」 is a verb ending used to describe two actions being performed simultaneously, similar to the English phrase, “While doing...”. First, let’s look at how each verb type is modified to end in 「～ながら」.

Verb type		Formation	Example
Add-on		stem + ながら	<sup>た</sup> 食べながら
Vowel-changing		stem(i) + ながら	<sup>き</sup> 聞きながら
Irregular	する	し + ながら	しながら
	<sup>い</sup> 行く	<sup>い</sup> 行き + ながら	<sup>い</sup> 行きながら
	<sup>く</sup> 来る	<sup>き</sup> 来 + ながら	<sup>き</sup> 来ながら

This is then used in a sentence like so:

[first action]-ながら + [second action]

The second action can be expressed in any tense, and this tense applies to both actions, since they are done simultaneously. Here are some examples:

I ran while listening to music.

(私は) <sup>おんがく</sup>音楽を <sup>き</sup>聞きながら <sup>はし</sup>走りました。

Let’s walk and talk (talk while walking).

<sup>ある</sup>歩きながら <sup>はな</sup>話しましょう。

Generally, the second action is the main action being spoken about, with the first action - the one expressed in the 「～ながら」 form - just being supplementary information. The 「～ながら」 verb is a bit like a description of the background upon which the other action is being performed. In the above examples, the main activities are running and talking, respectively. However, the emphasis on the main action is not always particularly strong, and both actions can carry relatively equal weight. This means that if you are ever unsure which action should be expressed in the 「～ながら」 form, it probably doesn’t matter.

## 12.5.5 Go and do, come and do - しに行く・しに来る

### New vocabulary

to borrow

借りる

In Japanese it is possible to talk about things that you go somewhere else to do, much like the English expressions “go and do X” or “go to do Y”. This is done by adding 「～に行く」 to the stem of the verb describing the action that is being done elsewhere, like so:

Verb type		Formation	Example
Add-on		stem + に行く	食べに行く
Vowel-changing		stem(i) + に行く	聞きに行く
Irregular	する	し + に行く	しに行く
	行く・来る	N/A	-

The verb 「行く」 can then be conjugated into whichever tense is applicable. Here are some examples:

He went to buy bread.

彼はパンを買いに行きました。

Let's go and watch a movie.

映画を見に行こう。

By using the verb 「来る」 instead of 「行く」, the reverse expression meaning “come and do X” can also be formed, such as in these examples:

She came to borrow my car.

彼女は私の車を借りに来ました。

They came to pick up their bags.

彼らはカバンを取りに来ました。

### 12.5.6 It's easy/difficult to... - しやすい・にくい

Saying whether something is easy or difficult to do can be done in Japanese by adding 「やすい」 or 「にくい」, respectively, to the end of a verb. The following table illustrates how this is done:

Verb type		Easy to... / Difficult to...	Example
Add-on		stem + やすい/にくい	食べやすい/ 食べにくい
Vowel-changing		stem(i) + やすい/にくい	飲みやすい/ 飲みにくい
Irregular	する	し + やすい/にくい	しやすい/ しにくい
	行く	行き + やすい/にくい	行きやすい/ 行きにくい
	来る	来 + やすい/にくい	来やすい/ 来にくい

In both cases, the resulting word is an い-adjective, which can be used like any other い-adjective, as shown in the following examples:

This tea is easy to drink.

このお茶は飲みやすいです。

That sign is difficult to read.

あの看板は読みにくいです。

I received a really easy-to-use camera from her.

彼女からとても使いやすいカメラをもらいました。

I need to fix this hard-to-close door.

この閉めにくいドアを直さないといけない。

### 12.5.7 Making comparisons - ～より～方が

#### New vocabulary

complicated	ふくざつ 複雑 (な)
cramped, small	せまい 狭い
simple	シンプル (な)

smell	におい 匂い
to smell (like), be odorous	においがする
spacious	ひろい 広い

In Chapter 11.1, the particle 「より」 was introduced as a way to define the basis for a comparison, such as in the following sentence:

Today is hotter than yesterday.  
 きょう きのう より あつ  
 今日は昨日より暑いのです。

One further application of this, which has more flexibility, is to combine 「より」 with a noun phrase ending in the word 「方」. 「方」 roughly translates as “the way of”, although such a direct translation would rarely be used in English. The above sentence could be re-phrased using 「方」 as follows:

Today is hotter than yesterday.  
 きのう きょう ほう あつ  
 昨日より今日の方が暑いのです。

Although the English translation is the same in both cases, there is a subtle difference in Japanese. In the first example, where 「方」 isn't used, 「今日」 is defined as the topic, which therefore places greater emphasis on what follows; that is, that *yesterday* is the day that today is hotter than. In the second example, however, 「今日の方」 is followed by 「が」, so there is a greater emphasis on the fact that *today* is the hotter day.

Ultimately, it does not make much difference, but the 「方」 expression has other uses that make it more flexible. For starters, we can remove 「昨日より」 from the second sentence above, and still keep the comparative meaning, like so:

Today is hotter.  
 きょう ほう あつ  
 今日の方が暑いのです。

The use of 「方」 allows us to say that today is hotter, without specifying what today is hotter than. Of course, for this to make sense, it has to be understood from context what today is being compared to.

The biggest advantage of 「方」, however, is that it makes it easier to compare other things, like verbs and adjectives. It allows us to say things like:

It would be better to wait here than to go inside.  
 なか はい ま ほう  
 中に入るよりここで待った方がいいのです。

To fully understand how to use this expression, we need to know how to combine different phrase types with each of 「より」 and 「方が」.

「より」 can be placed after almost any type of phrase without altering the phrase at all, as long as the phrase type that comes before 「より」 is consistent with what comes

after it. The only rule is that when a verb is used immediately before 「より」, it should always be expressed in the present/future tense.

The following table shows how 「方」<sup>ほう</sup> can be combined with different phrase types:

Word type	Noun phrase ending in hō	Example
Noun	[noun] + の方 <sup>ほう</sup>	きょう ほう 今日の方
い-adjective	[adjective] + 方 <sup>ほう</sup>	あつ ほう 暑い方
な-adjective	[adjective] + な方 <sup>ほう</sup>	しず ほう 静かな方
Positive verb	[verb in informal past tense] + 方 <sup>ほう</sup>	した ほう した方
Negative verb	[verb in informal present/future tense] + 方 <sup>ほう</sup>	しない ほう しない方

The most important point to take away from this table is that when comparing actions, the *past tense* should be used for verbs in their positive form, while the *present/future tense* should be used for verbs in their negative form. The reason for this, and for why the verb before 「より」 should be in the present/future tense, is quite complicated and doesn't need to be fully understood. However, if you would like a deeper understanding, the text box below provides a brief explanation.

### Verb tenses in the 「～より～方<sup>ほう</sup>が」 expression

In general, when talking about an action that will be done, there will be a time when that action is in the past. In the 「～より～方<sup>ほう</sup>が」 expression, the description that follows 「方<sup>ほう</sup>が」 applies to that future time, so the past tense should be used for the verb before it. When talking about an action that is not done, however, there is never a time when the action is in the past. The action is in a perpetual state of non-completion, and the description that follows 「方<sup>ほう</sup>が」 applies to that ongoing state. Negative verbs before 「方<sup>ほう</sup>が」 should therefore be expressed using the present/future tense.

The same applies to the verb before 「より」. Since the final description applies to the alternative action (the one before 「方<sup>ほう</sup>」), in that context, the action before 「より」 is also never completed, and should therefore be expressed in the present/future tense.

For a more thorough explanation of this, refer to Appendix 1: Understanding verb tenses in noun phrases.

Here are some examples of this expression:

I prefer cold weather.

(私は) 寒い天気の方が好きです。

When it comes to kitchens, spacious is easier to use than cramped.

台所は狭いより広い方が使いやすいです。

Simple is better than complicated.

複雑よりシンプルな方がいいです。

It's raining, so it would be better to go to the movies than play outside.

雨が降っているから、外で遊ぶより、映画館に行った方がいい。

This smells strange, so I think it would be better not to eat it.

これは変な匂いがするから、食べない方がいいと思います。

One additional thing to keep in mind is that although the phrase type that comes before「より」needs to be consistent with what comes after it, it does not necessarily need to be consistent with the phrase type immediately before「方」. The following sentence is one such example:

It would be better to go by car than by bus.

バスより車でいった方がいいです。

In this case, the mode of transport is being compared, not the action itself, so although the「～より～方」pattern is still used, the things being compared are independent from「方」.

## 12.5.8 Should - はず・べき

### New vocabulary

exam	試験
frequently	頻繁に
information	情報
next	次

should (expectation)	はず
should (obligation)	べき
turn (in a sequence)	番
to trust	信頼する

In Japanese, there are a couple of different expressions that can be translated into English to mean “should”, but they are not interchangeable. Consider these two sentences:

He should be able to go to the meeting.

You should go to the meeting.

Although both sentences use the word “should”, they have fundamentally different meanings. The first sentence expresses an expectation regarding the current situation; that is, the expectation that ‘he’ will come to the meeting. In the second sentence, however, “should” is used to say what action is in the person’s best interests, almost as if the person has an obligation to go to the meeting.

In Japanese, this difference is important, as the word used to mean “should” is different in each case.

### はず

When a person is describing their expectation, the Japanese equivalent to the word “should” is 「はず」. This word is a noun and is mostly used as the head noun of a noun phrase and followed by 「です」 or 「だ」. The word before 「はず」 can be a verb expressed in any tense, an adjective, or even a noun followed by 「の」, as shown in the following examples:

It should be here.

ここに**あるはず**です。

I should be able to play tennis on Saturday.

(私は)土曜日どようびにテニス**ができるはず**です。

He should have been able to go to the meeting.

彼は会議かいぎに**行けたはず**です。

Okinawa should be hot.

沖縄おきなわは暑あつ**いはず**だ。

Tomorrow’s exam should be easy.

明日あしたの試験しけんは簡単かんたん**なはず**だ。

It should be my turn next. (literally: Next should be my turn.)

次つぎは**私の番**ばん**のはず**だ。

## べき

When a person is describing what action is in their own or someone else's best interest, or what they are obligated to do, the word 「べき」 is used. This fits into sentences in a similar way as 「はず」, as it usually appears as the head noun of a noun phrase, except it can only be used after a verb in the informal present tense (dictionary form). To describe what somebody should have done in the past, 「です」 should be expressed in the past tense. Similarly, for negatives, the verb should remain unchanged in its positive form, with 「じゃない」 being added after 「べき」 instead. Here are some examples:

You should go to tomorrow's meeting.

(あなたは) 明日<sup>あした</sup>の会議<sup>かいぎ</sup>に行く<sup>い</sup>べきです。

I should read the newspaper more frequently, shouldn't I?

(私は) 新聞<sup>しんぶん</sup>をもっと頻繁<sup>ひんぱん</sup>に読む<sup>よ</sup>べきだね？

You should have waited until 5 o'clock.

(あなたは) 5 時<sup>ごじ</sup>まで待つ<sup>ま</sup>べきだった。

Even if they're cheap, you shouldn't buy things you don't need.

安<sup>やす</sup>くても、要<sup>い</sup>らない物<sup>もの</sup>を<sup>か</sup>買うべきじゃない。

When used with 「べき」, the verb 「する」 is an exception in that the 「る」 is usually dropped. The resulting phrase is 「すべき」, as shown in the following examples:

You should practice Japanese every day.

毎日<sup>まいにち</sup>日本語<sup>にほんご</sup>を練習<sup>れんしゅう</sup>すべきです。

We shouldn't trust old information.

(私たちは) 古<sup>ふる</sup>い情報<sup>じょうほう</sup>を信頼<sup>しんらい</sup>すべきじゃないです。

You may occasionally hear a Japanese person say 「するべき」, and you can get away with using this yourself, but it is technically incorrect.

### 12.5.9 Describing an incomplete list of activities - ～たり～たりする

#### New vocabulary

to climb	のぼ 登る
to do laundry	せんたく 洗濯する
Mount Fuji	ふじさん 富士山

In Chapter 11.1, we learned about the particles 「や」 and 「など」, which are used together to describe a vague or incomplete list of things. The same kind of vague list can be built for actions by using the 「～たり」 verb ending. Consider this example:

We did some shopping, saw a movie, drank tea, etc.

(私たちは) <sup>か</sup>買い物を<sup>もの</sup>したり、<sup>えい</sup>映画を<sup>が</sup>見たり、<sup>ちや</sup>お茶を<sup>の</sup>飲んだりしました。

Here, the speaker is talking about several things that they did, while also implying that they did other things as well. Much like sentences using 「や」 and 「など」, this kind of sentence is deliberately vague.

The 「～たり」 verb ending is formed in the same way as the informal past tense, with the addition of 「り」, as shown below:

Verb type		Formation of ～たり ending	Example
<b>Add-on</b>		stem + たり	<sup>た</sup> 食べたり
<b>Vowel-changing</b>	<b>う, つ, る</b>	～ったり	<sup>か</sup> 買ったり
	<b>ぶ, む, ぬ</b>	～んだり	<sup>あそ</sup> 遊んだり
	<b>く</b>	～いたり	<sup>き</sup> 聞いたり
	<b>ぐ</b>	～いだり	<sup>およ</sup> 泳いだり
	<b>す</b>	～したり	<sup>はな</sup> 話したり
<b>Irregular</b>	<b>する</b>	し + たり	したり
	<b>行く</b>	行ったり	行ったり
	<b>くる</b>	<sup>き</sup> 来 + たり	<sup>き</sup> 来たり

For verbs in the negative form, the 「ない」 ending is changed to 「なかったり」. For verbs expressed in the continuous form, the 「～ている」 ending is changed to 「～ていたり」.

The pattern to follow when using this expression is as follows:

[action]-たり、[action]-たり、...、[action]-たり + する

There is no limit to the number of activities that can be listed using this expression. However, like 「や」 and 「など」, since this is a deliberately vague expression, the number of activities is usually limited to three or four. It is also possible and not uncommon to list just one activity.

The important part to remember is that the sentence is not complete until the verb 「する」 is added in the appropriate tense, which can be basically anything. You will sometimes hear 「～たり」 used without 「する」 at the end, and this is acceptable in certain contexts, but generally, 「する」 needs to be included in order for the phrase to be a complete sentence. Here are some more examples:

Today, I cleaned the house, did the laundry, etc.

きょう いえ そうじ ふく せんたく  
今日、家を掃除したり、服を洗濯したりしました。

I want to go to Japan and climb Mount Fuji, ride the bullet train, etc.

にほん い ふじさん のぼ しんかんせん の  
日本に行って、富士山を登ったり、新幹線に乗ったりしたい。

I love music, and I am always (doing things like) dancing.

おんがく だいす おど  
私は音楽が大好きで、いつも踊ったりしています。

### 12.5.10 Discussing plans - つもり

In both English and Japanese, there are different ways to express our plans based on how certain it is that those plans will go ahead. While we don't often think about it, in English, we tend to use the word "will", or say things like "I'm going to the mall tomorrow" when our plans are certain. If, on the other hand, our plans are fairly certain but there is still a chance - even a small one - that they will not eventuate, we tend to insert phrases like, "I'm planning to..." or "I intend to..." to express that lower level of certainty, no matter how small.

In Japanese, definite plans are, as you know, expressed by simply using the present/future tense. Less concrete plans can be expressed by adding the word 「つもり」 after a

verb in the informal present/future tense. This forms a noun phrase that usually comes at the end of a sentence followed by 「です」 or 「だ」. Here are some examples:

I plan to go to the mall tomorrow

あした (私は) モールに **行くつもり** です。

I intend to leave home at 6am

あさろく じ いえ で 朝 6 時に家を出る**つもり**だ。

I planned to buy a new shirt, but there wasn't enough time

あたらし 新しいシャツを **買うつもり** でしたが、時間 じ かん がなかったです。

As the last example shows, even when talking about the plans you had for the past, the verb (in this case 「かかう」) is expressed in the present/future tense. The past tense use of 「でした」 makes the whole clause a reference to the past.

### 12.5.11 Expressing uncertainty - 〜かもしれません

An easy and useful way to add a degree of uncertainty to any phrase is to add 「〜かもしれません」, or 「〜かもしれない」, at the end of the sentence. This is similar to inserting a word like “might” or “could be” into an English sentence. It is also often used as a way to be more indirect when saying “no” to someone, which is important in Japanese culture, where directness is often considered impolite.

This expression can be added after any noun phrase or clause, with clauses mostly ending in verbs in their informal form. Here are some examples:

I might not be able to go.

(私は) 行けない**かもしれません**。

There might be a convenience store over there.

あそこにコンビニがある**かもしれない**。

That might be the case.

そう**かもしれない**。

This is very handy when you are not 100% certain of something, or even when you want to speak in a vague or indirect way. Since Japanese is generally a vague and non-specific language, and directness is not often well received, this expression is very common.

## 12.5.12 How to do things - やり方<sup>かた</sup>

### New vocabulary

to be mistaken	まちが <sup>まちが</sup> っている
to make a mistake	まちが <sup>まちが</sup> える
to show	み <sup>み</sup> せる

Any verb can be turned into a noun that means “how to ...” or “the way to...”. This is done by adding 「〜方<sup>かた</sup>」, which loosely translates as “way”, to the verb stem. Here is how 「〜方<sup>かた</sup>」 is added to each verb type:

Word type		How to...	Example
Add-on verb		stem + 方 <sup>かた</sup>	た <sup>た</sup> 食べ <sup>かた</sup> 方
Vowel-changing verb		stem(i) + 方 <sup>かた</sup>	つく <sup>つく</sup> 作り <sup>かた</sup> 方
Irregular verb	する	し + 方 <sup>かた</sup>	し <sup>かた</sup> 方
	いく	い <sup>い</sup> 行き + 方 <sup>かた</sup>	い <sup>かた</sup> 行き <sup>かた</sup> 方
	くる	き <sup>き</sup> 来 + 方 <sup>かた</sup>	き <sup>かた</sup> 来 <sup>かた</sup> 方

These can then be used in a sentence like any other noun, as these examples show:

I don't know how to eat this.

これの<sup>た</sup>食べ<sup>かた</sup>方がわかりません。

He showed me how to open the window.

彼が<sup>まど</sup>窓の<sup>あ</sup>開<sup>かた</sup>け<sup>み</sup>方を見せてくれました。

I've forgotten how to go to the airport.

<sup>くうこう</sup>空港への<sup>い</sup>行き<sup>かた</sup>方<sup>わす</sup>を忘れました。

You're doing it wrong. (literally: Your way of doing it is mistaken.)

(あなたの)<sup>かた</sup>やり<sup>ま</sup>方<sup>ちが</sup>が間違っているよ。

Please teach me how to practice karate.

<sup>から</sup>空手の<sup>て</sup>練<sup>れん</sup>習<sup>しゅう</sup><sup>かた</sup>し<sup>おし</sup>方を教えてください。

The verb 「する」 on its own is rarely expressed in this way as 「し<sup>かた</sup>方」. The verb 「やる」, also meaning “do”, is usually used instead. However, for verbs that consist of a word followed by 「する」, like 「練習<sup>れんしゅう</sup>する」, only 「し<sup>かた</sup>方」 is appropriate.

### 12.5.13 Trying - しようとする・してみる

#### New vocabulary

ATM	エイティーエム A T M
to break (intransitive)	こわ 壊れる
to restart (a machine)	さいきどう 再起動する
to withdraw	おろ 下す

In English, the word “try” has two main meanings:

1. To test or evaluate something to see what the result is, eg. Sushi is delicious. Try it!
2. To attempt to do or achieve something, eg. He tried to run 10km but stopped at 5km.

This difference is important because in Japanese, they are completely separate concepts that are expressed in completely different ways. Let's take a look at each of these:

#### Testing or evaluating something

To say that you or someone else is trying something to see what the result will be, the verb is expressed in the て-form followed by the verb 「みる」, like so:

[verb(て)] + みる

This is literally like saying, “Do and see”, meaning that you will do the action, and see what the result is. This can also be used simply to mean “do and see”, even if the word “try” would not be appropriate.

Here are some examples:

Sushi is delicious. Try it!

すしはおいしいよ。食<sup>た</sup>べてみて！

Did you try restarting your computer?

コンピューターを再起動<sup>さいきどう</sup>してみましたか？

Let's try turning the lights off.

電気<sup>でんき</sup>を消<sup>け</sup>してみよう。

In the English translations of all of the above sentences, the word “try” could be removed, and the entire sentence re-phrased to say “do and see”. Although it may not always sound natural, it is a useful way determine which “try” expression to use if you are ever unsure. Note, however, that despite effectively meaning “see”, 「みる」 in this context should always be written in hiragana.

### Describing an attempt

To express an attempt to do or achieve something, the action being attempted is expressed using the same verb ending as the “Let’s...” expression, followed by 「とする」, as shown in the following table:

Verb type	To try to...	Example
Add-on	stem + よう + とする	見 <sup>み</sup> ようとする
Vowel-changing	stem(o) + う + とする	聞 <sup>き</sup> こうとする
Irregular		
do	しよう + とする	しようとする
go	行 <sup>い</sup> こう + とする	行 <sup>い</sup> こうとする
come	来 <sup>こ</sup> よう + とする	来 <sup>こ</sup> ようとする

The verb 「する」 at the end can be expressed in any tense or level of politeness that makes sense. Here are some examples:

He tried to run 10km but stopped at 5km.

彼は10キロ走<sup>じゅっ</sup>ろうと<sup>はし</sup>したけど、5キロでやめた。

I'm trying to open the window.

窓<sup>まど</sup>を開<sup>あ</sup>けようとしています。

I tried to withdraw money, but the ATM is broken.

お金<sup>かね</sup>を下<sup>おろ</sup>そうと<sup>エイティーエム</sup>したけど、A T M <sup>こわ</sup>が壊れている。

Although it may look like it, this verb ending does not give the sentences the meaning, “Let’s try”. The “Let’s...” interpretation of the 「～よう」 or 「stem(o) + う」 verb ending is simply the most accurate way to translate it into English when it is used on its own. When followed by 「とする」, however, it forms a set expression meaning “try to”. If we want to say, “Let’s try to...”, we can do so by using the 「しよう」 form of 「する」 at the end of the phrase, like so:

Let’s try to fix the car.

くるま なお  
車を直そうとしよう。

This kind of expression is not very common, however, as it implies that you don’t really expect to succeed. Instead, you would more likely use a more positive statement like 「くるま なお車を直そう」 (Let’s fix the car), or even the other “try” expression, 「くるま なお車を直してみよう」 (Let’s fix the car and see).

#### 12.5.14 Negative questions - しませんか・じゃないの？

In English, we sometimes ask questions using a verb in the negative form, such as, “Won’t you come with me?” or, “Didn’t you see him yesterday?”. The same kinds of questions are often asked in Japanese, usually either as invitations, or when the person asking the question is expecting the answer to confirm that the action being described didn’t happen (eg. “No, I didn’t see him”). In the case of invitations, although the verb is expressed negatively, it is very much a positive invitation - that is, the person asking the question is hoping that the response will be positive. Here are some examples of negative questions:

Won’t you go and see a movie with me on Friday?

きんよう び えい が み い  
金曜日に私と映画を見に行かない？

Didn’t you buy bread yesterday?

きのう か  
昨日パンを買わなかったの？

Won’t you lend me your car?

くるま か  
(私に)車を貸してませんか？

A particularly common group of negative questions is regular statements followed by a questioning 「じゃないですか？」. A person would use this to seek confirmation of what they already believe (“Isn’t the party tomorrow?”), as opposed to asking a simple question (“Is the party tomorrow?”). Particularly with verbs and い-adjectives, this is

commonly preceded by 「ん」, the contraction of the sentence-ending particle 「の」 (see Chapter 11.1). Here are some examples:

Isn't the party tomorrow?

パーティーは明日<sup>あした</sup>じゃないですか？

Wouldn't it be better to go?

行った方<sup>ほう</sup>がいいんじゃない？

Isn't my jacket on the bed?

私の上着<sup>うわぎ</sup>はベッドにあるんじゃないの？

### 12.5.15 Before/after doing... - ～<sup>まえ</sup>前に・～<sup>あと</sup>後に

#### New vocabulary

details	しょうさい 詳細
report	レポート
to save money	ちよきん 貯金する

To describe when one action occurs relative to another, we can use the words 「<sup>まえ</sup>前に」 and 「<sup>あと</sup>後に」 to form noun phrases meaning “before” and “after”, respectively. These words can be attached to verbs in the informal form, or connected to nouns with the particle 「の」. The following table shows how these words can be used to form noun phrases:

Word type	Before	After
<b>Noun</b>	[noun] + の <sup>まえ</sup> 前に	[noun] + の <sup>あと</sup> 後に
<b>Verb</b>	[verb in informal present/future tense] + <sup>まえ</sup> 前に	[verb in informal past tense] + <sup>あと</sup> 後に

Here are some examples of these expressions:

Please read the report before the meeting.

かいぎ<sup>かいぎ</sup>の<sup>まえ</sup>前にレポートを<sup>よ</sup>読んでおいてください。

Before I left the house, I hung out the laundry.

いえでまえ せんたくもの ほ  
家を出る前に、洗濯物を干しておきました。

Before we buy a new house, let's save a bit more money.

あたらしいえ か まえ ちょきん  
新しい家を買う前に、もうちょっと貯金しておきましょう。

After my lunch break, I need to go and renew my passport.

ひるやす あと こうしん い  
昼休みの後に、パスポートを更新しに行かなければなりません。

After the match ended, we all (everyone) went to karaoke.

し あい お あと い  
試合が終わった後に、みんなでカラオケに行きました。

After I have spoken with her, I will send you the details via email.

はな あと しょうさい おく  
彼女と話した後に、詳細をメールで(あなたに)送ります。

The important thing to remember is that no matter whether we are talking about the future or the past, the verb before 「前」 should always be in the informal present/future tense, and the verb before 「後」 should always be in the informal past tense. The reason for this is that in Japanese, unlike English, it is not relevant when the first action occurred in relation to now. All that matters is when the action occurred relative to the other action.

If, for example, we say 「学校に行く前に、テレビを見ました」, the act of watching TV happened before going to school. Relative to the timing of watching TV, the act of going to school is in the future, hence the present/future tense should be used. On the other hand, if we say 「学校に行った後に、テレビを見ました」, then relative to the timing of watching TV, the act of going to school is in the past, so the past tense is used. For a more thorough explanation of why verb tenses differ from English in these situations, see Appendix 1: Understanding verb tenses in noun phrases.

## 12.5.16 For/in order to - ～ために

### New vocabulary

ferris wheel	かんらんしゃ 観覧車
to save (money)	た 貯める

The expression 「～ために」 can be added after a noun or verb to define the purpose or reason for a particular action.

## With nouns

When used with a noun, 「～ために」 defines who or what the action is done *for*, and is used in a sentence like so:

[person/thing] + のために

Here are some examples:

Let's buy this book **for our mother**.

この本を<sup>ほん</sup>母<sup>はは</sup>のために<sup>か</sup>買<sup>か</sup>いましょう。

Did you make this **for me**?

これを<sup>つく</sup>私<sup>わたし</sup>のために<sup>わたし</sup>作<sup>つく</sup>ったの？

I went to Tokyo **for a concert**.

(私は)ライブ<sup>らいうぶ</sup>のために<sup>い</sup>東京<sup>とうきょう</sup>に行<sup>い</sup>きました。

## With verbs

When used with a verb, 「ために」 takes the meaning of “in order to” or “so that”. In other words, it defines what purpose the action is being done *for*. The part of the sentence that comes before 「ために」 will therefore usually describe a goal, while the part that follows it describes the action to be taken in order to achieve that goal.

The action taken to achieve the goal can be expressed in any tense or level of politeness, as is appropriate. The verb describing the goal, however, should always be expressed in the present/future tense, as shown below:

[goal, using verb in present/future tense] + ために + [action taken to achieve the goal]

Here are some examples:

In order **to become a doctor**, I will study a lot.

(私は)<sup>い</sup>医<sup>い</sup>者<sup>しゃ</sup>になる<sup>なる</sup>ために、た<sup>べん</sup>く<sup>き</sup>さん<sup>き</sup>勉<sup>めん</sup>強<sup>きやう</sup>します。

I need to save money **to buy a new computer**.

<sup>あた</sup>新<sup>あたら</sup>しい<sup>しん</sup>コン<sup>こん</sup>ピュ<sup>ぴゅ</sup>ータ<sup>ー</sup>を<sup>を</sup>買<sup>か</sup>う<sup>う</sup>た<sup>た</sup>めに<sup>に</sup>お<sup>お</sup>金<sup>かね</sup>を<sup>を</sup>貯<sup>た</sup>め<sup>め</sup>ない<sup>ない</sup>とい<sup>い</sup>け<sup>け</sup>ない<sup>ない</sup>。

We waited an hour **to ride the ferris wheel**.

<sup>かん</sup>観<sup>らん</sup>覧<sup>しや</sup>車<sup>の</sup>に<sup>の</sup>乗<sup>の</sup>る<sup>の</sup>た<sup>い</sup>めに<sup>に</sup>、1<sup>いち</sup>時<sup>じ</sup>間<sup>かん</sup>待<sup>ま</sup>ちました。

## 12.5.17 Whether or not - 〜かどうか〜

## New vocabulary

address	じゅうしょ 住所
to answer	こた 答える
to confirm	かくにん 確認する
correct	ただ 正しい

One useful application of the question particle 「か」 is to combine it with 「どうか」 to effectively say “whether or not”. This can be added basically anywhere the particle 「か」 might be used, although the verb before the first 「か」 is usually expressed in the informal form. 「〜かどうか〜」 is then often followed by a phrase equivalent to something we might say before “whether or not” in English, such as, “I don’t know...” or “I will ask him...”. The following examples demonstrate this:

I don’t know whether or not it will rain tomorrow.

あした あめ ふ  
明日雨が降る**かどうか**わかりません。

I don’t know whether or not they won.

彼らが勝った**かどうか**わかりません。

I asked him whether or not he is coming, but he didn’t answer.

彼が来る**かどうか**聞いてみたけど、**こた**答えてくれなかった。

Please confirm whether or not your address is correct.

(あなたの) **じゅうしょ** 住所が **ただ** 正しい **かどうか** **かくにん** 確認してください。

## 12.5.18 Too... - 〜すぎる

## New vocabulary

luggage	に もつ 荷物
meat	にく 肉

In English, when we want to describe something as being excessive in some way, we use the word “too” before the appropriate adjective. Similarly, when we want to say that someone has performed a certain action excessively, we add a phrase like “too much” or “too far”, as in the sentences, “He bought too much” or “He went too far”.

In Japanese, the same idea can be expressed for both adjectives and verbs by attaching the word 「～すぎる」 to the end of the word. 「すぎる」 is itself an add-on verb, meaning it can be expressed in different tenses and with different levels of politeness. The following table shows how 「すぎる」 can be attached to each word type:

Word type		Too... / too much...	Example
い-adjective		Replace 「い」 with 「すぎる」	あつ 暑すぎる
な-adjective		Replace 「な」 with 「すぎる」	へん 変すぎる
Add-on verb		stem + すぎる	た 食べすぎる
Vowel-changing verb		stem(i) + すぎる	つく 作りすぎる
Irregular verb	する	し + すぎる	しすぎる
	いく	行き + すぎる	行きすぎる
	くる	来 + すぎる	来すぎる

Below are some examples of 「～すぎる」. Notice that since 「すぎる」 is itself a verb, it can be expressed in different tenses where appropriate.

This house is too scary.

この家<sup>いえ</sup>は怖<sup>こわ</sup>すぎる。

This town is too quiet.

この町<sup>まち</sup>は静<sup>しず</sup>かすぎます。

I ate too much pasta.

(私は)パスタを<sup>た</sup>食べすぎました。

I don't want to use too much money.

(私は)お金<sup>かね</sup>を<sup>つか</sup>使いすぎたくない。

Don't buy too much meat.

肉<sup>にく</sup>を<sup>か</sup>買いすぎないで。

He brought too much luggage.  
彼は荷物<sup>に もつ も</sup>を持<sup>も</sup>ってきすぎた。

### 12.5.19 Describing how things look/appear - ～そう

#### New vocabulary

cup	コップ
election	せんきょ 選挙
to hit, bump into (intransitive)	ぶつかる
to lose (not win)	ま 負ける
tree	き 木

The 「～そう」 ending in Japanese can be added to adjectives or verbs to describe how something appears. For adjectives, this transforms a sentence like, “You are cold”, to, “You look cold”. For verbs, this is used to describe something that hasn’t happened yet, but looks like it will or is about to. The following table shows how 「～そう」 can be added to each word type:

Word type		Formation of 「～そう」	Example
い-adjective		Change the last 「い」 to 「そう」	むずか 難しそう
な-adjective		Replace 「な」 with 「そう」	べんり 便利そう
Add-on verb		stem + そう	た 食べそう
Vowel-changing verb		stem(i) + そう	き 聞きそう
Irregular verb	する	し + そう	しそう
	行く <sup>い</sup>	行き + そう	行きそう
	来る <sup>く</sup>	来 + そう	来そう

An exception to this is the adjective 「いい/良<sup>よ</sup>い」, which should be changed to 「良<sup>よ</sup>さそう」. Similarly, when the adjective or verb is expressed as a negative, the 「ない」 ending should be changed to 「なさそう」.

When the 「そう」 ending is added to a word in this way, it becomes a な-adjective. This can be used like any other な-adjective, although in most cases, it will come at the end of a sentence followed by 「です」 or 「だ」, such as in the following examples:

You look cold!

(あなたは)寒<sup>さむ</sup>そうだ！

He doesn't look very happy.

彼はあまり嬉<sup>うれ</sup>しくなさそうです。

The cup looks like it will fall from the table.

コップがテーブルから落<sup>お</sup>ちそうだ。

It looks/seems like they will lose at the next election.

彼らは次の選挙で負<sup>つぎ せん きょ ま</sup>けそうです。

He looks like he is going to hit that tree.

彼はあの木<sup>き</sup>にぶつかりそうだ。

It appears she won't be able to come.

彼女は来<sup>こ</sup>れなさそうです。

## 12.5.20 Apparently, it seems/looks like - そう・らしい・みたい・よう

### New vocabulary

to catch (a cold)	ひ 引く
a cold (illness)	か ぜ 風邪
dangerous	あぶ 危ない

The words 「そう」, 「らしい」, 「みたい」 and 「よう」 can be added after certain phrases to indicate that the information being conveyed is not necessarily fact, but rather just what someone perceives to be true. Who that someone is is determined by which word is used. This is equivalent to using words like “apparently” and “seem” in English.

These words are attached to different word types like so:

Word	Formation
そう	[independent clause in informal form] + そう
らしい	[noun, adjective or informal verb] + らしい
みたい	[noun, adjective or informal verb] + みたい
よう	Form a noun phrase with the head noun 「よう」

Although these words are added to phrases in different ways, once formed, they are all used in the same way, with 「そう」, 「みたい」 and 「よう」 being な-adjectives, and 「らしい」 being an い-adjective. In terms of meaning, however, they are slightly different, so we need to take a closer look.

The words 「そう」 and 「らしい」 are primarily used to convey information that has come from a source other than oneself. For example, if you heard some interesting news and wanted to convey that to someone else, you would add 「そう」 or 「らしい」 to the end of the sentence to indicate that this is second-hand information. Here are some examples:

Apparently, there is a convenience store over there.

あそこにコンビニがある**そう**です。

Apparently, swimming at that beach is dangerous.

あの海で泳ぐのは危ない**そう**です。  
うみ およ あぶ

Apparently, he likes ice cream.

彼はアイスが好き**らしい**です。  
す

Apparently, she caught a cold.

彼女は風邪を引いた**らしい**です。  
かぜ ひ

In all of these sentences, the addition of 「そう」 and 「らしい」 turns an otherwise simple, direct statement into a communication of external information. In some cases, one of these two words may sound more natural than the other, but they are generally interchangeable.

In contrast, a person would use 「みたい」 or 「よう」 to tell someone how they themselves perceive things to be. Consider the following examples:

It seems he will come.

彼は来る**みたい**です。  
く

It seems that bread is delicious.

あのパンはおいしい**みたい**だ。

It seems they already left the house.

彼らはもう家<sup>いえ</sup>を出た**よう**です。

You are like a child.

あなたは子供<sup>こども</sup>の**よう**だ。

In all of these, the speaker is expressing what they themselves believe to be true based on information they have. Each statement could, of course, be expressed without 「みたい」 or 「よう」, but by including these words, the speaker implies that they are expressing their own thoughts, not facts. The difference between 「みたい」 and 「よう」 is much like 「そう」 and 「らしい」 in that although they are sometimes used in slightly different circumstances, they are mostly interchangeable.

### Different kinds of 「そう」

Although similar, this 「そう」 is not the same as when 「そう」 is added at the end of a verb or adjective to describe how things look, as described in Chapter 12.5.19. Compare these two sentences:

Apparently, there is a convenience store over there.

あそこにコンビニが**あるそう**です。

It looks like there is a convenience store over there.

あそこにコンビニが**ありそう**です。

In the first sentence, the speaker is relaying information that they heard somewhere else, while in the second sentence, the speaker is expressing their own expectation of where a convenience store might be. Although these meanings are similar, they are subtly different.

## 12.5.21 Letting or making someone do something - させる

### New vocabulary

to drive	うんてん 運転する
host family	ホストファミリー
Prime Minister	そうり だいじん 総理大臣

In Japanese, the expression used to talk about someone letting someone else do something, or someone making someone else do something, is the same. Even though these two concepts - “letting” and “making” - are very different in English, with the former describing someone receiving permission, and the latter implying that someone has been forced to do something, Japanese does not differentiate between them. Instead, context is relied upon to determine whether the person who eventually performs the action is doing so because they want to and are allowed, or because they have been forced to.

To express these ideas, verb endings are changed in the following ways:

Verb type		Letting or making	Example
Add-on		stem + させる	た 食べさせる
Vowel-changing		stem(a) + せる	き 聞かせる
Irregular	する	させる	-
	いく	いかせる	-
	くる	こ 来させる	-

Using these verbs in a sentence is fairly straightforward, but there are three important rules to remember when doing so:

1. The subject is the person who is making or letting the other person perform the action
2. For intransitive verbs, the person who is being made or allowed to perform the action is marked by the particle 「を」
3. For transitive verbs, the person who is being made or allowed to perform the action is marked by the particle 「に」

The first rule should be fairly intuitive as it works the same way as English. In the sentence, “Atsushi made him eat sushi”, Atsushi is the subject because he is the one who is making the other person eat. The same applies in Japanese.

The other two rules are more complicated. When the 「させる」 ending is added, intransitive verbs like 「行く」 are effectively turned into transitive verbs. The person being made or allowed to perform the action then becomes the object of that verb. Let's compare it to a regular transitive verb:

I ate sushi.

私はすしを<sup>た</sup>食べました。

I made/let Hiroshi go.

私はひろしを<sup>い</sup>行かせました。

The English sentence structure is different in each case, but in Japanese, the relationship between the key words is the same; just like sushi is the thing that has been eaten, Hiroshi is the thing that has been made/allowed to go. 「ひろし」 is therefore the object, and this should be marked by 「を」.

Transitive verbs are different, however, because they already have an object. Whether you say “I ate sushi” or “I made him eat sushi”, the thing being eaten is still sushi. We therefore need a different particle to identify who it is that has been made to perform the act of eating. That particle is 「に」, and this is based on the idea that the person who eventually performs the act of eating is the destination of the other person's permission or force. Let's look at an example.

He made Maki eat (her) vegetables.

彼はまきに<sup>やさい</sup>野菜を<sup>た</sup>食べさせました。

In this case, the vegetables are the object, so this is marked by 「を」. Maki is then marked by the particle 「に」 because she is the one being made to eat her vegetables, and is therefore the destination of the other person's force. The same applies when the meaning is “let”:

He let Maki eat chocolate.

彼はまきにチョコレート<sup>た</sup>を食べさせました。

Similarly, the chocolate is the object marked by 「を」, while Maki is marked by 「に」 as she is the destination of the permission to perform the act of eating.

Here are some more example sentences, using both transitive and intransitive verbs:

He is going to make her buy the tickets.

彼は彼女にチケットを買わせる。

The boss made Kudo-san write the report.

上司は工藤さんにレポートを書かせました。

My dad let my older brother drive the car.

父は兄に車を運転させた。

Let's make them wait.

彼らを待たせよう。

The teacher didn't let her go home.

先生は彼女を帰らせなかった。

Please let me go by airplane.

(私を)飛行機で行かせてください。

“Making” and “letting” can also be expressed in the passive form. This is done by changing 「(s)a + せる」 to 「(s)a + せられる」. The rules for using this in a sentence are the same as for other passive verbs, with the subject becoming the person who is made or allowed to perform the action, and 「に」 marking the *origin* of that force or permission. The following examples demonstrate this:

I was made to eat natto by my host family.

私はホストファミリーに納豆を食べさせられた。

I was allowed to meet the prime minister.

(私は)総理大臣に会わせられました。

## 12.5.22 I have a feeling... - ～気がする

The expression 「～気がする」 can be added after an independent clause to describe something that you have feeling may be true, but are not sure of. This will often be preceded by 「ような」 to become 「～ような気がする」, which adds an extra element of uncertainty to the expression. Here are some examples:

I have a feeling it was on the table.

テーブルにあった<sup>き</sup>気がする。

I have a feeling it would be better not to do that.

それをしない方がいい<sup>ほう</sup>気がする。

I have a feeling he won't be able to come.

彼は来れない<sup>こ</sup>ような気がする。

## 12.5.23 No choice but to... - するしかない

### New vocabulary

to give up

<sup>あきら</sup>  
諦める

As explained in Chapter 11.1, the particle 「しか」 can be placed after a noun phrase and followed by a verb in the negative form to mean “only”. This particle can also be used after verbs in the dictionary form, together with the word 「ない/ありません」 to say, “We have no choice but to...”. Such sentences are formed like so:

[verb in dictionary form] + しかない/ありません

Here are some examples:

We have no choice but to wait until tomorrow

(私たちは)明日<sup>あした</sup>まで<sup>ま</sup>待つしかありません。

It was becoming dark, so I had no choice but to go home

暗<sup>くら</sup>くなっていたから、帰<sup>かえ</sup>るしかなかった。

You have no choice but to buy a new one

(あなたは)新<sup>あた</sup>しいのを<sup>か</sup>買うしかありません。

Do we have no choice but to give up?

<sup>あきら</sup>  
諦めるしかないの？

As these examples show, the timing of the unavoidable action is described by changing the tense of the final verb 「ある」 accordingly.

## 12.5.24 Turning adjectives into nouns - ～さ

### New vocabulary

to appreciate, to thank	<small>かんしゃ</small> 感謝する
kind	<small>やさ</small> 優しい
to put up with	<small>た</small> 耐える
to be surprised	びっくりする

Most English adjectives can be converted into nouns with a similar meaning. For many of them, this is done by adding “ness” to the end of the word. For example, the adjective “kind” can be converted into the noun “kindness”, which can then be used like any other noun. Japanese adjectives can be similarly converted into nouns by replacing either 「い」 (for い-adjectives) or 「な」 (for な-adjectives) with 「さ」. Here are some examples:

Adjective (English)	Adjective (Japanese)	Noun (E)	Noun (J)
kind	<small>やさ</small> 優しい	kindness	<small>やさ</small> 優しさ
cold	<small>さむ</small> 寒い	coldness	<small>さむ</small> 寒さ
hot	<small>あつ</small> 暑い	heat	<small>あつ</small> 暑さ
quiet	<small>しず</small> 静か (な)	quietness	<small>しず</small> 静かさ
pretty/clean	きれい (な)	prettiness/cleanliness	きれいさ

The new words formed by adding 「さ」 can then be used in a sentence like other nouns. Here are some examples:

I appreciate your kindness.

あなたの<sup>やさ</sup>優<sup>かんしゃ</sup>しさに感謝します。

I can't put up with this heat any more.

この<sup>あつ</sup>暑<sup>た</sup>さはもう耐えられない。

I was surprised by the cleanliness of his room.

彼の<sup>へや</sup>部屋の<sup>きれい</sup>きれいさにびっくりした。



## Appendix 1

### Understanding verb tenses in noun phrases

There is an important difference between how Japanese and English treat verbs in noun phrases. Consider the following sentences:

When Yoshi **arrived** in Tokyo, he went to the hotel.

よしは東京<sup>とうきょう</sup>に着<sup>つ</sup>いたとき、ホテル<sup>い</sup>に行きました。

When Yoshi **arrives** in Osaka, please call me.

よしが大<sup>おお</sup>阪<sup>さか</sup>に着<sup>つ</sup>いたとき、(私<sup>でん</sup>に)電話<sup>わ</sup>してください。

In the first example, the words “arrive” and 「着く」 are in the past tense in both English and Japanese. In the second example, however, “arrive” is in the present tense, but the word 「着く」 is in the past tense. The reason for this is because the timing that relates to verbs in conditional clauses and noun phrases is different in each language.

In English, the important piece of timing information is the timing of the action *relative to the present moment*. If the action took place in the past, the past tense is used. If the action will take place in the future, the present tense is usually used. It may seem odd that the present tense is used for future actions, but this is just one of the quirks of the English language, and is the reason that many non-native English speakers would mistakenly express the second sentence above as, “When Yoshi will arrive in Tokyo, please call me”.

Regardless, in Japanese, the important piece of timing information is the timing of the action *relative to the main verb* in the sentence. In the first example, the main action is the act of going to the hotel. Since Yoshi’s arrival in Tokyo happened before he went to the hotel, from the perspective of the main action, his arrival occurred in the past, so the past tense is used. Similarly, in the second example, relative to the time that the person should call “me”, Yoshi will have already arrived in Osaka. The act of arriving will be in the past relative to that point in time, so the past tense is used.

This difference in perspective applies to noun phrases of all types, and all verb tenses. Here is an example from Chapter 10.4, slightly modified for the sake of comparison:

I saw that he **was eating** sushi.

(私<sup>は</sup>)彼<sup>が</sup>がすし<sup>を</sup>を食<sup>た</sup>べている<sup>の</sup>を<sup>み</sup>ました。

In this case, the English sentence uses the past continuous tense for “eat”, but in Japanese, 「<sup>た</sup>食べる」 is expressed in the present continuous tense. This is because ‘he’ was in the process of eating sushi at the time that ‘I’ saw him.

A more clear example that shows these different perspectives is when using the words 「<sup>まえ</sup>前」 and 「<sup>あと</sup>後」 to say “before” and “after”. Consider these sentences from Chapter 12.5.15:

Before I left the house, I hung out the laundry.

家を出る<sup>で</sup>前<sup>まえ</sup>に、洗濯物<sup>せんたくもの</sup>を干<sup>ほ</sup>しておきました。

After I have spoken with her, I will send you the details via email.

彼女と話<sup>はな</sup>した後<sup>あと</sup>に、詳細<sup>しょうさい</sup>をメールで (あなたに) 送<sup>おく</sup>ります。

In the first example, both actions described in the sentence occurred in the past, but because the word 「<sup>まえ</sup>前」 is used to form a noun phrase describing when ‘I’ left the house, the verb in that noun phrase - 「<sup>で</sup>出る」 - needs to be expressed from the perspective of main verb in the sentence. At the time that ‘I’ hung out the laundry, the act of leaving the house was in the future, so 「<sup>で</sup>出る」 needs to be expressed in the present/future tense.

The opposite situation occurs in the second example. The overall sentence refers to the future, but at the time that the main verb in the sentence - 「<sup>おく</sup>送ります」 - takes place, the act of speaking with “her” will be in the past. The verb 「<sup>はな</sup>話す」 should therefore be expressed in the past tense.

Another example is this one from Chapter 12.5.7, where the past tense is used even though the action being referred to is in the present or future:

It would be better to wait here than to go inside.

中<sup>なか</sup>に入るより、ここ<sup>こ</sup>で待<sup>ま</sup>った方<sup>ほう</sup>がいいです。

This is a bit trickier to make sense of, but essentially, the main verb here is 「です」, and this is used to describe the act of ‘waiting here’ as good (「いい」). The timing that this description applies to is actually a hypothetical future, where we are looking back and evaluating the outcome of having waited. At that hypothetical future time, the act of waiting is in the past, so the past tense is used for that verb.

By contrast, the act of ‘going inside’ will not have occurred at that future time. Instead, it will be in a perpetual state of non-completion, not occurring in the past, present or future. For this reason, the dictionary form is used to refer to the act of ‘going inside’ in general terms.

The same reasoning can be applied to why the negative present/future tense is used when a negative verb appears before 「方」<sup>ほう</sup>, such as in this example, also from Chapter 12.5.7:

This smells strange, so I think it would be better not to eat it.

これは変な匂い<sup>へんにお</sup>がするから、**食べない方**<sup>たほう</sup>がいい<sup>おも</sup>と思います。

Here, too, the act of ‘not eating’ does not occur at any time in the past, present or future. It is therefore described in general terms, which is done using the negative of the dictionary form.

In summary, the tense used for verbs that appear within noun phrases is sometimes different in English and Japanese because the perspective that applies to these actions is different. While in English we almost always talk about things from the perspective of the present, in Japanese sentences, verbs that appear within noun phrases should be expressed from the perspective of the main action in that sentence.



## Appendix 2

### Verb dictionary (English - Japanese)

This dictionary contains all of the Japanese verbs that appear in this book. Japanese verbs are presented in their dictionary form (informal present tense) and in the polite present tense to assist with verb type identification. Verbs that are part of a transitive/intransitive verb pair (refer to Chapter 8.7) are marked with a [t] for transitive and [i] for intransitive.

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
answer	こたえる【答える】	こたえます【答えます】
appear (in a match, on TV etc.)	でる【出る】	でます【出ます】
apply (liquids such as creams, paints etc.)	ぬる【塗る】	ぬります【塗ります】
appreciate	かんしゃする【感謝する】	かんしゃします【感謝します】
arrive	つく【着く】	つきます【着きます】
ascend [i]	あがる【上がる】	あがります【上がります】
ask	きく【聞く】	ききます【聞きます】
be	だ	です
be (living)	いる	います
be (non-living)	ある	あります
be audible	きこえる【聞こえる】	きこえます【聞こえます】
be born	うまれる【生まれる】	うまれます【生まれます】
be careful	きをつける【気を付ける】	きをつけます【気を付けます】
be found [i]	みつかる【見つかる】	みつかります【見つかります】
be late	おくれる【遅れる】、ちこくする【遅刻する】	おくれます【遅れます】、ちこくします【遅刻します】
be mistaken [i]	まちがう【間違う】	まちがいます【間違います】
be on time	まにあう【間に合う】	まにあいます【間に合います】
be surprised	びっくりする	びっくりします
be visible	みえる【見える】	みえます【見えます】
become	なる	なります
become empty	すく	すきます
begin [i]	はじまる【始まる】	はじめます【始まります】

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
belong	しょぞくする【所属する】	しょぞくします【所属します】
borrow	かりる【借りる】	かります【借ります】
break [i]	こわれる【壊れる】	こわれます【壊れます】
break [t]	こわす【壊す】	こわします【壊します】
bump [t]	ぶつける	ぶつけます
bump into [i]	ぶつかる	ぶつかります
buy	かう【買う】	かいます【買います】
call	でんわする【電話する】	でんわします【電話します】
can do	できる	できます
cancel	キャンセルする	キャンセルします
carry	もつ【持つ】	もちます【持ちます】
carry (from A to B)	はこぶ【運ぶ】	はこびます【運びます】
catch (a cold)	ひく【引く】	ひきます【引きます】
catch (fishing)	つる【釣る】	つります【釣ります】
change	かえる【変える】	かえます【変えます】
charge (a battery)	じゅうでんする【充電する】	じゅうでんします【充電します】
chase	おいかける【追いかける】	おいかけます【追いかけます】
choose	せんたくする【選択する】	せんたくします【選択します】
clean	みがく【磨く】	みがきます【磨きます】
clean	そうじする【掃除する】	そうじします【掃除します】
climb	のぼる【登る】	のぼります【登ります】
close [i]	しまる【閉まる】	しまります【閉まります】
close [t]	しめる【閉める】	しめます【閉めます】
collect [t]	あつめる【集める】	あつめます【集めます】
come	くる【来る】	きます【来ます】
come and pick up	むかえにくる【迎えに来る】	むかえにきます【迎えに来ます】
come on [i]	つく【付く】	つきます【付きます】
complete	かんせいする【完成する】	かんせいします【完成します】
confirm	かくにんする【確認する】	かくにんします【確認します】
cook	りょうりする【料理する】	りょうりします【料理します】
cost [i]	かかる	かかります
dance	おどる【踊る】	おどります【踊ります】
decide [t]	きめる【決める】	きめます【決めます】

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
depart	しゅっぱつする【出発する】	しゅっぱつします【出発します】
die	しぬ【死ぬ】	しにます【死にます】
do	する	します
do	やる	やります
do laundry	せんたくする【洗濯する】	せんたくします【洗濯します】
do mistakenly or completely	しまう	しまいます
do one's best	がんばる【頑張る】	がんばります【頑張ります】
drink	のむ【飲む】	のみます【飲みます】
drive	うんてんする【運転する】	うんてんします【運転します】
drop [t]	おとす【落とす】	おとします【落とします】
dry [i]	かわく	かわきます
eat	たべる【食べる】	たべます【食べます】
email	メールする	メールします
end	おわる【終わる】	おわります【終わります】
enter [i]	はいる【入る】	はいります【入ります】
exceed, be excessive	すぎる	すぎます
exercise	うんどうする【運動する】	うんどうします【運動します】
extinguish [t]	けす【消す】	けします【消します】
fall (rain, snow etc.)	ふる【降る】	ふります【降ります】
fall [i]	おちる【落ちる】	おちます【落ちます】
find [t]	みつける【見つける】	みつけます【見つけます】
finish	おわる【終わる】	おわります【終わります】
fix	なおす【直す】	なおします【直します】
fly	とぶ【飛ぶ】	とびます【飛びます】
forget	わすれる【忘れる】	わすれます【忘れめます】
gather [i]	あつまる【集まる】	あつまります【集まります】
get fat	ふとる【太る】	ふとります【太ります】
get sunburnt	ひやけする【日焼けする】	ひやけします【日焼けします】
get to know	しりあう【知り合う】	しりあいます【知り合います】
give	あげる	あげます
give (towards yourself)	くれる	くれます
give up	あきらめる【諦める】	あきらめます【諦めます】
go	いく【行く】	いきます【行きます】

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
go and pick up	むかえにいく【迎えに行く】	むかえにいきます【迎えに行きます】
go for a walk	さんぽする【散歩する】	さんぽします【散歩します】
go off, go out [i]	きえる【消える】	きえます【消えます】
go shopping	かいものする【買い物する】	かいものします【買い物します】
go up [i]	あがる【上がる】	あがります【上がります】
graduate	そつぎょうする【卒業する】	そつぎょうします【卒業します】
hang out (clothes etc.)	ほす【干す】	ほします【干します】
have	もつ【持つ】	もちます【持ちます】
have (a pet)	かう【飼う】	かいます【飼います】
have (non-living)	ある	あります
hit [i]	ぶつかる	ぶつかります
hit [t]	ぶつける	ぶつけます
hold	もつ【持つ】	もちます【持ちます】
hold (events etc.)	かいさいする【開催する】	かいさいします【開催します】
hurry	いそぐ【急ぐ】	いそぎます【急ぎます】
include	ふくむ【含む】	ふくみます【含みます】
introduce	しょうかいする【紹介する】	しょうかいします【紹介します】
jump	とぶ【飛ぶ】	とびます【飛びます】
kick	ける【蹴る】	けります【蹴ります】
know	しる【知る】	しります【知ります】
learn	まなぶ【学ぶ】	まなびます【学びます】
leave [i]	でる【出る】	でます【出ます】
lend	かす【貸す】	かします【貸します】
listen	きく【聞く】	ききます【聞きます】
live (reside)	すむ【住む】	すみます【住みます】
lose	まける【負ける】	まけます【負けます】
lose weight	やせる【痩せる】	やせます【痩せます】
love	あいする【愛する】	あいします【愛します】
make	つくる【作る】	つくります【作ります】
make a mistake [t]	まちがえる【間違える】	まちがえます【間違えます】
make a phone call	でんわする【電話する】	でんわします【電話します】
make a reservation	よやくする【予約する】	よやくします【予約します】
marry	けっこんする【結婚する】	けっこんします【結婚します】

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
meet	あう【会う】	あいます【会います】
meet (for the first time)	であう【出会う】	であいます【出会います】
mess around	あそぶ【遊ぶ】	あそびます【遊びます】
move [i]	うごく【動く】	うごきます【動きます】
move [t]	うごかす【動かす】	うごかします【動かします】
need	いる【要る】	いります【要ります】
open [i]	あく【開く】	あきます【開きます】
open [t]	あける【開ける】	あけます【開けます】
order	ちゅうもんする【注文する】	ちゅうもんします【注文します】
oversleep, sleep in	ねぼうする【寝坊する】	ねぼうします【寝坊します】
own	もつ【持つ】	もちます【持ちます】
pass (a test)	ごうかくする【合格する】	ごうかくします【合格します】
pass, hand over (something)	わたす【渡す】	わたします【渡します】
pay	はらう【払う】	はらいます【払います】
pick up	とる【取る】	とります【取ります】
place (an object)	おく【置く】	おきます【置きます】
place an order	ちゅうもんする【注文する】	ちゅうもんします【注文します】
play (a stringed instrument)	ひく【弾く】	ひきます【弾きます】
play football	フットボールする	フットボールします
play, mess around	あそぶ【遊ぶ】	あそびます【遊びます】
practice	れんしゅうする【練習する】	れんしゅうします【練習します】
put (an object) on	おく【置く】	おきます【置きます】
put in [t]	いれる【入れる】	いれます【入れます】
put on (liquids such as creams, paints etc.)	ぬる【塗る】	ぬります【塗ります】
put on (lower body)	はく【履く】	はきます【履きます】
put on (upper body)	きる【着る】	きます【着ます】
put on weight	ふとる【太る】	ふとります【太ります】
put out [t]	だす【出す】	だします【出します】
put up with	たえる【耐える】	たえます【耐えます】
quit	やめる【辞める】	やめます【辞めます】
raise [t]	あげる【上げる】	あげます【上げます】
read	よむ【読む】	よみます【読みます】

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
receive	もらう	もらいます
remember	おぼえる【覚える】	おぼえます【覚えます】
renew	こうしんする【更新する】	こうしんします【更新します】
reply	へんじする【返事する】	へんじします【返事します】
respect	そんけいする【尊敬する】	そんけいします【尊敬します】
restart (a machine)	さいきどうする【再起動する】	さいきどうします【再起動します】
return (home) [i]	かえる【帰る】	かえります【帰ります】
return (something) [t]	かえす【返す】	かえします【返します】
ride	のる【乗る】	のります【乗ります】
ring	なる【鳴る】	なります【鳴ります】
run	はしる【走る】	はしります【走ります】
save (money)	ためる【貯める】	ためます【貯めます】
save money	ちょきんする【貯金する】	ちょきんします【貯金します】
say	いう【言う】	いいます【言います】
search	さがす【探す】	さがします【探します】
see (spot, notice)	みかける【見かける】	みかけます【見かけます】
sell	うる【売る】	うります【売ります】
send	おくる【送る】	おくります【送ります】
send email	メールする	メールします
show	みせる【見せる】	みせます【見せます】
shut [t]	しめる【閉める】	しめます【閉めます】
sit	すわる【座る】	すわります【座ります】
ski	スキーする	スキーします
sleep	ねる【寝る】	ねます【寝ます】
smell (emit a smell)	においがする【匂いがする】	においがします【匂いがします】
speak	はなす【話す】	はなします【話します】
spend (money, time) [t]	かける	かけます
spot (see)	みかける【見かける】	みかけます【見かけます】
stand (up)	たつ【立つ】	たちます【立ちます】
start [i]	はじまる【始まる】	はじまります【始まります】
stay (at accommodation)	とまる【泊まる】	とまります【泊まります】
stop	やめる	やめます
study	べんきょうする【勉強する】	べんきょうします【勉強します】

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
swim	およぐ【泳ぐ】	およぎます【泳ぎます】
take	とる【取る】	とります【取ります】
take (a person/animal)	つれる【連れる】	つれます【連れめます】
take (a photograph/video)	とる【撮る】	とります【撮ります】
take (a shower)	あびる【浴びる】	あびます【浴びます】
take (money, time) [i]	かかる	かかります
take (money, time) [t]	かける	かけます
take off (clothes)	ぬぐ【脱ぐ】	ぬぎます【脱ぎます】
take out [t]	だす【出す】	だします【出します】
talk	はなす【話す】	はなします【話します】
teach	おしえる【教える】	おしえます【教えます】
tell	おしえる【教える】	おしえます【教えます】
thank	かんしゃする【感謝する】	かんしゃします【感謝します】
there is (living)	いる	います
there is (non-living)	ある	あります
think (opinion)	おもう【思う】	おもいます【思います】
throw out	すてる【捨てる】	すてます【捨てます】
touch	さわる【触る】	さわります【触ります】
travel	りょこうする【旅行する】	りょこうします【旅行します】
trust	しんらいする【信頼する】	しんらいします【信頼します】
turn off [t]	けす【消す】	けします【消します】
turn on [t]	つける【付ける】	つけます【付けます】
understand	わかる	わかります
use	つかう【使う】	つかいます【使います】
visit	ほうもんする【訪問する】	ほうもんします【訪問します】
wait	まつ【待つ】	まちます【待ちます】
wake up	おきる【起きる】	おきます【起きます】
walk	あるく【歩く】	あるきます【歩きます】
wash	あらう【洗う】	あらいます【洗います】
watch	みる【見る】	みます【見ます】
wear (lower body)	はく【履く】	はきます【履きます】
wear (upper body)	きる【着る】	きます【着ます】
win	かつ【勝つ】	かちます【勝ちます】

English	Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense
withdraw	おろす【下す】	おろします【下します】
work	はたらく【働く】	はたらきます【働きます】
work	しごとする【仕事する】	しごとします【仕事します】
work hard	がんばる【頑張る】	がんばります【頑張ります】
write	かく【書く】	かきます【書きます】

## Appendix 3

### Verb dictionary (Japanese - English)

This dictionary contains all of the Japanese verbs that appear in this book. Japanese verbs are presented in their dictionary form (informal present tense) and in the polite present tense to assist with verb type identification. Verbs that are part of a transitive/intransitive verb pair (refer to Chapter 8.7) are marked with a [t] for transitive and [i] for intransitive.

Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense	English
<b>あ</b>		
あいする【愛する】	あいします【愛します】	love
あう【会う】	あいます【会います】	meet
あがる【上がる】	あがります【上がります】	ascend, go up [i]
あきらめる【諦める】	あきらめます【諦めます】	give up
あく【開く】	あきます【開きます】	open [i]
あげる	あげます	give
あげる【上げる】	あげます【上げます】	raise [t]
あける【開ける】	あけます【開けます】	open [t]
あそぶ【遊ぶ】	あそびます【遊びます】	play, mess around
あつまる【集まる】	あつまります【集まります】	gather [i]
あつめる【集める】	あつめます【集めます】	collect [t]
あびる【浴びる】	あびます【浴びます】	take (a shower)
あらう【洗う】	あらいます【洗います】	wash
ある	あります	be, there is, have (non-living)
あるく【歩く】	あるきます【歩きます】	walk
いう【言う】	いいます【言います】	say
いく【行く】	いきます【行きます】	go
いそぐ【急ぐ】	いそぎます【急ぎます】	hurry
いる	います	be, there is (living)
いる【要る】	いります【要ります】	need
いれる【入れる】	いれます【入れます】	put in [t]
うごかす【動かす】	うごかします【動かします】	move [t]
うごく【動く】	うごきます【動きます】	move [i]

Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense	English
うまれる【生まれる】	うまれます【生まれます】	be born
うる【売る】	うります【売ります】	sell
うんてんする【運転する】	うんてんします【運転します】	drive
うんどうする【運動する】	うんどうします【運動します】	exercise
おいかける【追いかける】	おいかけます【追いかけます】	chase
おきる【起きる】	おきます【起きます】	wake up
おく【置く】	おきます【置きます】	place, put (an object) on
おくる【送る】	おくります【送ります】	send
おくれる【遅れる】	おくれます【遅れます】	be late
おしえる【教える】	おしえます【教えます】	teach, tell
おちる【落ちる】	おちます【落ちます】	fall [i]
おとす【落とす】	おとします【落とします】	drop [t]
おどる【踊る】	おどります【踊ります】	dance
おぼえる【覚える】	おぼえます【覚えます】	remember
おもう【思う】	おもいます【思います】	think (opinion)
およぐ【泳ぐ】	およぎます【泳ぎます】	swim
おろす【下す】	おろします【下します】	withdraw
おわる【終わる】	おわります【終わります】	end, finish
<b>か</b>		
かいさいする【開催する】	かいさいします【開催します】	hold (events etc.)
かいものする【買い物する】	かいものします【買い物をします】	go shopping
かう【買う】	かいます【買います】	buy
かう【飼う】	かいます【飼います】	have (a pet)
かえす【返す】	かえします【返します】	return (something) [t]
かえる【変える】	かえます【変えます】	change
かえる【帰る】	かえります【帰ります】	return (home) [i]
かかる	かかります	take (money, time), cost [i]
かく【書く】	かきます【書きます】	write
かくにんする【確認する】	かくにんします【確認します】	confirm
かける	かけます	spend, take (money, time) [t]
かす【貸す】	かします【貸します】	lend
かつ【勝つ】	かちます【勝ちます】	win
かりる【借りる】	かります【借ります】	borrow
かわく	かわきます	dry [i]

Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense	English
かんしゃする【感謝する】	かんしゃします【感謝します】	appreciate, thank
かんせいする【完成する】	かんせいします【完成します】	complete
がんばる【頑張る】	がんばります【頑張ります】	do one's best, work hard
きえる【消える】	きえます【消えます】	go off, go out [i]
きく【聞く】	ききます【聞きます】	listen, ask
きこえる【聞こえる】	きこえます【聞こえます】	be audible
きめる【決める】	きめます【決めます】	decide [t]
キャンセルする	キャンセルします	cancel
きる【着る】	きます【着ます】	wear, put on (upper body)
きをつける【気を付ける】	きをつけます【気を付けます】	be careful
くる【来る】	きます【来ます】	come
くれる	くれます	give (towards yourself)
けす【消す】	けします【消します】	turn off, extinguish [t]
けっこんする【結婚する】	けっこんします【結婚します】	marry
ける【蹴る】	けります【蹴ります】	kick
ごうかくする【合格する】	ごうかくします【合格します】	pass (a test)
こうしんする【更新する】	こうしんします【更新します】	renew
こたえる【答える】	こたえます【答えます】	answer
こわす【壊す】	こわします【壊します】	break [t]
こわれる【壊れる】	こわれます【壊れます】	break [i]
<b>さ</b>		
さいきどうする【再起動する】	さいきどうします【再起動します】	restart (a machine)
さがす【探す】	さがします【探します】	search
さわる【触る】	さわります【触ります】	touch
さんぽする【散歩する】	さんぽします【散歩します】	go for a walk
しごとする【仕事する】	しごとします【仕事します】	work
しぬ【死ぬ】	しにます【死にます】	die
しまう	しまいます	do mistakenly or completely
しまる【閉まる】	しまります【閉まります】	close (I)
しめる【閉める】	しめます【閉めます】	close, shut [t]
じゅうでんする【充電する】	じゅうでんします【充電します】	charge (a battery)
しゅっぱつする【出発する】	しゅっぱつします【出発します】	depart
しょうかいする【紹介する】	しょうかいします【紹介します】	introduce

Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense	English
しょぞくする【所属する】	しょぞくします【所属します】	belong
しりあう【知り合う】	しりあいます【知り合います】	get to know
しる【知る】	しります【知ります】	know
しんらいする【信頼する】	しんらいします【信頼します】	trust
スキーする	スキーします	ski
すぎる	すぎます	exceed, be excessive
すく	すきます	become empty
すてる【捨てる】	すてます【捨てます】	throw out
すむ【住む】	すみます【住みます】	live (reside)
する	します	do
すわる【座る】	すわります【座ります】	sit
せんたくする【洗濯する】	せんたくします【洗濯します】	do laundry
せんたくする【選択する】	せんたくします【選択します】	choose
そうじする【掃除する】	そうじします【掃除します】	clean
そつぎょうする【卒業する】	そつぎょうします【卒業します】	graduate
そんけいする【尊敬する】	そんけいします【尊敬します】	respect
<b>た</b>		
だ	です	be
たえる【耐える】	たえます【耐えます】	put up with
だす【出す】	だします【出します】	put out, take out [t]
たつ【立つ】	たちます【立ちます】	stand (up)
たべる【食べる】	たべます【食べます】	eat
ためる【貯める】	ためます【貯めます】	save (money)
ちこくする【遅刻する】	ちこくします【遅刻します】	be late
ちゅうもんする【注文する】	ちゅうもんします【注文します】	order, place an order
ちょきんする【貯金する】	ちょきんします【貯金します】	to save money
つかう【使う】	つかいます【使います】	use
つく【付く】	つきます【付きます】	come on [i]
つく【着く】	つきます【着きます】	arrive
つくる【作る】	つくります【作ります】	make
つける【付ける】	つけます【付けます】	turn on [t]
つる【釣る】	つります【釣ります】	catch (fishing)
つれる【連れる】	つれます【連れま	take (a person/animal)

Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense	English
であう【出会う】	であいます【出会います】	meet (for the first time)
できる	できます	can do
でる【出る】	でます【出ます】	leave [i], appear (in a match, on TV etc.)
でんわする【電話する】	でんわします【電話します】	call, make a phone call
とぶ【飛ぶ】	とびます【飛びます】	jump, fly
とまる【泊まる】	とまります【泊まります】	stay (at accommodation)
とる【取る】	とります【取ります】	take, pick up
とる【撮る】	とります【撮ります】	take (a photograph/video)
<b>な</b>		
ない	ありません	[Negative of ある]
なおす【直す】	なおします【直します】	fix
なる	なります	become
なる【鳴る】	なります【鳴ります】	ring
においがする【匂いがする】	においがします【匂いがします】	smell (emit a smell)
ぬぐ【脱ぐ】	ぬぎます【脱ぎます】	take off (clothes)
ぬる【塗る】	ぬります【塗ります】	apply, put on (liquids such as creams, paints etc.)
ねぼうする【寝坊する】	ねぼうします【寝坊します】	oversleep, sleep in
ねる【寝る】	ねます【寝ます】	sleep
のぼる【登る】	のぼります【登ります】	climb
のむ【飲む】	のみます【飲みます】	drink
のる【乗る】	のります【乗ります】	ride
<b>は</b>		
はいる【入る】	はいります【入ります】	enter [i]
はく【履く】	はきます【履きます】	wear, put on (lower body)
はこぶ【運ぶ】	はこびます【運びます】	carry (from A to B)
はじまる【始まる】	はじまります【始まります】	begin, start [i]
はしる【走る】	はしります【走ります】	run
はたらく【働く】	はたらきます【働きます】	work
はなす【話す】	はなします【話します】	speak, talk
はらう【払う】	はらいます【払います】	pay
ひく【引く】	ひきます【引きます】	catch (a cold)
ひく【弾く】	ひきます【弾きます】	play (a stringed instrument)

Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense	English
びっくりする	びっくりします	be surprised
ひやけする【日焼けする】	ひやけします【日焼けします】	get sunburnt
ふくむ【含む】	ふくみます【含みます】	include
ぶつかる	ぶつかります	hit, bump into [i]
ぶつける	ぶつけます	hit, bump [t]
フットボールする	フットボールします	play football
ふとる【太る】	ふとります【太ります】	put on weight, get fat
ふる【降る】	ふります【降ります】	fall (rain, snow etc.)
べんきょうする【勉強する】	べんきょうします【勉強します】	study
へんじする【返事する】	へんじします【返事します】	reply
ほうもんする【訪問する】	ほうもんします【訪問します】	visit
ほす【干す】	ほします【干します】	hang out (clothes etc.)
<b>ま</b>		
まける【負ける】	まけます【負けます】	lose
まちがう【間違う】	まちがいます【間違えます】	be mistaken [i]
まちがえる【間違える】	まちがえます【間違えます】	make a mistake [t]
まつ【待つ】	まちます【待ちます】	wait
まなぶ【学ぶ】	まなびます【学びます】	learn
まにあう【間に合う】	まにあいます【間に合います】	be on time
みえる【見える】	みえます【見えます】	be visible
みがく【磨く】	みがきます【磨きます】	clean
みかける【見かける】	みかけます【見かけます】	spot, see
みせる【見せる】	みせます【見せます】	to show
みつかる【見つかる】	みつかります【見つかります】	be found [i]
みつける【見つける】	みつけます【見つけます】	find [t]
みる【見る】	みます【見ます】	watch
むかえにいく【迎えに行く】	むかえにいきます【迎えに行きます】	go and pick up
むかえにくる【迎えに来る】	むかえにきます【迎えに来ます】	come and pick up
メールする	メールします	email, send email
もつ【持つ】	もちます【持ちます】	hold, carry, own, have
もらう	もらいます	receive
<b>や</b>		
やせる【痩せる】	やせます【痩せます】	lose weight

Dictionary form (informal present tense)	Polite present tense	English
やめる	やめます	stop
やめる【辞める】	やめます【辞めます】	quit
やる	やります	do
よむ【読む】	よみます【読みます】	read
よやくする【予約する】	よやくします【予約します】	make a reservation
<b>ら</b>		
りょうりする【料理する】	りょうりします【料理します】	cook
りょこうする【旅行する】	りょこうします【旅行します】	travel
れんしゅうする【練習する】	れんしゅうします【練習します】	practice
<b>わ</b>		
わかる	わかります	understand
わすれる【忘れる】	わすれます【忘れます】	forget
わたす【渡す】	わたします【渡します】	pass, hand over (something)



## Appendix 4

### Non-verb dictionary (English - Japanese)

This dictionary contains all of the vocabulary that appears in this book, except verbs.  
For an English-Japanese verb dictionary, see Appendix 2.

English	Japanese
a bit	ちょっと
a bit more	もうちょっと
a lot	たくさん
about...	〜について
above	うえ【上】
abroad	かいがい【海外】
address	じゅうしょ【住所】
advice	アドバイス
Africa	アフリカ
after	あと【後】
afternoon	ごご【午後】
again	また
air conditioner	エアコン
airplane	ひこうき【飛行機】
airport	くうこう【空港】
alarm	アラーム
alcohol	おさけ【お酒】
all of them	どれも
already	もう
always	いつも
America	アメリカ
amusement park	ゆうえんち【遊園地】
any time	いつでも
anybody	だれでも【誰でも】
anything	なんでも【何でも】
anywhere	どこでも

English	Japanese
apple	りんご
April	しがつ【4月／四月】
article	きじ【記事】
ATM	エイティーエム 【ATM】
August	はちがつ【八月】
Australia	オーストラリア
autumn	あき【秋】
awful (taste)	まずい
baby	あかちゃん【赤ちゃん】
bacon	ベーコン
bad	わるい【悪い】
bad at	へた【下手】
bag	カバン
ball	ボール
bank	ぎんこう【銀行】
baseball	やきゅう【野球】
basketball	バスケットボール
bathroom	ふろば【風呂場】
battery	でんち【電池】
beach	うみ【海】
beautiful	うつくしい【美しい】
bed	ベッド
beer	ビール
before	まえ【前】
beginning	はじめ【初め】

English	Japanese
behind	うしろ【後ろ】
below	した【下】
beside	となり
bicycle	じてんしゃ【自転車】
big	おおきい【大きい】
birthday	たんじょうび【誕生日】
black	くろい【黒い】
blue	あおい【青い】
book	ほん【本】
bored	ひま【暇】
boring	つまらない
boss	じょうし【上司】
box	はこ【箱】
boy	おとこのこ【男の子】
boyfriend	かれし【彼氏】
bread	パン
break	やすみ【休み】
breakfast	あさごはん【朝ご飯】
brothers, siblings	きょうだい【兄弟】
building	たてもの【建物】
bullet train	しんかんせん【新幹線】
bus	バス
bus stop	バスてい【バス停】
busy	いそがしい【忙しい】
but	でも、けど、けれども
cake	ケーキ
camera	カメラ
candle	ろうそく
candy	おかし【お菓子】
capital city	しゅと【首都】
car	くるま【車】
cash	げんきん【現金】

English	Japanese
cat	ねこ【猫】
chair	いす【椅子】
cheap	やすい【安い】
cheese	チーズ
child	こども【子供】
child (someone else's)	おこさん【お子さん】
China	ちゅうごく【中国】
Chinese (language)	ちゅうごくご【中国語】
chocolate	チョコレート
choice	せんたく【選択】
chopsticks	おはし【お箸】
cinema	えいがかん【映画館】
city	とし【都市】
class	じゅぎょう【授業】
clean	きれい
closet	クローゼット
clothes	ふく【服】
coffee	コーヒー
cola	コーラ
cold	さむい【寒い】
cold (illness)	かぜ【風邪】
colleagues	どうりょう【同僚】
Coming of Age Day	せいじんのひ【成人の日】
company	かいしゃ【会社】
complicated	ふくざつ【複雑】
computer	コンピュータ
concert	ライブ
contract	けいやく【契約】
convenience store	コンビニ
convenient	べんり【便利】
cooking	りょうり【料理】
cool	かっこいい

English	Japanese
correct	ただしい【正しい】
couch	ソファ
counters	
- age	さい【歳】
- animals	ひき【匹】
- days	かかん、にちかん【日間】
- day of the month	か、にち【日】
- hour of the day	じ【時】
- hours	じかん【時間】
- items of clothing	ちゃく【着】
- minutes	ふん(かん)【分(間)】
- months	かげつ(かん)【か月(間)】
- people	にん【人】
- seconds	びよう(かん)【秒(間)】
- things (general)	こ【個】
- things (general, small)	つ
- times (number of)	かい【回】
- weeks	しゅうかん【週間】
- years	ねん(かん)【年(間)】
- yen	えん【円】
country	くに【国】
couple (romantic)	カップル
course	コース
cracker	クラッカー
cramped	せまい【狭い】
culture	ぶんか【文化】
cup	コップ
cute	かわいい【可愛い】
dad	ちち【父】
dangerous	あぶない【危ない】

English	Japanese
dark	くらい【暗い】
date (romantic)	デート
daughter (someone else's)	おじょうさん【お嬢さん】
daughter (your own)	むすめ【娘】
day	ひ【日】
day after tomorrow	あさって【明後日】
December	じゅうにがつ【十二月】
definitely	ぜったいに【絶対に】
delicious	おいしい
dentist	はいしゃ【歯医者】
desk	つくえ【机】
details	しょうさい【詳細】
difficult	むずかしい【難しい】
dinner	ばんごはん【晩ご飯】
dirty	きたない【汚い】
dishes	しょっき【食器】
doctor	いしゃ【医者】
dog	いぬ【犬】
dollars	ドル
donut(s)	ドーナツ
door	ドア
dress	ワンピース
early	はやい【早い】
easy	かんたん【簡単】
economic conditions	けいき【景気】
eight	はち【八】
election	せんきょ【選挙】
elephant	ゾウ
elevator	エレベータ
email	メール
end	おわり【終わり】
English (language)	えいご【英語】

English	Japanese
enough	じゅうぶん【十分】
every day	まいにち【毎日】
every evening	まいばん【毎晩】
every month	まいつき【毎月】
every morning	まいあさ【毎朝】
every week	まいしゅう【毎週】
every weekend	まいしゅうまつ【毎週末】
every year	まいとし【毎年】
every... (period of time)	〜ごとに
everybody	だれも【誰も】
everyone	みんな、みなさん【皆さん】
everything	すべて
everything	ぜんぶ【全部】
everywhere	どこも
exam	しけん【試験】
excuse me	すみません
expensive	たかい【高い】
explanation	せつめい【説明】
extremely, very very (Kansai region)	めっちゃ
extremely, very very (Kanto region)	ちょう【超】
family (one's own)	かぞく【家族】
family (someone else's)	ごかぞく【ご家族】
famous	ゆうめい【有名】
fast	はやい【速い】
father (someone else's)	おとうさん【お父さん】
February	にがつ【二月】
ferris wheel	かんらんしゃ【観覧車】
festival	まつり【祭り】
fine	だいじょうぶ【大丈夫】

English	Japanese
fine (health-wise)	げんき【元気】
fine (weather)	はれ【晴れ】
first	さいしょ【最初】
fish	さかな【魚】
five	ご【五】
floor	ゆか【床】
food	たべもの【食べ物】
football	フットボール
four	し、 よん【四】
France	フランス
free (unoccupied)	ひま【暇】
free time	ひまなとき【暇なとき】
french fries	ポテト
frequently	ひんばんに【頻繁に】
Friday	きんようび【金曜日】
friend(s)	ともだち【友達】
fruit	くだもの【果物】
fun	たのしい【楽しい】
funny	おもしろい【面白い】
futon	ふとん【布団】
game (a single match)	しあい【試合】
garbage	ごみ
Germany	ドイツ
girl	おんなのこ【女の子】
glasses (eye)	メガネ
go and collect (a person)	むかえにいく【迎えに行く】
golf	ゴルフ
good	いい、 よい【良い】
good (skillful or tasty)	うまい
good at	じょうず【上手】
good evening	こんばんは
good morning	おはようございます

English	Japanese
good night	おやすみなさい
good-looking	かっこいい
goodbye	さようなら
graduation ceremony	そつぎょうしき【卒業式】
grandchild	まご【孫】
grandchild (someone else's)	おまごさん【お孫さん】
grandfather (familiar)	おじいちゃん
grandfather (someone else's)	おじいさん【お祖父さん】
grandfather (your own)	そふ【祖父】
grandmother (someone else's)	おばあさん【お祖母さん】
grandmother (your own)	そぼ【祖母】
green	みどり
grilled meat	やきにく【焼肉】
guitar	ギター
hair	かみのけ【髪の毛】
half	はんぶん【半分】
half past (time)	はん【半】
hamburger	ハンバーガー
hand	て【手】
happy	うれしい【嬉しい】
hat	ぼうし【帽子】
hate	きらい【嫌い】
he	かれ【彼】
head	あたま【頭】
headphones	イヤホン
heavy	おもい【重い】
hello	こんにちは
here	ここ
home	いえ【家】

English	Japanese
home town	じもと【地元】
homework	しゅくだい【宿題】
horrible	ひどい【酷い】
hospital	びょういん【病院】
host family	ホストファミリー
hot	あつい【暑い】
hot dog	ホットドッグ
hotel	ホテル
house	いえ【家】
how	どうやって
how many	いくつ
how much	いくら
HR department	じんじぶ【人事部】
hundred	ひゃく【百】
hundred million	おく【億】
hurts	いたい【痛い】
husband (other person's)	ごしゅじん【ご主人】
husband (your own)	しゅじん【主人】
I	わたし【私】 (see also: わたくし, ぼく, あたし, おれ, うち)
I'm okay, no thank you	けっこう【結構】
ice cream	アイスクリーム
important	たいせつ【大切】
in front	まえ【前】
in that way	そう
in that way (over there)	ああ
in this way	こう
in what way	どう
inconvenient	ふべん【不便】
information	じょうほう【情報】
inside	なか【中】

English	Japanese
instruction manual	せつめいしょ【説明書】
interesting	おもしろい【面白い】
Internet	インターネット、ネット
island	しま【島】
jacket	うわぎ【上着】
January	いちがつ【一月】
Japan	にほん【日本】
Japanese (language)	にほんご【日本語】
Japanese bar/restaurant	いざかや【居酒屋】
Japanese food	わしょく【和食】
Japanese pancake	おこのみやき【お好み焼き】
job	しごと【仕事】
July	しちがつ【七月】
June	ろくがつ【六月】
kanji (Chinese characters)	かんじ【漢字】
karaoke	カラオケ
key	かぎ【鍵】
kilometers	キロ
kind	やさしい【優しい】
kitchen	だいどころ【台所】
lake	みずうみ【湖】
last	さいご【最後】
last month	せんげつ【先月】
last week	せんしゅう【先週】
last weekend	せんしゅうまつ【先週末】
last year	きょねん【去年】
late, slow	おそい【遅い】
later	あとで【後で】
laundry	せんたくもの【洗濯物】
left	ひだり【左】

English	Japanese
left hand side	ひだりがわ【左側】
leg	あし【足】
letter	てがみ【手紙】
library	としょかん【図書館】
light	かるい【軽い】
lights	でんき【電気】
like	すき【好き】
London	ロンドン
loud	うるさい
love	だいすき【大好き】
love	あい【愛】
luggage	にもつ【荷物】
lunch	ひるごはん【昼ご飯】
lunch break	ひるやすみ【昼休み】
magazine	ざっし【雑誌】
mall	モール
man	おとこのひと【男の人】
man, male	おとこ【男】
many	たくさん
marathon	マラソン
March	さんがつ【三月】
match	しあい【試合】
May	ごがつ【五月】
me	わたし【私】 (see also: わたくし, ぼく, あたし, おれ, うち)
meat	にく【肉】
meeting	かいぎ【会議】
middle of the day	ひる【昼】
milk	ミルク、ぎゅうにゅう【牛乳】
minutes	ふん【分】
mobile phone	ケータイ

English	Japanese
model	モデル
mom	はは【母】
Monday	げつようび【月曜日】
money	おかね【お金】
monkey	さる【猿】
month	つき【月】
moon	つき【月】
more	もっと
morning	あさ【朝】
mother	おかあさん【お母さん】
motorbike	バイク
Mount Fuji	ふじさん【富士山】
mountain	やま【山】
mouse	ネズミ
movie	えいが【映画】
movie theatre	えいがかん【映画館】
much	たくさん
museum	はくぶつかん【博物館】
music	おんがく【音楽】
name	なまえ【名前】
national holiday	しゅくじつ【祝日】
natto	なっとう【納豆】
naughty	だめ
necessary	ひつよう【必要】
necklace	ネックレス
never	ぜんぜん【全然】
new	あたらしい【新しい】
news	ニュース
newspaper	しんぶん【新聞】
next	つぎ【次】
next month	らいげつ【来月】
next to	となり

English	Japanese
next week	らいしゅう【来週】
next year	らいねん【来年】
nice to meet you	はじめまして
night	よる【夜】
nine	きゅう【九】
no	いいえ
no	いや
no thank you, I'm okay	けっこう【結構】
nobody	だれも【誰も】
noise	おと【音】
noisy	うるさい
none of them	どれも
not allowed	だめ
not very	あまり
not yet	まだ
nothing	なにも【何も】
November	じゅういちがつ【十一月】
now	いま【今】
nowhere	どこも【どこも】
number	ばんごう【番号】
occasionally	たまに
October	じゅうがつ【十月】
octopus dumpling	たこやき【たこ焼き】
office	オフィス
often, well	よく
okay	だいじょうぶ【大丈夫】
old	ふるい【古い】
older brother	あに【兄】
older brother (someone else's)	おにいさん【お兄さん】
older sister	あね【姉】

English	Japanese
older sister (someone else's)	おねえさん【お姉さん】
Olympics	オリンピック
on top of	うえ【上】
one	いち【一】
one of them	どれか
online	ネットで
order	ちゅうもん【注文】
ouch	いたい【痛い】
outside	そと【外】
over there	あそこ
painting	え【絵】
parents (other person's)	ごりょうしん【ご両親】
parents (your own)	りょうしん【両親】
park	こうえん【公園】
part-time job	アルバイト
particles	じょし【助詞】
party	パーティー
passport	パスポート
pasta	パスタ
pen	ペン
pencil	えんぴつ【鉛筆】
people	ひとたち【人たち】
person	ひと【人】
phone	でんわ【電話】
phone number	でんわばんごう【電話番号】
photograph	しゃしん【写真】
piano	ピアノ
picture	え【絵】
pink	ピンク
pizza	ピザ
place	ばしょ【場所】

English	Japanese
plan	つもり
please	ください
policeman	けいさつかん【警察官】
possible	かのう【可能】
post office	ゆうびんきょく【郵便局】
postcard	はがき
practice	れんしゅう【練習】
present (gift)	プレゼント
pretty	きれい
previous	まえの【前の】
Prime Minister	そうりだいじん【総理大臣】
project	プロジェクト
quiet	しずか【静か】
quite	かなり
rain	あめ【雨】
ramen	ラーメン
rarely	めったに
reason	りゆう【理由】
red	あかい【赤い】
refrigerator	れいぞうこ【冷蔵庫】
remote control	リモコン
rent	やちん【家賃】
report	レポート
reservation	よやく【予約】
restaurant	レストラン
rich	おかねもち【お金持ち】
right	みぎ【右】
road	みち【道】
roof	やね【屋根】
room	へや【部屋】
route, the way	みち【道】

English	Japanese
rubbish	ごみ
sad	かなしい【悲しい】
sake (alcohol)	おさけ【お酒】
salaried employee	サラリーマン
salt	しお【塩】
sandwich	サンドイッチ
sasimi	さしみ【刺身】
Saturday	どうようび【土曜日】
savings	ちょきん【貯金】
scary	こわい【怖い】
scenery	けしき【景色】
school	がっこう【学校】
science	かがく【科学】
scissors	ハサミ
sea	うみ【海】
seafood	シーフード
season	きせつ【季節】
seat	せき【席】
see you later	またね
September	くがつ【九月】
seven	しち、 なな【七】
she	かのじょ【彼女】
shirt	シャツ
shitsumon	しつもん【質問】
shoes	くつ【靴】
shop	みせ【店】
shopping	かいもの【買い物】
should (expectation)	はず
should (obligation)	べき
show (TV/radio)	ばんぐみ【番組】
shower	シャワー
shrine	じんじゃ【神社】

English	Japanese
siblings, brothers	きょうだい【兄弟】
sick	びょうき【病気】
side	がわ【側】
sign	かんばん【看板】
simple	シンプル
six	ろく【六】
size	サイズ
sky	そら【空】
slow, late	おそい【遅い】
small	ちいさい【小さい】
small (cramped)	せまい【狭い】
smartphone	スマホ
smell	におい【匂い】
smelly	くさい【臭い】
snow	ゆき【雪】
soccer	サッカー
sofa	ソファ
somebody	だれか【誰か】
something	なにか【何か】
sometime	いつか
sometimes	ときどき【時々】
somewhere	どこか
son (someone else's)	むすこさん【息子さん】
son (your own)	むすこ【息子】
song	うた【歌】
sorry	ごめんなさい、 ごめん
sound	おと【音】
South Korea	かんこく【韓国】
souvenir	おみやげ【お土産】
spacious	ひろい【広い】
Spanish (language)	スペインご【スペイン語】

English	Japanese
sport	スポーツ
spring	はる【春】
spring break	はるやすみ【春休み】
spy	スパイ
staff	スタッフ
stamp	きって【切手】
station	えき【駅】
steak	ステーキ
steel	てっこう【鉄鋼】
still	まだ
stomach	おなか
store	みせ【店】
straight	まっすぐ
strange	へん【変】
strong	つよい【強い】
student	がくせい【学生】
summer	なつ【夏】
summer vacation	なつやすみ【夏休み】
Sunday	にちようび【日曜日】
sunglasses	サングラス
sunscreen	ひやけどめ【日焼け止め】
supermarket	スーパー
sushi	すし
sweets	おかし【お菓子】
swimming pool	プール
swing (play equipment)	ブランコ
table	テーブル
tall	たかい【高い】
tea	おちゃ【お茶】
teacher	せんせい【先生】
teeth	は【歯】
ten	じゅう【十】

English	Japanese
ten thousand	まん【万】
tennis	テニス
test	テスト
text book	テキスト
thank you	ありがとう
thank you (polite)	ありがとうございます
that	それ
that (over there, polite)	あちら
that (over there)	あれ
that (polite)	そちら
that kind of	そんな
that kind of (over there)	あんな
that x	その
that x (over there)	あの
the day before yesterday	おととい【一昨日】
then, and then	そして
there	そこ
they	かれら【彼ら】
things	もの【物】
this	これ
this (polite)	こちら
this kind of	こんな
this month	こんげつ【今月】
this morning	けさ【今朝】
this week	こんしゅう【今週】
this x	この
this year	ことし【今年】
thousand	せん【千】
three	さん【三】
throat	のど
Thursday	もくようび【木曜日】

English	Japanese
ticket	チケット
time	じかん【時間】
today	きょう【今日】
toilet	トイレ
tomorrow	あした【明日】
tonight	こんや【今夜】
tour	ツアー
tourist	かんこうきやく【観光客】
town	まち【町】
train	でんしゃ【電車】
trash	ごみ
travel	りょこう【旅行】
tree	き【木】
Tuesday	かようび【火曜日】
turn (in a sequence)	ばん【番】
TV	テレビ
two	に【二】
ugly	みにくい【醜い】
umm	あのう、えっと
unacceptable	いけない、いけません
underneath	した【下】
United Kingdom	イギリス
university	だいがく【大学】
us	わたしたち【私たち】
vacation	やすみ【休み】
vegetables	やさい【野菜】
vending machine	じどうはんばいき【自動販売機】
very	とても
very very, extremely (Kansai region)	めっちゃ

English	Japanese
very very, extremely (Kanto region)	ちょう【超】
visa	ビザ
voice	こえ【声】
volleyball	バレー、バレーボール
wallet	さいふ【財布】
want	ほしい【欲しい】
warm	あたたかい【暖かい】
watch (time piece)	とけい【時計】
water	みず【水】
way (route)	みち【道】
we	わたしたち【私たち】
weather	てんき【天気】
Wednesday	すいようび【水曜日】
week	しゅう【週】
weekend	しゅうまつ【週末】
well (health-wise)	げんき【元気】
well, often	よく
what	なん、なに【何】
what day?	なんようび【何曜日】
what kind of	どんな
what month?	なんがつ【何月】
what on earth?	いったいなに【いったい何】
when	いつ
where	どこ
which	どれ
which (polite)	どちら
which x	どの
whichever	どれでも
white	しろい【白い】
who	だれ【誰】

English	Japanese
why	どうして、なんで
wife (someone else's)	おくさん【奥さん】
wife (your own)	つま【妻】
wind	かぜ【風】
window	まど【窓】
wine	ワイン
winter	ふゆ【冬】
woman	おんなのひと【女の人】
woman, female	おんな【女】
work	しごと【仕事】
workplace	しょくば【職場】
world	せかい【世界】
yakisoba	やきそば【焼きそば】
year after next	さらいねん【再来年】
year before last	おとし【一昨年】
years	ねん (かん)【年 (間)】
yellow	きいろい
yen	えん【円】
yes	はい
yesterday	きのう【昨日】
you	あなた
you're welcome	どういたしまして
younger brother (someone else's)	おとうとさん【弟さん】
younger brother (your own)	おとうと【弟】
younger sister (someone else's)	いもうとさん【妹さん】
younger sister (your own)	いもうと【妹】
zoo	どうぶつえん【動物園】

## Appendix 5

### Non-verb dictionary (Japanese - English)

This dictionary contains all of the vocabulary that appears in this book, except verbs.  
For a Japanese-English verb dictionary, see Appendix 3.

Japanese	English
あ	
ああ	in that way (over there)
あい【愛】	love
アイスクリーム	ice cream
あおい【青い】	blue
あかい【赤い】	red
あかちゃん【赤ちゃん】	baby
あき【秋】	autumn
あさ【朝】	morning
あさごはん【朝ご飯】	breakfast
あさって【明後日】	day after tomorrow
あし【足】	leg
あした【明日】	tomorrow
あそこ	over there
あたし	I, me (for women/girls only)
あたたかい【暖かい】	warm
あたま【頭】	head
あたらしい【新しい】	new
あちら	that (over there, polite)
あつい【暑い】	hot
あと【後】	after
あとで【後で】	later
アドバイス	advice
あなた	you
あに【兄】	older brother
あね【姉】	older sister

Japanese	English
あの	that x (over there)
あのう	umm
あぶない【危ない】	dangerous
アフリカ	Africa
あまり	not very
あめ【雨】	rain
アメリカ	America
アラーム	alarm
ありがとう	thank you
ありがとうございます	thank you (polite)
アルバイト	part-time job
あれ	that (over there)
あんな	that kind of (over there)
いい	good
いいえ	no
いえ【家】	house, home
イギリス	United Kingdom
いくつ	how many
いくら	how much
いけない、いけません	unacceptable
いざかや【居酒屋】	Japanese bar/restaurant
いしゃ【医者】	doctor
いす【椅子】	chair
いそがしい【忙しい】	busy
いたい【痛い】	ouch, hurts
いち【一】	one

Japanese	English
いちがつ【1月／一月】	January
いつ	when
いつか	sometime
いったいなに【いったい何】	what on earth?
いつでも	any time
いつも	always
いぬ【犬】	dog
いま【今】	now
いもうと【妹】	younger sister (your own)
いもうとさん【妹さん】	younger sister (someone else's)
いや	no
イヤホン	headphones
インターネット	Internet
うえ【上】	above, on top of
うしろ【後ろ】	behind
うた【歌】	song
うち	I, me (informal, mainly for women/girls)
うつくしい【美しい】	beautiful
うまい	good (skillful or tasty)
うみ【海】	sea, beach
うるさい	loud, noisy
うれしい【嬉しい】	happy
うわぎ【上着】	jacket
え【絵】	painting, picture
エアコン	air conditioner
えいが【映画】	movie
えいがかん【映画館】	cinema, movie theatre
えいご【英語】	English (language)
エイティーエム【ATM】	ATM
えき【駅】	station

Japanese	English
えっと	umm
エレベータ	elevator
えん【円】	yen, counter for yen
えんぴつ【鉛筆】	pencil
オーストラリア	Australia
おいしい	delicious
おおきい【大きい】	big
おかあさん【お母さん】	mother
おかし【お菓子】	candy, sweets
おかね【お金】	money
おかねもち【お金持ち】	rich
おく【億】	hundred million
おくさん【奥さん】	wife (someone else's)
おこさん【お子さん】	child (someone else's)
おこのみやき【お好み焼き】	Japanese pancake
おさけ【お酒】	sake, alcohol
おじいさん【お祖父さん】	grandfather (someone else's)
おじいちゃん	grandfather (familiar)
おじょうさん【お嬢さん】	daughter (someone else's)
おそい【遅い】	slow, late
おちゃ【お茶】	tea
おと【音】	sound, noise
おとうさん【お父さん】	father (someone else's)
おとうと【弟】	younger brother (your own)
おとうとさん【弟さん】	younger brother (someone else's)
おとこ【男】	man, male
おとこのこ【男の子】	boy
おとこのひと【男の人】	man
おととい【一昨日】	the day before yesterday

Japanese	English
おとし【一昨年】	year before last
おなか	stomach
おにいさん【お兄さん】	older brother (someone else's)
おねえさん【お姉さん】	older sister (someone else's)
おばあさん【お祖母さん】	grandmother (someone else's)
おはし【お箸】	chopsticks
おはようございます	good morning
オフィス	office
おまごさん【お孫さん】	grandchild (someone else's)
おみやげ【お土産】	souvenir
おもい【重い】	heavy
おもしろい【面白い】	interesting, funny
おやすみなさい	good night
オリンピック	Olympics
おれ【俺】	I, me (informal, for men/boys only)
おわり【終わり】	end
おながく【音楽】	music
おんな【女】	woman, female
おんなのこ【女の子】	girl
おんなのひと【女の人】	woman
<b>か</b>	
か、にち【日】	counter for days of the month
かい【回】	counter for number of times
かいがい【海外】	abroad
かいぎ【会議】	meeting
かいしゃ【会社】	company
かいもの【買い物】	shopping
かがく【科学】	science

Japanese	English
かかん、にちかん【日間】	counter for number of days
かぎ【鍵】	key
がくせい【学生】	student
かげつ(かん)【か月(間)】	counter for months
かぜ【風】	wind
かぜ【風邪】	a cold (illness)
かぞく【家族】	family (one's own)
かっこいい	cool, good-looking
がっこう【学校】	school
カップル	couple (romantic)
かなしい【悲しい】	sad
かなり	quite
かのう【可能】	possible
かのじょ【彼女】	she
カバン	bag
かみのけ【髪の毛】	hair
カメラ	camera
かようび【火曜日】	Tuesday
カラオケ	karaoke
かるい【軽い】	light
かれ【彼】	he
かれし【彼氏】	boyfriend
かれら【彼ら】	they
がわ【側】	side
かわいい【可愛い】	cute
かんこうきゃく【観光客】	tourist
かんこく【韓国】	South Korea
かんじ【漢字】	kanji (Chinese characters)
かんたん【簡単】	easy
かんばん【看板】	sign
かんらんしゃ【観覧車】	ferris wheel

Japanese	English
き【木】	tree
きいろい	yellow
きじ【記事】	article
きせつ【季節】	season
ギター	guitar
きたない【汚い】	dirty
きって【切手】	stamp
きのう【昨日】	yesterday
きゅう【九】	nine
ぎゅうにゅう【牛乳】	milk
きょう【今日】	today
きょうだい【兄弟】	brothers, siblings
きょねん【去年】	last year
きらい【嫌い】	hate
きれい	pretty, clean
キロ	kilometers
ぎんこう【銀行】	bank
きんようび【金曜日】	Friday
くこう【空港】	airport
くがつ【9月／九月】	September
くさい【臭い】	smelly
ください	please
くだもの【果物】	fruit
くつ【靴】	shoes
くに【国】	country
くらい【暗い】	dark
クラッカー	cracker(s)
くるま【車】	car
クローゼット	closet
くろい【黒い】	black
ケーキ	cake
ケータイ	mobile phone
けいき【景気】	economic conditions
けいさつかん【警察官】	policeman

Japanese	English
けいやく【契約】	contract
けさ【今朝】	this morning
けしき【景色】	scenery
けっこう【結構】	no thank you, I'm okay
げつようび【月曜日】	Monday
けど、けれども	but
げんき【元気】	fine, well (health-wise)
げんきん【現金】	cash
ご【五】	five
こ【個】	counter for general things
コース	course
コーヒー	coffee
コーラ	cola
こう	in this way
こうえん【公園】	park
こえ【声】	voice
ごかぞく【ご家族】	family (someone else's)
ごがつ【5月／五月】	May
ここ	here
ごご【午後】	afternoon
ごしゅじん【ご主人】	husband (other person's)
こちら	this (polite)
コップ	cup
ことし【今年】	this year
～ごとに	every... (period of time)
こども【子供】	child
この	this x
ごみ	garbage, rubbish, trash
ごめんなさい、ごめん	sorry
ごりょうしん【ご両親】	parents (other person's)
ゴルフ	golf
これ	this

Japanese	English
こわい【怖い】	scary
こんげつ【今月】	this month
こんしゅう【今週】	this week
こんな	this kind of
こんにちは	hello
こんばんは	good evening
コンビニ	convenience store
コンピュータ	computer
こんや【今夜】	tonight
<b>さ</b>	
さい【歳】	counter for age
さいご【最後】	last
さいしょ【最初】	first
サイズ	size
さいふ【財布】	wallet
さかな【魚】	fish
さしみ【刺身】	sasimi
サッカー	soccer
ざっし【雑誌】	magazine
さむい【寒い】	cold
さようなら	goodbye
さらいねん【再来年】	year after next
サラリーマン	salaried employee
さる【猿】	monkey
さん【三】	three
さんがつ【3月／三月】	March
サングラス	sunglasses
サンドイッチ	sandwich
し【四】	four
じ【時】	counter for hour of the day
シーフード	seafood
しあい【試合】	game, match
しお【塩】	salt

Japanese	English
しがつ【4月／四月】	April
じかん【時間】	time, counter for hours
しけん【試験】	exam
しごと【仕事】	work, job
しずか【静か】	quiet
した【下】	underneath, below
しち【七】	seven
しちがつ【7月／七月】	July
しつもん【質問】	shitsumon
じてんしゃ【自転車】	bicycle
じどうはんばいき【自動販売機】	vending machine
しま【島】	island
じもと【地元】	home town
しゃしん【写真】	photograph
シャツ	shirt
シャワー	shower
じゅう【十】	ten
しゅう【週】	week
じゅういちがつ【11月／十一月】	November
じゅうがつ【10月／十月】	October
しゅうかん【週間】	counter for weeks
じゅうしょ【住所】	address
じゅうにがつ【12月／十二月】	December
じゅうぶん【十分】	enough
しゅうまつ【週末】	weekend
じゅぎょう【授業】	class
しゅくじつ【祝日】	national holiday
しゅくだい【宿題】	homework
しゅじん【主人】	husband (your own)
しゅと【首都】	capital city
しょうさい【詳細】	details

Japanese	English
じょうし【上司】	boss
じょうず【上手】	good at
じょうほう【情報】	information
しょくば【職場】	workplace
じよし【助詞】	particles
しょっき【食器】	dishes
しろい【白い】	white
しんかんせん【新幹線】	bullet train
じんじぶ【人事部】	HR department
じんじゃ【神社】	shrine
シンプル	simple
しんぶん【新聞】	newspaper
スーパー	supermarket
すいようび【水曜日】	Wednesday
すき【好き】	like
すし	sushi
スタッフ	staff
ステーキ	steak
スパイ	spy
スペインご【スペイン語】	Spanish (language)
すべて	everything
スポーツ	sport
スマホ	smartphone
すみません	excuse me
せいじんのひ【成人の日】	Coming of Age Day
せかい【世界】	world
せき【席】	seat
ぜったいに【絶対に】	definitely
せつめい【説明】	explanation
せつめいしょ【説明書】	instruction manual
せまい【狭い】	cramped, small
せん【千】	thousand

Japanese	English
せんきょ【選挙】	election
せんげつ【先月】	last month
せんしゅう【先週】	last week
せんしゅうまつ【先週末】	last weekend
せんせい【先生】	teacher
ぜんぜん【全然】	never
せんたく【選択】	choice
せんたくもの【洗濯物】	laundry
ぜんぶ【全部】	everything
そう	in that way
ゾウ	elephant
そうりだいじん【総理大臣】	Prime Minister
そこ	there
そして	then, and then
そちら	that (polite)
そつぎょうしき【卒業式】	graduation ceremony
そと【外】	outside
その	that x
そふ【祖父】	grandfather (your own)
ソファ	sofa, couch
そぼ【祖母】	grandmother (your own)
そら【空】	sky
それ	that
そんな	that kind of
<b>た</b>	
だいがく【大学】	university
だいじょうぶ【大丈夫】	okay, fine
だいすき【大好き】	love
たいせつ【大切】	important
だいどころ【台所】	kitchen
たかい【高い】	expensive, tall

Japanese	English
たくさん	a lot, many, much
たこやき【たこ焼き】	octopus dumpling
ただし【正しい】	correct
たてもの【建物】	building
たのしい【楽しい】	fun
たべもの【食べ物】	food
たまに	occasionally
だめ	not allowed, naughty
だれ【誰】	who
だれか【誰か】	somebody
だれでも【誰でも】	anybody
だれも【誰も】	everybody, nobody
たんじょうび【誕生日】	birthday
チーズ	cheese
ちいさい【小さい】	small
チケット	ticket
ちち【父】	dad
ちゃく【着】	counter for items of clothing
ちゅうごく【中国】	China
ちゅうごくご【中国語】	Chinese (language)
ちゅうもん【注文】	order
ちょう【超】	very very, extremely (Kanto region)
ちょきん【貯金】	savings
チョコレート	chocolate
ちょっと	a bit
つ	counter for general (small) things
ツアー	tour
つき【月】	moon, month
つぎ【次】	next
つくえ【机】	desk
つま【妻】	wife (your own)
つまらない	boring

Japanese	English
つもり	plan
つよい【強い】	strong
て【手】	hand
デート	date (romantic)
テーブル	table
てがみ【手紙】	letter
テキスト	text book
テスト	test
てっこう【鉄鋼】	steel
テニス	tennis
でも	but
テレビ	TV
てんき【天気】	weather
でんき【電気】	lights
でんしゃ【電車】	train
でんち【電池】	battery
でんわ【電話】	phone
でんわばんごう【電話番号】	phone number
ドーナツ	donut(s)
ドア	door
ドイツ	Germany
トイレ	toilet
どう	in what way
どういたしまして	you're welcome
どうして	why
どうぶつえん【動物園】	zoo
どうやって	how
どうりょう【同僚】	colleagues
ときどき【時々】	sometimes
とけい【時計】	watch (time piece)
どこ	where
どこか	somewhere
どこでも	anywhere

Japanese	English
どこも	everywhere, nowhere
とし【都市】	city
としょかん【図書館】	library
どちら	which (polite)
とても	very
となり	next to, beside
どの	which x
ともだち【友達】	friend(s)
どうび【土曜日】	Saturday
ドル	dollars
どれ	which
どれか	one of them
どれでも	whichever
どれも	all of them, none of them
どんな	what kind of
<b>な</b>	
なか【中】	inside
なつ【夏】	summer
なっとう【納豆】	natto
なつやすみ【夏休み】	summer vacation
なな【七】	seven
なにか【何か】	something
なにも【何も】	nothing
なまえ【名前】	name
なん、なに【何】	what
なんがつ【何月】	what month?
なんで	why
なんでも【何でも】	anything
なんようび【何曜日】	what day?
に【二】	two
におい【匂い】	smell
にがつ【2月／二月】	February
にく【肉】	meat

Japanese	English
にち、か【日】	counter for days of the month
にちかん、かかん【日間】	counter for number of days
にちようび【日曜日】	Sunday
～について	about...
にほん【日本】	Japan
にほんご【日本語】	Japanese (language)
にもつ【荷物】	luggage
ニュース	news
にん【人】	counter for people
ねこ【猫】	cat
ネズミ	mouse
ネックレス	necklace
ネット	Internet
ねん(かん)【年(間)】	year, counter for years
のど	throat
<b>は</b>	
は【歯】	teeth
パーティー	party
はい	yes
バイク	motorbike
はいしゃ【歯医者】	dentist
はがき	postcard
はくぶつかん【博物館】	museum
はこ【箱】	box
ハサミ	scissors
はじめ【初め】	beginning
はじめまして	nice to meet you
ばしょ【場所】	place
はず	should (expectation)
バス	bus
バスケ、バスケットボール	basketball
パスタ	pasta

Japanese	English
バスてい【バス停】	bus stop
パスポート	passport
はち【八】	eight
はちがつ【8月／八月】	August
はは【母】	mom
はやい【早い】	early
はやい【速い】	fast
はる【春】	spring
はるやすみ【春休み】	spring break
はれ【晴れ】	fine (weather)
バレー、バレーボール	volleyball
パン	bread
はん【半】	half past (time)
ばん【番】	turn (in a sequence)
ばんぐみ【番組】	show (TV/radio)
ばんごう【番号】	number
ばんごはん【晩ご飯】	dinner
ハンバーガー	hamburger
はんぶん【半分】	half
ひ【日】	day
ビール	beer
ピアノ	piano
ひき【匹】	counter for animals
ひこうき【飛行機】	airplane
ビザ	visa
ピザ	pizza
ひだり【左】	left
ひだりがわ【左側】	left hand side
ひつよう【必要】	necessary
ひと【人】	person
ひどい【酷い】	horrible
ひとたち【人たち】	people
ひま【暇】	bored, free
ひゃく【百】	hundred

Japanese	English
ひやけどめ【日焼け止め】	sunscreen
びょう(かん)【秒(間)】	seconds, counter for seconds
びょういん【病院】	hospital
びょうき【病氣】	sick
ひる【昼】	middle of the day
ひるごはん【昼ご飯】	lunch
ひるやすみ【昼休み】	lunch break
ひろい【広い】	spacious
ピンク	pink
ひんばんに【頻繁に】	frequently
プール	swimming pool
ふく【服】	clothes
ふくざつ【複雑】	complicated
ふじさん【富士山】	Mount Fuji
フットボール	football
ふとん【布団】	futon
ふべん【不便】	inconvenient
ふゆ【冬】	winter
ブランコ	swing (play equipment)
フランス	France
ふるい【古い】	old
プレゼント	present (gift)
プロジェクト	project
ふろば【風呂場】	bathroom
ふん(かん)【分(間)】	minutes, counter for minutes
ぶんか【文化】	culture
ベーコン	bacon
べき	should (obligation)
へた【下手】	bad at
ベッド	bed
へや【部屋】	room
ペン	pen

Japanese	English
へん【変】	strange
べんり【便利】	convenient
ボール	ball
ぼうし【帽子】	hat
ぼく【僕】	I, me (for men/boys only)
ほしい【欲しい】	want
ホストファミリー	host family
ホットドッグ	hot dog
ポテト	french fries
ホテル	hotel
ほん【本】	book
<b>ま</b>	
まいあさ【毎朝】	every morning
まいしゅう【毎週】	every week
まいしゅうまつ【毎週末】	every weekend
まいつき【毎月】	every month
まいとし【毎年】	every year
まいにち【毎日】	every day
まいばん【毎晩】	every evening
まえ【前】	before, in front
まえの【前の】	previous
まご【孫】	grandchild
まずい	awful (taste)
また	again
まだ	still, not yet
またね	see you later
まち【町】	town
まっすぐ	straight
まつり【祭り】	festival
まど【窓】	window
マラソン	marathon
まん【万】	ten thousand

Japanese	English
みぎ【右】	right
みず【水】	water
みずうみ【湖】	lake
みせ【店】	shop, store
みち【道】	the way, route, road
みどり	green
みにくい【醜い】	ugly
ミルク	milk
みんな、みなさん【皆さん】	everyone
むかえに(いく/くる) 【迎えに(行く/来る)】	(to go/come and) pick up
むずかしい【難しい】	difficult
むすこ【息子】	son (your own)
むすこさん【息子さん】	son (someone else's)
むすめ【娘】	daughter (your own)
メール	email
メガネ	glasses (eye)
めったに	rarely
めっちゃ	very very, extremely (Kansai region)
モール	mall
もう	already
もうちょっと	a bit more
もくようび【木曜日】	Thursday
もっと	more
モデル	model
もの【物】	things
<b>や</b>	
やしそば【焼きそば】	yakisoba
やきにく【焼肉】	grilled meat
やきゅう【野球】	baseball
やさい【野菜】	vegetables
やさしい【優しい】	kind
やすい【安い】	cheap

Japanese	English
やすみ【休み】	break, vacation
やちん【家賃】	rent
やね【屋根】	roof
やま【山】	mountain
ゆうえんち【遊園地】	amusement park
ゆうびんきょく【郵便局】	post office
ゆうめい【有名】	famous
ゆか【床】	floor
ゆき【雪】	snow
よい【良い】	good
よく	well, often
よやく【予約】	reservation
よる【夜】	night
よん【四】	four
<b>ら</b>	
ラーメン	ramen
らいげつ【来月】	next month
らいしゅう【来週】	next week
らいねん【来年】	next year
ライブ	concert
リモコン	remote control
りゆう【理由】	reason
りょうしん【両親】	parents (your own)
りょうり【料理】	cooking
りょこう【旅行】	travel
りんご	apple
れいぞうこ【冷蔵庫】	refrigerator
レストラン	restaurant
レポート	report
れんしゅう【練習】	practice
ろうそく	candle
ろく【六】	six
ろくがつ【6月／六月】	June

Japanese	English
ロンドン	London
<b>わ</b>	
ワイン	wine
わしょく【和食】	Japanese food
わたくし【私】	I, me (formal)
わたし【私】	I, me
わたしたち【私たち】	we, us
わるい【悪い】	bad
ワンピース	dress

## Appendix 6

### Hiragana Chart

あ a	い i	う u	え e	お o
か ka	き ki	く ki	け ke	こ ko
が ga	ぎ gi	ぐ gu	げ ge	ご go
さ sa	し shi	す su	せ se	そ so
ざ za	じ ji	ず zu	ぜ ze	ぞ zo
た ta	ち chi	つ tsu	て te	と to
だ da	ぢ ji	づ dzu	で de	ど do
な na	に ni	ぬ nu	ね ne	の no
は ha	ひ hi	ふ fu	へ he	ほ ho
ば ba	び bi	ぶ bu	べ be	ぼ bo
ぱ pa	ぴ pi	ぷ pu	ぺ pe	ぽ po
ま ma	み mi	む mu	め me	も mo
や ya		ゆ yu		よ yo
ら ra	り ri	る ru	れ re	ろ ro
わ wa				を wo
ん n				

きゃ kya	きゅ kyu	きょ kyo
ぎゃ gya	ぎゅ gyu	ぎょ gyo
しゃ sha	しゅ shu	しょ sho
じゃ ja	じゅ ju	じょ jo
ちゃ cha	ちゅ chu	ちょ cho
ぢゃ ja	ぢゅ ju	ぢょ jo
にゃ nya	にゅ nyu	にょ nyo
ひゃ hya	ひゅ hyu	ひょ hyo
びゃ bya	びゅ byu	びょ byo
ぴゃ pya	ぴゅ pyu	ぴょ pyo
みゃ mya	みゅ myu	みょ myo
りゃ rya	りゅ ryu	りょ ryo

## Appendix 7

### Katakana Chart

ア a	イ i	ウ u	エ e	オ o
カ ka	キ ki	ク ku	ケ ke	コ ko
ガ ga	ギ gi	グ gu	ゲ ge	ゴ go
サ sa	シ shi	ス su	セ se	ソ so
ザ za	ジ ji	ズ zu	ゼ ze	ゾ zo
タ ta	チ chi	ツ tsu	テ te	ト to
ダ da	ヂ ji	ヅ dzu	デ de	ド do
ナ na	ニ ni	ヌ nu	ネ ne	ノ no
ハ ha	ヒ hi	フ fu	ヘ he	ホ ho
バ ba	ビ bi	ブ bu	ベ be	ボ bo
パ pa	ピ pi	プ pu	ペ pe	ポ po
マ ma	ミ mi	ム mu	メ me	モ mo
ヤ ya		ユ yu		ヨ yo
ラ ra	リ ri	ル ru	レ re	ロ ro
ワ wa				ヲ wo
ン n				

キャ kya	キュ kyu	キョ kyo
ギャ gya	ギュ gyu	ギョ gyo
シャ sha	シュ shu	ショ sho
ジャ ja	ジュ ju	ジョ jo
チャ cha	チュ chu	チョ cho
ヂャ ja	ヂュ ju	ヂョ jo
ニャ nya	ニュ nyu	ニョ nyo
ヒャ hya	ヒュ hyu	ヒョ hyo
ビャ bya	ビュ byu	ビョ byo
ピャ pya	ピュ pyu	ピョ pyo
ミャ mya	ミュ myu	ミョ myo
リャ rya	リュ ryu	リョ ryo