



# Pimsleur®

## Japanese 2

Reading Booklet  
&  
Culture Notes

# Japanese 2

*Travelers should always check with  
their nation's State Department for  
current advisories on local conditions  
before traveling abroad.*

Second Edition  
Booklet Design: Maia Kennedy

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# Japanese 2

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## Introduction

The Japanese language has three distinctive writing systems: *kanji*, *hiragana*, and *katakana*.

### ***Kanji***

In early Japan, Japanese was a spoken language only and there was no writing system. China, however, had already developed a sophisticated writing system based on symbols called *hanzi*. As early as the first century, Japanese people had some exposure to these Chinese symbols on coins, official seals, and other decorative items imported from China. Like many other Asian countries, Japan adopted the Chinese writing system and by the 5th century, Chinese characters began to be used earnestly in Japan. The Japanese called this writing system *kanji*, which literally means "Chinese characters."

This new writing system created a new literacy for the Japanese. When the Japanese adopted the Chinese writing system, they used the characters to represent both meaning as well as sound. As a result, in Japan there are two ways to "read" or pronounce a single Chinese character:

- *on yomi*, based on the original Chinese pronunciation,
- *kun yomi*, native Japanese pronunciation.

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Many *kanji* have multiple pronunciations in both *on yomi* and *kun yomi*.

How many *kanji* are there? That depends on various sources. One of the most comprehensive dictionaries contains approximately 85,000 characters, but only an estimated 7,000 are said to be in daily use. Today in Japan, a *kanji* dictionary contains approximately 50,000 characters of which 2,100 to 2,200 characters are commonly used.

## ***Hiragana***

Some Japanese sounds and meanings were difficult to represent using *kanji*. To fill this gap, *kana* symbols were invented, based on the sound and the shape of the *kanji*. One such phonetic system is *hiragana*, which was invented between the eighth and the tenth centuries. Unlike *kanji*, *hiragana* represent a sound and not meaning. *Hiragana* is derived from a cursive form of *kanji* and the letters are curvilinear in style. They are used to express Japanese grammatical elements such as particles and the endings of adjectives and verbs.

There are forty-six basic *hiragana* syllables. There are also twenty-five additional modified syllables, thirty-six modified/contracted syllables, and one that is used to transcribe double consonants.

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## ***Katakana***

*Katakana* came into existence at about the same time as *hiragana*. The shapes of the *katakana* letters were also formed based on the *kanji*, but *katakana* have straighter lines, while *hiragana* are curvier.

Today *katakana* is used mainly to write loan words which the original Japanese language did not have. An example is the word for "coffee," since coffee didn't exist in Japan until it was imported from abroad. *Katakana* is also used for representing onomatopoeia, the names of plants and animals (with some exceptions), and for placing emphasis on certain words.

There are the same number of syllables in both *katakana* and *hiragana*.

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## Reading Kana

*Hiragana* and *katakana* are phonetically consistent, and reading them is relatively straightforward once the letters and their sounds are learned.

When writing Japanese today, the three writing systems are combined — *kanji*, *hiragana*, and *katakana* can all appear within a single sentence. Here's an example:

デパートに行きます。
(I) go to a department store. ( <i>depaato ni ikimasu.</i> )
デパート department store ( <i>katakana</i> )
に post-positional word to show direction ( <i>hiragana</i> )
行 the root of the verb "go" ( <i>kanji</i> )
きます ending of the verb "go" ( <i>hiragana</i> )

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In Level 1, you were introduced to reading *hiragana*. In this course, you will learn how to read *katakana*. For practice, all the words and sentences in the Reading Lessons are written in *katakana*. Spaces have been added in the longer phrases for ease in reading.

## ***Katakana* Chart**

a	ア	i	イ	u	ウ	e	エ	o	オ
ka	カ	ki	キ	ku	ク	ke	ケ	ko	コ
ga	ガ	gi	ギ	gu	グ	ge	ゲ	go	ゴ
sa	サ	shi	シ	su	ス	se	セ	so	ソ
za	ザ	ji	ジ	zu	ズ	ze	ゼ	zo	ゾ
ta	タ	chi	チ	tsu	ツ	te	テ	to	ト
da	ダ	ji	ヂ	zu	ヅ	de	デ	do	ド
na	ナ	ni	ニ	nu	ヌ	ne	ネ	no	ノ
ha	ハ	hi	ヒ	fu	フ	he	ヘ	ho	ホ
ba	バ	bi	ビ	bu	ブ	be	ベ	bo	ボ
pa	パ	pi	ピ	pu	プ	pe	ペ	po	ポ
ma	マ	mi	ミ	mu	ム	me	メ	mo	モ
ya	ヤ			yu	ユ			yo	ヨ
ra	ラ	ri	リ	ru	ル	re	レ	ro	ロ
wa	ワ	wo	ヲ	n/m	ン				

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## Katakana Combinations – youon

		wi / ui	ウイ	wi / ui	ウイ				
kya	キヤ			kyu	キュ			kyo	キョ
gya	ギヤ			gyu	ギユ			gyo	ギョ
sha	シャ			shu	シュ			sho	ショ
ja	ジャ			ju	ジュ			jo	ジョ
cha	チャ			chu	チュ			cho	チョ
nya	ニヤ			nyu	ニユ			nyo	ニョ
hya	ヒヤ			hyu	ヒユ			hyo	ヒョ
bya	ビヤ			byu	ビユ			byo	ビョ
pya	ピヤ			pyu	ピユ			pyo	ピョ
mya	ミヤ			myu	ミユ			myo	ミョ
rya	リヤ			ryu	リュ			ryo	リョ
fa	ファ	fi	フィ	fu/hu	フツ	fe	フェ	fo	フォ
va	ヴァ	vi	ヴィ	vu	ヴ	ve	ヴェ	vo	ヴォ
tue/ twe	トウエ								

ー	ッ	・	ゝ	゜
elongation mark	sokuon little tsu	separation dot	dakuten two dashes	handakuten small circle

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## Lesson One

1. ス
2. ミ
3. スミス
4. ニ
5. ミニ
6. キ
7. スキー
8. ミス / キス
9. テ
10. テニス
11. ク
12. クニ
13. ラ
14. クラス
15. ア
16. イ
17. アイス
18. タ
19. ミスター
20. ミスター・スミス

# Japanese 2

## Lesson Two

1. ク/タ
2. テ/ニ
3. ラ/ス
4. キ/ミ
5. ム
6. キム
7. ト
8. トム
9. ツ
10. タイツ
11. ニック
12. ラッキー
13. リ
14. クリーム
15. アイスクリーム
16. マ
17. マリア
18. ム/マ
19. ミニマム
20. クリスマス

# Japanese 2

## Lesson Three

1. クリスマスツリー
2. マックス
3. シ
4. タクシー
5. シーツ
6. ツーリスト
7. ノ
8. ノア
9. メ
10. メアリー
11. ウ
12. ウイスキー
13. エ
14. エア
15. ン
16. ミシン
17. ソ
18. ソース
19. ソックス
20. アン

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## Lesson Four

1. ソ/ン
2. ツ/シ
3. カ
4. アメリカ
5. カンクーン
6. チ
7. チキン
8. ナ
9. ナンシー
10. ナ/メ
11. ダ
12. カナダ
13. ロ
14. ロダン
15. コ
16. メキシコ
17. オ
18. オンタリオ
19. キッチン
20. ローン

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## Lesson Five

1. ロ / コ
2. チ / テ
3. ケ
4. ケン
5. ケンタッキー
6. ヤ
7. ケニヤ
8. サ
9. サリー
10. サンスクリット
11. セ
12. セント
13. ヤ / セ
14. センター
15. ヌ
16. セーヌ
17. ド
18. ドット
19. ヌード
20. サラダ

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## Lesson Six

1. ト/ド
2. ドミニカン
3. ネ
4. ネクタイ
5. ネオンサイン
6. ヒ
7. コーヒー
8. コーヒーケーキ
9. フ
10. フリー
11. フリーマーケット
12. ハ
13. ハーフ
14. ハーフマラソン
15. バ
16. ハバナ
17. ホ
18. ホース
19. ホンコン
20. フリーダム

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## Lesson Seven

1. バハマ
2. ヒマラヤ
3. ピ
4. ピーマン
5. ピーター
6. ビ
7. ビキニ
8. ヒ / ピ / ビ
9. ル
10. ルビー
11. ボ
12. ボストン
13. ポ
14. ポテト
15. ホ / ポ / ボ
16. モ
17. モーター
18. ハーモニカ
19. ピンポン
20. リモコン

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## Lesson Eight

1. バビロン
2. モナコ
3. ヘ
4. ヘンリー
5. ペ
6. ペン
7. ベ
8. ベネット
9. ヘ / ペ / ベ
10. レ
11. ウクレレ
12. レモン
13. ユ
14. ユタ
15. ユートピア
16. ヨ
17. ヨット
18. ヨセミテ
19. グ
20. ニカラグア

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## Lesson Nine

1. ク/グ
2. コ/ユ/ヨ
3. ワ
4. タワー
5. ガ
6. ガス
7. マダガスカル
8. ギ
9. イギリス
10. プ
11. アルプス
12. プエルトリコ
13. ブ
14. ブーツ
15. ブダペスト
16. フ/プ/ブ
17. パ
18. パン
19. パンダ
20. パプリカ

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## Lesson Ten

1. ウ / ワ
2. キ / ギ
3. デ
4. デンマーク
5. ゲ
6. バーゲン
7. ケ / ゲ
8. ゴ
9. ゴンドラ
10. シカゴ
11. ザ
12. バザー
13. ジ
14. ジーパン
15. ズ
16. ズッキーニ
17. キ / ヤ
18. キヤ
19. カ / キヤ
20. キャンプ

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## Lesson Eleven

1. キャンパス
2. キャップ
3. ゼ
4. ゼロックス
5. ゾ
6. ゾーン
7. ギャ
8. ギャング
9. キュ
10. キューバ
11. ギュ
12. ギューニュー
13. キョ
14. キョート
15. ギョ
16. ギョーザ
17. シャ
18. シャーリーン
19. ジャ
20. ジャック

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## Lesson Twelve

1. キュ / ギュ
2. シャ / ジャ
3. シュ
4. シュークリーム
5. ジュ
6. ポタージュ
7. ショ
8. ショパン
9. ジョ
10. ジョンソン
11. チャ
12. チャプリン
13. チュ
14. チューインガム
15. チョ
16. チョコレート
17. ニャ
18. ニャーニャー
19. ニュ
20. ニューヨーク

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## Lesson Thirteen

1. チャ / チュ / チョ
2. ジャ / ジュ / ジョ
3. ニョ
4. シャカニョライ
5. ニヤ / ニユ / ニョ
6. ヒヤ
7. ヒヤヒヤパンダ
8. ビヤ
9. ビヤクガン
10. ピヤ
11. ピヤチゴルスク
12. ヒュ
13. ヒューストン
14. ビュ
15. ビューロー
16. ピュ
17. コンピュータ
18. ピューリタン
19. ヒョ
20. ヒョウタン

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## Lesson Fourteen

1. ヒヤ / ヒュ / ヒョ
2. ヒヤ / ビヤ / ピヤ
3. ピョ
4. ピョンヤン
5. ビョ
6. ビョーク
7. ミヤ
8. ミヤンマー
9. ミュ
10. ミュージック
11. ミョ
12. ミョウガ
13. リヤ
14. リヤクズ
15. リュ
16. リュックサック
17. リョ
18. リョービ
19. ミヤ / ミュ / ミョ
20. ピヤ / ピュ / ピョ

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## Lesson Fifteen

1. リヤ/リュ/リョ
2. コーフィ
3. ファッション
4. ファックス
5. フィラデルフィア
6. フェンス
7. フェンシング
8. フォーマット
9. パフォーマンス
10. フットボール
11. ヴァチカン
12. ヴァンクーヴァー
13. バンクーバー
14. ヴインセント
15. ヴェランダ
16. ヴェニス
17. ヴォルガ
18. ヴォリューム
19. サーヴ
20. サーブ

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## Lesson Sixteen

1. ファ / フィ / フェ / フォ
2. ヴァ / ヴィ / ヴ / ヴェ / ヴォ
3. フィンランド / ヴィクトリア
4. フォーク / ヴォーグ
5. ウィンター
6. ウインター
7. フェンウェイ / ヴェンダー
8. ベンダー / ヴェンダー
9. ビクトリア / ヴィクトリア
10. シェーカー
11. ジェット
12. テモシー
13. ティモシー
14. プロデューサー
15. プロジューサー
16. ミシェル
17. クリスティン
18. レイチェル
19. ソフィー
20. アリソン

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## Lesson Seventeen

1. ウィリアム
2. スティーブン
3. チャールズ
4. ジェイソン
5. ラッセル
6. マサチューセッツ
7. コネチカット
8. ミシシッピ
9. ニュージャージー
10. カリフォルニア
11. アイリッシュコーヒー
12. カフェカプチーノ
13. ロシアンティー
14. ジュース
15. サンドイッチ
16. ウィリアム・フォークナー
17. マーク・トウエイン
18. エミリー・ディッキンソン
19. アーネスト・ヘミングウェイ
20. ハーマン・メルヴィル

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## Lesson Eighteen

1. リトルロック・アーカンソー
2. ドーヴァー・デラウェア
3. アトランタ・ジョージア
4. バトンルーージュ・ルイジアナ
5. メリーランド
6. アトランタ・ホークス
7. インディアナ・ペイサーズ
8. オーランド・マジック
9. クリーブランド・キャバリアーズ
10. サンアントニオ・スパーズ
11. ヒュー・ジャクマン
12. トム・ハンクス
13. オーランド・ブルーム
14. ハリソン・フォード
15. アーノルド・シュワルツェネッガー
16. レ・ミゼラブル
17. ダ・ヴィンチ・コード
18. スター・ウォーズ
19. ターミネーター
20. ロード・オブ・ザ・リング

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## Lesson Nineteen

1. イエローストーン
2. エヴァグレース・フロリダ
3. サン・アントニオ・ミッション
4. インデペンデンス・ホール
5. モンテチェロ
6. サンクトペテルブルク
7. ジェロニモス
8. ルクセンブルグ
9. マラムレシュ
10. アウシュヴィッツ
11. オール ザ ライト ウィ キャン ノット スィー
12. アンソニー・ドーアー
13. ザ・ゴールドフィンチ
14. ドナ・タート
15. ゼ・オフアン・マスターズ・サン
16. アダム・ジョンソン
17. エンパイア フォールズ
18. リチャード・ルッソ
19. オリーブ・キッタリッジ
20. エリザベス・ストラウト

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## Lesson Twenty

1. ヨハン・セバスティアン・バッハ
2. ベートーヴェン
3. モーツァルト
4. モーリス・ラヴェル
5. チャイコフスキー
6. トッカータ
7. エリーゼ
8. ソナタ
9. ジュリエット
10. フィガロ
11. シューベルト
12. ボルチモア・オリオールズ
13. ボストン・レッドソックス
14. クリーブランド・インディアンス
15. オークランド・アスレチックス
16. アリゾナ・ダイヤモンドバックス
17. バーゲンセール
18. クレジットカード
19. ダイエットペプシ
20. カレーライス



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## Notes on Japanese Culture and Communication

These are the Culture Notes for Pimsleur's *Japanese 2*. The objective of *Japanese 2* is to introduce you to the language and culture of Japan primarily through your ears, and only secondarily through your eyes.

This approach is based upon the fact that more than 95 percent of our lives is spent in listening and talking, and less than 5 percent in reading and writing. The most effective and productive way to begin acquiring these necessary communication skills is by actually working with the "language in use," as demonstrated by native speakers of the language being learned.

Efficiency is greatly increased when what you learn first are the most-frequently-used structures and daily life vocabulary, so that you practice with the practical tools you require every day. This carefully selected "core-language" allows the tutor on the audio to keep you focused entirely on essential language. This is self-motivating because you will begin to use it immediately and successfully.

As you learn the language, you are absorbing the culture. Language and culture are so closely intertwined that learning them separately can make you literally "culturally-deprived," that is, unable to produce appropriate and meaningful language. For

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this reason you must carefully notice the different ways the Japanese "act" in the various situations you will experience. Being sensitive to "who is doing what to whom, and why," is what you have learned to do almost unconsciously in your native tongue — you will attain this same sense of "awareness" as you gain proficiency in your new language. This implicit instruction will come from the lessons, as you learn to identify the intonation and melody of the speakers. This Audio will provide additional explicit instruction to further confirm what you have learned.

Acquiring the culture, "the map of the territory," is like acquiring the terminology of a subject: it enables you to operate as a fellow member in that society. Your success in working with native speakers of Japanese will depend upon how sensitive you become to the accumulated heritage that is Japanese.

## **Dialects in Japan**

As is the case with any language, Japanese has many dialects. The main dialects are Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Kansai, and Kyushu. Though they are classified as dialects, they are more like various accents. Fortunately, standard Japanese is understood across the country.

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## Introductions

When introduced to someone, a proper way to identify yourself would be to say, for example, *jameson to mooshimasu*. This means "I am called Jameson." It translates as, "I say myself Jameson," expressed in a humble fashion. This expression is appropriately modest and shows your sensitivity toward whatever difference in social status there may be between you and the person you're speaking with. The Japanese are very concerned with hierarchical relationships, and *mooshimasu* is a safe way to identify yourself when meeting someone whose position you don't know. You identify yourself humbly, elevating the status of the other person.

In social situations Americans almost always automatically introduce strangers to one another. However, many Japanese are not accustomed to doing so, and you may sometimes need to take the initiative and introduce yourself. Do not feel offended if you are not introduced, since your Japanese host is probably unaware of the Western custom of introduction.

The Japanese, on the other hand, will customarily exchange business cards when they meet someone for the first time. When you receive a card, it's considered polite to study the card long enough to understand and appreciate all the information on it, such as the person's name, title, and company

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she or he is working for. You can use some of this information as initial topics in your conversation. If you intend to conduct business in Japan, it will be very important to always carry your own business cards with you.

## ***honne* and *tatemae***

The Japanese are known to be sensitive to others' feelings, as well as concerned about maintaining their own face in their interpersonal interactions. They utilize a wide variety of communication tactics in order to carefully preserve their relationships with others. One of the most-commonly-used strategies, though difficult for foreign speakers to distinguish, is the deliberate distinction made between *tatemae*, or "overt opinions," and *honne*, "true feelings." Japanese people's reluctance to reject an offer by simply saying "No," or their complimenting someone's positive attributes without touching on the more apparent negative side, are examples of *tatemae*.

It is sometimes difficult even for native Japanese to judge whether the speaker is disclosing his or her *honne*, when he or she says to you, *nihongo ga jozu desu ne*, "Your Japanese is very skilled." The speaker may be trying not to hurt your feelings by offering you the compliment. Depending upon the situation and the relationship with the speaker, you will need to choose whether to say *arigato*, or *demo mada jozu ja arimasen*, "But I'm not skilled yet."

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## ***ocha wa doo desu ka?*** ("How about some tea?")

While *ocha* literally means "tea," which is normally green tea in Japan, this expression is used for a variety of drinks, such as coffee, brown tea, Japanese green tea, Chinese tea, and even many kinds of soft drinks. By asking *ocha wa doo desu ka?* the person is not so much suggesting that you have tea, but that you take a break and have something to drink to relax.

When visiting someone's house or office, you are usually offered a cup of tea before you ask for it. You may find that it is too bitter for you, but it's considered impolite to add cream or sugar. It's also in poor taste to ask for a different beverage, as this implies criticism of the host or hostess' chosen offering. If your host or hostess notices you are not drinking and asks if you would prefer another kind of drink, you may ask, for instance, *kohi wa arimasu ka?* meaning, "Do you have any coffee?"

You will find American franchised coffee shops in most large cities, so you can enjoy virtually the same kind of coffees you are accustomed to drinking. Though coffee used to be very expensive in Japan, the price has come down considerably, thanks to the large franchised shops. You will find the coffee comparable in taste and price to that in the U.S.

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## ***uchi* vs. *soto***

*uchi*, in Japanese means "house," or "home." The word refers not only to a house as a physical building, but also and more often to a social and symbolic unit that surrounds the speaker, such as his or her family, community, or company. You will often hear a business person, for example, speak of *uchi no kuruma*. He is not referring to a personal car, but instead to a car owned, operated, or even sold as merchandise by his company.

Japan is a society that places more value on collectivity, in comparison to the U.S. which highly values individualism. People in Japan are more concerned about what group you belong to rather than what you as an individual are like. The Japanese make a clearer distinction between those who belong to the same group as they do and those who don't. Once you are accepted as an *uchi no hito*, an "in-group member," you will feel comfortably involved with and protected by the group. If you remain as *soto no hito*, or "an outsider," then you will inevitably feel more distance from the group. The language used among the in-group members reflects more intimacy and less formality than the language used with out-group members.

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## Bus Transportation in Japan

Buses are a very common means of public transportation in Japan. There are both local buses and long distance express buses that connect large cities such as Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, and Fukuoka. When using Japanese buses, you will need to know the routes that a local bus system serves, the fares, and also whether to pay when you get on or when you get off. On Tokyo metropolitan buses, for instance, there is generally one flat rate and you pay when you get on. In addition, you are sometimes required to have the exact change. Just ask a person waiting at the bus stop, *oikura desu ka?* "How much is it?"

### ***nanika nomitai n desu ga.***

Japanese often use *ga* at the end of a sentence to express their desire, for example, *nanika nomitai n desu ga*. The *ga* at the end literally means "but," and it is added to soften your request and make it less direct. It implies, "I would like something to drink, but I don't want to put you to any trouble and if it is too much trouble for you, that is all right." It shows your modesty and respect for the other person's time and effort.

Japanese speakers often show their extreme consideration for others in such an evasive and indirect manner that foreigners are sometimes confused. This serves to save face. You may be at first annoyed

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by the speakers' ambiguity, because it only seems to imply their non-commitment to their own words, indecisiveness, and even insincerity. Such ambiguity, however, is believed to lubricate the social relationships among the Japanese, and you will soon likely find yourself ending your request with a slightly extended *ga ...* . It really softens your tone of voice, particularly when requesting another person's favor, or stating a claim.

## Days of the Week

*nichi yoobi* is Sunday, *getsu yoobi*, Monday; Tuesday is *ka yoobi*. The rest go *sui yoobi*, *moku yoobi*, *kin yoobi*, *do yoobi*, respectively. You'll notice that they all end in the same way: *yoobi*, meaning "day of the week." In fact, people sometimes omit *yoobi* and may simply say, *getsu*, *ka*, *sui*, etc.

While the Japanese used to be known for their hardworking habits, working six days a week, many companies have come to give their workers two days off per week in recent years. Most schools have adopted a five-day-per-week class schedule, but some schools, mostly private, still require their students to take classes on Saturdays. You will still find many high school students commuting on trains and buses on Saturdays.

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## Incomplete Sentences

As in English, Japanese speakers sometimes appear to use incomplete sentences. For instance, you may hear a Japanese person asking a friend when he arrived in Japan by saying *itsu nihon e?*

This is yet another example of leaving a statement, this time a question, unfinished. The Japanese person is omitting the last part of the question: *korare mashita ka?*

Leaving the sentence unfinished like this is an informal way of asking a question, and it should be used among close friends, people of the same social rank, or by a superior addressing a subordinate. You should not use such informal remarks with someone you have just met or a business associate who occupies a higher rank than you, as in this situation it may offend.

You will notice that many Japanese statements are seemingly incomplete and even appear grammatically incorrect in English terms. Being able to read the speaker's mind and to let others read yours is an important skill in Japanese daily communication. If you speak in Japanese using clear, complete, precise sentences, which is an important communication competency in English, you might be considered legalistic, aggressive, and even offensive. After some experience and practice,

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you will learn how to leave your language vague and "incomplete" in actual social situations.

## **Politeness: *imasu ka?* vs. *irasshaimasu ka?***

The complex rules governing status in Japan play an important role in the expressions used in various social situations. The significance of observing the appropriate levels of politeness when you speak to Japanese people, especially those whose social status is apparently different from yours, cannot be overstressed. Although as a foreign speaker you are not always expected to know subtle nuances, if you wish to get ahead in business, for instance, having some knowledge concerning the levels of politeness and actually practicing them in your communication will surely help you in your attempt to attain your personal and professional goals.

*imasu ka?* and *irasshaimasu ka?* both mean "Is ... here?" The latter is far more polite than the former. If you are telephoning to a close friend's home, and you ask another person in the family for your friend, you may safely ask ... *wa imasu ka?* When speaking to a business associate, however, you would generally ask, *irasshaimasu ka?* You will find it necessary to make a distinction between the way you address your close friend and your business associate.

Initially, you may find the concept of using different expressions to convey different levels of

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politeness difficult to understand and remember. But stop and think for a moment about your regular English usage. While you may use the same words or phrases in different situations, you express your politeness by subtle changes in your tone, your intonation, or even sometimes your voice. You do not say, "How are you?" in exactly the same way when you see your friend, your grandmother, or when you greet an extremely important guest of your company or family.

## **Traveling in and around Japan**

Osaka, Nara, and Okinawa are all popular places to visit, and foreign tourists as well as business people often go there. Each region in Japan has its own distinct cultural flavor, and you will enjoy the different attractions they offer. You should take advantage of the small size of the country and the well-developed public transportation to travel to different regions while in Japan.

You will also find other Asian cities quite easily accessible from Japan. Seoul, Korea is only one and a half hours away from Tokyo; Shanghai and Hong Kong are only three hours away. If you have some extra time to spend, you may want to explore these exotic Asian cities.

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## *ii desu ne*

When you say *ii desu ne* in response to someone offering you something to eat at a restaurant, it means, "That's a good idea. I'd love to." The same expression can also be used when you wish to give an affirmative answer to someone's inquiry. For example, if you're trying on some new clothes in a department store, a clerk may say, *ikaga desu ka?* "How is it?" You can respond by saying, *ii desu ne*. The *ne* at the end will implicitly ask the clerk if she agrees. *ii desu ne* in this context implies, "I like it. Don't you?" The clerk will probably say *hai*, indicating "I agree."

You must be careful, however, when you say *ii desu* without *ne* at the end. The meaning changes drastically, and instead it shows the speaker's refusal and withdrawal. If you say *ii*, *ii desu* in response to "Let's eat something at a restaurant," it means, "No, thank you. I'll pass." Whether you put the *ne* at the end or not turns the meaning around completely, so you need to be careful, especially when you are offered something.

## *tsumetai* and *samui*

Japanese has two different words for "cold." *tsumetai* is used to describe cold objects such as drinks and food. When you visit in a Japanese home, you may be asked whether you want *atsui ocha*,

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"hot tea," or *tsumetai ocha*, "iced tea." Hot tea is served most of the time, but during the summer cold tea that is made from roasted barley or cold Chinese oolong tea may be served.

You can also use *tsumetai* to refer to a person who is cold-hearted. You may hear some Japanese people say *tsumetai hito*, "a cold person."

If you want to talk about cold weather, on the other hand, you must say *samui* instead of *tsumetai*. *samui* is used to describe a cold day, week, month, season, or a cold place. *tsumetai*, on the other hand, refers to more specific objects and phenomena, such as drinks, water, and wind.

## **Newspapers in Japan**

Keeping abreast of what is happening in your home country is an important concern, particularly if you conduct business for extensive periods of time abroad. Most major English newspapers and magazines are readily available in large cities in Japan. If you cannot find the ones you would like to read at a kiosk, a large bookstore, which you should find in virtually every town, is very likely to carry them. You can also subscribe to English papers published by Japanese news companies. They are mostly English versions of Japanese papers and give you information on what is occurring in Japan and your local community. Thanks to advanced satellite

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and cable systems in major hotels, you can also watch TV news from over ten different countries in their original languages. The Internet is of course accessible in most hotels in Japan.

## **Climate in Japan**

Despite Japan's small size, the climate varies dramatically since it stretches lengthwise (some 1,500 miles) from north to south. When visiting, you must be careful to plan what kind of clothes you will need, which will depend on which part of the country you will be visiting. In Hokkaido, the northernmost island, and the northern and mountain areas of Honshu, for example, it gets quite cold. In fact, the winter Olympics were held in Sapporo in 1974 and held again in Nagano in central Japan in 1998. However, if you are in Okinawa, the southernmost part of the country, you will find a subtropical climate.

Except for these extreme climates, the rest of the country has four distinct seasons. Generally speaking, Japan gets a fair amount of rain every year, particularly during the rainy season that lasts from mid-June to mid-July. The rain is of course indispensable to rice, the nation's staple diet. The summer in Japan is generally hot and humid. If you are traveling to Japan for pleasure, you should plan to be there either in the spring or fall, if possible.

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## ***musume and musuko***

We have stressed that showing your politeness is important in Japanese communication. The words used to describe family members change in a rather complex manner, depending on whether you are speaking of your own family or the family of the person you are speaking to. In referring to your own children you may say *musume*, "daughter," and *musuko*, "son." You may also use *musume san* and *musuko san* to refer to other peoples' children. There are additional, different sets of words when you talk about other people's children, with differing levels of politeness. Since this is complex, you are not expected to be able to use all of them correctly. If you are to stay in Japan for a long time, however, you will find such knowledge in politeness quite useful.

## ***gochisoosama deshita***

*gochisoosama deshita* literally means, "It was a feast." You may use this expression to indicate that you have finished eating and are ready to go, if you are eating out with someone, or to say that you have appreciated the good meal provided for you at someone's house or at a restaurant. Japanese, in general, enjoy inviting guests to their homes or treating them at restaurants.

One thing to remember is that you should also repeat the expression *gochisoosama deshita* on

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a later date to show your gratitude. This consideration will be greatly appreciated. If you wish to thank your hosts for the meal provided for you the day before, simply add *kino wa*, and say *kino wa gochisoosama deshita*, "Thank you for the meal you cooked or paid for yesterday."

## ***kuruma* and Driving in Japan**

The word for car is *kuruma*. *kuruma*, however, originally means a wheel, or a tire. People have begun to use the word to refer to an automobile. When the Japanese say *kuruma de iku*, they mean either "go by taxi" or "drive one's own car."

Despite the well-developed public transportation system, many people now have their own cars, which results in heavy traffic in most cities. You must remember, if you drive in Japan, that cars are driven on the left side of the street as in the U.K. and Australia. Parking in large cities such as Tokyo and Osaka is often not only difficult to secure, but also costly. And automobile insurance is expensive.

The minimum age required for driving is 18, but not everybody has a driver's license, unlike in the U.S. As a foreign visitor traveling to cities in Japan, the best advice is to use public transportation or to find Japanese friends to drive you around.

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## **Emergency Calls**

In case you need to report a fire or call for an ambulance, the number to dial is 119 and if you need to call the police, it is 110 all across Japan.

While the police and fire stations in large cities have English-speaking staff on duty, their communication ability in the foreign language is limited. You need to know some basic words to report the emergency. You must also describe the location of the emergency. Most traffic lights have the street names written both in Japanese and in English. If you make the call from a public phone, you will find a special button that will directly connect you to the police or fire station. The public phone system allows the receivers of phone calls to identify the location of the caller, so you do not need to worry about explaining where you are. If, however, you call from a mobile phone, you will need to be able to tell them your exact location.

## **Drugstores and Convenience Stores**

Drugstores in Japan are similar to those in the U.S., except that in general they are less spacious, and therefore the variety of merchandise available is limited. In most drugstores, you can purchase over-the-counter as well as prescription drugs; items such as soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, and toothpaste; and household goods, such as detergents and pesticides.

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You will also find small drugstores adjacent to many clinics. These drugstores usually supply only medicines prescribed by the doctors in the clinics. While you are likely to find most of the common cold and stomach medicines that you see in the U.S., you may want to pack certain brands that you find especially effective when you travel to Japan.

Another popular place for light shopping is convenience stores. They are franchised and the stores are virtually everywhere in Japan. Though small, in comparison to supermarkets, most convenience stores carry almost everything you need. You can buy food, beverages, magazines, and stationery. They also have copy machines, will accept payments for your mail order purchases ranging from books and movie tickets to plane tickets, and accept parcels to be sent by overnight express carriers. These stores are literally "convenient."

## **Trains in Japan**

Japan is known for its well-developed, efficient railroad system. Most cities are connected by the Japanese Railways (or "JR"). There are several classes of trains, determined by the number of stops that they make. They are, in ascending order, *futsu* or "Regular Train" which provides local service and will make every stop on a line. After that you have the *kaisoku*, or "Limited Express Train," which makes fewer stops and runs primarily for commuters. The

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*kyuukoo*, or "Express Train," and the *tokkyuu*, or "Super Express Train," make successively limited stops. And at the top of the line, you have the *shinkansen* "Bullet Trains" which usually run from one end of the line to the other with only a few stops in between. They run in the northern part of Japan between Akita and Tokyo; the central part, between Niigata and Tokyo; and the western part between Fukuoka and Tokyo via Osaka, Kyoto, and Nagoya.

When you use either the *tokkyuu* or *shinkansen*, you must pay for special express tickets in addition to the regular fare. If you know in advance that you will be using train services in Japan, you can save yourself quite a bit of money by purchasing a Japan Rail Pass prior to your departure from the U.S. Only foreign visitors can take advantage of this pass, which is valid for unlimited travel on JR lines.

## **Playing Sports in Japan**

Many Japanese people in recent years have become concerned about maintaining their health, and that concern drives them to participate in many kinds of sports from aerobics to rugby. Given the climatic features of Japan, people enjoy winter sports in the northern regions such as Hokkaido and Tohoku where they can ski from November to early May, and marine sports in the south including scuba diving and parasailing. The most popular sports are bowling, golf, softball, and tennis. While baseball

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used to be the most popular sport to watch, it has been replaced by soccer in recent years. You can enjoy virtually all sports in Japan that you are used to playing and/or watching at home.

Many Japanese parents are also enthusiastic about developing their children's talent in sports. For example, a large number of children go to private swimming schools, where they are tested regularly to have their achievement certified. Some children belong to school or community sport teams such as soccer and baseball and compete against other schools and communities.

## ***zuibun isogashii n desu ne***

*zuibun isogashii n desu ne* — "You're awfully busy, aren't you?" In Japanese society, which highly values work, this statement is taken as a compliment. The implication behind the statement is that the busier you are, the more important a person you are in your *kaisha*. Business people in Japan spend a considerable amount of time traveling. Because of the size of the country, it is quite possible to be in Nagoya on Wednesday, Osaka on Thursday, and Kobe on Friday. It is only a one-hour ride on *shinkansen* from Nagoya to Kobe.

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## National Holidays in Japan

There are quite a few national holidays in Japan. All schools, government offices, post offices, banks, and most businesses — except stores — are closed on these holidays. The Japanese holidays are as follows:

- January 1 New Year's Day
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of January Coming-of-Age Day
- February 11 National Foundation Day
- March 21 (*approx.*) Vernal Equinox Day
- April 29 Showa Day
- May 3 Constitution Memorial Day
- May 4 Greenery Day
- May 5 Children's Day
- July 20 Marine Day
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of September Respect-for-the-Aged Day
- September 23 (*approx.*) Autumnal Equinox Day
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of October Health-Sports Day
- November 3 Culture Day
- November 23 Labor Day
- December 23 Emperor's Birthday

In case a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday becomes an alternate holiday, called "Happy Monday."

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## *kedo*

The Japanese often end their statements with *kedo*. This is yet one more of the many ways to soften the tone and imply that they would not terribly mind if the other person did not agree with their ideas, requests, or suggestions. *kedo* also suggests that the speakers are willing to accept and adapt to the other person's ideas.

Many Japanese do not feel comfortable isolating themselves in any social settings, including meetings where Americans would readily expect to see open confrontation and clashes of ideas. You may wonder how the Japanese make group decisions. It certainly entails a long process in which subtle exchanges of ideas take place. Hierarchical relationships among the people involved in the process also play an important role. After careful and thorough exchange of ideas, people believe that decisions will naturally become clear. Active expressions such as "hammering out a decision" do not accurately describe the purpose of Japanese meetings.

However, in interacting with the Japanese, do not let the frequent use of *kedo* fool you. Many people attach the word only in order to make their assertions sound tentative, while in reality they may indeed be strongly committed to their ideas and not at all ready to change their positions. While they will not refute openly, *kedo* functions as a façade in many

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situations. Being able to pick up social cues and discern the distinction between *honne* and *tatemae* are important communication skills in Japanese culture.

## Japanese Sweets

Tasting exotic foods in a foreign country adds to enjoyment in international trips. There is quite a variety of sweets available in Japan, ranging from Western style cakes to traditional Japanese desserts. You will find the cakes in Japan similar to those in the U.S., except that they are smaller and less sweet. The most popular kind of Japanese sweet is called *manju*, sweetened bean paste wrapped in dough and either baked or steamed.

Another special kind of Japanese sweet that you should be alert to is called *higashi*. It is a small piece of cake, particularly sweet, and served with green tea at a tea ceremony. The tea served in the ceremony is a special kind and it is very bitter. The sweet that accompanies the tea is to compensate for the tea's bitter taste. You are expected to finish the *higashi* before you drink the tea. Both the tea and the sweets at the tea ceremony are considered to be an acquired taste and if you find them not to your liking, just say so. The Japanese host or hostess will not be offended.

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## Geography of Japan

Japan is an island country, but how many islands the country comprises is not so widely known. There are four main islands. Going from the north to the south, you have Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu.

Honshu is the largest island in size, population, and economic strength. Many metropolitan areas are concentrated along the Pacific coast on Honshu: Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka, Kobe, and Hiroshima. While some fairly large cities, such as Niigata and Kanazawa, are on the Japan Sea, this coast is often referred to as *ura nihon*, or the back side of Japan.

Hokkaido is the northernmost island and it has acres and acres of farmland. Many agricultural and dairy products support the economy of Hokkaido. The largest city is Sapporo where the winter Olympics were held in 1974.

Shikoku is an island across the Setonaikai (the Inland Sea of Japan) from Honshu. It is the size of all the Hawaiian islands put together.

Kyushu is the southernmost of the four main islands and is connected with Honshu by a tunnel and a bridge. The largest city is Fukuoka.

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Other than the four main islands, there are some 2,000 smaller ones, including the Okinawa Islands. The size of the entire country is about the same as that of the state of California. Considering that the population of Japan is about one half of that of the U.S., and that half of the population is concentrated in metropolitan areas such as Tokyo and Osaka, you can imagine how crowded the large cities are.

## ***jaa, mata itsuka***

*jaa, mata itsuka* — which means, "Well then, some other time." The expression is used to show social politeness, and it is equivalent to "Let's get together sometime." In this case, you would not ask, "What exactly do you mean by 'sometime'?" If you did, you might be considered socially incompetent and rude. In Japanese society, with the extreme concern for politeness in human relations, you will come across many such expressions. *chikai uchi ip-pai yari mashi*, for instance, means "Let's go for a drink some time soon." In most cases, the person is likely to be saying it just to be polite, so the safest response is something like *ii desu ne*, or "That sounds good."

## ***osokunatte sumimasen* — "I'm sorry I'm late."**

People's concept of time is different from culture to culture, and their expectations vary accordingly. In some cultures, keeping someone waiting

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for fifteen minutes is a sign of insult, while in others showing up one hour late for an appointment is a common practice. Japan, in general, is classified into the punctual group. If you have a business appointment with someone to whom you must show respect, a prospective customer or employer for instance, you should plan to arrive early. If you are invited to someone's house for a party, on the other hand, being a little late, say ten to fifteen minutes, is considered acceptable, and even polite. If you are late for more than half an hour, it is necessary to say *osokunatte sumimasen*. You should by all means avoid having to use this expression when you have a business appointment.

## Gift Giving

Gift giving is a very popular social practice in Japan. People customarily give gifts twice a year to their superiors, such as teachers and senior members at the workplace. The gift in the summer is called *ochugen* and the one in winter is called *oseibo*. The *o* at the beginning of these is the honorific prefix. People also bring gifts when they visit someone's house for a get-together, when they visit an office on business, and when they visit family members, relatives, and friends at a hospital.

Items such as candies and chocolates, flowers, and wine make appropriate gifts to bring when you're invited for dinner.

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The Japanese very rarely, if ever, have a potluck party. When invited for dinner, you may ask what, if anything, you may bring, but the chances are that you will be told "nothing." These customs are very similar in Japan and the U.S., but one difference you may need to be aware of is that you are expected to express your appreciation again the next time you see your host or hostess. *kono mae wa arigato gozaimashita*, "Thank you for the other day," is an appropriate thing to say.

## ***shitsurei shimasu***

*shitsurei shimasu* means roughly, "I'm going to commit a rude thing." The Japanese use this expression when they enter someone's room or house. A similar expression, *ojama shimasu*, whose literal meaning is "I'm going to interfere with you," can also be used in the same situation. When you take your leave, on the other hand, you simply make these expressions into the past tense and say *shitsurei shimashita* or *ojama shimashita*.

## **Continuing Success**

Throughout *Japanese 2*, you have learned many essential elements of the Japanese language. Practicing using the expressions you have learned in the thirty units will assure you successful initial encounters with the Japanese people. We hope you will keep up with your daily practice and

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further build upon your vocabulary. One additional aspect of competency that you will find useful and important is your sensitivity to cross-cultural differences in values, thought patterns, space and time orientations, mannerisms, etc. You can also continue to build on your communication skills by proceeding on to *Japanese 3*.

For more information,  
call 1-800-831-5497  
or visit us at [Pimsleur.com](http://Pimsleur.com)