

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

How to Write in Japanese: Hiragana and Katakana #2 The Hiragana K Column

#2

Hi everyone! Welcome to BASIC JAPANESE WRITING. The fastest, easiest, and most fun way to master the Japanese alphabet!

You've learned these five Hiragana characters from the previous lesson.

かがきぎくぐけげここ

In this lesson, you'll learn five new characters and 10 new sounds. How is that possible? Stay tuned to find out!

The first Hiragana character for this lesson is か.

Need help remembering this one? Just imagine it as a blade CUTTING a stick!

か is actually a Hiragana character that is used a lot since it is the question-marking particle in Japanese. So if you see a sentence ending in か it is most probably a question.

The Hiragana か also has another reading once we add this mark.

This mark is called "dakuten" or "ten ten". It is made up of two lines that look a bit like a quotation mark symbol and it's put on the upper right corner of the character.

The dakuten makes the consonant of the syllable voiced. So か with a dakuten will be pronounced as が.

Voicing a consonant simply means that you create a vibration in your vocal cords when you say it. が. が. Notice the difference? か; が. か; が.

Hiragana か is written in 3 strokes.

The first stroke starts as a horizontal line, then bends down into a vertical curved line. Finally it ends with a "hane" release.

The second stroke is a downward diagonal line with a slight curve inwards. Make sure that this stroke intersects the first stroke around here.

The final stroke is a curved slanted stroke to the right of where the first stroke bends.

Make the last stroke slightly longer than the other small slanted strokes in previous characters to distinguish it from the dakuten.

Ok, let's see it again.

Ok, next up is the Hiragana character き. き.

き looks like a [pause] KEY!

Just like the Hiragana か, all of the characters in this column can be altered by a "dakuten."

き with a dakuten is pronounced as ぎ. き; ぎ. き; ぎ.

Hiragana き is written in 4 strokes.

The first two strokes are two parallel lines both starting from left to right. They are written at a bit of an angle.

The third stroke cuts through the first two strokes and ends with a "hane" release.

Because the third stroke ends with a "hane," don't put down your pen yet. When you get to this point, make a small curve like half of a smile.

Even though you see the fourth stroke connected to the third stroke in most fonts, the correct way to write き is to lift your pen up before making the final stroke.

Ok, let's see it again.

The third one is the Hiragana < . < .

To remember this character, think of it as a cuckoo's beak. CUCKOO

Let's add a "dakuten" to < as well. How do you think it will sound like?

It's pronounced as <ゝ. <; <ゝ. <; <ゝ.

Hiragana < is written in 1 stroke.

It is written just like an open angle bracket but with a slight inward bend.

To make your handwriting neat, make sure that the start and end points are aligned.

Ok, let's see it again.

This is the Hiragana character け. け.

け looks like a KEG, doesn't it?

Just like the first three characters, け can be modified by a dakuten.

け with a dakuten is pronounced as げ. け; げ. け; げ.

Hiragana け is written in 3 strokes.

The first stroke is a vertical stroke with a slight outward curve and then ends with a "hane."

After the "hane," continue on to the next stroke. it is a short horizontal line.

The third stroke is another vertical stroke that curves opposite to the first stroke but starts a bit higher and ends lower. Flick your pen at the end of this stroke.

Ok, let's see it again.

And our final character for this lesson is the Hiragana こ. こ.

Imagine this character as two KOI fish swimming around each other.

Now, can you go and say what こ sounds like with a dakuten?

It will be こ. こ; こ. こ; こ.

Hiragana こ is written in 2 strokes.

The first stroke is a curved horizontal line that ends with a "hane."

Go down to this point and make a longer horizontal line that curves opposite from the first one.

Just like the Hiragana い, こ should look like it is enclosing a circle.

Ok, let's see it again.

Let's see all the characters again. か, が, き, ぎ, く, ぐ, け, げ, こ, こ.

Quiz time!

Now, let's review what you've learned. I'll show you a character or group of characters and give you time to say them. Ready?

き. Just like a KEY remember?

か. か actually means "a mosquito."

Do you remember this one? [pause for 3 sec] It's え!

い.

こ.

う.

く.

かく. This means "to write."

かげ. かげ means "shadow."

きく. This means "to listen." Try not to mix this up with かく.

こえ. こえ is "voice."

かぎ. かぎ means "key." Don't forget it!

きおく. This means "memory." Make sure not to forget this one as well.

えいが. えいが is "movie."

おおきい. This means "big"!

Great job! Are you wondering, "How do I identify between a dakuten mark and a quotation mark?" Don't worry. In Japanese we use corner brackets to signify quotes and titles instead of quotation marks.

Ok, let's wrap up this lesson by recapping what you've learned.

In this lesson, you learned か and が, き and ぎ, く and ぐ, け and げ, and こ and こ.

よくできました！ You've now mastered 10 characters and 15 Japanese syllables:

Are you ready to learn what "imagination" is in Japanese? Stay tuned for the next lesson when we move on to the hiragana characters in the S column.

Before you go, practice writing the following words on your own!

[pause]

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See you in the next lesson! またね！