

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

How to Write in Japanese: Hiragana and Katakana #9 The Hiragana Y Column and Digraphs

#9

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

BASIC JAPANESE WRITING

You've learned these 40 hiragana characters from the previous lessons.

In this lesson, you'll learn three new characters, AND 33 new syllable sounds. Yes, 33! 11 times 3, 33 new sounds! Gotta learn them all!

やゆよ

The first hiragana character for this lesson is や. や.

や actually looks like a YAK. The two horns are protruding on top.

Hiragana や is written in 3 strokes.

The first stroke is a long diagonal line going up which ends with a curve. It looks like a small and slim ㄣ.

The second stroke is a short slanted stroke at the top center.

The third stroke is a tall diagonal line which cuts through the first stroke around 1/3 from the left.

Ok, let's see it again.

The third hiragana for this lesson is ゆ. ゆ.

There's a magical way to remember ゆ. Just think of a UNICORN!

ゆ is also a popular hiragana character. But not because of how it's used in a sentence, but because it is used as mark for おんせん or hot spring baths. ゆ actually stands for おゆ meaning "hot water."

Hiragana ゆ is written in 2 strokes.

The first stroke starts as a vertical line going down. Then it retraces back a bit, then forms a huge curve that almost turns into a circle.

The second stroke is a curved vertical stroke that cuts through the curved part of the first stroke. It finishes up with a flick of your pen.

Ok, let's see it again.

Our final character for this lesson is the hiragana よ. よ.

To remember よ, imagine a YOYO dangling from a finger.

Hiragana よ is written in 2 strokes.

The first stroke is a short horizontal stroke starting from the center, going to the right.

The second stroke starts as a vertical line going down, then it makes a loop towards the bottom.

Ok, let's see it again.

There's another set of syllables in Japanese which is formed by adding the や, ゆ, or よ sound to a consonant + an "i" sound.

This time the や, ゆ, and よ characters are written smaller.

These are the Japanese digraphs called ようおん. Even though they look longer, they're still said for the same duration as the previous syllables that you've learned.

きゃ, きゅ, きょ. ぎゃ, ぎゅ, ぎょ.

しゃ, しゅ, しょ. じゃ, じゅ, じょ.

ちゃ, ちゅ, ちょ. にゃ, にゅ, にょ.

ひゃ, ひゅ, ひょ. びゃ, びゅ, びょ. ぴゃ, ぴゅ, ぴょ.

みゃ, みゅ, みょ. りゃ, りゅ, りょ.

Technically, you could also make a digraph with ぢ but it is not in use any more.

One thing to note is that you need to be careful when writing or pronouncing them. They are written smaller and they are pronounced by gliding to the Y-sound and not pronouncing the "i" sound. Doing it otherwise might get you a completely different word.

Here's an example: りゅう means "dragon," but りゆう means "reason."

Another one is きょう meaning "today." However, when you pronounce the "i" sound and say きよう, it means "handy" or "skilled."

Let's see all the characters again. や, ゆ, よ.

And the digraphs: きゃ, きゅ, きょ. ぎゃ, ぎゅ, ぎょ.

しゃ, しゅ, しょ. じゃ, じゅ, じょ.

ちゃ, ちゅ, ちょ. にゃ, にゅ, にょ.

ひゃ, ひゅ, ひょ. びゃ, びゅ, びょ. ぴゃ, ぴゅ, ぴょ.

みゃ, みゅ, みょ. りゃ, りゅ, りょ.

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?

よ.

ほ.

ゆ. The magical UNICORN.

や.

の.

あ. Remember the APPLE?

し.

ゆめ. It means "dream."

やま. やま is "mountain."

やすい. This means "cheap."

りょうり. りょうり means "cooking." Are you good at it?

かいしゃ. It means "company,"

じゅうどう. じゅうどう is a national sport of Japan.

しゅくだい. This means "homework." You'd better do it!

びょういん. It means "hospital." You don't want to confuse it with びょういん meaning "hairstylist"

Great job! Do you like listening to Japanese songs? Try finding the lyrics in Japanese with furigana online and practice your hiragana by reading them and eventually singing them!

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

In this lesson, you learned the hiragana characters や, ゆ, and よ and all the Japanese digraphs.

よくできました！ You've now mastered 43 characters and 99 Japanese syllables: Wow!

We're going to finish up hiragana in the next lesson with the last 3 characters – わ, を, and ん, so don't miss it!

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

And to learn MORE Japanese, go to JapanesePod101.com.

Are you an anime fan? Japanese anime is so popular that many people try to incorporate it into their language learning routine. So, by popular demand, we've made a list of the best animes to help you learn Japanese! Check out our list of The Top 10 Anime To Help You Learn Japanese now!

See you in the next lesson! またね！