

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

# How to Write in Japanese: Hiragana and Katakana #10 The Hiragana W Column Plus N

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# 10

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

You've learned these 43 hiragana characters from the previous lessons.

In this lesson, you'll learn three new characters, and just 2 new sounds. Yes, you've learned one of them before. Stay tuned to find out which one.

わをん

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

Do you remember that the hiragana character は is pronounced as "wa" if it's a particle? Well, the "wa" sound is actually signified by this character as well. わ!

To remember わ, think of it as a SWAN behind a number ONE

Many people have a hard time distinguishing between ね, れ and わ because their left halves all look the same.

Hopefully our mnemonics can come to the rescue. Remember, ね is a SNAIL with a spiral in its shell, れ is a REINDEER looking up in the sky, and わ is a WHITE SWAN wading on the water.

Hiragana わ is written in 2 strokes.

It starts the same way as the characters similar to it, so it starts with a vertical line that goes from top to bottom.

The second stroke starts with a short horizontal line that passes the first stroke. It then goes diagonally to the left passing the first stroke again and retraces back, but this time it makes a big curve and you're done.

Ok, let's see it again.

The third hiragana for this lesson is を. を. It is also commonly said as "o." "o."

Try to think of を as a crack in the WALL.

を is a very distinct character. It is never used in a word but instead it functions as the object marking particle.

So whenever you see it, that means that the word before it is the object of the sentence.

For example, りんごをたべました。 This means "(I) ate an apple." The object of the verb たべました or "ate" is りんご or "apple," and it's the one that comes before を

Hiragana を is written in 3 strokes.

The first stroke is a horizontal line going from left to right.

The second stroke starts as a diagonal line that crosses the first stroke then turns and makes a hump. It should end lower than where it turned.

The third stroke is a curved line that starts from here and intersects the second stroke on the humped part.

Ok, let's see it again.

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

This one's easy. It looks like an italicized N.

Hiragana ん is also special because you can never start a word with it. It could only be found in the middle or end of words.

One more thing that's special about ん is that its pronunciation varies a bit depending on the syllable that comes after it.

It can sometimes have an "mm" sound when it comes before a B or P-sound. For example: こんぶ, and かんぱい. And sometimes it can have an "ng" sound when it comes before a "g" sound, like in はんがく.

Hiragana ん is written in 1 stroke.

It starts out as a diagonal line going down to the left. Then it turns and retraces a bit before making a wave. Flick your pen at the end.

Ok, let's see it again.

Let's see all the characters again. わ, を or "o" and finally, ん.

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?

を. It looks like a crack in the WALL, right?

よ.

ば.

げ.

Which one is the hiragana わ? [pause 3 sec] It's this one!

ん.

しよ. Remember it's not しよ. It's しよ.

かわ. This means "river."

えん. It means "circle." It's also the Japanese currency, yen. In Japanese, we call it えん.

わたし. わたし is "I."

おんがく. This means "music!"

しんぶん. It's a "newspaper." Since after ん comes ぶ, we pronounce it as "mm." しんぶん.

おかあさん. おかあさん means "mother."

みずをのむ. This means "to drink water."

やさいをたべる. This means "to eat vegetables."

Great job! Did you know? There used to be hiragana characters for "wi" and "we"? However, just like how を is pronounced interchangeably as "o", "wi" and "we" was also pronounced as the vowels "i" and "e" so they became obsolete. You never know,

but maybe を might become obsolete in the future as well.

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

In this lesson, you learned the hiragana characters わ, を, and ん.

よくできました！ You've now mastered all 46 hiragana characters and all 101 Japanese syllables!

Here are the 46 hiragana characters. They are used mainly for Japanese words and as grammatical particles.

These are the five vowel sounds and the rest are a combination of a consonant and a vowel sound except for ん.

This is the "dakuten" or "ten ten" mark that makes the consonant of the syllable voiced. It can modify the characters under the K, S, T, and H columns.

On the other hand, this is the "handakuten" or "maru" mark and it's exclusively used for the H column. It makes the consonant sound plosive.

Japanese digraphs are formed by adding a small や, ゆ, or よ to a consonant + an "i" syllable. They are pronounced by gliding to the Y-sound and not pronouncing the "i."

Pronunciation of hiragana characters is always the same except for these characters with alternate pronunciations:

は is pronounced "wa" when it is used as the topic-marking particle.

へ is pronounced "e" when it is used as a preposition.

を is actually more commonly pronounced as "o."

And ん can sometimes be pronounced "mm" or "ng," depending on the syllable that comes after it.

Congratulations! You now know all the syllable sounds native to Japanese! But wait! We're not done yet. Did you know that around 10% of Japanese is made of loan words from English? You will already know many Japanese words just by learning the loan words in katakana, so you definitely don't want to miss out on them.

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

And to learn MORE Japanese, go to [JapanesePod101.com](http://JapanesePod101.com).

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See you in the next lesson! またね !