

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Ultimate Japanese Pronunciation Guide #5

Perfect Pronunciation of Japanese Consonants – Group 2

5

Hi everyone! I'm Michelle Yamamoto.

Welcome back to The Ultimate Japanese Pronunciation Guide at JapanesePod101.com.

In this lesson, you'll master the second of 2 consonant groups.

Again, this group will be broken down into rows. The m-row is next.

ま、み、む、め、も

The consonant m is the same as the English "m"-sound as in "map". Close the mouth, put the lips together and make the nasal sound, "m".

Repeat after me.

ま

み

む

め

も

Did you notice that when you say み, the tongue position changed? The front of your tongue is raised to the roof of the mouth, because it's influenced by the following "i" sound.

み

み

Next is the y-row. There are only three sounds of this group in modern Japanese

や、ゆ、よ

y-sound is the same as "y" at the start of the English word "you". The position of the mouth and the tongue is the same as "い", but it moves to the next vowel.

Repeat after me.

や

ゆ

よ

The next group is the "r" row.

ら、り、る、れ、ろ

When you say "r" in Japanese, you lightly tap the teethridge that's just behind your top row of teeth with the tongue. It's very different from the English r-sound. It's actually similar to the "l" sound. Don't roll your tongue.

Ready? Repeat after me.

ら

り

る

れ

ろ

Now onto some words.

Repeat after

me.

りす squirrel、り・す、りす

りす

からい spicy、か・ら・い、 からい

からい

Next is the w-row. There are only two sounds in this group in modern Japanese.

わ を

The "w" in わ is similar to the English w-sound, however, ease the pressure a little when you round the lips.

Repeat after me.

わ

わ

The を sound is grouped in this consonant w-group, but it's pronounced the same as お in Japanese.

Repeat after me.

を

を

The final consonant is "ん".

"ん" can stand alone, and is a syllable on its own.

ん, ん

Block the breath flow far back in the mouth so that the breath flows only to the nose.

This is known as a nasal sound.

Repeat after me.

ん

ん

Practice this sound with words.

えん、yen、え・ん、えん

えん

にほん、Japan、に・ほ・ん、 にほん

にほん

What about this word?

If you put the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth when you say ん, you would say...

ほんにゃく instead of ほんやく

Make sure you don't touch the tip of your tongue in any place in your mouth when you say ん. Instead, it should be suspended in the empty mouth space.

Be careful of this word too.

せんえん、one thousand yen,

せ・ん・え・ん、せんえん

Don't say せんねん.

Make sure that you keep the tip of your tongue suspended in the empty space, and don't touch it to any particular part, and say せんえん.

せんえん

Okay, the last pattern is when consonants such as "p", "b", "m", "t", "g" or "k" come after "ん" such as .

In some cases, the sound "ん" is influenced by a following consonant.

The first case is...

うんめい destiny, う・ん・め・い、うんめい

It sounds more like an "m" sound because it's influenced by the following consonant, "m" sound.

うんめい

Can you tell the difference with the ん sound in this word?

さんか participation, さ・ん・か、さんか

The transition between the ん and か sounds like the nasal sound "ng".

Again, さんか

Okay, repeat after me.

えん, yen, え・ん、えん

えん

うんめい destiny, う・ん・め・い、うんめい

うんめい

さんか participation, さ・ん・か、さんか

さんか

Congratulations! You've now learned all 46 of the basic sounds in Japanese. You've learned many words already, so now you should practice saying words you know. Have you ever seen kana characters with little marks on them? You'll learn how to pronounce them in the next lesson.

How confident are you about your pronunciation of "ra", "ri", "ru", "re", "ro"? Tell us about it in the comments!

See you in the next Ultimate Japanese Pronunciation Guide lesson!