

# **A BASIC COURSE IN JAPANESE**

**Compiled by**

**Mr Busareddy Vijaya Kumar**

**Ms Rekha P R**

Faculty of Japanese Language

Department of English and Foreign Languages

SRM Institute of Science and Technology

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## PREFACE

This book is prepared primarily to meet the requirements of engineering students to acquire a basic knowledge in Japanese language in the course of 30 hours.

The objective of this book is to empower the students to possess good conversational skills in Japanese language together with the understanding of Japanese culture. However, attempt is also made to encourage the students to learn the native scripts viz, Hiragana, Katakana and basic Kanjis, which are Chinese characters that form part of the Japanese language writing system.

The lessons are prepared in such a manner that basic grammar is introduced right from the beginning. The lessons are aimed at enabling the students to speak the language that will be applicable to daily life situations. The main lessons are written in Hiragana script with Romaji (Roman script) and English side by side for better understanding. The vocabulary and meanings, grammar and exercises for each lesson is also given at the end of each lesson.

A brief description about Japan, its culture and society is given in the Glossary in English. Adjectives, verbs and N5 Kanjis are given in the Additional Information section. All this information has been procured from the internet. A glossary of terms such as greetings, family relationships, time expression, numbers, etc. is also appended for reference at the end of every lesson. Hiragana and Katakana practice charts are included to practise the scripts.

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Chennai

# LESSONS



## Lesson 1

### Jiko Shoukai

(Mr Raja, an Electrical engineer from India goes to Japan for a training programme. He meets Mr Tanaka for the first time)



たなか

田 中 : はじめまして、わたしは  
田中です。にほんじんです。にほんごの きょうし  
です。

どうぞ よろしく。

ラジャ: はじめまして、わたしは ラジャ です。  
インドじん です。 エンジニアです。  
よろしくおねがいします。

田 中 : ラジャさんの せんもんは なんですか。

ラジャ: でんきこうがく です。

田 中 : ああ、そうですか。

----- After some time -----

ラジャ: じゃあ、また。

田 中 : じゃあ、また。

**Tanaka:** Hajimemashite, watashi wa Tanaka  
desu. Nihonjin desu. Nihongo no  
kyoushi desu. Douzo yoroshiku.

**Raja:** Hajimemashite, watashi wa Raja  
desu. Indojin desu. Enjinia desu.  
Yoroshiku onegaishimasu.

**Tanaka:** Raja san no senmon wa nan desu ka.

**Raja:** Denki kougaku desu.

**Tanaka:** Aa, sou desu ka.

----- After some time -----

**Raja:** Jaa, mata.

**Tanaka:** Jaa, mata.

**Tanaka:** How do you do? I am Tanaka. I am a  
Japanese teacher from Japan.  
Pleased to meet you.

**Raja:** How do you do? I am Raja. I am an  
Engineer from India. Nice to meet  
you.

**Tanaka:** What is your specialization, Mr Raja?

**Raja:** Electrical Engineering.

**Tanaka:** Oh, I see.

----- After some time -----

**Raja:** See you later.

**Tanaka:** See you later.

## れんしゅう /Renshuu I (Simple dialogues)

A) Kimura desu.

1. Watanabe    2. Hayashi    3. Yamada    4. Lakshmi    5. Thomas    6. Susan

B) Indojin desu.

1. Nihon    2. Chuugoku    3. Furansu    4. Doitsu    5. Kankoku

C) Watashi wa kyouushi desu.

1. gakusei    2. bengoshi    3. Isha    4. keisatsukan    5. gijutsusha    6. kangoshi

D) Tanaka san wa sensei desu.

1. Hayashi, isha    2. Raja, enjinia    3. Kiran, bengoshi  
4. Thomas, keisatsukan    5. Susan, kangoshi

## れんしゅう /Renshuu 2

A) Watashi wa kyouushi dewa arimasen.

1. gakusei    2. bengoshi    3. isha    4. keisatsukan    5. gijutsusha    6. kangoshi

B) Watashi wa Indojin dewa arimasen.

1. Amerika    2. Chuugoku    3. Mareeshia    4. Furansu    5. Doitsu    6. Kankoku

C) Watashi wa Tanaka dewa arimasen.

1. Matsuyama    2. Watanabe    3. Hayashi    4. Yamada    5. Kiran    6. Satomi

れんしゅう /Renshuu 3

**Reddy:** Tanaka san wa sensei desu ka.

**Raja:** Hai sou desu.

1. gakusei 2. bengoshi 3. isha 4. keisatsukan 5. gijutsusha 6. kangoshi **Kiran:** Susan san wa oishasan desu ka.

**Raja:** Iie, isha dewa arimasen, kangoshi desu.

**Kiran:** Sou desu ka.

1. gakusei, sensei 2. bengoshi, gakusei 3. keisatsukan, gunjin 4. gijutsusha, nouka

れんしゅう /Renshuu 4

**Thomas:** Yamada san wa Nihonjin desu ka?

**Susan:** Hai, Yamada san wa Nihonjin desu.

**Thomas:** Watanabe san mo Nihonjin desu ka?

**Susan:** Hai, Watanabe san mo Nihonjin desu.

**Thomas:** Wan san mo?

**Susan:** Iie, (Wan san wa Nihonjin ja arimasen.) Chuugokujin desu.

1. Indo, indonesia 2. Furansu, Kanada 3. Doitsu, Amerika

れんしゅう /Renshuu 5 (Introducing someone) **Tanaka:** Raja

san, kochira wa Kimura san desu. **Kimura:**

Hajimemashite, Kimura desu. Douzo yoroshiku. **Raja:**

*Raja* desu. Douzo yoroshiku.

1. Matsuyama 2. Watanabe 3. Hayashi 4. Yamada 4. *Kiran* 5. Satomi

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## Exercises

### I) Fill in the blanks with particles

1. Hayashi san\_\_\_ sensei desu.
2. Kimura san\_\_\_ Nihonjin desu\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Hirayama san \_\_\_Nihongo\_\_\_\_sensei desu.
4. Watashi \_\_\_ gakusei desu. Anata\_\_\_gakusei desu ka.
5. Tanaka san\_\_\_gijutsusha desu\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Kimura san\_\_\_\_\_ oisha san desu\_\_\_\_\_.
7. Hayashi san \_\_\_ eigo\_\_\_sensei desu. Hirayama san\_\_\_sensei desu.
8. *Sumisu* san \_\_\_ *Amerikajin* desu. *Tomu* san \_\_\_\_\_*Amerikajin* desu.
9. Watanabe san \_\_ Nippon Denshi\_\_\_bengoshi desu.
10. *Maria* san wa *Aporo* byouin \_\_\_\_\_kangoshi desu.

### II) Rearrange the following sentences

1. wa/desu/san/*Raja*/jin/*Indo*
2. keisatsukan/arimasen/wa/dewa/*Kiran*/san
3. sensei/san/nihongo/wa/Kimura/desu/no
4. isha/watashi/arimasen/wa/dewa/iie
5. san/mo/Watanabe/desu/nihonjin/ka

### III) Translate the following sentences into Japanese (Romaji)

1. I am Hayashi.
  2. Is Mr Suzuki a teacher of Japanese language?
  3. Ms Sakura is not a student.
  4. My specialization is electrical engineering.
  5. Is Mr *Ravi* also an *Indian*?
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## Kono lesson no kotoba

しごと	<b>shigoto</b>	<b>work, occupation</b>
きょうし	kyoushi	teacher (while addressing self)
せんせい	sensei	teacher (while addressing others)
がくせい	gakusei	student
べんごし	bengoshi	lawyer
いしゃ	isha	doctor
かんごし	kangoshi	nurse
けいさつかん	keisatsukan	police
ぐんじん	gunjin	military person
のうか	nouka	farmer
ぎじゅつしゃ	gijutsusha	engineer
エンジニア	<i>enjinia</i>	engineer
くに	<b>kuni</b>	<b>country</b>
にほん	Nihon	Japan
ドイツ	<i>Doitsu</i>	Germany
かんこく	Kankoku	Korea
ちゅうごく	Chuugoku	China
アメリカ	<i>Amerika</i>	America
インド	<i>Indo</i>	India
マレーシア	<i>Mareeshia</i>	Malaysia
フランス	<i>Furansu</i>	France
イギリス	<i>Igirisu</i>	England
<b>pronoun</b>		
わたし	watashi	I
あなた	anata	you
こちら	kochira	this (he/she)
<b>other</b>		
せんもん	senmon	speciality
でんきこうがく	denki kougaku	electrical engineering
びょういん	byouin	hospital
えいご	eigo	English (language)

あいさつ                      aisatsu  
 はじめまして              hajimemashite  
 どうぞよろしく douzo yoroshiku  
 おねがいします onegai shimasu  
 じゃあ、また              jaa, mata

**greeting**

How do you do? \*first meeting only  
 Glad to meet you  
 I ask your favour  
 Well, (see you) again

**Answer for closed question**

はい                      hai                      yes  
 いいえ                      iie                      no

そう です                      sou desu                      it is so  
 そう ですか                      sou desu ka                      I see (*flat pronunciation*)/  
    Is that so? (*rising intonation*)

**Bunpou**

は                      wa                      Topic marker  
 か                      ka                      question tag  
 の                      no                      belong(s) to/of/from/'s  
 も                      mo                      also

です                      desu                      am/is/are  
 では ありません                      dewa arimasen                      am not/is not/are not

～じん                      ~jin                      suffix denoting nationality  
 ～ご                      ~go                      suffix denoting language  
 ～さん                      ~san                      suffix denoting Mr/Ms (title)

## Grammar notes

Noun1 は Noun2 です

Eg: Watanabe san wa bengoshi desu.

Wa - Topic marker. Sound is “wa” but 「は」 is used for writing to show that it is a particle.

**wa** follows noun1 singling it out as the topic of the sentence. Bengoshi is noun2 and the phrase is concluded with **desu**.

**Desu** is a copula meaning am/are/is.

Noun1 は noun2 です か。

はい、noun1 は noun2 です。

いいえ、noun1 は noun2 では/じゃ ありません。

Eg: *Susan* san wa oishasan desu ka?

Hai, oishasan desu.

lie, oishasan dewa/ja arimasen

**ka**-the question marker

It is easy to make questions in Japanese. Simply place the particle ‘ka’ at the end of the sentence. No change in word order is required.

**Hai/lie**

Hai means Yes and lie means No

**Desu** - is/am/are

**Dewa/ja arimasen**

Dewa/ja arimasen is the negative form of desu. Ja is more informal than dewa. The chart below summarizes the forms of desu.

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Present form	
Affirmative	Negative
desu	dewa arimasen
Is	Is not

さん is a title of respect added to a person's name, so it cannot be used after one's own name.

さん is used with both male and female names, and with either surnames or given names.

こちら—(this one) implies “this person here” and is a polite way of saying “this person” and is used when introducing one person to another.

の - The particle **no** attaches itself to nouns, and the noun-no combination modifies the word that comes after it. **No** expresses belonging /possession/association/affiliation.

も - particle means also. When it appears, other particles are cut; は、が and so on

よろしくおねがいします。

A phrase used when being introduced. “Yoroshiku onegaishimasu” is usually combined with “hajimemashite”. It is also used when taking leave of someone after having asked a favour.

**GREETINGS**

おはようございます	Ohayou gozaimasu	good morning
こんにちは	Konnichiwa	hello, good afternoon
こんばんは	Konbanwa	good evening
おやすみなさい	Oyasuminasa	good night
さようなら	Sayounara	good bye

**CLASSROOM EXPRESSIONS**

はじめましょう	Hajimemashou	Let's begin
おわりましょう	Owarimashou	Let's finish
わかりましたか	Wakarimashita ka	Did you understand?
はい、わかりました	Hai, wakarimashita	Yes, I understood
いいえ、わかりません	Iie, wakarimasen	No, I don't understand
すみません	Sumimasen	Excuse me, sorry
しつれいします	Shitsurei shimasu	Sorry (for being impolite)
もういちど、おねがいします	Mou ichido onegai shimasu	Once more please
ありがとうございます	Arigatou gozaimasu	Thank you very much
どういたしまして	Dou itashimashite	You're welcome

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# ESSAYS

## 1. JAPAN – GENERAL INFORMATION



Japan is an archipelago (group) of 6,852 islands. The four largest islands are Honshuu, Hokkaidou, Kyuushuu and Shikoku, together accounting for ninety-seven percent of Japan's land area. Japan has the world's tenth-largest population, with over 127 million people.

Japan is over 70% mountainous terrain with approximately 18% of the land mass suitable for settlement. Japanese cities are typically sprawling and densely populated. Tokyo, a megalopolis and capital of Japan, is located on Honshu island. Central Tokyo has a population of 12 million people, with the population of the Greater Tokyo Area estimated at over 35 million people. Japan is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Mount Fuji is Japan's highest point and the city of Tokyo, Japan's capital is the largest city of Japan.

Although Japan enjoys mostly a temperate climate, it varies from North to South. The climate

of Japan is basically wet and humid and is marked in most places by four distinct seasons. The Pacific Ring of Fire however makes Japan extremely vulnerable to volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis. Typhoons are predominant all over Japan which brings heavy rains. Japan is very seismically active with over 1,500 earthquakes per year.

Japan's tourism thrives on all its natural resources like the Hot Springs. Japan is also noted worldwide for its martial arts and Sumou wrestling, which is the national sport of Japan.

The two major religions in Japan are Shintoism and Buddhism. Religion does not play a major role in the life of the average Japanese, but people usually have religious ceremonies at births, weddings, and funerals. On New Year's Day visiting a temple or shrine is also a common custom.

Japanese is the official language of Japan. Many Japanese also have some ability in writing and speaking English as it is a mandatory part of the curriculum in the Japanese educational system. Japanese uses four different writing systems; Kanji (Chinese characters), Hiragana (phonetic alphabet for native words), Katakana (phonetic alphabet for foreign words), and Romaji (western alphabet used to write Japanese). Japanese vocabulary has been strongly influenced by loanwords from other languages, with most loanwords coming from Chinese and English.

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The national flag of Japan is a white rectangular flag with a large red disc (representing the sun) in the center. This flag is officially called Nisshouki, "sun-mark flag" in Japanese, but is more commonly known as Hi no maru, "circle of the sun".



The circle in the middle of the flag represents the sun. Japan's name – Nihon - translates to "The land of the rising sun". The white represents honesty and purity and the red disc is a sun symbol meaning brightness, sincerity and warmth.

**Official Name:** Nippon/ Nihon

**Government:** Parliamentary with constitutional monarchy

**Era:** REIWA mean 'fortunate' or 'peace' or 'harmony'

**Emperor:** Naruhito (since May 2019)

**Prime Minister:** Yoshihide Suga (since September 2020)

**Capital:** Tokyo

**Population:** 126.5 million (2018)

**Area:** 377,965 sq km

**Major Cities:** Tokyo, Kyoto, Yokohama, Osaka, Sapporo

**GDP:** 4.97 Trillion (2018)

**Religion:** Shintoism and Buddhism

**Industries:** Consumer electronics, motor vehicles, machine tools, steel, and nonferrous metals

**Exports:** Motor vehicles, semiconductors, and office machinery

**Agriculture:** Rice, sugar beets, vegetables, fruit, pork, fish

**Currency:** Yen

**Literacy Rate:** 99%

**Unemployment Rate:** 4%

**Climate:** From dry winter to humid summer

