

# **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.

We, the faculty members hereby acknowledge that we are highly indebted to our **Ryoko Iseda sensei**, who was formerly, the senior Japanese language advisor from the Japan Foundation, New Delhi for her valuable suggestions and corrections made by her in the preparation of this book. We also express our sincere thanks to our sensei Ms. Vimala Solomon, Director, Surya Nihongo Gakko, Madurai, who gave her valuable suggestions towards the preparation of this book. A special mention about **Hideyuki Fujisawa sensei** and **Ms. Chiho BABA** our voluntary teachers from JICA, Japan for their invaluable contribution in bringing out this book to suit the needs of the learners.

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We also express our sincere gratitude to the SRM Management, the Director (Engineering & Technology) for facilitating the department to hold seminars and workshops conducted by Japan foundation, New Delhi, for improving our teaching methodology in Japanese on couple of occasions. These seminars prompted us to write a book for the use of our own students of Japanese language.

Chennai

# LESSONS

## Lesson 2

### Are wa nan desu ka

せんせい：これは なん ですか。

がくせい：それは えんぴつ です。

せんせい：これも えんぴつ ですか。

がくせい：いいえ、それは えんぴつ では ありません。ペンです。

せんせい：あれは なん ですか。

がくせい：あれは まど です。

せんせい：この かばんは あなたの ですか。

がくせい：はい、わたしの です。

せんせい：かばんの なかに なにが ありますか。

がくせい：ほんが あります。

せんせい：あの へやに だれが いますか。

がくせい：わたなべ せんせいが います。





**Sensei:** Kore wa nan desu ka.

**Gakusei:** Sore wa enpitsu desu.

**Sensei:** Kore mo enpitsu desu ka.

**Gakusei:** Iie, sore wa enpitsu dewa arimasen.  
*Pen desu.*



**Teacher:** What is this?

**Student:** That is a pencil.

**Teacher:** Is this also a pencil.

**Student:** No, that is not a pencil. (That's a) pen.



**Sensei:** Are wa nan desu ka.

**Gakusei:** Are wa mado desu.

**Sensei:** Kono kaban wa anata no desu ka.

**Gakusei:** Hai, watashi no desu.

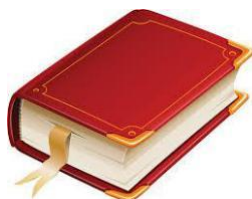


**Teacher:** What is that (over there)?

**Student:** That's a window.

**Teacher:** Is this bag yours?

**Student:** Yes, it's mine.



**Sensei:** Kaban no naka ni nani ga arimasu ka.

**Gakusei:** Hon ga arimasu.

**Sensei:** Ano heya ni dare ga imasu ka.

**Gakusei:** Watanabe sensei ga imasu.

**Teacher:** What is inside the bag?

**Student:** There is a book

**Teacher:** Who is inside that room (over there)?

**Student:** Prof. Watanabe is there.



## れんしゅう /Renshuu

1. A: Kono kaban wa dare no desu ka.  
B: Sono kaban wa watashi no desu.  
1. *Ravi* san    2. Yamada san    3. sensei    4. anata
2. Kaban no naka ni nani ga arimasu ka.  
1. heya    2. kyoushitsu    3. Hako
3. A: Tsukue no ue ni nani ga arimasu ka.  
B: Tsukue no ue ni hon ga arimasu.  
1. Isu, shita, kutsu    2. Kaban, naka, saifu
4. A: Sono heya ni dare ga imasu ka.  
B: Kono heya ni Yamada san ga imasu.  
1. sensei    2. gakusei    3. *Raja* san
5. A: Anata no enpitsu wa dore desu ka.  
B: Watashi no enpitsu wa kore desu.  
1. kasa, sore    2. kaban, are

6. Kono kaban wa dare no desu ka.

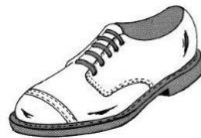
1. kasa

2. kutsu

3. boushi

4. *nooto*

5. tokei



6. Variation Q: Anata no kaban wa dore desuka?

A: (watashino wa) kore desu.

7. Q: Anata no kasa wa kore desu ka.

A: (yes) Hai, sore desu.

(no) lie, (sore ja arimasen.) Eetto... kore desu.

1. *Ravi* san, hon (yes)

2. *Raja* san, enpitsu (yes)

3. *Kumar* san, boushi (no, あれ)

7. Variation Q: Kore wa anata no kasa desu ka?

A: Hai, sou desu. Watashino desu.

A: lie, chigaimasu. Watashino ja arimasen.

## Exercises

### I) Fill in the blanks

1. Kore \_\_\_\_ hon \_\_\_\_.
2. Kaban \_\_\_\_ naka \_\_\_\_ enpitsu \_\_\_\_ arimasu.
3. Kono saifu \_\_\_\_ watashi \_\_\_\_ desu.
4. Saifu \_\_\_\_ naka \_\_\_\_ nani \_\_\_\_ arimasu \_\_\_\_.
5. Kutsu wa isu \_\_\_\_ shita \_\_\_\_ arimasu.

### II) Rearrange the following sentences

1. ka/ga/ni/no/kaban/nani/naka/arimasu
2. *Raja* / heya/wa/ka/ni/imasu/san
3. ka/anata/kasa/no/wa/dore/desu
4. Watashi kasa/kore/no/desu/wa
5. desu/wa/kono/dareno/kutsu/ka

### III) Translate into Japanese

1. This is a hat.
2. Whose bag is this?
3. That watch is mine.
4. Which is your umbrella?
5. Where is Mr Hayashi?

Mr Hayashi is in that room over there.

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## Kono lesson no kotoba

**Prepositions**

うえ	ue	on, up, top, above
なか	naka	in, inside
した	shita	below, under

**Stationery**

えんぴつ	enpitsu	pencil
ペン	<i>pen</i>	pen
ボールペン	<i>boorupen</i>	ball point pen
まんねんひつ	mannenhitsu	fountain pen
けしゴム	keshigomu	eraser
かみ	kami	paper
ノート	<i>nooto</i>	notebook
ほん	hon	book

**Place**

へや	heya	room
きょうしつ	kyoushitsu	classroom
へやのなか	<b>heya no naka</b>	<b>Inside the room</b>
まど	mado	window
つくえ	tsukue	desk
いす	isu	chair

**Other**

はこ	hako	box
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**Objects**

ぼうし	boushi	hat, cap
とけい	tokei	watch, clock
さいふ	saifu	purse
かばん	kaban	bag
かさ	kasa	umbrella
くつ	kutsu	shoe

**Pronoun**

あなた	anata	you
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**Possession**

あなたの	anatano	yours
わたしの	watashino	mine
～の	～no	[name]'s one

**Bunpou****Demonstrative**

これ	kore	this
それ	sore	that
あれ	are	that, over there
どれ	dore	which

この～	kono ～	this ～
その～	sono ～	that ～
あの～	ano ～	that ～over there
どの～	dono ～	which ～

**Interrogative**

どなた／だれ	donata/dare	who (polite/plain)
なん／なに	nan/nani	what

**Verb**

あります	arimasu	to be/have/exist (inanimate)
います	imasu	to be/have/exist (animate)

**Particle**

に	ni	in
が	ga	subject marker

**Grammar**

じゃ ありません	ja arimasen	am/is/are not
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## Grammar notes

### Demonstrative pronouns

The Japanese language has three separate demonstrative pronouns: kore/sore/are, which demonstrate objects:

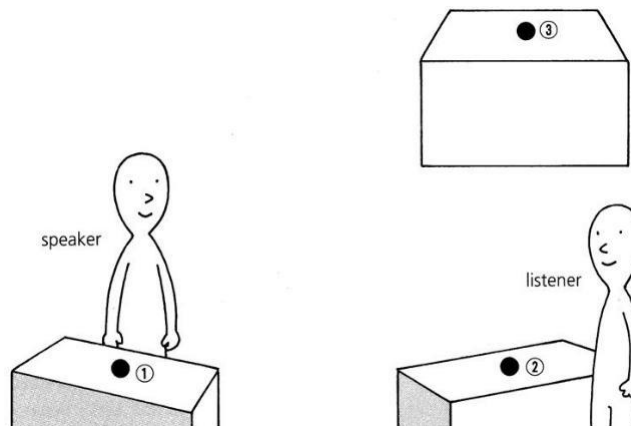
(see pictures below)

#### Pattern 1 (the speaker is away from the listener)

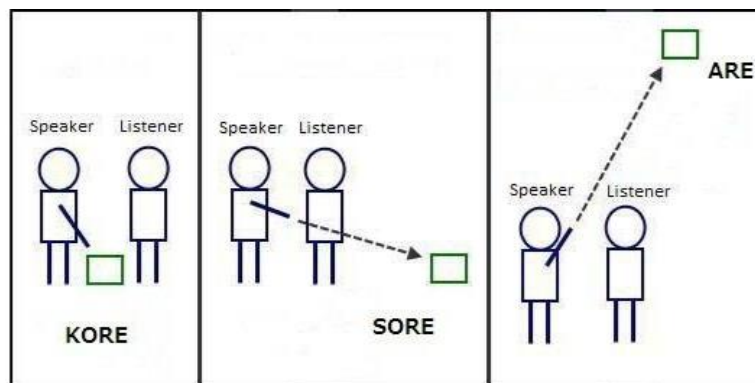
これ: indicates something near the speaker ○ 1

それ: indicates something near the listener ○ 2

あれ: indicates something away from both speaker and listener ○ 3



#### Pattern 2 (the speaker is close to the listener)



これ/それ/あれ **は** noun **です**。

Eg: Kore wa hon desu. This is a book.

The interrogative **どれ** means *which object*.

Eg: anata no hon wa dore desu ka?

The prenominals **kono/sono/ano** modify nouns and demonstrate people as well as objects.

この/その/あの **Noun1 は Noun2 です**。

Eg: Kono **hon wa watashino** desu.

Kono **hon wa eigo no hon** desu.

Kono **kata wa oishasan** desu.

### Existence of people and things

Japanese use the verb –Arimasu/Imasu to express *being* or *having*, i.e. *existence* or *possession*.

**あります** is used for inanimate things (trees, books, buildings, etc) **います** is used for animate things (people, animals, insects) The particle **に** means “in” or “at” a place.

The subject marker **が** is used when a subject is introduced for the first time, or when the speaker believes the information to be new to the listener. For instance, **ga** should be used when someone or something unknown to the listener is in/at a particular place.

Noun **が** あります/います。

Eg: Hondana ni hon ga arimasu.

Kyoushitsu ni *Mohan* san ga imasu.

gawa➡

**Wa** is the topic marker which is used when you give your opinion/comment regarding something/someone. Even to say where he/she/it exists, use **wa** instead of **ga**.

Noun **は** place **に** arimasu/imasu.

Eg: Eigo no hon wa hondana ni arimasu.

*Mohan* san wa kyoushitsu ni imasu.

## DAYS OF THE WEEK

にちようび	nichiyoubi	Sunday
げつようび	getsuyoubi	Monday
かようび	kayoubi	Tuesday
すいようび	suiyoubi	Wednesday
もくようび	mokuyoubi	Thursday
きんようび	kinyoubi	Friday
どようび	doyoubi	Saturday
なんようび	nanyoubi	what day

平成19年 3月						
日	月	火	水	木	金	土
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## MONTHS OF THE YEAR

いちがつ	ichi gatsu	January
にがつ	ni gatsu	February
さんがつ	san gatsu	March
しがつ	shi gatsu	April
ごがつ	go gatsu	May
ろくがつ	roku gatsu	June
しちがつ	shichi gatsu	July
はちがつ	hachi gatsu	August
くがつ	ku gatsu	September
じゅうがつ	juu gatsu	October
じゅういちがつ	juu ichi gatsu	November
じゅうにがつ	juu ni gatsu	December
なんがつ	nangatsu	which month?
こんげつ	kongetsu	this month

January

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					

February

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

March

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

April

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

May

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

June

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

July

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

August

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

September

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

October

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

November

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

December

Va	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

## 2. まつり /MATSURI - FESTIVALS OF JAPAN

Matsuri is the Japanese word for a festival or holiday. In Japan, festivals are usually sponsored by a local shrine or temple, though they can be secular.

### おしょうがつ /Oshougatsu (O is an honorific prefix) - New Year

Date: 1–3 of January (related celebrations take place throughout January)

New Year observances are the most elaborate of Japan's annual events. Before the New Year, homes are cleaned, debts are paid off, and osechi is prepared or bought. Osechi foods are traditional foods which are chosen for their lucky colors, shapes, or lucky-sounding names in the hope of obtaining good luck in various areas of life during the new year. Homes are decorated, and the

holidays are celebrated by family gatherings, visits to temples or shrines. Ganjitsu (The first day of the year) is usually spent with members of the family. People also visit Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines.



### ひなまつり /Hina-matsuri - Doll Festival

Date: March 3



This is the day families pray for the happiness and prosperity of their girls and to help ensure that they grow up healthy and beautiful. The celebration takes place inside the home and is meant to ward off evil spirits from girls. Young girls put on their best kimonos and visit their friends' homes. Tiered platforms for hina ningyô (hina dolls; a set of dolls representing the emperor, empress, attendants, and musicians in ancient court dress) are set up in the home, and the family celebrates with a special meal of hishimochi (diamond-shaped rice cakes) and shirozake (rice malt with sake).

### こどものひ /Kodomo no hi - Children's Day

Date: May 5

It is customary on this day for families with male children to fly koinobori (carp streamers, a symbol of success) outside the house, display musha ningyô (warrior dolls) inside, and eat chimaki (rice cakes wrapped in cogan grass or bamboo leaves) and kashiwamochi (rice cakes filled with bean paste and wrapped in oak leaves).



## たなばた/*Tanabata* - The Star Festival



Date: July 7

It originated from a Chinese folk legend concerning two stars-the Weaver Star; Vega and the Cowherd Star; Altair -who were said to be lovers- who could meet only once a year on the 7th night of the 7th month provided it didn't rain and flood the Milky Way. People often write wishes and romantic aspirations on long, narrow strips of coloured paper and hang them on bamboo branches along with other small ornaments.

## とうろうながし/*Tourou Nagash* - Lantern Floating



Date: 15th or 16 August

This is a customary practice to mark the end of "obon" in some region. Small paper lanterns containing lit candles are set afloat on rivers or the sea light the way for the ancestral spirits as they depart. Usually a message is written on the outside of the paper lantern.

## しちごさん/*Shichi go san* - "7-5-3" Festival

Date: November 15

Five or three year old boys and seven or three year old girls are taken to the local shrine to pray for their safe and healthy future. This festival started because of the belief that children of certain ages were especially prone to bad luck and hence in need of divine protection. Children are usually dressed in traditional clothing for the occasion and after visiting the shrine many people buy the thousand-year candy (chitose ame) sold at the shrine.



## おおみそか/*Oomisoka* – New year's eve



Date: December 31

People do the general house cleaning (Oosouji) to welcome coming year and not to keep having impure influences. Many people visit Buddhist temples to hear the temple bells rung 108 times at midnight (joya no kane). This is to announce the passing of the old year and the coming of the new. The reason they are rung 108 times is due to the Buddhist belief that human beings are plagued by 108 earthly desires or passions (bonnou). With each ring one desire is dispelled. It is also a custom to eat toshikoshi-soba in the hope that one's family fortunes will extend like the long noodles.

