

Japanese Scripts

The modern Japanese writing system consists of a simplified version of ancient Chinese. It is a fascinating, complex style of writing, the first in Japan. The Japanese writing system can be divided into two parts: Kanji and Kana.

Kana is made of two alphabets, Hiragana and Katakana. Kana is used for flora and fauna. They each have forty-six letters. Hiragana is used for native words or poetry that are not in Kanji. Katakana is used for names or foreign words.

Kanji is a simplified version of Chinese writing. There are 2,000 basic Kanji and thousands of other less common ones. Some Kanji are compound words, meaning they combine more than one Kanji to form another.

Romanji is the pronunciation of the word or character in English to help English speakers understand. Some scripts are written with all three systems.

Japanese originated from Chinese, which began before the Shang Dynasty, about the sixteenth century BC. It began with the oracle bone script, discovered by Liu E., a Chinese scholar, which was written on bones or turtle shells and were supposed to tell future events. Soon after the Shang Dynasty this became the smaller and greater seal scripts, which were written on bronze. Smaller seal script became the official written language during the Han Period. Around that time the clerical or scribe script and cursive was formed because Smaller seal took too long to write. During the late Han Period clerical script became the official script and Smaller seal became just decorative. Around the same time, 220 AD, Block script was formed, and it has been used until the present.

The Yayoi, the first Japanese brought the spoken language with them around 300 BC. The Japanese learned much from China and Korea. From 18-907 AD Japan sent scholars to China and Korea so they could learn the language. They created Kaifuso, a Japanified Chinese, so that they could read the Chinese writings. Later they developed a system where they took the first two sounds of a Chinese meaning and made a symbol, called Man'yō. Man'yō eventually

split into Hiragana and Katakana. The first all Kana book was published in the 900. The language eventually got so complicated that scholars made a restricted character set in 1946.

Japanese is a very intricate language, with a fascinating history.

KATAKANA

ア a	イ i	ウ u	エ e	オ o	カ ka	キ ki	ク ku	ケ ke	コ ko
サ sa	シ shi	ス su	セ se	ソ so	タ ta	チ chi	ツ tsu	テ te	ト to
ナ na	ニ ni	ヌ nu	ネ ne	ノ no	ハ ha	ヒ hi	フ fu	ヘ he	ホ ho
マ ma	ミ mi	ム mu	メ me	モ mo	ヤ ya	ユ yu	ヨ yo	ラ ra	リ ri
	ル ru	レ re	ロ ro	ワ wa	ヲ wo	ン n			

HIRAGANA

あ a	い i	う u	え e	お o	か ka	き kia	く ku	け ke	こ ko
さ sa	し shi	す su	せ se	そ so	た ta	ち chi	つ tsu	て te	と to
な na	に ni	ぬ nu	ね ne	の no	は ha	ひ hi	ふ hu	へ he	ほ ho
ま ma	み mi	む mu	め me	も mo	や ya	ゆ yu	よ yo	ら ra	り ri
	る ru	れ re	ろ ro	わ wa	を wo	ん n			

Japanese Alphabets

KATAKANA

	a	i	u	e	o
	ア	イ	ウ	エ	オ
k	カ	キ	ク	ケ	コ
s	サ	シ	ス	セ	ソ
t	タ	チ	ツ	テ	ト
n	ナ	ニ	ヌ	ネ	ノ
h	ハ	ヒ	フ	ヘ	ホ
m	マ	ミ	ム	メ	モ
y	ヤ		ユ		ヨ
r	ラ	リ	ル	レ	ロ
w	ワ				ヲ
g	ガ	ギ	グ	ゲ	ゴ
z	ザ	ジ	ズ	ゼ	ゾ
d	ダ	ヂ	ヅ	デ	ド
b	バ	ビ	ブ	ベ	ボ
p	パ	ピ	プ	ペ	ポ
/n/	ン				

HIRAGANA

	a	i	u	e	o
	あ	い	う	え	お
k	か	き	く	け	こ
s		し	す	せ	そ
t	た	ち	つ	て	と
n	な	に	ぬ	ね	の
h	は	ひ	ふ	へ	ほ
m	ま	み	む	め	も
y	や		ゆ		よ
r	ら	り	る	れ	ろ
w	わ				を
g	が	ぎ	ぐ	げ	ご
z	ざ	じ	ず	ぜ	ぞ
d	だ	ぢ	づ	で	ど
b	ば	び	ぶ	べ	ぼ
p	ぱ	ぴ	ぷ	ぺ	ぽ
/n/	ん				

OUTLINE

I. Introduction

- A. Introduce subjects
- B. Explain subject

II. Body paragraph 1

- A. Types of scripts
- B. History

III. Body paragraph 2

- A. Examples

V. Conclusion

- A. Wrap it up

Works Cited

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