



## Absolute Beginner S1

### Asking a Japanese Question

9

Kanji	2
Kana	2
Romanization	2
English	2
Vocabulary	2
Phrase Usage	3
Grammar Points	4
Cultural Insight	6

## Kanji

テイラー	これは...おかしですか。
まさと	はい、そうです。日本のおかしです。
かおり	そうです。ようかんです。
テイラー	よ・う・か・ん？

## Kana

テイラー	これは...おかしですか。
まさと	はい、そうです。にほんのおかしです。
かおり	そうです。ようかんです。
テイラー	よ・う・か・ん？

## Romanization

Teirā	Kore wa... o-kashi desu ka.
Masato	Hai, sō desu. Nihon no o-kashi desu.
Kaori	Sō desu. Yōkan desu.
Teirā	Yō.ka.n?

## English

Taylor	Are these sweets?
Masato	Yes, that's right. They're Japanese sweets.
Kaori	Right. They're "yokan."
Taylor	Yo-ka-n?

## Vocabulary

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
肉	にく	niku	meat
これ	これ	kore	this
はい、そうです。	はい、そうです。	Hai, sō desu.	Yes, that's right.
日本	にほん	Nihon	Japan
お菓子	おかし	okashi	sweets, snacks, candy
ようかん	ようかん	yōkan	soft sweet red bean jelly
野菜	やさい	yasai	vegetables
魚	さかな	sakana	fish
日本の	にほんの	Nihon no	Japanese (item, thing)

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

これは肉です。

Kore wa niku desu.

This is meat.

あれ？これは私のですか。

Are? Kore wa watashi no desu ka.

Huh? Is this mine?

田中さんですか。はい、そうです。

Tanaka-san desu ka. Hai, sou desu.

Are you Mr. Tanaka? -Yes, I am.

これは日本の車です。

Kore wa Nihon no kuruma desu.

This is a Japanese car.

アメリカのお菓子です。

Amerika no okashi desu.

These are American snacks.

これは、ようかんです。

Kore wa yōkan desu.

This is soft sweet red bean jelly.

それは野菜です。

Sore wa yasai desu.

That's a vegetable.

それは魚です。

Sore wa sakana desu.

That's fish.

これは日本のおかしです。

Kore wa nihon no okashi desu.

These are Japanese sweets.

## Vocabulary Phrase Usage

okashi (おかし)

A general word for "sweets" or "snacks" (includes cookies, candies, crackers, and the like).

nihon no (日本の)

In the dialogue, we had the phrase nihon no okashi, which translates to "Japanese sweets." Nihon no means "Japanese," and it can come before the name of any item to describe it as Japanese.

For Example:

1. Nihon no okashi  
"Japanese sweets"
2. Nihon no fur tsu  
"Japanese fruit" (fur tsu = "fruit")

s desu

When Taylor asked whether the snacks he received were sweets, Masato responded with hai, s desu. As we learned before, hai means "yes." We also use the phrase s desu to affirm something, and so it is similar to the phrase "that's right" in English. You will find that this is very common way to respond to questions!

## Grammar Points

**The Focus of This Lesson Is Asking Questions.**

Kore wa... o-kashi desu ka.

これは・・・おかしですか。

"Are these sweets?"

In Lessons 7 and 8, you learned how to say what something is with the sentence pattern [A] wa [B] desu ("A is B," for example "This is water"). In this lesson, you'll learn how to turn that very sentence into a question: "Is A B?" ("Is this water?") In English, turning a statement into a question requires changing the sentence order all around, but not in Japanese! We'll show you how easy it is.

Lesson Focus: Making Questions

Let's take a sentence that uses our "A is B" sentence pattern that we learned in Lesson 7.

For Example:

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1. Kore wa okashi desu.  
これはおかし です。  
"These are sweets."

Let's say you have a plate of snacks in front of you that look sweet...but you can't really tell! To turn the sentence above into a question ("These are sweets" "Are these sweets?"), we simply add ka to the end of the sentence.

So now you can ask:

1. Kore wa okashi desu ka.  
これはおかし ですか。  
"Are these sweets?"

Let's try it with some other sentences:

Sentence	English	Question	English
Kore wa mizu desu. (これはみずです。)	"This is water."	Kore wa mizu desu ka? (これはみずですか?)	"Is this water?"
Kore wa niku desu. (これはにくです。)	"This is meat."	Kore wa niku desu ka? (これはにくですか?)	"Is this meat?"
Kore wa sakana desu. (これはさかなです。)	"This is fish."	Kore wa sakana desu ka? (これはさかなですか?)	"Is this fish?"
Kore wa yasai desu. (これはやさいです。)	"This is a vegetable."	Kore wa yasai desu ka? (これはやさいですか?)	"Is this a vegetable?"
Kore wa fur tsu desu. (これはフルーツです。)	"This is a fruit."	Kore wa fur tsu desu ka? (これはフルーツですか?)	"Is this a fruit?"

## Examples from This Dialogue

1. Kore wa.. o-kashi desu ka.  
これは・・・おかしですか。  
"Are these sweets?"

## Language Tips: Saying "Yes" or "No"

We have touched on how to say "yes" (hai) in previous lessons and also learned the phrase s desu, which we also use to affirm something. Let's take a look at how to say "no" as well:

1. "Yes" /Hai./Hai, so desu.  
はい。/はい、そうです。

2. "No" / lie./lie, chigaimasu.

いいえ。/ いいえ、ちがいます。

## Cultural Insight

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### What's Y kan?

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In the dialogue, Kaori gave Taylor a gift of y kan, which is sweet, jellied, red-bean paste. It is sold in block form, and we often eat it in slices. There are many different varieties of yokan. Definitely try some if you get a chance!