

In Japanese, there are numerous ways to refer to yourself and others around you. The difficult part is figuring out what to use and when! Use this cheat sheet to help yourself remember what you should (and shouldn't) be using in any given situation.

I

わたし	Neutral / standard way to say "I." You can't go wrong with this one. It's polite and it's neutral, and this is what you should use if you aren't sure about the others.
わたくし	This is a more polite version of watashi. When used by men it is considered very polite, though when used by women it is considered neutral / polite.
あたし	A feminine version of watashi. Younger girls use this, though it's not recommended for use in a "polite" situation.
ぼく	Used mostly by younger men. This is a masculine way to say "I." Not too impolite, but still best to use watashi if you're not sure.
おれ	Informal and can be considered vulgar in the wrong situation. Used mostly by men.
じぶん	Very militaristic and you won't hear this one much.

You

あなた	The standard way to say "you" in Japanese.
おまえ	Can be considered rude, though often used amongst close friend jokingly
きみ	The "affectionate" you. You'll hear it used with boyfriends / girlfriends, as well as those who are very close to each other.
てまえ	Old fashioned, pretty rude, and good to use with someone you are angry with. Despite how it's written, it's usually pronounced "teme" rather than "temae."
こいつ	Literally means "this person" - used to talk down to someone.
Person's Name	Instead of saying "You" the nicest thing to do is to replace "you" with someone's name. It'll sound like you're talking about someone in the third person, but it works out in Japanese.

Name Enders

～さん	Standard name-ender. You'll hear san being used the most out of any of these.
～くん	Used more on younger males, from kids to adults. If you are higher / equal rank to another man, you can use kun as their name-ender.
～ちゃん	Usually used on young children and girls, though you'll hear it used affectionately with people who know each other really well or have known each other for a long time.
～せんせい	Literally means "teacher," so it's attached to the names of people who are teachers. Also, you'll see this being used with doctors as well.
～せんぱい	Similar to "sensei" but used on <i>peers</i> whom you look up to / are a higher rank than you (ex. those who are in a higher grade at school).