

Travel Japanese

Survival Booklet

Free Sample Version



Ippo Ippo Japanese

Last updated: September 2023

Key Survival Japanese

Yes & No

Hai	Yes, that's right
iie	No, that's not the case

Please & Thank You

Arigatō gozaimasu	Thank you <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leave out "gozaimasu" to speak more casually.
iie	No worries; no problem; you're welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You may come across "doitashimashite" to mean "you're welcome". In reality, this is not used very commonly.
Sumimasen	Excuse me, sorry <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sometimes also used similarly to "thank you", e.g. when accepting the offer of a seat on a crowded train
Hai, o-negai shimasu	Yes, please <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multipurpose phrase for when you ask someone to do something for you or accept an offer
iie, daijōbu desu	No, thank you <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friendly but polite way of turning down an offer

Here You Go

Dōzo	Here you go/here you are (when giving something); go ahead
Dōmo	Thank you (when accepting something)

I Don't Understand

Wakarimashita ka?	Do you understand?
Wakarimasen	I don't understand
Mō ichido itte kudasai	Please say that again
Yukkuri itte kudasai	Please speak slowly
Eigo hanasemasu ka?	Do you speak English?

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Week 1: Welcome

Key Facts: Japanese Language

- Approx. 128 million speakers worldwide
- Part of the Japonic language family, which contains just Japanese and the languages of the Ryūkyū Islands (an island chain including Okinawa that stretches from Japan towards Taiwan)
- Due to historical contact with China, modern Japanese has a lot of words from Chinese (like English does from French)

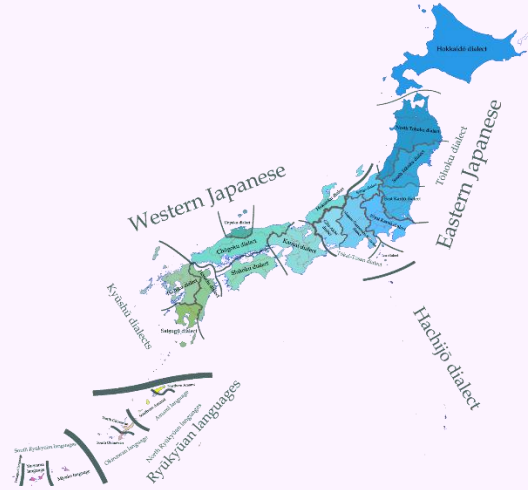


Image: [Wikipedia](#)

Within Japan, there are many different dialects. For example, when visiting places like Osaka and Kyoto, you may hear people talk about Kansai dialect.

Key Facts: Japanese Writing System

- Three scripts: kanji, hiragana and katakana
- Kana is another word for the two scripts of hiragana and katakana
- Each kana script has 48 basic characters
- Japanese children are expected to know 2,136 kanji by end of junior high school
- Most adults know somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 kanji



Image: [Smashing Magazine](#)

Why are there three scripts?

While it can be difficult to get your head round at first, there are definite advantages to having three scripts. For example:

- Having alphabet-style scripts like hiragana and katakana means you can get by with a limited knowledge of kanji.
- Having kanji makes it easier to tell the difference between words that would otherwise look the same.

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Week 2: Meeting People

Key Words & Phrases: Greetings

Konnichiwa	Hello
Moshi moshi	Hello (on the phone/video calls)
Ohayō gozaimasu*	Good morning
Konbanwa	Good evening
Oyasumi nasai*	Good night
Ittekimasu	“I’m going and will come back” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used when leaving the house/going out for the day
Itterasshai	“Please go and come back” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Said in response to “ittekimasu”
Tadaima	I’m home!
Okaeri nasai*	Welcome home! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Said in response to “tadaima”
Jaa ne / mata ne / bai bai	Bye; see you!**

*Drop “gozaimasu” or “nasai” to speak more casually.

**You might also hear sayonara, but this is more common when saying a final farewell, so can sound overly sombre in day-to-day conversation.

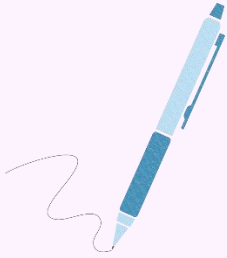
Key Words & Phrases: Self Intros Pt1

Hajimemashite	Pleased to meet you
_____ desu	I am/my name is _____
_____ -jin desu	I’m _____ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give your nationality, use the name of your country + jin (e.g. Igrisu-jin = British; Furansu-jin = French) • See list of countries on the next page
_____ shusshin desu	I’m from _____
_____ kara kimashita	I’m from _____

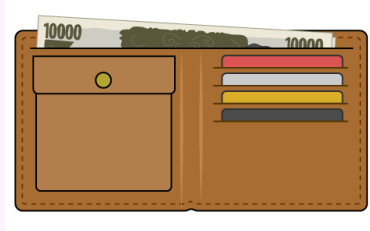
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Weeks 3 & 4: Shopping & Eating Out

Key Words: Things



Pen



Saifu
Wallet



Kaban
Bag



Tii shatsu
T-shirt



Jiinzū
Jeans



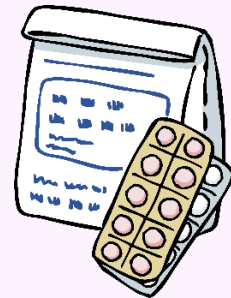
Bōshi
Hat



Kutsu
Shoes



Hiyake-dome
Suncream



Itami-dome
Painkiller



Hon
Book



Keitai
Mobile phone



Pasokon
Computer

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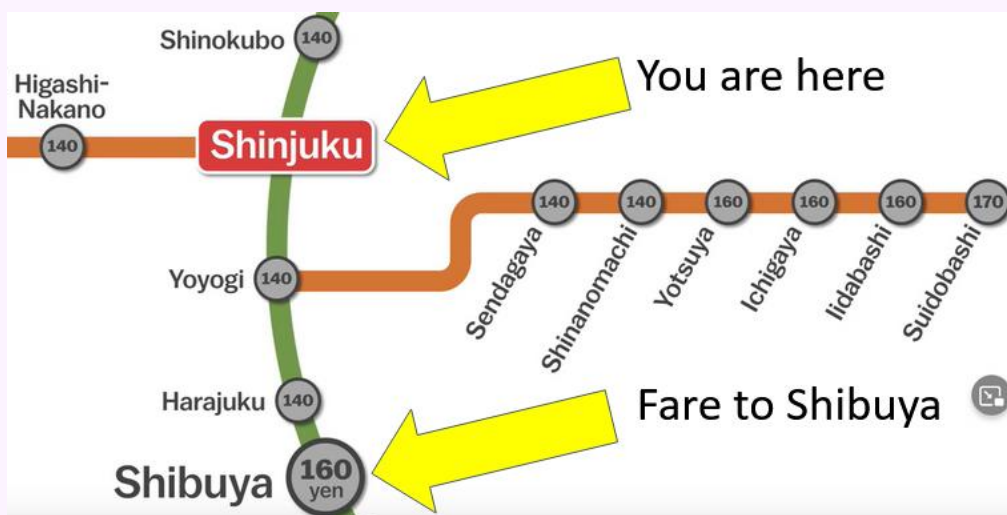
Weeks 5 & 6: Navigating Japan

Navigating Japan: Practical Tips

- **Apps:** while Google Maps is generally reliable, you may want to download a [Japan-specific travel app](#) for extra helpful info
- **ATMs:** be aware that ATMs have opening hours, and that most charge fees (on top of fees for using non-Japanese cards).
- **Budget travel:** between cities, consider night buses. For extensive travel around Japan, look into options such as the Japan Rail Pass
- **Buses:** bus travel can be a little more complicated than train. If you have a choice between the two, the train is likely to be more straightforward.
- **Driving:** if you want to drive in Japan, you will need an [international driving permit](#)
- **Konbini:** convenience stores are handy for a lot more than just buying food and drink. They also provide services such as printing plane tickets, dropping off packages, buying tickets for exhibitions and concerts, and for residents, even paying your utility bills!
- **Missing your train:** in cities and many towns, missing your train is no big deal – another one will be along soon
- **Mistaking your fare:** don't worry too much about getting your transport fare wrong – this can always be fixed at the other end!
- **Paying for transport:** [Prepaid IC Cards](#) are generally the simplest way of paying for bus and train tickets. However, you can buy tickets for specific fares by checking the navigation map at the station you're departing from (see example below).
- **Taxis:** common but slightly more expensive. Remember that doors usually open and close themselves!
- **Wi-Fi:** public Wi-Fi may not be as available or reliable as you expect. If possible, arrange a phone plan or portable hotspot in advance that can be used in Japan.

Train Fares

At train stations, you should be able to find a board like this showing the cost of travel to other stations.



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Week 7: Practical Tips for Travellers

Japanese Road Signs

Note: you may find some of the signs below updated to include English.



Stop



One way street



No entry (one-way exit)



No parking or stopping



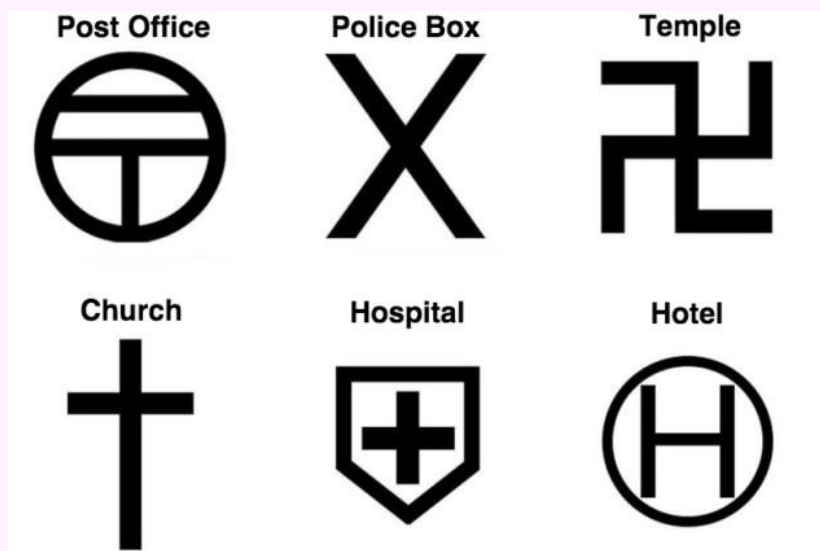
Railway crossing ahead



Slow down

Old Map Symbols

Note: still generally used on Japanese language maps.



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Week 8: Cultural Tips for Travellers

Etiquette: Out & About

General tips:

- Be aware that tabe-aruki (eating while walking) can be frowned upon
- Aruki-tabako (smoking while walking) is prohibited in many areas and is generally bad manners. If you need to smoke, seek a designated smoking area.
- Take care to stand to one side on escalators. In Tokyo, people typically stand on the left, and in Osaka, the right!
- Try to observe queuing and not be too loud or disruptive in general, especially in quieter areas

Public transport:

- Try to follow the arrows and keep to one side on stairs, as many people rely on public transport for commuting and may need to get past quickly
- On train platforms, try to check if there is a specific queue for the train you need to get
- On busy trains, buses etc, try to keep relatively quiet. Don't use your phone; avoid loud music spilling out of headphones; don't apply makeup, perfume, deodorant etc; keep any bags out of the way of others.
- Keep an eye out for priority seating. Try not to use it unless need be. If appropriate, offer your seat to others more in need.
- Be aware that those wearing pregnancy badges (pictured right) may do so partly to indicate they need priority seating

Hygiene:

- If blowing your nose, try to do so subtly
- Observe Covid etiquette as far as possible. Depending on where you are, this may include extra steps such as sanitising your phone.

Etiquette: Shrines & Temples

Shrines: Shintō places of worship

- Bow to the torii gate before entering
- Avoid walking down the middle of the path, as this is reserved for the gods



Buy the Full Survival Booklet

Visit the [Ippo Ippo Japanese Shop](#) to purchase your complete Travel Japanese Survival Guide for as little as £15. This guide took many hours to put together, so I really appreciate you supporting my work!

By purchasing the full version, you will get access to a 43-page Survival Booklet including:

- The continuation of each chapter
- A curated list of handy resources & further reading for travellers
- A selection of quizzes to test your knowledge and practise your Japanese

The Survival Booklet is designed to be printer friendly. When making payment, you can select either A4 or A5 size and a background that is either light purple or white. Please let me know if you have any other needs such as for larger text.



Itterasshai!