

HIRAGANA!

Beginners Guide to Japanese



ひらがな

a i u e o

あいうえお -

かきくけこ k

さしすせそ s

たちつてと t

なにぬねの n

はひふへほ h

まみむめも m

や ゆ よ y

らりるれろ r

わ を w

ん

A beginner's guide to the wonders of

So you want to learn hiragana?

Congratulations!

Everything you need for mastering hiragana should be found right here. But if you do need help or have a question, please visit our *free* site for learning Japanese:

www.thejapanesepage.com, discover other books and resources at www.TheJapanShop.com, or email the authors directly at help@thejapanshop.com.

Find other resources at our store: <http://www.TheJapanShop.com>

If you study one or two pages a day for 10-30 minutes you will learn hiragana in a few short weeks AND begin reading Japanese (real Japanese) the first day!

You will have to work of course! But that's all part of the fun!
Let's begin the adventure —

Japanese is a fascinating language to study and by learning hiragana you will be well on your way! By the end of this book you should be able to read and write all hiragana, know interesting facts, learn some eighty essential words, and more.

Hiragana is one of three writing systems in Japanese. You will need to know all three to be able to read Japanese newspapers, novels, or even manga, for example.

However, hiragana--in our opinion--is the most important to learn first.

Once you learn hiragana, you will know **all** the sounds and sound combinations possible in Japanese. Katakana (hiragana's sister) uses the same format and sounds found in hiragana which makes learning it after hiragana a breeze. In addition, many books will have small hiragana, called *furigana*, over kanji (characters incorporated into Japanese from Chinese a long time ago). So, even if you have never seen a kanji before, by knowing hiragana you can "read" its pronunciation.

Like the English alphabet, hiragana and katakana--but not kanji--only convey sound and not meaning. However, hiragana is not an alphabet; it is a syllabary. Each of the 46 basic hiragana characters represent more or less a syllable.

So with the English alphabet, we would write **か** *ka* using two characters: "k" and "a," but just one character in hiragana: **か**.

If katakana uses the same sounds and format as hiragana, why two syllabaries?

Good question. Hiragana, the more fluid and "feminine" of the two, is at the heart of written Japanese. Hiragana fills out where kanji leaves off. It can also be used to write whole words. For example, the word for "new" is *atarashii* and can

be written as **あたらしい** (just hiragana) or with kanji **新しい** (kanji and hiragana). Notice how the hiragana finishes the word where the kanji leaves off. But if you don't know the kanji, having *furigana* (small hiragana) is helpful:

あたらしい **新しい**. All three examples are pronounced exactly the same, *atarashii* and mean the same thing, "new."



Tip: Kanji conveys ideas and sound; hiragana and katakana only convey sounds.

DATE: _____ TIME SPENT: _____

5

Katakana is used mostly for foreign names, foreign loan words, and for emphasis in certain cases. Your name, for example, would be written in katakana, but let's not jump too far ahead--learn hiragana first and well!

If you look at the chart on the next page, you will notice the hiragana are divided into sections by row. Each row, after the first one, is a consonant plus a vowel. Find the above mentioned

か

in **the second row** and **first column**. Notice it is on **"k"** row and the **"a" column**. *ka*.



Tip: Take some time to study the chart on the next page. Understanding the pattern will help you master hiragana more than anything else.

a i u e o

あいうえお -

かきくけこ k

さ し す せ そ s

た ち つ て と t

なにぬねの n

はひ ふ へ ほ h

まみむめも m

や ゆ よ y

らりるれろ r

わ を w

ん

ねこ&ねずみ
Cat & Mouse



HIRAGANA

7

There are a few “rules” that will help make your learning process easier:

- Written Japanese is made of kanji (Chinese characters), katakana (Hiragana's sister which is used mainly for foreign words and names), and hiragana.
- You will need to learn 46 basic characters to learn hiragana.
- A few additional sounds are made by combining two hiragana and/or by adding one of two small symbols.
- Except for a few cases, each character's sound is unique. (Unlike English where five vowels--a, e, i, o, and u--represent fifteen vowel sounds!)
- Every hiragana, katakana, or kanji has a specific stroke order. This book shows the stroke order for all hiragana. Sometimes in the book however, characters with one stroke are shown with two strokes for ease of understanding.
- Stroke order usually **starts from the upper left** corner down to the lower right. **Vertical lines** are drawn from **top to bottom** and **horizontal lines** are **left to right**. Knowing this, you can guess how to write *most* characters.

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

We believe studying fifteen minutes each day is far more effective than two hours once a week. You may want to record how much time you spend each day to encourage regular study periods. While everyone is different, it seems **the average time to learn hiragana is only about two weeks.**

In the hiragana box, its *romaji* (romanized / alphabet letters) and its sound is shown. There are also squares to practice writing. Please follow the stroke order shown. Even if your goal is simply to read, knowing the correct stroke order will help you in other areas such as learning kanji and writing better overall.

We also give memory tips for each character. Admittedly some of them are pretty silly; but the sillier they are, the easier they stick. Give them a try, but feel free to come up with different memory tricks that work best for you.



Gambarimashou!
(Let's do our best!)

あ	<p>This is the first of the vowels. 1 2 3 ー ㇏ あ</p> <p>There are only FIVE vowel sounds. All the other characters are made of a consonant + a vowel (except the “n” sound [p. 45])</p> <p>Usually, stroke order goes horizontally and then vertically, from top to bottom--<i>usually</i>.</p>
romaji - a sound - fAther	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> MEMORY HELP A “t” with a slanted “g” makes an “ah” sound </div>	
あ	あ



い	<p style="text-align: right;">1 2 ゝ い</p> <p>Now we come to our first real word. Let's put あ together with い and see what happens!</p> <p>あ + い = あい <i>ai</i> which means “love!”</p> <p>Not a bad first day's work!</p>
romaji - i sound - fEEt	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> MEMORY HELP It looks like two dangling fEEt!! </div>	
い	い



You will be tempted to pronounce the vowels by their English name, but あ sounds like “ah” instead of “eh.” Learn to pronounce them correctly.

This hiragana is sometimes used to make other characters longer in duration. Actually, all the vowels work in this capacity, but う is the most used. You will see this later so don't worry about it now *but don't forget it either!*

う

romaji - u
sound - fOOd

MEMORY HELP

It looks like an open mouth looking for "fOOd"

う	う								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

It may seem difficult at first, but learning these first few hiragana will be the base for your Japanese future! So learn these important ones well.

Also, learn these in order [a, i, u, e, o].

え

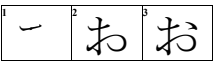

romaji - e
sound - bEt
or sometimes like the letter A

MEMORY HELP

hEY, it's a man running

え	え								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

TIP: Hiragana and Katakana are "syllabaries" and not alphabets; the symbols represent syllables: "ma" is one character in Japanese, but two in English.

お	<p>Don't confuse this with あ! And don't forget the short, diagonal line in step three.</p> <p>You are on your last hiragana vowel! Congratulations!</p>								
romaji - o sound - Oh nO!									
MEMORY HELP It looks like “あ a” but Oh! it's different.									
									
お	お								

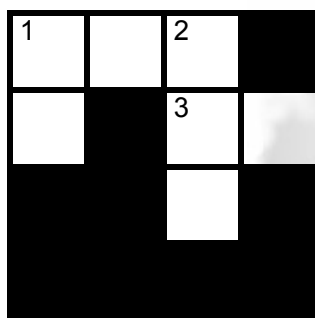
Now, can you figure out what these words are?
 You may stop pinching yourself—you are reading **real Japanese!**

HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| あい | | This means <i>love</i> |
| あおい | | This means <i>blue</i> |
| え | | This means <i>picture, painting</i> |
| いえ | | This means <i>house</i> |
| おい | | This means <i>a lot or much</i> [Long お sound] |
| いえ | | This means <i>no</i> [Long い sound] |
| いう | | This means <i>to talk</i> |
| いい | | This means <i>good</i> [Long い sound] |

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE!

Practice writing the hiragana (not romaji)!



Across

1 This means “blue” (3)

3 This means “good” (2)

Down

1 This means “love” (2)

2 This means “no” (3)



Now, try to answer the following questions from memory. (Of course if you must peek to above.)

Q&A:

- 1) あい means _____
- 2) How do you write “blue” in Japanese? _____
- 3) How would you say “blue house” in Japanese? [hint “blue” + “house”] _____

TRUE OR FALSE: (circle one)


- 1) いえ means “no” T F
- 2) あおい means “red” T F

Answers on p. 51

か	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> っ か か </div>	<p>Now that you have learned the vowels [あいうえお], let's build from them! The remaining hiragana (except one) are sounds we would write with two or more letters in English. This chapter begins the "k" row and this one [か] is "k" + "a" or "ka." (two letters but one hiragana character)</p>
romaji - ka sound - CAR	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">MEMORY HELP</div> <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;">It looks like a "K" with the top falling off</div>	

か	か								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

き	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ー ニ キ き </div>	<p>Continuing with the "k" section and adding the second vowel sound "i" we get "ki." The sound KI means "tree" in Japanese.</p>
romaji - ki sound - KEY	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">MEMORY HELP</div> <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;">It looks like a skeleton KEY</div>	



き	き								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Katakana, hiragana's sister, is used primarily to write foreign words and names.
Your name would be written in katakana.

Now we have “k” and the 3rd vowel
“u” to make “ku” better known as the “less
than” mark. When drawing this character,
start at the top (right) go down left then
finally down right.



romaji - ku
sound - COOL

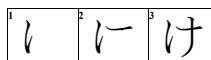
MEMORY HELP

It looks like pa**KU** man (Pac-man™)



く	く								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Perhaps now you can see
how the rest of hiragana is constructed: a
consonant + one of the 5 vowel sounds. No
problem! The sound KE means “hair” in
Japanese.




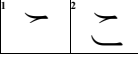
romaji - ke
sound - KEttle



MEMORY HELP

It looks like a broken old KEttle

け	け								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

		<p>Now that you have learned the vowel sounds and have studied the first consonant + vowel line, you should have a basic understanding of hiragana. But don't worry if you are still a bit confused... Take it one step at a time.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> MEMORY HELP </div> <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> It's obviously a "COLa can" with no sides... </div>		
こ	こ	

Let's get moving...

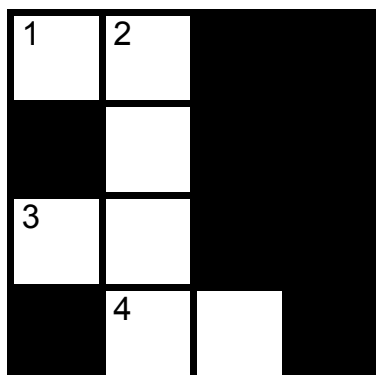
HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them? Copy the hiragana.

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| かお | | This means <i>face</i> |
| えき | | This means <i>train station</i> |
| おおきい | | This means <i>big</i> [pronounce the O long] |
| いく | | This means <i>to go</i> |
| くうこう | | This means <i>airport</i> [the う makes the く and こ a longer sound. You don't actually pronounce it.] |
| こい | | This means <i>love</i> or <i>carp (fish)</i> |
| かき | | This means <i>persimmon</i> |
| いけ | | This means <i>pond</i> |

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE!

Practice writing the hiragana (not romaji)!



Across

- 1 This means “face” (2)
 3 This means
 “persimmon” (2)
 4 This means “to go” (2)

Down

- 2 This means “big” (4)



Now, try to answer the following questions from memory. (Of course if you must peek look on the previous page.)

Q&A:

- 1) How do you write “big (train) station” [big + station]


 2) Which writing system is used for foreign names, hiragana or katakana? _____ [p.12]

TRUE OR FALSE: (circle one)


- 1) くうこう means “airport” T F
 2) To make some sounds longer add an ん T F


Answers on p. 51

さ	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 1 2 3 </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> 一 十 さ </div>	<p>This looks similar to き [p. 8] but with one less line.</p> <p>Make drawing hiragana fun! The more you draw them the quicker you will remember them.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> MEMORY HELP </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> It looks like a Sargeant barking orders. </div>		
さ	さ	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; height: 40px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"></div> </div>

し	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">し</div>	<p>This is one of the least complicated to draw! Remember to always start at the top and go down when drawing Japanese characters. You may be expecting “s” but it is pronounced “<i>shi</i>.”</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> MEMORY HELP </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> SHE has hair flowing in the wind. </div>		
し	し	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; height: 40px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"></div> </div>

TIP: You can immediately recognize hiragana from katakana by its more fluid form.

<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">一</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">す</div>									
<p>For the second stroke: Start from the top and as you go down, loop it to the left and then end with a tail.</p>									
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> MEMORY HELP It looks like a girl named SUE wearing a hat. </div>									
す	す								

<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">一</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">ナ</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">せ</div>									
<p>Are you writing each character many times? Try to use more than one sense: seeing, speaking, and writing aids memorization more than just seeing.</p>									
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> MEMORY HELP An opened mouth person wearing a hat SAYing something </div>									
せ	せ								

When writing romaji, many Japanese write “*si*” for し. However, for the non-Japanese, “*shi*” is much closer to the pronunciation.

そ	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 123 </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 一2そ </div>	<p>Another way to write this one is そ</p> <p>Just remember that they are the same.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%; text-align: center;"> <p>MEMORY HELP</p> <p>It looks SO abstract it could be PicaSO</p> </div>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0 10px;"> そ そ </div>		

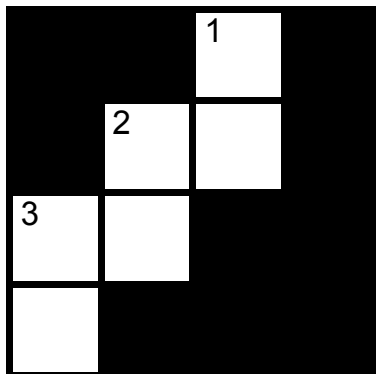
HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them? Copy the hiragana.

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------------------|
| さけ | | This means <i>Japanese alcohol</i> |
| うし | | This means <i>cow</i> |
| すし | | This means <i>sushi</i> |
| あさ | | This means <i>morning</i> |
| すき | | This means <i>to like (something)</i> |
| うそ | | This means <i>a lie</i> |
| かさ | | This means <i>umbrella</i> |
| せき | | This means <i>chair or seat</i> |

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE!

Practice writing the hiragana (not romaji)!



Across

2. This means “to like”

3. This means “cow”

Down

1. This means “chair”

2. This means “sushi”

3. This means “a lie”



Now, try to answer the following questions from memory.

Q&A:

- 1) How do you write sushi in hiragana? — —
- 2) How is かさ pronounced? _____

TRUE OR FALSE: (circle one)



- 1) さ is “*ki*” and き is “*sa*” T F
- 2) There are two ways to write そ T F

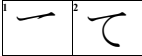

Answers on p. 51

た	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 一 十 チ た </div>	<p>You are now beginning the “t” row. You will encounter two irregular pronunciations. Until now, it has been pretty easy: one consonant + one vowel with no irregularities.</p>							
romaji - ta sound - TOddler	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">MEMORY HELP</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;">It looks like a TOddler reaching for a toy</div>								
た	た								

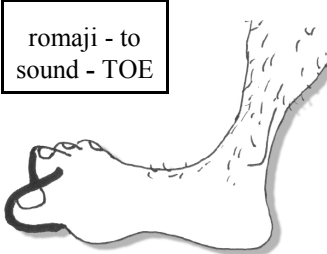
ち	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 一 ち </div>	<p>You should be congratulated! You have reached your first “irregular” hiragana pronunciation. Yeah! Ahem... This is pronounced as “<i>chi</i>” and not “<i>ti</i>” as you would think.</p>							
romaji - chi sound—CHEAp	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">MEMORY HELP</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;">A CHEAp version of the number 5</div>								
ち	ち								

There are a few irregular pronunciations in hiragana. The front and back charts show these in red.

	<p>TSU. This one is a bit difficult to pronounce. The sound is NOT found in English. But if you say the words “cat” and “soup” fast you get a caTSOUp. This is the sound you want. Later we will see a small つ. This causes a short pause between syllables.</p>	
MEMORY HELP		romaji - tsu sound - caT SOUp
A wave from a TSU nami (tidal wave)		
つ	つ	

	<p>Taking a break from the irregular, let's continue on with the regular guys! By the way, “hand” in Japanese is <i>te</i>. (KaraTE—empty hand)</p>	
MEMORY HELP		romaji - te sound - TErrible
A TE rrible 7		
て	て	

Listen to a native speaker or a sound file at thejapanesepage.com to hear the つ *tsu* sound.

<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">と</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">romaji - to sound - TOE</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">1 と</div>	<p>You have finished the fourth row. Getting close to the mid mark. Don't give up. You are doing just fine!</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-left: 10px; text-align: center;"> MEMORY HELP It looks like someone's big TOE </div> </div>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.5em;">と</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.5em;">と</div>	

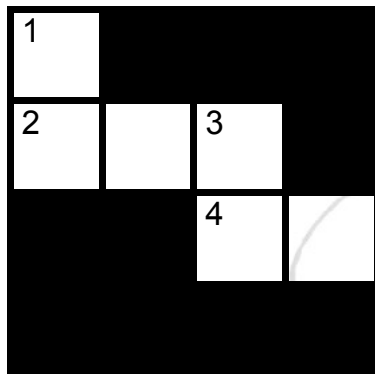
HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them? Copy the hiragana.

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| おと | | This means <i>sound</i> |
| とおい | | This means <i>far</i> |
| いち | | This means <i>the number 1</i> |
| ちち | | This means <i>father</i> |
| すてき | | This means <i>nice</i> |
| さとう | | This means <i>sugar</i> (the う makes と longer in sound) |
| くち | | This means <i>mouth</i> |
| うた | | This means <i>song</i> |

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE!

Practice writing the hiragana (not romaji)!



Across

2 This means “far” (3)

4 This means “father” (2)

Down

1 This means “sound” (2)

3 This means “1” (2)



Now, try to answer the following questions from memory.


Q&A:

- 1) Write the two hiragana with irregular pronunciations in this chapter — —
- 2) How do you write “song” in Japanese? _____

TRUE OR FALSE: (circle one)

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| 1) いち means “2” | T | F |
| 2) すてき means “steak” | T | F |

Answers on p. 51

な	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 一 ナ ナ な </div> <p>There are three characters that have a ㇏ part. They are all in the “n” section.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>								
romaji - na sound - kNOt									
MEMORY HELP <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> It looks like a rope all tangled in a kNOt </div>									
な	な								

に	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"> ゝ に に </div> <p>Try your best to learn to read and write the hiragana. Even Japanese, when they forget a kanji (Chinese character) can always write the word in hiragana.</p>								
romaji - ni sound - knee									
MEMORY HELP <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> It looks like a person sitting on his kNEEs (as seen from above) </div>									
に	に								

Here is the second ヌ character. We are pointing this out as there are several characters that are somewhat similar.

ㄱ ㄴ ㄷ ㄹ ㅁ ㅂ ㅅ ㅈ ㅊ ㅋ ㅌ ㅍ ㅎ

romaji - nu
sound - NEw

MEMORY HELP

It looks like a あ but with a tail and no hat— a **NEW** nu

ぬ	ぬ								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

There will be two more hiragana that look similar to ね. Be sure to get straight that “ne” is the one with the tail— ヌ

ㄱ ㄴ ㄷ ㄹ ㅁ ㅂ ㅅ ㅈ ㅊ ㅋ ㅌ ㅍ ㅎ

romaji - ne
sound - NEck

MEMORY HELP

If you look carefully you will see a “1,” “+,” and a “2,” but, **NAY**, no “3.”

ね	ね								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

ね is also used as a sentence ending particle. It is very versatile meaning things like, “isn’t it?”, “don’t you?”, and “you know...”

<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">の</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">romaji - no sound - NO</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">1 2 / の</div>	<p>This hiragana is used as a particle [grammatical marker] as well as parts of words. As a particle, it means the apostrophe S [marks the possessive]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ねこ の えさ cat 's food</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">MEMORY HELP</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">A 9 on its side. [German for NO is “nein” pronounced “nine”]</div>							
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;">の</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;">の</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;"> </div>

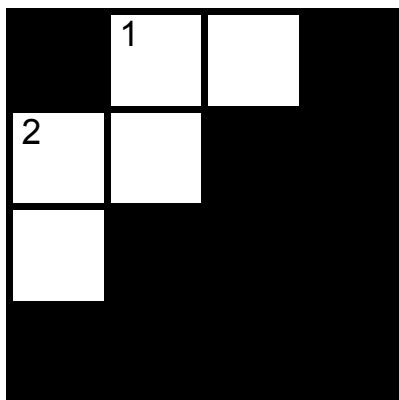
HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them? Copy the hiragana.

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| ねこ | | This means <i>cat</i> |
| この | | This means <i>this</i> |
| ねっ | | This means <i>fever</i> |
| いぬ | | This means <i>dog</i> |
| にし | | This means <i>West</i> |
| なっ | | This means <i>summer</i> |
| なに | | This means <i>what</i> |
| なな | | This means <i>seven</i> |

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE!

Practice writing the hiragana (not romaji)!

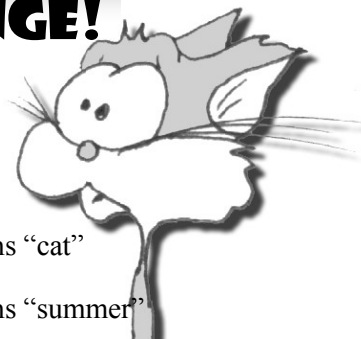


Across

1. This means "cat"
2. This means "summer"

Down


1. This means "fever"
2. This means "what?"




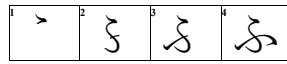
Find home: Follow the hiragana in order to get out of the maze


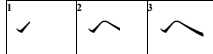
	い	き	し	つ	の	お	な	つ
の	と	て	に	ぬ	お	さ	あ	う
ね	な	つ	ち	い	す	こ	け	お
ぬ	に	う	た	と	ぬ	の	に	て
て	け	し	そ		う	え	お	さ
い	こ	ね	せ	あ	い	に	か	ね
ぬ	き	お	す	し	な	と	き	そ
あ	く	な	に	さ	こ	け	く	す
し	の	と	さ	す	の	と	つ	ぬ

は	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> いへけは </div>	<p>This and “<i>he</i>” [see page 29] are the only hiragana that have two sounds for one character. When “は” is used to make up words like はし <i>hashi</i> (chopsticks) it is pronounced “<i>ha</i>.” However when used as a grammatical marker (as a “topic” or “main idea”) it is pronounced “<i>WA</i>”</p>
romaji - ha sound - HA!		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 5px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>MEMORY HELP</p> <p>It has two parts to make memorizing HArD.</p> </div>		
は	は	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> </div>


ひ	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> へてひ </div>	<p>Nearly every letter in the English alphabet has two or more possible sounds, but remarkably, Japanese sounds and characters are very regular.</p>
romaji - hi sound - HE		
<p><big sigh of relief heard here></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>MEMORY HELP</p> <p>It looks like a big smiley face saying “HEE HEE”</p> </div> </div>		
ひ	ひ	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> <div style="width: 10%;"></div> </div>

NOTE: Japanese children learn hiragana before learning katakana or kanji.

	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 1234 </div> 	<p>This can also be written as ふ. Just remember that the middle line can be drawn or not. Also the pronunciation of this is not “<i>hu</i>” as you would expect but “<i>fu</i>.” As in と 豆腐 <i>toufu</i>—tofu. Although, the sound is sometimes in-between “<i>hu</i>” and “<i>fu</i>.”</p>										
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> <p>MEMORY HELP</p> <p>It looks like a snake looking for some FOOd</p> </div>												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table>												

	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 123 </div> 	<p>“へ” can be pronounced as “<i>he</i>” or “<i>e</i>.” Usually, when used as part of a word, it is pronounced as “<i>he</i>” as in へそ <i>heso</i> (belly button). And when used as a grammatical particle (to show direction) it is pronounced “<i>e</i>” - but not always!</p>										
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> <p>MEMORY HELP</p> <p>HEY! It's an upside V (<i>almost</i>)</p> </div>												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table>												

You may see some hiragana drawn differently. English also has this [a or ɑ] [M or **M**].

ほ	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-right: 5px;"> 1 2 3 4 </div> <div style="font-family: monospace; font-size: 1.2em;"> 1 2 3 4 </div> </div>	<p>This comes after は so it has a top bar. Notice the second bar is slightly longer than the first.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>
romaji - ho sound - HOle		
MEMORY HELP HO OH! It is more complicated than は <i>ha</i>		
ほ	ほ	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 30px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>

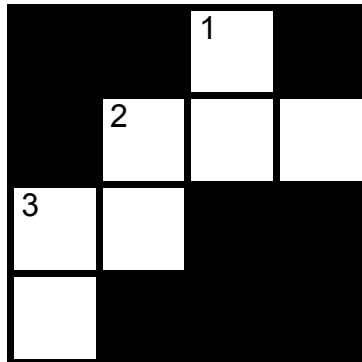
HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them? Copy the hiragana.

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| はこ | | This means <i>box</i> |
| ひと | | This means <i>person</i> |
| ふね | | This means <i>boat</i> |
| へた | | This means <i>bad at, or unskilled</i> |
| はと | | This means <i>dove</i> |
| ひたち | | This means <i>Hitachi</i> (the company) |
| ほし | | This means a <i>star</i> |
| とうふ | | This means <i>tofu</i>
[the う just makes the と longer.
You don't actually pronounce the う
-- but a long と] |

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE!

Practice writing the hiragana (not romaji)!



Across

2. This means “Hitachi”

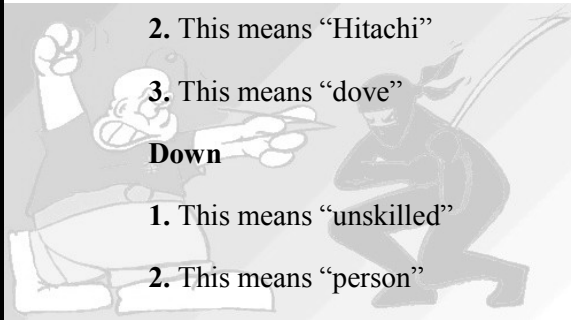
3. This means “dove”

Down

1. This means “unskilled”

2. This means “person”

3. This means “box”



Now let's play a traditional Japanese game—Shiritori. “shiri” means “butt” and “tori” means “to catch.” Someone starts with a word and the next player says another word that begins with the last letter of the previous word. Let's play Shiritori with a few words you have studied:

“box” —

は こ [p. 26]

“love” or “carp” —

こ _____ [p. 10]

“to go” —

_____ [p. 10]

“airport” —

_____ [p. 14]

“cow” —

_____ し _____ [p. 14]


Answers on p. 51

<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">ま</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">romaji - ma sound - MA MA</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 一 二 三 ま </div>	<p>At first you may have to think of each memory help in order to say each pronunciation, but after a while, you will be able to simply look at the character and, <i>skipping the memory help</i>, your mind will jump right to the sound. This is real progress.</p>										
MEMORY HELP												
Look MA! I caught a dragonfly. (Imagine a dragonfly)												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; height: 40px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">ま</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">ま</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table>			ま	ま								
ま	ま											


<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">み</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">romaji - mi sound - ME</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> ㄣ ミ み </div>	<p>Also, there may be some hiragana you know better than others. Don't let this worry you. In time as you read more and more, the bumps will be smoothed out.</p>										
MEMORY HELP												
It looks to ME like a 2 over a 4												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; height: 40px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">み</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">み</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table>			み	み								
み	み											

Hiragana (and katakana) originally came from kanji (Chinese characters).

<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">む</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">romaji - mu sound - MOvie</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">一</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">す</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">む</div>	<p>Getting this far, you have accomplished quite a lot.</p> <p>Go on a treasure hunt on the internet. Start at a Japanese site such as <i>kids.yahoo.co.jp</i>. Find and sound out the hiragana you have studied.</p> <p>(Also with <i>Yahoo Japan</i>, when you put your mouse over any link and look at the bottom, you will see the directory name in English!)</p>							
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> MEMORY HELP It looks like an old film projector showing a MOvie </div>									
む	む								

<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">め</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">romaji - me sound - MEn</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">\</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">め</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">め</div>	<p>Here we have the last of the look-a-likes. め [me] looks a lot like ん [nu], の [no], and even あ [a].</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>							
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> MEMORY HELP It looks like a half closed eye. [in Japanese “eye” is “め”] </div>									
め	め								

If you haven't internalized the pattern in the chart at the front yet, please take a look at the rows and columns.

<div style="font-size: 2em; font-family: cursive;">も</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">し</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">も</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">も</div>	<p>Now that you are finishing your seventh row, be sure to spend some time reviewing what you have studied.</p>
romaji - mo sound - MOWer		
MEMORY HELP		
A man with a hat resting after MOWing his yard		
も	も	

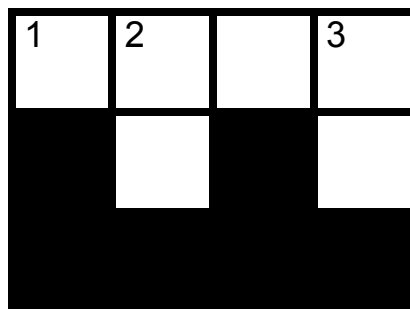
HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them? Copy the hiragana.

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| もも | | This means <i>peach</i> |
| まめ | | This means <i>bean</i> |
| ひみつ | | This means <i>secret</i> |
| しまうま | | This means zebra [the う does NOT make the ま longer - pronounce it as a u] |
| たま | | This means <i>ball</i> |
| まち | | This means <i>town</i> |
| こめ | | This means <i>rice</i> |
| さめ | | This means <i>shark</i> |

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE!

Practice writing the hiragana (not romaji)!



Across

1. This means “zebra”

Down

2. This means “beans”

3. This means “town”



Now, try to answer the following questions from memory.

Q&A:


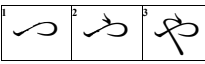



- 1) How do you pronounce む ____ & how do you pronounce め ____?
- 2) Write *shimauma* [zebra] in Japanese. _____


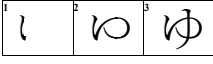


TRUE OR FALSE: (circle one)

- 1) Hiragana came from kanji
T F
- 2) The correct order for the m's is もめむみま
T F



Answers on p. 51

	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 123 </div> 	<p>If you look at the order of hiragana on the front of this booklet, you will see that the やゆよ row is missing a few sounds.</p>
romaji - ya sound - Y A cht		
MEMORY HELP		
A YA cht with its sail blowing in the wind		
		<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>

	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 123 </div> 	<p>There is no <i>yi</i> or <i>ye</i> sound. That is why we are on <i>yu</i> now.</p>
romaji - yu sound - YOU	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> MEMORY HELP </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin-top: 5px;"> If you look closely you may see a y, o, and a u </div>	
		<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>

The “y” row has only *ya*, *yu* and *yo*.

		<p>It may seem easier to write the down stroke first, but learn it in the correct order from the start. Stroke order is very important to the Japanese and, yes, it can make a difference in the appearance sometimes.</p>
	<p>romaji - yo sound - YO-YO</p>	
<p>MEMORY HELP</p> <p>A fancy trick on a YO-yo</p>		

The や, ゆ, and よ can be used in two ways:

- 1) as "letters" to make words
- 2) or...

Take a look at the lower back cover where it says "plus small や ゆ よ." Remember not to panic and then come back here. It looks scary but, really, it isn't too complicated.

There is a pattern.

In every case a consonant sound is combined with a small や *ya*, ゆ *yu*, or よ *yo*. And the consonant sound has already been decided for you! It is always those under the "i" column. Look at the chart on the front or back (left) cover. Starting with the "k" row, we see き, し, ち, に, ひ, み, and り are used. (all i's)

Now notice the sound changes. き *ki* + や *ya* = きゃ *kya*

Easy isn't it? You can think of the smaller や, ゆ or よ as taking away the "i" sound in the first character. You may be saying, "What is the difference between きゃ *kiya* and きゃ *kya*?" First, the sound is different. "KI YA" (two syllables) versus "KYA" (one syllable). Second, the meaning can be totally different.

HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them?

はやい	_____	This means <i>fast</i>
いきましよう	_____	This means <i>let's go!</i>
へや	_____	This means <i>room</i>
かいしゃ	_____	This means <i>company, business</i>
おちゃ	_____	This means <i>Japanese tea</i>
きょう	_____	This means <i>today</i>
ひゃく	_____	This means <i>hundred (100)</i>

Copy the following words to make a [not so useful] sentence in Japanese:

きょう、 _____ [the 、 is a comma]

きょう、あなた _____

きょう、あなたは _____

きょう、あなたは ひゃく _____

きょう、あなたは ひゃく さい。

きょう-today
 あなた-you [pronoun]
 は *wa*-makes the preceding word or
 phrase the "topic" or "main thought" [not
 translated] (p. 24)
 ひゃく-100
 さい-years old

Now use the glossary to the
 left to figure out the mean-
 ing in English: [add an "are" in
 there]

Answer on p. 51

Let's practice the small やゆよ

The following table shows all the hiragana you have learned with a small や, ゆ or よ. The last line [r line] will be studied next.

き+y	きや <i>kya</i>	きゆ <i>kyu</i>	きよ <i>kyo</i>
し+y	しや <i>sha</i>	しゆ <i>shu</i>	しよ <i>sho</i>
ち+y	ちや <i>cha</i>	ちゆ <i>chu</i>	ちよ <i>cho</i>
に+y	にや <i>nya</i>	にゆ <i>nyu</i>	によ <i>nyo</i>
ひ+y	ひや <i>hya</i>	ひゆ <i>hyu</i>	ひよ <i>hyo</i>
み+y	みや <i>mya</i>	みゆ <i>myu</i>	みよ <i>myo</i>
り+y	りや <i>rya</i>	りゆ <i>ryu</i>	りよ <i>ryo</i>

NOTE: We didn't write the し and ち rows with a "y" in the romaji. If we were to write *sha* (as many Japanese people do) the sound to the foreigner will be different. Both ways are correct—One being more "correct" to the Japanese understanding of the writing system and the other being more "correct" to the pronunciation.

Write "190" in Japanese

To write 190 in Japanese, you need to write **100** and **9** and **10**.

100 9 10
hyaku kyuu juu

[Remember to use ん to make the *kyu* and *ju* longer]

hya ku

kyu u

ju u

Answers on p. 51

<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">ら</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">romaji - ra</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 1 2 3 </div>	<p>You will notice there is no sound given for the “r” section. That is because the Japanese R sounds are different from any English sound. In this chapter, we will try to explain how to make the sounds [p 43], but be sure to listen to the sound files on the web. [see bottom]</p>										
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">MEMORY HELP</div> <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid black;">A 5 with a ROtten top</div>												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; height: 40px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">ら</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">ら</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table>			ら	ら								
ら	ら											

<div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 10px 0;">り</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">romaji - ri</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> 1 2 </div>	<p>The R sound is in between the R and L sounds in English. Sometimes it sounds like a “D” to English ears. Pronunciation-wise this is the most difficult section, so learn it well. But don’t worry too much about it. Once you get the hang of it you will be understood.</p>										
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">MEMORY HELP</div> <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid black;">It looks like two arms REaching for something</div>												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; height: 40px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">り</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">り</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table>			り	り								
り	り											

For more info on how to correctly make the “r” sounds (with sound files), please visit <http://thejapanesepage.com/beginners/pronunciation> and see page 43.

る	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">ー</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">ろ</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">る</div>	<p>If you have Japanese friends, ask them to help you with the “r” sounds. Listen carefully and mimic the sounds.</p>							
romaji - ru									
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> MEMORY HELP It looks like a ROOT </div>									
る	る								

れ	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">丨</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">れ</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">れ</div>	<p>Don't confuse this with ん <i>ne</i> [p. 21]</p>							
romaji - re									
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> MEMORY HELP It is a snake REsting on a stick </div>									
れ	れ								



See p. 43 for an overview on making “r” sounds.

Congratulations!

ろ	ろ	ろ	<p>You have survived the last of the dreaded "r's"</p> <p>Spend some time listening to the sound files [see page 40 bottom] and reading page 43 to get your pronunciation down.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> MEMORY HELP </div> <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> Think of a man ROWing a boat </div>							
ろ	ろ									

HERE ARE SOME REAL JAPANESE WORDS

How do you pronounce them? Copy the hiragana.

- | | | |
|------|--|----------------------------|
| りか | | This means <i>science</i> |
| らく | | This means <i>easy</i> |
| くり | | This means <i>chestnut</i> |
| りす | | This means <i>squirrel</i> |
| あり | | This means <i>ant</i> |
| あれ | | This means <i>that</i> |
| れつ | | This means <i>line</i> |
| ろうそく | | This means <i>candle</i> |

Overview of R sounds

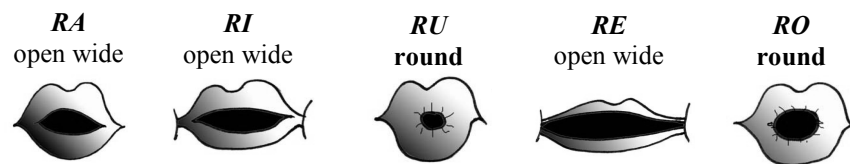
There are two considerations for mastering the R's: **Tongue** and **Mouth**

PART ONE: The Tongue...

The sound is made by lightly slapping your tongue just behind your upper teeth. Think of making an L sound, like LOVE. That is the approximate place. The only difference between the Japanese R and the English L sound is how long the tongue is held there. In English the tongue is held a while so air can go around it. In Japanese, the tongue is immediately dropped. All of the R sounds are made the same way with the tongue.

PART TWO: The Mouth...

The mouth takes a little practice to make it natural, but it is also easy, really. Very simply, for RA RI & RE the mouth is more open and for RU & RO the mouth is more rounded and shut. [NOTE: actually for perfect pronunciation, ALL 5 sounds have unique mouth positions -- we will look at this, but remember basically for RA, RI & RE the mouth is more opened and RU & RO it is rounded and smaller.]



Again the most important thing is that RA, RI & RE have a kind of open, wide mouth and RU & RO have a more rounded, small mouth. Practice saying them in order -- (open mouth) RA RI (round mouth) RU (open mouth) RE (round mouth) RO.

Lastly remember, slap the tongue with a wide mouth for RA, RI, RE and slap the tongue with a round mouth for RU & RO.

わ

romaji - wa
sound - WAsh

| | |

There are only two letters under the “w” section. This is the only character that has a “w” sound. The next hiragana を is technically a “wo” but most of the time it is pronounced “o.”

MEMORY HELP

It is a **W**Ashing machine

わ

わ

を

romaji - o
sound - OH

一 才 を

This character is only used as a grammatical particle. It will never be found as part of a word. You have studied the character that does that (お). を is placed right after the direct object. (see exercise at bottom of page 45)

MEMORY HELP

It looks like a person carefully stepping into a cold pond—**OH!** It's cold!

を

を

を is the only hiragana that cannot be used to make words.

<div style="font-size: 2em; font-family: cursive;">ん</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">ん</div>	<p>Finally the last one! This is the only one that has just one consonant sound—n. Also the ん cannot be used at the beginning of a word.</p>										
romaji - n sound - n or m	MEMORY HELP <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; margin: 5px auto; width: 80%;"> It looks like a cursive “n” — <i>n</i> </div>											
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">ん</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">ん</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table>			ん	ん								
ん	ん											

Copy the following words to make a sentence in Japanese:

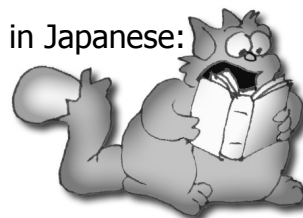
わたし _____

わたしは _____

わたしは ほん _____

わたしは ほんを _____

わたしは ほんを よみたい。



watashi—I (pronoun)
 は *wa*—makes the preceding word or phrase the “topic” or “main thought” [not translated] (p. 24)
hon—book
 を *o*—marks the Direct Object of the sentence [not translated]
yomitai—want to read

Now use the glossary to the left to figure out the meaning in English: [verb is last]

Answer on p. 51

Small やゆよ review

The “i” column [きしちにひみり] is combined with a small や, ゆ or よ to make additional sounds.

Write the hiragana for the following words:

- 1) *kyu u ri* _____ [cucumber]
- 2) *sho u ri* _____ [victory]
- 3) *o cha* _____ [Japanese tea]
- 4) *ryo u ri* _____ [cooking, food]
- 5) *kyo u* _____ [today]
- 6) *sha shi n* _____ [photo]



Answers on p. 51

The small つ

Way back on page 17, we mentioned sometimes a small つ *tsu* is used to cause a short pause or break between syllables. For example, in English we have a slight pause after “black” in “black car.” Here is a good example to show how important this small つ is.

がっき *gakki* - musical instrument [with a slight pause]
- and -

がき *gaki* - brat, annoying kid [without the pause]

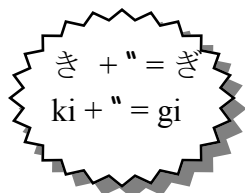
Remember:

The small つ is not pronounced, but causes a short hiccup between sounds

Now here is what you have been waiting for. I am sure you have been wondering what those " and ° things are all about. Although it isn't as easy as the little や, ゆ or よ's, again there is a pattern that can be followed.



- " The " or "ten ten" makes a soft sound harder. For example, it makes a "k" sound a hard "g" sound ("g" as in **g**ood). "s" becomes "z," "t" becomes "d," and "h" becomes "b."
- ° The ° or "maru" makes the "h" become a "p" sound. The other consonant sounds are not affected by the maru, only the "h" group. That's all there is to it!



See how easy it is? All you have to remember is:

k → g	s → z	t → d
h " → b	h ° → p	

Before doing the practice below, look at the chart on the back cover until you understand how it works.

Let's practice writing words with the " and the °

- ① Here is き *ki*. How do you make a *gi*? _____
- ① Here is ふ *fu*. How do you make a *pu*? _____
- ① Here is きゅ *kyu*. How do you make a *gyu*? _____
- ① Here is しょ *sho*. How do you make a *jo*? _____ [look at chart]
- ① Now write *bi ji n*. This means "beautiful woman": _____

Answers on p. 51



When か is given a *ten ten* [が], it can be a grammatical particle. (it can also be a regular "letter" to make up words...) As a grammatical particle it marks the subject of the sentence. Very often the usage of the particles は and が are similar. は usually covers a broad topic while が is more narrow.

Other particles:

は	<i>wa</i> —topic marker	[as a regular "letter" it is pronounced " <i>ha</i> "]
へ	<i>he</i> or <i>e</i> —directional marker	
を	<i>o</i> —direct object marker	
が	<i>ga</i> —subject marker	

There are two sets with the same pronunciation with the *ten ten*.

じ & ぢ are both pronounced *ji* and ず & づ are both *zu*.

While all 4 characters do appear in words (and are not interchangeable) the じ is more common than ぢ and the ず is more common than づ. Think of *ji* as じ and *zu* as ず.

What's this in romaji?

じ = *ji*

1. ぶ = _____
2. ふ = _____
3. だ = _____
4. びや = _____
5. づ = _____

What's this in hiragana?

ji = じ or ぢ

1. *ba* = _____
2. *do* = _____
3. *gu* = _____
4. *cho* = _____
5. *myu* = _____

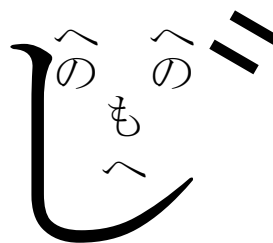
Answer on p. 51

FUN WITH

HIRAGANA

I want you to meet Mr. *Henohenomoheji*

The name sounds impossible to remember, but it is simply reading the hiragana that makes the character. The eyebrow is "he." The eye is "no." The nose is "mo." the mouth is "he." And the face is made by "ji." (*ji* = *shi* + ") Do you see it? Try to draw it. Impress your friends.



.....



Here's another one. Can you read it? It is also *henohenomoheji* but as a cat.

SHIRITORI - A traditional Japanese game which you have already seen (p. 31) is called *Shiritori*. If you remember, the game starts with someone saying a word. The next player takes the last "letter" of that word and uses it to begin the next word. *Shiritori* is an excellent way to have fun while gaining a larger vocabulary.

KAIBUN (Japanese palindrome) - This is a word play where a sentence can be read from the left or right and still make sense.

わたしまけましたわ *watashi makemashita wa*—Reading from either the left or right it means "I lost." [*watashi* = I; *makemashita* = lost; *wa* = sigh or exclamation sound] Notice this doesn't work looking at the romaji, but only with hiragana.

たけやぶやけた *takeyabu yaketa*—Again reading from the left or the right, it means, "the bamboo grove burned." [*takeyabu* = bamboo grove; *yaketa* = was burned]

Yumi's challenge

Here is your chance. Yumi has prepared a few sentences based mainly on words found in this booklet. See if you can sound out the words **and** understand them.

- ① りすは くりが すき。
- ② うしは かおが おおきい。
- ③ おおきい くうこうへ いきましょう。
- ④ しまうまは はやい です。

Some hints

- は, へ and が are used also as grammatical particles. [p. 44]
- Japanese verbs are at the end of the sentence.
- Think of です as "to be" [is, am, are]

Here are the page numbers for each word, if you need to look them up:

- 1) 42, 42, 18
- 2) 18, 14, 14
- 3) 14, 14, 38
- 4) 34, 38, *desu*
- 5) 45, 10, 30, *desu*



ANSWERS: Crosswords

P. 11

あ	お	い	
い		い	い
		え	

P. 15

か	お		
	お		
か	き		
	い	く	

P. 19

		せ	
	す	き	
う	し		
そ			

P. 23

お			
と	お	い	
		ち	ち

P. 27

	ね	こ	
な	つ		
に			

P. 31

		へ	
	ひ	た	ち
は	と		
こ			

P. 35

し	ま	う	ま
	め		ち

P. 27

★	い	き	し	つ	の	お	な	つ
の	ど	て	に	ぬ	お	さ	あ	う
ね	な	つ	ち	い	す	こ	け	お
ぬ	に	う	た	と	ぬ	の	に	て
て	け	し	そ	う	え	お		さ
い	こ	ね	せ	あ	い	に	か	ね
ぬ	き	お	す	し	な	と	き	そ
あ	く	な	に	さ	こ	け	く	す
し	の	と	さ	す	の	と	つ	ぬ

ANSWERS: Questions

- P. 11 - Q&A 1) love 2) あおい 3) あおい いえ T/F 1) F [いいえ is no] 2) F [あおい is blue]
P. 15 - Q&A 1) おおきい えき 2) katakana T/F 1) T 2) T
P. 19 - Q&A 1) すし 2) *ka sa* [means “umbrella”] T/F 1) F [さ is “sa”; き is “ki”] 2) T
P. 23 - Q&A 1) ち *chi* & つ *tsu* 2) うた T/F 1) F [いち means “1”] 2) F [すてき means “nice”]
P. 31 - box = はこ; love or carp = こい; to go = いく; airport = っこう; cow = うし
P. 35 - Q&A 1) ぬ *nu* め *me* 2) しまうま T/F 1) T 2) F [まみむめも]
P. 38 - きょう、あなたはひゃくさい。 means “Today, you are a hundred years old.”
P. 39 - ひゃく きゅう じゅう
P. 45 - わたしはほんをよみたい。 means “I want to read a book.”
P. 46 - 1) きゅうり 2) しょうり 3) おちや 4) りょうり 5) きょう 6) しゃしん
P. 47 - 1) ぎ *gi* 2) ぷ *pu* 3) ぎゅ *gyu* 4) じょ *jo* 5) びじん *bijin*
P. 48 - romaji 1) bu 2) pu 3) da 4) bya 5) zu hiragana 1) ば 2) ど 3) ぐ 4) ちょ 5) みゆ

QUICK

HIRAGANA CHART

Plus ten ten or maru

Only affected rows shown

Red denotes sounds different from pattern

a i u e o

あいうえお -

かきくけこ k

さしすせそ s

たちつてと t

なにぬねの n

はひふへほ h

まみむめも m

や ゆ よ y

らりるれろ r

わ を w

ん

The blue rows may be combined with the ten ten or maru to make more sounds:

じゃ *jya* (or *ja*)
ぴゅ *pyu*

が ga ぎ gi ぐ gu げ ge ご go

ざ za じ *ji* ず zu ぜ ze ぞ zo

だ da ぢ *ji* づ *zu* で de ど do

ば ba び bi ぶ bu べ be ぼ bo

ぱ pa ぴ pi ぷ pu ぺ pe ぽ po

Plus small ya yu yo

Only affected rows shown

き+y きや *kya* きゅ *kyu* きょ *kyo*

し+y しゃ *sha* しゅ *shu* しょ *sho*

ち+y ちゃ *cha* ちゅ *chu* ちょ *cho*

に+y にゃ *nya* にゅ *nyu* にょ *nyo*

ひ+y ひゃ *hya* ひゅ *hyu* ひょ *hyo*

み+y みゃ *mya* みゅ *myu* みょ *myo*

り+y りゃ *rya* りゅ *ryu* りょ *ryo*