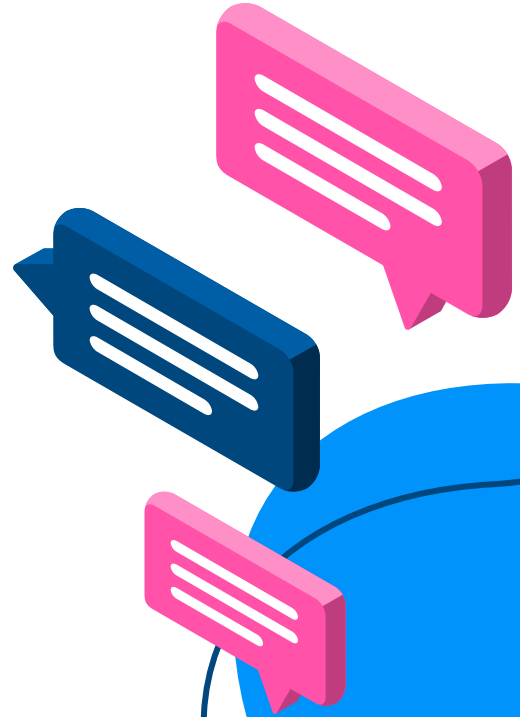


How to Study Japanese

- **Giuseppe di Martino**
- Adapted from a presentation by **Samantha Shoppell and Andre Perez**





How to Study

1. **Active studying + immersion:** Realistically you need both.
2. **Slow and steady** wins the race: A reasonable amount everyday beats a tsunami in one go.
3. Learn **words in context:** That's how language works! And Japanese is a very context-centric language.
4. Follow your **passions:** You retain what you like.
5. **Balanced growth:** Don't ignore your weaknesses.
6. Don't be afraid to **make mistakes.** How else will we learn from them?



1

Textbooks and Tests

Force yourself to achieve your goals, and measure your progress.

2

Human Interaction

Conversation is key to learning non-textbook JPN, and just the effort will earn you points.

3

Writing

Exercise your ability to craft sentences.

4

Flashcards

Making them is half the battle.

5

The More, the Better

There's no wrong avenue to explore.

Keep in Mind

Challenge Yourself

Work the language muscle. Step out of your comfort zone.



Sleep, Eat, Exercise

It helps the brain form the needed synapses.

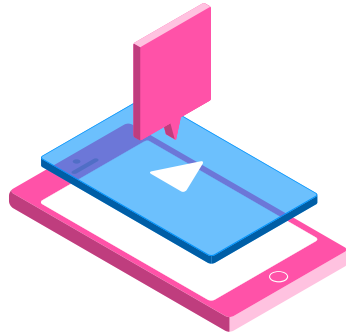
Stay in Your Lane

Don't study advanced stuff as a beginner.

It's Not a Contest

Don't let competitive *gaijin* disrupt your pace.

Beginner Japanese



Classes

Also a lovely way to meet people

Use Kana

Avoid *romaji* and train your かな brain

Apps

Duolingo etc. work best as a supplement to book study

Notebooks

For practicing writing

Textbooks

Genki is what I used. Many come with helpful CDs

Partners

Help each other and keep at it

Beginner Building Blocks

The Prism of Japanese Phonics

For example, “vanilla,” when strained through JPN’s relatively limited sound library, becomes “*banira*.”

Vowel Length Matters

You don’t want to confuse “consultant” (*komon*) with “anus” (*koumon*)

Particles

The most fundamental grammatical building block. Learn them + vocab to unlock the meaning of most sentences

Radicals

The “alphabet” of shared symbols inside kanji. Learn these and demystify kanji.

◻ goes in 仇 化 仏 仲, etc.



Intermediate Japanese

Non-learner Media

Consume media meant for native speakers

Shadowing

Improve spoken pronunciation, prosody, and rhythm

Nanori

How to read kanji in people's names. Learn students/coworkers' name kanji

Non-learner Interaction

Take classes *using* JPN. Join various classes at school

Dictation

Great at honing listening and writing simultaneously

Dictionaries

Move away from J↔E dictionaries toward JPN-only dictionaries

Things to Note

Masculine and Feminine Speech

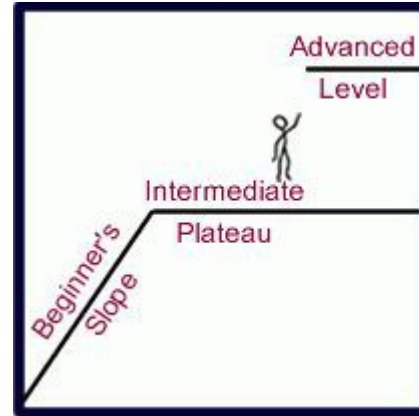
Know what gendered speech patterns you may or may not be absorbing from opposite-sex company.

Written vs. Spoken JPN

There's a relatively high amount of words and phrases that usually only show up in one or the other.

The Intermediate Plateau

The amount you learn per day will make up a smaller and smaller percentage of the pool of what you already know. You will be just okay at JPN for a while.



Advanced Japanese

Pitch Accent and Native Pronun.

Look up the YouTube
videos of Dogen



Keigo

Takes getting used to
but it's honestly kind
of fun

Neologisms

Like “*guguru*” for “to
google”

Aim for Eloquence

Ride more widely
than ever and take
notice of others'
speech patterns.
Hang out and
converse with native
speakers. Do speech
contests, etc.

Resources

- **Textbooks:** Kanzen Master [series]; 3anet [publisher]; ALC [publisher]
- **Newspapers** (in person or online: [NHK News Web Easy](#) - with audio)
- **Picture books** (絵本 *ehon*), **manga** (漫画), **light novels** (ライトノベル),
Children's and young adult literature (check out your school's library!)
- **Vocabulary:** renshuu.org [web], Anki [iPhone/Android/Windows/Mac]
- **Kanji:** Wanikani [web], Kanji Tree [Android]
- **Grammar:** Bunpo [Android]



Thanks

If you already have a decent amount of Japanese under your belt, you can try your hand at participating in the **weekly Japanese-conversation hours** hosted by the **JETAANY** Language Chair.

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