

JP

HIRAGANA

# Hiragana 1 · Chapter 9 · Na Ni Nu

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# Hiragana 1

Chapter 9 · Na Ni Nu

## 🌸 The N Row Begins — な に ん

The fourth consonant row is **n**, with な (na), に (ni) and ん (nu). That makes **twenty-three characters**, and with them you can read the words for what, you, country and dog.

|          | a | i | u | e | o |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|
| (vowels) | あ | い | う | え | お |
| k +      | か | き | く | け | こ |
| s +      | さ | し | す | せ | そ |
| t +      | た | ち | つ | て | と |
| n +      | な | に | ぬ | ね | の |

Twenty-three down, twenty-three to go: exactly halfway. ん and の come in Chapter 10.

## 🌟 Three New Characters — な に ん

な

**na**

like "na" in *nap*, but with an open "ah" ("nah")

4 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

**Memory hook:** a *nanny* kneeling beside a cross-shaped toy.

に

**ni**

like "knee" ("nee"), short

3 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

**Memory hook:** a bent leg: the long line is the thigh, and the two bars are the *knee*.

ぬ

**nu**

like "noo" in *noodle*, with relaxed lips

2 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

**Memory hook:** a tangle of *noodles*, with a loop at the bottom right.

### Look-Alike Heads-Up: に and the け-は-ほ Family; め and the Loop Family

に belongs to the family of characters that begin with a **vertical line on the left**: け, に, は and ほ. に is the simplest, with just two short bars to its right, no loop. め is the first of a look-alike group: め, ね and め all finish at the bottom right. め and ね end in a **loop**, while め ends in a plain sweep. Their cousins の, れ and わ look similar too. You'll meet the rest over the next few chapters, and we'll compare them carefully. For now, learn め's shape well: a short stroke at the top, then a long stroke ending in a loop.

## Read It — New Words

*Twenty-three characters give you plenty to read. Remember that each character is one beat.*

| #  | WORD | ROMAJI | ENGLISH              | NOTE                            |
|----|------|--------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1  | なに   | nani   | what?                | <i>na + ni; a question word</i> |
| 2  | あなた  | anata  | you                  | <i>a + na + ta</i>              |
| 3  | くに   | kuni   | country; home region | <i>ku + ni</i>                  |
| 4  | いぬ   | inu    | dog                  | <i>i + nu</i>                   |
| 5  | さかな  | sakana | fish                 | <i>sa + ka + na</i>             |
| 6  | にく   | niku   | meat                 | <i>ni + ku</i>                  |
| 7  | かに   | kani   | crab                 | <i>ka + ni</i>                  |
| 8  | なつ   | natsu  | summer               | <i>na + tsu</i>                 |
| 9  | にし   | nishi  | west                 | <i>ni + shi</i>                 |
| 10 | なか   | naka   | inside, middle       | <i>na + ka</i>                  |

| #  | WORD | ROMAJI | ENGLISH          | NOTE                             |
|----|------|--------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 11 | おなか  | onaka  | stomach, belly   | <i>the polite お + なか</i>         |
| 12 | ない   | nai    | there isn't; not | <i>the word for "not / none"</i> |

## Mini-Dialogs

### ① What Is It? — なに？

A:

なに？

*nani?*

What is it?

B:

さかな！

*sakana!*

Fish!

A:

おいしい？

*oishii?*

Is it delicious?

B:

ええ、おいしい。

*ee, oishii.*

Yes, it's delicious.

### ② A Big Dog — いぬ！

A:

そこ、なに？

*soko, nani?*

What's there?

B:

いぬ！

*inu!*

A dog!

A:

おおきい？

*ookii?*

Is it big?

B:

ええ、おおきい！

*ee, ookii!*

Yes, big!

### Real Japanese Tip — Be Careful with あなた

あなた means "you", but Japanese speakers use it rarely, because saying "you" straight to someone can sound blunt or distant. Instead they use the person's **name** (plus a title), even when talking directly to them. You'll find あなた in textbooks and songs, and a wife might say it to her husband affectionately, but in real life, drop "you" and use the name. That's why the conversation courses concentrate on names and polite forms.

### Real Japanese Tip — ない Means "Not" or "There Isn't"

ない is the word for "there isn't / doesn't exist", and it's also the ending that makes verbs and adjectives negative (you'll see it at the end of many words soon). Keep it in mind: whenever you see 〜ない at the end of a word, think "not".

### Review: Reading Back

Cover the English and read these again: て (hand) · とけい (clock) · ことし (this year) ·

おと (sound) · そと (outside) · こと (thing) · いつ (when) · たいせつ (important) ·

あたたかい (warm).

## Try It Yourself — れんしゅう

*Say each answer out loud first, then click to check.*

1. Read these aloud: な · に · ぬ

▼ Show answer

na · ni · nu

2. How many strokes do な, に and ぬ have?

▼ Show answer

な has 4, に has 3, ぬ has 2.

3. Read and translate: いぬ · さかな · くに

▼ Show answer

inu (dog) · sakana (fish) · kuni (country)

4. Write in hiragana: *nani* (what?) · *anata* (you) · *natsu* (summer)

▼ Show answer

なに・あなた・なつ

5. Read and translate: かに・にく・にし

▼ Show answer

kani (crab) · niku (meat) · nishi (west)

6. Why do Japanese people often avoid saying あなた?

▼ Show answer

It can sound blunt or distant, so they use the person's name (with a title) instead.

### Coming Up in Chapter 10

Two characters finish the N row: ね (ne) and の (no). You'll then read ねこ (cat), この (this), その (that) and あの (that over there). Warning: ね looks very like め, so you'll compare the two side by side.