

JP

HIRAGANA

Hiragana 3 · Chapter 4 · Sha Shu Sho

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🌸 Combined Sounds II — しゃ しゅ しょ and じゃ じゅ じょ

Same rule as last chapter, on two new rows: し and じ plus a small や, ゆ or よ. Notice that the romaji is sha shu sho and ja ju jo, not "shya" or "jya": the "y" is already inside the sh and j sounds. Romaji is shown for everything.

✖ The Rule Again — 拗音

The rule has not changed: an し-row character + a small や, ゆ or よ = **one beat**. Today it is applied to し and じ.

	や (YA)	ゆ (YU)	よ (YO)
し (shi)	しゃ sha	しゅ shu	しょ sho
じ (ji)	じゃ ja	じゅ ju	じょ jo

Remember: し is shi and じ is ji, so these combine to sha and ja, not shya.

しゃ

sha

"sha" in one beat, like *shah*

stroke order ▶

Memory hook: sha in *shashin*, a photo. し + small や.

しゅ

shu

"shu" in one beat, like *shoe*

stroke order ▶

Memory hook: shu as in *shumi*, a hobby. し + small ゆ.

しょ

sho

"sho" in one beat, like *show*

stroke order ▶

Memory hook: sho, like a *show*. し + small よ.

じゃ

ja

"ja" in one beat, like *jam*

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *ja* like *jam*. じ
+ small や.

じゅ

ju

"ju" in one beat, like *ju* in

jewel

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *ju* as in *jū*, *ten*.
じ + small ゆ.

じょ

jo

"jo" in one beat, like *Joe*

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *jo*, like *Joe*. じ
+ small よ.

One Beat or Two? — しゃ versus しゃ

Size again decides: しゃ (small や) is one beat, *sha*. しゃ (full-size や) is two beats, *shi-ya*. The length matters even more with じゅう (ten) and じゅう (freedom): same letters, different sizes, completely different words.

TWO BEATS

SAY IT

ONE BEAT

SAY IT

しゃ

shi-ya

しゃ

sha

じゅう

ji-yū (freedom)

じゅう

jū (ten)

Long Vowels Again

As before, a combined sound followed by う is a long vowel: しょうゆ is *shō-yu* and じゅう is *jū*. The word しょうがっこう (elementary school) has everything from this course so far: a long ō, a small っ and a long ō again.

Read It — New Words

Read the Japanese first, then check the romaji. Remember: each combined sound is one beat.

#	WORD	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	NOTE
1	しゃしん	shashin	photograph	<i>sha-shi-n</i>
2	しゅみ	shumi	hobby	<i>shu-mi</i>
3	かいしゃ	kaisha	company; workplace	<i>ka-i-sha: you will use this a lot</i>
4	しょうゆ	shōyu	soy sauce	<i>shō-yu</i>
5	しょくじ	shokuji	meal	<i>sho-ku-ji</i>
6	じゅう	jū	ten	<i>jū: じゅう is a long u</i>
7	じょうず	jōzu	skilled; good at	<i>jō-zu: used to praise someone</i>
8	じゅぎょう	jugyō	class; lesson	<i>ju-gyō</i>
9	しょうがっこう	shōgakkō	elementary school	<i>shō-gak-kō: a long ō, then small つ, then another long ō</i>
10	じゃあ	jā	well then; so	<i>jā: a long a</i>

Real Japanese Tip — しゅみは 何ですか？

しゅみは 何ですか ("What's your hobby?") is a classic question when you meet someone new. And じゃあ、また ("Well then, see you again") is a casual goodbye among friends. You can read all of it already.

Review: Words from the Last Chapter

きょう (today) · きょうと (Kyoto) · ぎょうざ (gyoza) · きゅうり (cucumber) ·
ぎゅうにく (beef) · きょうだい (siblings).

Try It Yourself — れんしゅう

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

1. How is **しゃ** romanised, and why is it not "shya"?

▼ Show answer

sha: the "y" sound is already part of sh, so there is no extra y.

2. What is the difference between **じゅう** and **じゆう**?

▼ Show answer

じゅう (jū) is ten; じゆう (jiyū) is freedom: small ゆ gives one beat, full-size ゆ gives two.

3. Read aloud and translate: **しゃしん・しゅみ・かいしゃ**

▼ Show answer

shashin (photograph) · shumi (hobby) · kaisha (company)

4. Read aloud and translate: **しょうゆ・しょくじ・じょうず**

▼ Show answer

shōyu (soy sauce) · shokuji (meal) · jōzu (skilled)

5. Read aloud: **しょうがっこう**. What three ideas from earlier chapters does it use?

▼ Show answer

shōgakkō (elementary school): a combined sound, a long ō (ょう) and a small っ.

6. Write in hiragana: *shumi · kaisha · jōzu* (check the small characters).

▼ Show answer

しゅみ・かいしゃ・じょうず

Coming Up in Chapter 5

Two more rows: **ちゃ ちゅ ちょ** and **にゃ にゅ によ**. You'll be able to read **おちゃ** (tea), **ちょっと** (a little) and **ちゅうごく** (China).