

JP

HIRAGANA

Hiragana 3 · Chapter 6 · Hya Hyu Hyo

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🌸 Combined Sounds IV — ひゃ ひゅ ひょ and びゃ びゅ びょ

Two more rows with the same rule, and this time a practical bonus: the numbers for **hundreds**, and a famous trap, hospital versus beauty salon. The characters are ひ and び plus a small や, ゆ or よ. Romaji is shown for everything.

✳️ The Rule Again — 拗音

One more pair of rows: ひ and its voiced partner び plus a small や, ゆ or よ. The same rule: one beat. Today's words give you the numbers for hundreds, and the word for a hospital.

	ゃ (YA)	ゅ (YU)	ょ (YO)
ひ (hi)	ひゃ hya	ひゅ hyu	ひょ hyo
び (bi)	びゃ bya	びゅ byu	びょ byo

The pattern follows the plain character: ひ (hi) gives hya hyu hyo, and び (bi) gives bya byu byo.

ひゃ

hya

"hya" in one beat, like the start of *Hyannis*

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *hya-ku*, one hundred. ひ + small や.

ひゅ

hyu

"hyu" in one beat, like *huge*

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *hyū-hyū*, the whistle of the wind. ひ + small ゆ.

ひょ

hyo

"hyo" in one beat

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *hyō*, a chart or table. ひ + small よ.

びや

bya

"bya" in one beat, a b plus
"ya"

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *sanbyaku*,
three hundred. び + small や.

びゅ

byu

"byu" in one beat, like *beauty*

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *byūn-byūn*, a
gust of wind. び + small ゆ.

びょ

byo

"byo" in one beat

[stroke order ▶](#)

Memory hook: *byō-in*, a
hospital. び + small よ.

100 The Hundreds

Counting in hundreds shows a sound change you will meet again: after some numbers, ひゃく turns into びゃく.

NUMBER	HIRAGANA	SAY IT
100	ひゃく	hyaku
200	にひゃく	nihyaku
300	さんびゃく	sanbyaku (びゃ: the sound changes)
400	よんひゃく	yonhyaku
500	ごひゃく	gohyaku
700	ななひゃく	nanahyaku
900	きゅうひゃく	kyūhyaku

600 (ろっぴゃく) and 800 (はっぴゃく) use the P version, ぴゃ, which comes in the next chapter.

Hospital or Beauty Salon?

A famous mix-up for learners: びょういん (*byōin*) is a **hospital** and びよういん (*biyōin*) is a **beauty salon**. The only difference is the size of one character and one vowel. Say "I'm going to the びょういん" and you'll get very different reactions. Size matters!

HOSPITAL OR...?	SAY IT	ENGLISH
びょういん	byōin	hospital
びよういん	biyōin	beauty salon
ひょう	hyō	chart; table
ひよう	hiyō	cost; expense

Read It — New Words

Read the Japanese first, then check the romaji.

#	WORD	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	NOTE
1	ひゃく	hyaku	one hundred	<i>hya-ku</i>
2	にひゃく	nihyaku	two hundred	<i>ni-hya-ku</i>
3	さんびゃく	sanbyaku	three hundred	<i>sa-n-bya-ku</i> : ひゃ becomes ひゃ after ん
4	ひゃくえん	hyakuen	one hundred yen	<i>hya-ku-e-n</i> : the most useful coin
5	ひょう	hyō	chart; table	<i>hyō</i> : よう is a long ō
6	びょういん	byōin	hospital	<i>byō-i-n</i>

#	WORD	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	NOTE
7	びょうき	byōki	illness	<i>byō-ki</i>
8	ひょうじょう	hyōjō	facial expression	<i>hyō-jō: two combined sounds in a row</i>
9	ひゅうひゅう	hyūhyū	whistling (wind)	<i>hyū-hyū: a mimetic word</i>
10	びゅんびゅん	byunbyun	whooshing (fast wind)	<i>byu-n-byu-n: a mimetic word</i>

Real Japanese Tip — ひゃくえん

The ひゃくえん coin (100 yen) is the workhorse of Japanese money: vending machines, lockers, shops everywhere. Knowing ひゃく in both its forms (ひゃく, びゃく, ぴゃく) is a practical skill for anyone shopping in Japan, and you'll practise it in Japanese Basic Conversation 1.

Review: Words from the Last Chapter

おちゃ (tea) · ちゃわん (rice bowl) · ちょっと (a little) · ちゅうごく (China) ·
ちゅうもん (an order) · にゅうがく (entering school).

Try It Yourself — れんしゅう

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

1. How are ひゃ and びゃ romanised?

▼ Show answer

hya and bya.

2. Read aloud and translate: ひゃく · にひゃく · さんびゃく

▼ Show answer

hyaku (100) · nihyaku (200) · sanbyaku (300)

3. What is the difference between びょういん and びよういん?

▼ Show answer

びょういん (byōin) is a hospital; びよういん (biyōin) is a beauty salon.

4. Read aloud and translate: びょうき · ひょう · ひゃくえん

▼ Show answer

byōki (illness) · hyō (chart) · hyakuen (100 yen)

5. After which numbers does ひゃく change to びゃく?

▼ Show answer

After 3 (さん): さんびゃく. (600 and 800 use ひゃ, coming in Chapter 7.)

6. Write in hiragana: *hyaku* · *byōin* · *byōki* (check the small characters).

▼ Show answer

ひゃく · びょういん · びょうき

Coming Up in Chapter 7

Two more rows: ひゃ ひゅ ひょ and みゃ みゅ みょ. You'll be able to read ろっぴゃく (600), はっぴゃく (800) and みょうじ (family name).