

JP

JAPANESE LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 1 · Greetings & Goodbyes

Japanese Basic Conversation 1

Chapter 1 · Greetings & Goodbyes

👋 Greetings & Goodbyes — あいさつ

Welcome to your first conversation lesson. By the end of this chapter you'll be able to greet people at any time of the day, say thank you and sorry, say goodbye, and use the little set phrases for leaving and coming home. Japanese is shown in kana (hiragana, with katakana where needed), with **romaji** **under every line**, so you're never guessing. You already know how to read it: now you learn to use it.

① Good Morning at the Hotel — あさの あいさつ

A:

おはようございます。

Ohayō gozaimasu.

Good morning.

B:

おはようございます。おげんきですか。

Ohayō gozaimasu. Ogenki desu ka.

Good morning. How are you?

A:

はい、げんきです。ありがとうございます。

Hai, genki desu. Arigatō gozaimasu.

Yes, I'm well. Thank you.

B:

よかったです。

Yokatta desu.

That's good to hear.

② A Nice Day — こんにちは

A:

こんにちは。

Konnichiwa.

Hello.

B:

こんにちは。いい天気ですね。

Konnichiwa. Ii tenki desu ne.

Hello. Nice weather, isn't it?

A:

はい、そうですね。

Hai, sō desu ne.

Yes, it is.

B:

では、また。

Dewa, mata.

Well then, see you again.

A:

さようなら。

Sayōnara.

Goodbye.

③ At the Office — かいしゃで

A:

たなかさん、おつかれさまです。

Tanaka-san, otsukaresama desu.

Tanaka-san, hello (good work today).

B:

おつかれさまです。パソコンはだいじょうぶですか。

Otsukaresama desu. Pasokon wa daijōbu desu ka.

Hello. Is the PC all right?

A:

はい、だいじょうぶです。ありがとうございます。

Hai, daijōbu desu. Arigatō gozaimasu.

Yes, it's fine. Thank you.

B:

では、おさきにしつれいします。

Dewa, osaki ni shitsurei shimasu.

Well then, I'll leave before you (excuse me).

A:

おつかれさまでした。

Otsukaresama deshita.

Thanks for your work today.

④ Leaving and Coming Home — いえで

A:

いってきます。

Ittekimasu.

I'm off (and I'll be back).

B:

いってらっしゃい。

Itterasshai.

See you later. Take care.

A:

ただいま。

Tadaima.

I'm home. (later, on returning)

B:

おかえりなさい。

Okaerinasai.

Welcome home.

⑤ Thanks and Sorry — ありがとう と ごめんなさい

A:

あ、すみません。

A, sumimasen.

Oh, excuse me.

B:

いいえ、だいじょうぶです。

⑥ Goodbye to a Friend (casual) — ともだちに

A:

じゃあ、また あした。

Jā, mata ashita.

Well, see you tomorrow.

B:

うん、またね。

Iie, daijōbu desu.

No, it's all right.

A:

ごめんなさい。ありがとうございます。
ます。

Gomen nasai. Arigatō gozaimasu.

I'm sorry. Thank you.

B:

どういたしまして。

Dō itashimashite.

You're welcome.

Un, mata ne.

Yeah, see you.

A:

おやすみなさい。

Oyasuminasai.

Good night.

B:

おやすみ。

Oyasumi.

Night.

Key Phrases — たいせつな ひょうげん

Japanese has a polite style and a casual style. With anyone you don't know well, in a shop, in a hotel or at work, use the polite column. The casual column is for close friends and family, and for understanding what you hear.

SITUATION	POLITE	CASUAL
Good morning	おはようございます <i>ohayō gozaimasu</i>	おはよう <i>ohayō</i>
Hello (daytime)	こんにちは <i>konnichiwa</i>	(same)
Good evening	こんばんは <i>konbanwa</i>	(same)
Thank you	ありがとうございます <i>arigatō gozaimasu</i>	ありがとう <i>arigatō</i>
Sorry	すみません <i>sumimasen</i>	ごめん <i>gomen</i>

SITUATION	POLITE	CASUAL
Goodbye	さようなら <i>sayōnara</i>	じゃあね <i>jā ne</i>
Good night	おやすみなさい <i>oyasuminasai</i>	おやすみ <i>oyasumi</i>
How are you?	おげんきですか <i>ogenki desu ka</i>	げんき？ <i>genki?</i>
See you / see you later	では、また <i>dewa, mata</i>	またね <i>mata ne</i>

abc Three Verbs You Can Already Use — どうし

Japanese verbs have one polite pattern. Here are the forms of the three most useful verbs for this chapter. You do not need to learn the grammar behind them yet; just recognise the endings.

VERB	PRESENT (POLITE)	NEGATIVE	PAST
to be (です)	です <i>desu</i>	ではありません <i>dewa arimasen</i>	でした <i>deshita</i>
to go (いく)	いきます <i>ikimasu</i>	いきません <i>ikimasen</i>	いきました <i>ikimashita</i>
to come (くる)	きます <i>kimasu</i>	きません <i>kimasen</i>	きました <i>kimashita</i>

How the Polite Forms Work

The polite present ends in **-ます** (*-masu*), the polite negative in **-ません** (*-masen*) and the polite past in **-ました** (*-mashita*). **です** works the same way: **です** → **ではありません** → **でした**. The **は** in **ではありません** is read *wa*.



Going Out, Coming Home, Eating, Working — いえとかいしゃ

Japanese has set phrases for everyday moments that English does not bother to mark. You will hear these every day.

SAY THIS...	...WHEN	THE REPLY
いってきます <i>ittekimasu</i>	leaving home or the office, intending to return	いってらっしゃい <i>itterasshai</i>
ただいま <i>tadaima</i>	arriving home	おかえりなさい <i>okaerinasai</i>
いただきます <i>itadakimasu</i>	before eating	(nothing needed)
ごちそうさまでした <i>gochisōsama deshita</i>	after eating	(nothing needed)
おさきに しつれいします <i>osaki ni shitsurei shimasu</i>	leaving work before others	おつかれさまでした <i>otsukaresama deshita</i>



Vocabulary — ごい

20 key words. Read the Japanese first, then check the romaji.

#	JAPANESE	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	おはようございます	<i>ohayō gozaimasu</i>	good morning (polite)	phrase
2	こんにちは	<i>konnichiwa</i>	hello; good afternoon	phrase
3	こんばんは	<i>konbanwa</i>	good evening	phrase
4	おやすみなさい	<i>oyasuminasai</i>	good night	phrase

#	JAPANESE	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	TYPE
5	さようなら	<i>sayōnara</i>	goodbye	phrase
6	ありがとう	<i>arigatō</i>	thank you (casual)	phrase
7	ありがとうございます	<i>arigatō gozaimasu</i>	thank you (polite)	phrase
8	どういたしまして	<i>dō itashimashite</i>	you're welcome	phrase
9	すみません	<i>sumimasen</i>	excuse me; sorry; thank you	phrase
10	ごめんなさい	<i>gomen nasai</i>	I'm sorry	phrase
11	はい	<i>hai</i>	yes	phrase
12	いいえ	<i>iie</i>	no	phrase
13	おげんきですか	<i>ogenki desu ka</i>	how are you?	phrase
14	げんきです	<i>genki desu</i>	I'm well	phrase
15	いってきます	<i>ittekimasu</i>	I'm off (and will be back)	phrase
16	いってらっしゃい	<i>itterasshai</i>	see you later; take care	phrase
17	ただいま	<i>tadaima</i>	I'm home	phrase
18	おかえりなさい	<i>okaerinasai</i>	welcome home	phrase
19	おつかれさまです	<i>otsukaresama desu</i>	hello / thanks for your work (at work)	phrase
20	しつれいします	<i>shitsurei shimasu</i>	excuse me (entering or leaving)	phrase

Real Japanese Tip — Bowing (おじぎ)

Greetings in Japan often come with a **bow**. A small nod is enough for everyday hellos and thanks; a deeper bow shows more respect, such as to a customer, a boss or after a mistake. As a visitor you

are not expected to bow perfectly: a slight nod and a smile with こんにちは is always welcome.

すみません Does Three Jobs

すみません means *excuse me* (to get someone's attention), *I'm sorry* (when you've troubled someone) and, very often, *thank you* (for something someone has done for you). ごめんなさい is closer to a plain "I'm sorry", so it is more personal and a little more casual.

おつかれさまです — The Office Greeting

At work in Japan you will hear おつかれさまです all day: as a greeting in the corridor, when you pass a colleague, when you leave. It literally means "you must be tired", but it simply says "thanks for your effort". It's the safe, polite word between colleagues, whatever the time of day. And in shops you'll often hear いらっしゃいませ, "welcome", to which you don't reply.

Time of Day

おはようございます is used until about mid-morning, こんにちは from then until evening, and こんにちはばんは from evening. At the end of the day, おやすみなさい is for going to bed. The exact switch-over times are flexible: use what feels natural.

Kanji Spotlight — 日

こんにちは is originally part of a longer sentence written 今日は (*konnichi wa*, "as for today..."). Two kanji, and the second, 日 (*nichi, hi*), means **day** and **sun**. It is also in 日本 (*Nihon*, Japan, literally "the origin of the sun"), and in the word for *Sunday*. Look for it as you read: [see the kanji page for 日 ▶](#).

Try It Yourself — れんしゅう

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

1. It is 8 a.m. and you meet the receptionist at your hotel. What do you say?

▼ Show answer

おはようございます。 (Ohayō gozaimasu.)

2. A shop assistant gives you your change. What do you say?

▼ Show answer

ありがとうございます。 (Arigatō gozaimasu.) or すみません。

3. You bump into someone on a train. What do you say, and what might they reply?

▼ Show answer

すみません。 / ごめんなさい。 They might say だいじょうぶです。 (It's all right.)

4. You are leaving home for work. What do you say, and what is the reply?

▼ Show answer

いってきます。 The reply: いってらっしゃい。

5. A colleague leaves the office before you. What do they say, and what do you reply?

▼ Show answer

おさきに しつれいします。 You reply: おつかれさまでした。

6. Say "Good night" politely, then casually.

▼ Show answer

おやすみなさい。 (polite) · おやすみ。 (casual)

Coming Up in Chapter 2

Introducing yourself: はじめまして ("nice to meet you"), saying your name with ~です and ~といいます, and よろしくおねがいします. You'll meet the particle は properly, and learn why Japanese people say their family name first.