

JP

KATAKANA

Katakana 1 · Chapter 13 · Ma Mi Mu

Katakana 1

Chapter 13 · Ma Mi Mu

🌱 The M Row Begins — マ ミ ム

Three new characters: マ (ma), ミ (mi) and ム (mu). You can read ten real words today, including マイク, the "Mike" from Chapter 1. Romaji is shown for everything.

🌟 Your Three New Characters — マ ミ ム

ma

like "ma" in *mama* ("mah")

2 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: a mailbox with a flag: a flat top and a flag slanting down. Hiragana twin: ま.

mi

like "me", short ("mee")

3 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: three cat whiskers: miaow. Also, three slanting lines for the third note, *mi*, of do-re-mi. Hiragana twin: み.

mu

like "moo", short and relaxed ("moo")

2 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: a cow's horn: a mooing cow with a pointed horn and a little tick. Hiragana twin: む.

KATAKANA

HIRAGANA TWIN

ROMAJI

マ

ま

ma

ミ

み

mi

ム

む

mu

Look-Alikes: マ and ア, ミ and ニ

マ (ma) is easy to confuse with ア (a), which you learned in Chapter 1: both start with a bar, but ア's second stroke is a long slash crossing down through the bar, while マ ends with a short tick. Compare them side by side on their stroke-order pages. And ミ (mi) is three *slanting* lines, while ニ (ni), from Chapter 9, is two *horizontal* lines.

Read It — Real Words

#	WORD	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	NOTE
1	ハム	hamu	ham	<i>ha-mu</i>
2	マスク	masuku	mask	<i>ma-su-ku</i>
3	ホーム	hōmu	(station) platform; home	<i>ho-o-mu</i>
4	ムース	mūsu	mousse	<i>mu-u-su</i>
5	マーク	māku	mark; logo	<i>ma-a-ku</i>
6	ミス	misu	mistake (a "miss")	<i>mi-su</i>
7	ミニ	mini	mini	<i>mi-ni</i>
8	マナー	manā	manners	<i>ma-na-a</i>
9	テーマ	tēma	theme	<i>te-e-ma</i> : borrowed from German <i>Thema</i> , not English
10	マイク	maiku	microphone; Mike	<i>ma-i-ku</i> : a mic, and also the name from Chapter 1

Not Only English

Not every katakana word comes from English. テーマ (theme) comes from the German *Thema*, and many other loanwords come from Portuguese, Dutch, French and other languages. Don't be

surprised if a katakana word doesn't sound quite like the English one: it may not be English at all. Meanwhile, マイク can be both the name Mike and a microphone, so context is your guide.

Try It Yourself — れんしゅう

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

1. Read aloud: マ ・ ミ ・ ム

▼ Show answer

ma · mi · mu

2. Read aloud and translate: ハム ・ マスク ・ ホーム

▼ Show answer

hamu (ham) · masuku (mask) · hōmu (platform; home)

3. Read aloud and translate: マーク ・ ミス ・ ミニ

▼ Show answer

māku (mark) · misu (mistake) · mini (mini)

4. Read aloud and translate: マナー ・ テーマ ・ マイク

▼ Show answer

manā (manners) · tēma (theme) · maiku (microphone; Mike)

5. How can you tell ≡ from 二?

▼ Show answer

≡ is three slanting lines; 二 is two horizontal lines.

6. Write in katakana: hamu · masuku · maiku (check the stroke order).

▼ Show answer

ハム・マスク・マイク

Coming Up in Chapter 5

Two more M sounds: め (me) and も (mo), completing the M row. You'll read めも (memo), アニめ (anime) and めキシコ (Mexico).