

JP

KATAKANA

Katakana 2 · Chapter 1 · Ga Gi Gu Ge Go

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🌸 The Dakuten on the K Row — ガ ギ グ ゲ ゴ

You already know what the two dots do from Hiragana 2: they turn an unvoiced consonant into a voiced one. Katakana uses exactly the same mark in exactly the same way. Today it goes on the whole K row at once, giving **ガ ギ グ ゲ ゴ** (ga gi gu ge go). Romaji is shown for everything.

PLAIN	WITH ˆ	SOUND BEFORE	SOUND NOW
カ	ガ	ka	ga
キ	ギ	ki	gi
ク	グ	ku	gu
ケ	ゲ	ke	ge
コ	ゴ	ko	go

	a	i	u	e	o
k	カ	キ	ク	ケ	コ
g (k + ˆ)	ガ	ギ	グ	ゲ	ゴ

All five highlighted characters are today's: the whole G row in one chapter, because each one is just a K character you already know plus ˆ .

🌟 Five New Characters — ガ ギ グ ゲ ゴ

ガ

ギ

グ

ga

like "ga" in *gas* ("gah")

4 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: a *gas* flame: ガ with two sparks. Hiragana twin: が.

gi

like "gee" in *geese*, short ("gee")

5 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: a *guitar* with its strings: キ with two dots. Hiragana twin: ぎ.

gu

like "goo" in *goose* ("goo")

4 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: a *goose's* beak and two eyes: ク with two dots. Hiragana twin: ぐ.

ge

like "ge" in *get* ("geh")

5 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: a *gecko's* tail and two spots: ケ with two dots. Hiragana twin: げ.

go

like "go" in *go*, short ("goh")

4 strokes · [stroke order](#) ▶

Memory hook: a *goal* with two balls: コ with two dots. Hiragana twin: ご.

Always a Hard G

Just as in hiragana, **g** is always the hard sound of *go* and *get*, never the soft sound of *giant*. So ギ is "gee", and ギフト is *gi-fu-to*, with a hard g.

Don't Confuse the Marks with シ and ツ

The dakuten ㇰ is two tiny strokes at the **top right corner** of a character. Don't mistake it for the dots of シ, ツ or ソ, which are strokes of those characters themselves. If a character has two small marks in the top right corner, it is a voiced character.

Read It — New Words

Read the Japanese first, then check the romaji and the English word it comes from.

#	WORD	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	NOTE
1	ゲーム	gēmu	game	<i>ge-e-mu: the English word game</i>
2	ギター	gitā	guitar	<i>gi-ta-a</i>
3	ガス	gasu	gas	<i>ga-su</i>
4	グラス	gurasu	glass (a drinking glass)	<i>gu-ra-su</i>
5	ゴルフ	gorufu	golf	<i>go-ru-fu</i>
6	ゴール	gōru	goal	<i>go-o-ru: in football you hear it shouted</i>
7	ガム	gamu	chewing gum	<i>ga-mu</i>
8	ゲスト	gesuto	guest	<i>ge-su-to</i>
9	ゴリラ	gorira	gorilla	<i>go-ri-ra</i>
10	ギフト	gifuto	gift	<i>gi-fu-to</i>

Real Japanese Tip — ゲーム Is Everywhere

ゲーム is not only for screens: it also means any game, including board games and sports games. Japan's video-game culture is why the word appears on so many shop fronts, so it is a very useful one to recognise. And in a football or baseball broadcast, ゴール is shouted just as in English.

English Words Bent into Japanese

Notice how English consonant clusters get vowels inserted: *glass* becomes *gu-ra-su*, *golf* becomes *go-ru-fu* and *gift* becomes *gi-fu-to*. You met this in Katakana 1, and it is the same here: Japanese needs a vowel after every consonant.

Review: Words from Chapter 0

コーヒー (coffee) ・ アイス (ice) ・ テニス (tennis) ・ カメラ (camera) ・ ホテル (hotel) ・ アメリカ (America).

Try It Yourself — れんしゅう

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

1. Read aloud: ガ ・ ギ ・ グ ・ ゲ ・ ゴ

▼ Show answer

ga ・ gi ・ gu ・ ge ・ go

2. Read aloud and translate: ゲーム ・ ギター ・ ガス

▼ Show answer

gēmu (game) ・ gitā (guitar) ・ gasu (gas)

3. Read aloud and translate: ゴルフ ・ ゴール ・ ゴリラ

▼ Show answer

gorufu (golf) ・ gōru (goal) ・ gorira (gorilla)

4. Read aloud and translate: グラス ・ ゲスト ・ ギフト

▼ Show answer

gurasu (glass) ・ gesuto (guest) ・ gifuto (gift)

5. What does the dakuten do to カ, and what is the result?

▼ Show answer

It voices the consonant: k → g, so カ (ka) becomes ガ (ga).

6. Write in katakana: *gēmu* · *gorufu* · *gitā* (check the stroke order).

▼ Show answer

ゲーム・ゴルフ・ギター

Coming Up in Chapter 2

The dakuten on the S row: ザ ジ ズ ゼ ゾ (za ji zu ze zo). You'll be able to read ゼロ (zero), ジム (gym) and ズボン (trousers).