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Understanding

KEY PHRASES

Do you speak English? 英語が 話せますか? ē·go ga ha·na·se·mas ka

des ka

English?

わかりません。

wa-ka-ri-ma-sen

understand. What does ...

…はどういう意味

...wa dō yū i·mi

mean? ですか?

英語が話せますか? Do you speak (ē·go) ga ha·na·se·mas ka (English)? (英語)が話せます。 I speak (English). (ē·go) ga ha·na·se·mas (日本語)が話せません。 I don't speak (ni-hon-go) ga ha-na-se-ma-sen (Japanese). どなたか英語が Does anyone speak English? 話せますか? do·na·ta ka ē·go ga ha·na·se·mas ka わかりましたか? Do you understand? wa·ka·ri·mash·ta ka はい、わかりました。 Yes, I do understand. hai wa-ka-ri-mash-ta いいえ、わかりません。 No, I don't ī·e wa·ka·ri·ma·sen understand. Lunderstand. わかりました。 wa-ka-ri-mash-ta I don't understand. わかりません。 wa-ka-ri-ma-sen

l speak a little.	少し話せます。
	su·ko·shi ha·na·se·mas
How do you pronounce this?	これはどう発音 しますか。 ko·re wa dō ha·tsu·on
	shi·mas ka
How do you write 'shiatsu'?	「指圧」はどう書きますか? shi·a·tsu wa dō ka·ki·mas ka
What does 'deguchi' mean?	「出口」はどういう意味ですか? de·gu·chi wa dō yū i·mi des ka
Could you please write it down?	書いてくれませんか? kai·te ku·re·ma·sen ka
Could you please repeat that?	繰り返してくれませんか? ku·ri·ka·e·shi·te ku·re·ma·sen ka
Could you please speak more slowly?	もっとゆっくり 話して くれませんか? mot·to yuk·ku·ri ha·na·shi·te ku·re·ma·sen ka
Slowly, ゆっ please!	くり話して! yuk·ku·ri ha·na·shi·te

I'd like to learn some of your local dialects. Would you like to learn some English?

方言を習いたいのですが。 hō·gen o na·rai·tai no des ga 英語を習いたいですか? ē·go o na·rai·tai des ka

Numbers & Amounts

KEY PHRASES

How many? どのくらい? do-no ku-rai
How much? いくつ? i-ku-tsu
a little ちょっと chot-to
a lot/many たくさん ta-ku-san

Cardinal Numbers

The numbers 4,7 and 9 – and all other numbers containing these numbers – have alternative pronunciations which are completely interchangeable.

1	_	i∙chi
2	二	ni
3	三	san
4	四	shi/yon
5	五	go
6	六	ro·ku
7	七	shi·chi/na·na
8	八	ha·chi
9	九	ku/kyū
10	+	jū
11	+-	jū·i·chi
12	十二	jū·ni
20	二十	ni∙jū
21	二十一	ni∙jū∙i∙chi

22	二十二	ni∙jū∙ni
30	三十	san∙jū
40	四十	yon∙jū
50	五十	go∙jū
60	六十	ro∙ku∙jū
70	七十	na∙na∙jū
80	八十	ha·chi·jū
90	九十	kyū·jū
100	百	hya∙ku
200	二百	ni∙hya∙ku
300	三百	sam∙bya∙ku
1,000	千	sen
10,000	一万	i·chi·man
1,000,000	百万	hya∙ku∙man
100,000,000	一億	i∙chi∙o∙ku

Note that Japanese has no unit for 'a million'. Millions are expressed in units of 10 thousand, so one million is 100 ten-thousand units.

Ordinal Numbers

To use an ordinal number in Japanese, just add ·ban (番) to the end of the corresponding cardinal number.

1st	一番	i·chi·ban
2nd	二番	ni·ban
3rd	三番	sam·ban

Counters

In Japanese, when expressing a certain number of objects, people or animals, the cardinal number is followed by a counter. Counters, also commonly known as 'classifiers', indicate the size, shape and function of things and distinguish between objects, people and animals.



The following generic counters can be used to count most objects, but not to count people or animals:

1	一つ	hi·to·tsu
2	二つ	fu·ta·tsu
3	三つ	mit·tsu
4	四つ	yot⋅tsu
5	五つ	i·tsu·tsu
6	六つ	mut·tsu
7	七つ	na·na·tsu
8	八つ	yat∙tsu
9	九つ	ko·ko·no·tsu
10	+	tō
numbers higher than 10		·ko

Note that apart from the last generic counter mentioned in the list above, there's no need to add the cardinal number before as this already makes part of the counter, eg the phrase 'Give me an apple, please.' is rin-go o hi-to-tsu ku-da-sai (りんごを一つください), literally 'apple-o one please', not rin-go o i-chi hi-to-tsu ku-da-sai (りんごを一一つください), literally 'apple-o one one please'.

Here are also some basic specific counters frequently used in everyday speech, including the ones for people and animals:

age	…歳	·sai
animals*	…匹	·hi·ki/pi·ki/bi·ki
books	…∰	·sa·tsu
bottles, pens (long objects)*	…本	·hon/pon/bon
floors (of buildings)	…階	·kai
objects (small)	…個	·ko
people	…人	·nin
scoops, glasses, cups*	…杯	·hai/pai/bai

sheets (paper, sliced objects)	…枚	·mai	
time	…時	·ji	
vehicles	…台	·dai	

*Note that the pronunciation of these three counters changes according to the preceding number. For these, generally use the first option (·hi·ki, ·hon, ·hai) but change to ·pi·ki, ·pon, ·pai after the numbers 1, 6 and 10, and to ·bi·ki, ·bon and ·bai after the number 3. Don't forget to add the cardinal number before each of the specific counters listed above!

Useful Amounts

How much?	どのくらい? do·no ku·rai	
How many?	いくつ? i·ku·tsu	
(100) grams	(100) グラム (hya·ku)·gu·ra·mu	
a kilo	1キロ i·chi·ki·ro	
a quarter	4分の1 yom·bun no i·chi	
a third	3分の1 sam·bun no i·chi	
a half	半分 ham·bun	
all	全部 zem·bu	
none	なし na·shi	

For other useful amounts, see self-catering (p189).

Time & Dates

KEY PHRASES

What time is it? 何時ですか?

nan∙ji des ka

At what time ...?

何時に…

nan∙ji ni ...

What date?

何月 何日ですか?

nan·ga·tsu nan·ni·chi des ka

Telling the Time

To specify the hour, add the number of the hour before the word \cdot ji (時) 'o'clock'. Note that four o'clock is an exception: yo-ji (4時), not shi-ji. The minutes come after the hour and are expressed by adding \cdot fun/·pun (分) after the number – see **numbers & amounts** for how to form numbers in Japanese. To say 'half past' use 'ji han (時半). For times leading up to the hour (in English 'to') use ma-e des (前です), meaning literally 'before it is' instead of des (です), 'it is'.

What time is it?	何時ですか? nan·ji des ka
A lt's (ten) o'clock.	(10)時です。 (jū)·ji des
Five past (ten).	(10) 時5分です。 (jū)·ji go·fun des
Quarter past (ten).	(10) 時15分です。 (jū)·ji jū·go·fun des
Half past (ten).	(10)時半です。 (jū)·ji han des
Quarter to (ten).	(10) 時15分前です。 (jū)·ji jū·go·fun ma·e des

Twenty to (ten).	(10) 時20分前です。 (jū)-ji ni-jup-pun ma·e des
At what time?	何時に… nan·ji ni
At (ten).	(10時)に。 (jū·ji) ni

Combining numbers with minutes produces some special forms:

one minute	1分	ip∙pun
two minutes	2分	ni∙fun
three minutes	3分	sam·pun
four minutes	4分	yom∙pun
five minutes	5分	go·fun
six minutes	6分	rop∙pun
seven minutes	7分	na·na·fun
eight minutes	8分	hap∙pun
nine minutes	9分	kyū∙fun
10 minutes	10分	jup∙pun
15 minutes	15分	jū∙go∙fun
20 minutes	20分	ni∙jup∙pun
am	午前	go·zen
pm	午後	go·go
morning	朝	a·sa
day	日中	nit∙chū
midday	正午	shō∙go
afternoon	午後	go·go
evening	夕方	yū⋅ga⋅ta
midnight	真夜中	ma·yo·na·ka
night	夜	yo∙ru

The Calendar

Monday	月曜日	ge·tsu·yō·bi
Tuesday	火曜日	ka·yō·bi
Wednesday	水曜日	su·i·yō·bi
Thursday	木曜日	mo∙ku∙yō∙bi
Friday	金曜日	kin∙yō∙bi
Saturday	土曜日	do·yō·bi
Sunday	日曜日	ni·chi·yō·bi
January	1月	i·chi·ga·tsu
February	2月	ni∙ga∙tsu
March	3月	san∙ga∙tsu
April	4月	shi∙ga∙tsu
May	5月	go·ga·tsu
June	6月	ro·ku·ga·tsu
July	7月	shi·chi·ga·tsu
August	8月	ha·chi·ga·tsu
September	9月	ku·ga·tsu
October	10月	jū⋅ga⋅tsu
November	11月	jū·i·chi·ga·tsu
December	12月	jū·ni·ga·tsu
summer	夏	na∙tsu
autumn	秋	a·ki
winter	冬	fu∙yu
spring	春	ha∙ru

To express the date, use the cardinal number plus $\cdot ni \cdot chi$ (\exists):

What date?

何月何日ですか? nan-ga-tsu nan-ni-chi des ka

What date is it today?	今日は何月何日 ですか? kyō wa nan·ga·tsu nan·ni·chi des ka
A It's (18 October).	(10月18日)です。 (jū·ga·tsu jū·ha·chi·ni·chi) des

There are irregular forms for the 1st to the 10th, the 14th, 20th and 24th when referring to dates:

Present

now	今	i·ma
this afternoon	今日の午後	kyō no go∙go
this morning	今朝	ke·sa
this month	今月	kon·ge·tsu
this week	今週	kon∙shū
this year	今年	ko·to·shi

today	今日	kyō
tonight	今夜	kon∙ya

Past

(three days) ago	(3日)前	(mik·ka) ma·e
day before yesterday	おととい	o·to·toy
last month	先月	sen⋅ge⋅tsu
last night	ゆうべ	yū∙be
last week	先週	sen∙shū
last year	去年	kyo∙nen
since (May)	(5月)から	(go·ga·tsu) ka·ra
yesterday	きのう	ki∙nō
yesterday afternoon	きのうの午後	ki∙nō no go∙go
yesterday evening	きのうの夜	ki∙nō no yo∙ru
yesterday morning	きのうの朝	ki·nō no a·sa

Future

day after tomorrow	あさって	a·sat·te
in (six days)	(6日)後	(mu·i·ka) go
next	来…	rai
next month	来月	rai·ge·tsu
next week	来週	rai·shū
next year	来年	rai·nen
tomorrow	明日	a·shi·ta
tomorrow afternoon	明日の午後	a·shi·ta no go·go
tomorrow evening	明日の夜	a∙shi∙ta no yo∙ru
tomorrow morning	明日の朝	a·shi·ta no a·sa
until (June)	(6月) まで	(ro·ku·ga·tsu) ma·de



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