

Introduction

I Aim and purpose

GENKI: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese is a textbook for beginners in the study of the Japanese language. Students can complete the elementary-level study of Japanese in the 23 lessons of this text, which is divided into two volumes. The book is designed mainly for use in university and college courses, but it is also effective for high school students and adults who are beginning to learn Japanese either at school or on their own. Hopefully, students will have at least a basic knowledge of English, because grammar explanations are given in English.

GENKI: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese is a comprehensive approach to developing the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in order to cultivate overall Japanese-language ability. Much emphasis has been placed on balancing accuracy, fluency, and complexity so that students using the material would not end up speaking accurately yet in a stilted manner, nor fluently yet employing only simple grammatical structures.

II Structure of the textbook

This textbook basically consists of three sections: Dialogue and Grammar, Reading and Writing, and the Appendix. A detailed explanation of each part follows.

A► Dialogue and Grammar

The Dialogue and Grammar section aims at improving students' speaking and listening abilities by learning basic grammar and increasing vocabulary. The Dialogue and Grammar section of each lesson is comprised of the following components:

● Dialogue

The dialogues revolve around the lives of foreign students living in Japan, their friends, and their families, presenting various scenes that students are likely to face in their daily lives. By practicing natural expressions and *aizuchi* (responses that make conversations go smoothly), students are able to understand how sentences are connected and how some phrases are shortened in daily conversation. Because the Dialogue section of each lesson covers a lot of new grammar and vocabulary, students may feel it is too difficult

to understand at first. Don't be overly concerned, however, because the grammar and vocabulary will gradually take root with practice.

Dialogues are recorded on the accompanying CD. Students are encouraged to practice regularly by listening to the CD and carefully noting pronunciation and intonation.

●Vocabulary

The Vocabulary section presents all the new words encountered in both the Dialogue and Practice sections of each lesson. Words that appear in the Dialogue are marked with an asterisk (*). Words are listed according to their function in Lessons 1 and 2, and by parts of speech in Lesson 3 and following. In addition, all words presented in the text are also found in the Index at the end of each volume.

Words found in the Vocabulary section of each lesson appear frequently in subsequent lessons, thus students are encouraged to learn them little by little each day. After Lesson 2, commonly used kanji equivalents of some words (Joyo Kanji) are also listed, but students are not required to memorize them.


This textbook does not indicate a word's accents. The accent of a Japanese word varies considerably, depending on the region, the speaker's age (including the generation gap between speakers), the word's paradigmatic form, and its connection with other words. Therefore, don't be overly concerned about the accent, but try to imitate as closely as possible the intonation heard on the accompanying CD.

●Grammar

Grammar explanations are detailed, so that students can easily study them on their own. Students at school are expected to read the grammar explanations before each class.

This section also fully explains the items found in the Practice section that follows. Necessary explanations for the grammar and vocabulary that are not found in the Practice section can be found in the Expression Notes at the end of each Grammar section.

●Practice

This section includes questions related to what was taught in each section of the lesson, providing students with both basic practice and application. By answering the questions sequentially, students can naturally build up their Japanese-language ability. The exercises with only one answer are marked with  and recorded on the CD, allowing students the opportunity to practice on their own.

The last part of the Practice section contains Review Exercises, which incorporate aspects of the lesson as a whole. For example, some questions combine various topics covered in the lesson, and some call for the creation of new phrases based on what was learned in the Dialogue section.

●Supplement

Finally, some lessons include additional or supplementary information. This includes expressions related to the topic of the lesson, as in “Time and age” in Lesson 1, or expressions suitable at certain times or places, as in “At the station” in Lesson 10. Words introduced in the Supplement section are found in the Index of each volume.

B▶Reading and Writing

The Reading and Writing section aims to foster comprehension and writing ability by learning Japanese characters and by providing opportunities to practice both reading and writing. *Hiragana* is introduced in Lesson 1, followed by *katakana* in Lesson 2, and kanji in Lesson 3 and following. From Lesson 3, each lesson contains the following components:

●Kanji list

Each new kanji introduced in a lesson is contained in a list, each with about 15 kanji. This makes it easy to memorize a few each day, rather than be overwhelmed with so many at once.

① serial number	(2) kanji	(4) reading	(5) compounds including the kanji
017	本	ホン もと (book; basis)	本 (ホン) book 日本 (ニホン) Japan 日本語 (ニホンゴ) Japanese 山本さん (やまもとさん) Mr./Ms. Yamamoto
		(3) meaning	(5) 一 十 才 木 本 (7) stroke order
		(6) total strokes	

Among the readings shown in (4) and (5), *hiragana* indicates the *kun'yomi*, or Japanese readings for a kanji, while *katakana* indicates the *on'yomi*, or Chinese reading. Both *kun'yomi* and *on'yomi* are sometimes altered in compounds of two or more kanji. For example, the ordinary pronunciation of 学 is “*gaku*,” which becomes “*ga(k)*” when the kanji is used in the word 学校. Such derivative readings are also included in (4) and (5).

Although some kanji have many readings, only those readings that are useful at an elementary level are included.

Shaded readings and words in each lesson should be memorized. The others are for reference, so students don't need to memorize them. A practice sheet for each kanji is provided in the Reading and Writing section of the Workbook. Students should practice

writing the kanji repeatedly, according to the stroke order shown on the kanji list in the textbook.

● Practice

GENKI I consists of kanji practice, readings for comprehension, questions about the content of the readings, and writing practice. Kanji practice includes various types of questions, such as having students reconstruct a kanji from its various parts or make new words by combining kanji. By tackling these problems, students will realize the goal of practice—to become more proficient in their use of kanji. Basically, the readings are short and deal with subjects familiar to the students. They are easy to understand if the student has learned the vocabulary and grammar taught previously in the Dialogue and Grammar section. When readings include new words, a corresponding word list is provided. Finally, composition topics are given for writing practice.

GENKI II contains readings for comprehension, questions about the content of the readings, and writing practice. The readings employ various styles of Japanese, ranging from letters and fables to essays and advertisements. With a knowledge of the previously learned vocabulary, grammar, and kanji, the readings are easy to understand but grow longer and more difficult in later lessons. Word lists are provided for newly introduced vocabulary. Finally, composition topics are introduced.

C► Appendix

Volumes 1 and 2 both contain an Index. The Japanese-English Index, in *hiragana* order, lists words found in the Vocabulary and Supplement section of each lesson. The number next to a word indicates the lesson in which the word was introduced. In the English-Japanese Index, English equivalents to Japanese words are arranged in alphabetical order.

Also included in the Appendix are tables of verb conjugations as well as sound inflections of the expressions related to numbers.

III Orthography and font

The basic text is written in kanji and *hiragana*. Kanji is used for the most commonly used characters, those that appear in the official list of Joyo Kanji. *Hiragana* is used instead, however, when the Joyo Kanji equivalent would not be necessary for beginning students of Japanese.

So that students can easily study the Dialogue and Grammar section, the pronunciation of every kanji is indicated in *hiragana*. However, to lessen the burden on the students and allow them to study on their own, Greetings and Lessons 1 and 2 are represented in *hiragana* and *katakana*, as well as by romanized forms. It is best not to rely too much on the romanizations, but use them only as a learning aid. Students study *hiragana* and *katakana* in Lessons 1 and 2, respectively, of the Reading and Writing section.

Students study kanji from Lesson 3 in the Reading and Writing section, where pronunciations of the kanji already presented are not indicated in *hiragana*, in order to promote the students' increasing acquisition of kanji.

The Japanese in the basic text is set mainly in the Textbook font, which resembles handwriting and serves as a good model for students. Students will encounter a variety of fonts used for Japanese materials, however, and should be aware that the shape of some characters differ considerably, depending on the font used. Note especially that with some characters, we find two separate strokes in one style are merged into a single stroke.

Example:	Textbook font	Mincho font	Gothic font	Handwriting
	さ	さ	サ	サ
	き	き	キ	キ
	り	り	リ	リ
	ら	ら	ラ	ラ
	こ	こ	コ	コ
	や	や	ヤ	ヤ

Japanese Writing System

There are three kinds of characters in Japanese: *hiragana*, *katakana*, and kanji.¹ All three characters can be seen in a single sentence.

テレビを見ます。

katakana kanji hiragana

I watch television.

Hiragana and *katakana*, like the alphabet, represent sounds. As you can see in the above example, *hiragana* has a roundish shape and is used for conjugation endings, function words, and native Japanese words not covered by kanji. *Katakana*, which has rather straight lines, is normally used for writing loanwords and foreign names. For example, the Japanese word for “television” is written in *katakana* as テレビ (*terebi*). Kanji, or Chinese characters, represent not just sounds but also meanings. Mostly, kanji are used for nouns and the stems of verbs and adjectives.

① Hiragana

1. Basic Hiragana Syllables

There are forty-six basic *hiragana* syllables, which are listed below. Once you memorize this chart, you will have the skill to transcribe all of the Japanese sounds.

あ <i>a</i>	い <i>i</i>	う <i>u</i>	え <i>e</i>	お <i>o</i>
か <i>ka</i>	き <i>ki</i>	く <i>ku</i>	け <i>ke</i>	こ <i>ko</i>
さ <i>sa</i>	し <i>*shi</i>	す <i>su</i>	せ <i>se</i>	そ <i>so</i>
た <i>ta</i>	ち <i>*chi</i>	つ <i>*tsu</i>	て <i>te</i>	と <i>to</i>
な <i>na</i>	に <i>ni</i>	ぬ <i>nu</i>	ね <i>ne</i>	の <i>no</i>
は <i>ha</i>	ひ <i>hi</i>	ふ <i>fu</i>	へ <i>he</i>	ほ <i>ho</i>

¹There is another writing system called *rōmaji* (Roman letters) which is used for station names, signs, and so on.

ま <i>ma</i>	み <i>mi</i>	む <i>mu</i>	め <i>me</i>	も <i>mo</i>
や <i>ya</i>		ゆ <i>yu</i>		よ <i>yo</i>
ら <i>ra</i>	り <i>ri</i>	る <i>ru</i>	れ <i>re</i>	ろ <i>ro</i>
わ <i>wa</i>				を <i>**o</i>
ん <i>n</i>				

*The syllables し, ち, and つ are romanized as *shi*, *chi*, and *tsu*, respectively, which is closer to the English pronunciation.

**を is also pronounced as “*wo*.”

The romanization is given for general pronunciation reference.

2. Hiragana with Diacritical Marks

You can transcribe 23 additional sounds by adding diacritical marks. With a pair of short diagonal strokes (°), the unvoiced consonants *k*, *s*, *t*, and *h* become voiced consonants *g*, *z*, *d*, and *b*, respectively. The consonant *h* changes to *p* with the addition of a small circle (°).

が <i>ga</i>	ぎ <i>gi</i>	ぐ <i>gu</i>	げ <i>ge</i>	ご <i>go</i>
ざ <i>za</i>	じ <i>ji</i>	ず <i>zu</i>	ぜ <i>ze</i>	ぞ <i>zo</i>
だ <i>da</i>	*ち <i>ji</i>	*づ <i>zu</i>	で <i>de</i>	ど <i>do</i>
ば <i>ba</i>	び <i>bi</i>	ぶ <i>bu</i>	べ <i>be</i>	ぼ <i>bo</i>
ぱ <i>pa</i>	ぴ <i>pi</i>	ぷ <i>pu</i>	ぺ <i>pe</i>	ぽ <i>po</i>

*ち (*ji*) and づ (*zu*) are pronounced the same as じ (*ji*) and ず (*zu*), respectively, and have limited use.

3. Transcribing Contracted Sounds

Small や, ゆ, and よ follow after letters in the second column (*i*-vowel *hiragana*, except い) and are used to transcribe contracted sounds. The contracted sound represents a single syllable.

きや <i>kya</i>	きゆ <i>kyu</i>	きよ <i>kyo</i>
しや <i>sha</i>	しゆ <i>shu</i>	しよ <i>sho</i>
ちや <i>cha</i>	ちゆ <i>chu</i>	ちよ <i>cho</i>
にや <i>nya</i>	にゆ <i>nyu</i>	によ <i>nyo</i>
ひや <i>hya</i>	ひゆ <i>hyu</i>	ひよ <i>hyo</i>
みや <i>mya</i>	みゆ <i>myu</i>	みよ <i>myo</i>
りや <i>rya</i>	りゆ <i>ryu</i>	りよ <i>ryo</i>

ぎや <i>gya</i>	ぎゆ <i>gyu</i>	ぎよ <i>gyo</i>
じゃ <i>ja</i>	じゆ <i>ju</i>	じよ <i>jo</i>

びや <i>bya</i>	びゆ <i>byu</i>	びよ <i>byo</i>
ぴや <i>pya</i>	ぴゆ <i>pyu</i>	ぴよ <i>pyo</i>

4. Transcribing Double Consonants

There is another small letter つ, which is used when transcribing double consonants such as *tt* and *pp*.

Examples: かった *katta* (won) cf. かた *kata* (shoulder)
 さっか *sakka* (writer)
 はっぱ *happa* (leaf)
 ざっし *zasshi* (magazine)

Note that double consonant *n*'s, as in *sannen* (3 years), are written with ん + a *hiragana* with an initial *n* sound (な, に, ぬ, ね, or の).

Examples: さんねん *sannen* (3 years)
 あんない *annai* (guide)

5. Other Issues Relating to Transcription and Pronunciation

A. Long Vowels

When the same vowel is placed one right after the other, the pronunciation of the vowel

becomes about twice as long as the single vowel. Be sure to hold the sound long enough, because the length of the vowel can change one word to another.

<i>aa</i>	おばあさん	<i>obaasan</i>	(grandmother)	cf. おばさん	<i>obasan</i>	(aunt)
<i>ii</i>	おじいさん	<i>ojiisan</i>	(grandfather)	cf. おじさん	<i>ojisan</i>	(uncle)
<i>uu</i>	すうじ	<i>suuji</i>	(number)			
<i>ee</i>	The long <i>ee</i> sound is usually transcribed by adding an い to an <i>e</i> -vowel <i>hiragana</i> . There are a few words, however, in which え is used instead of い.					
	えいが	<i>eega</i>	(movie)			
	おねえさん	<i>oneesan</i>	(big sister)			
<i>oo</i>	The long <i>oo</i> sound is in most cases transcribed by adding an う to an <i>o</i> -vowel <i>hiragana</i> . There are, however, words in which the long vowel is transcribed with an お, for historical reasons.					
	ほうりつ	<i>hooritsu</i>	(law)			
	とお	<i>too</i>	(ten)			

B. Pronunciation of ん

ん “*n*” is treated like a full syllable, in terms of length. Its pronunciation varies, however, depending on the sound that follows it. Japanese speakers are normally not aware of the different sound values of ん. Therefore, you do not need to worry too much about its pronunciation.²

C. Vowels to Be Dropped

The vowels *i* and *u* are sometimes dropped when placed between voiceless consonants (*k*, *s*, *t*, *p*, and *h*), or at the end of an utterance preceded by voiceless consonants.

Example: すきです *s(u)kides(u)* (I like it.)

²One variety of the ん pronunciation merits discussing here. When it is followed by a vowel or at the end of an utterance, ん indicates that the preceding vowel is long and nasalized. (Nasalized vowels are shown here with a tilde above vowel letters. You hear nasalized vowels in French words such as “bon,” or the English interjection “uh-uh,” as in “no.”)

れんあい *rēai* (romance)

ほん *hō* (book)

Followed by *n*, *t*, *d*, *s*, and *z* sounds, ん is pronounced as “*n*.”

おんな *onna* (woman)

Followed by *m*, *p*, and *b* sounds, ん is pronounced as “*m*.”

さんぽ *sampo* (stroll)

Followed by *k* and *g* sounds, ん is pronounced as “*ng*” as in “song.”

まんが *maŋga* (comics)

D. Accent in the Japanese Language

Japanese has a pitch accent: all syllables are pronounced basically either in high or low pitch. Unlike the English stress accent in which stressed syllables tend to be pronounced longer and louder, in Japanese each syllable is pronounced approximately in equal length and stress. The pitch patterns in Japanese vary greatly, depending on the region of the country.

Examples: あさ $\overset{a}{\text{sa}}$ (morning)
 なまえ $\overset{na}{\text{ma}}\overset{e}{\text{e}}$ (name)
 たかい $\overset{ta}{\text{ka}}\overset{i}{\text{i}}$ (high)

II K a t a k a n a

ア <i>a</i>	イ <i>i</i>	ウ <i>u</i>	エ <i>e</i>	オ <i>o</i>
カ <i>ka</i>	キ <i>ki</i>	ク <i>ku</i>	ケ <i>ke</i>	コ <i>ko</i>
サ <i>sa</i>	シ <i>*shi</i>	ス <i>su</i>	セ <i>se</i>	ソ <i>so</i>
タ <i>ta</i>	チ <i>*chi</i>	ツ <i>*tsu</i>	テ <i>te</i>	ト <i>to</i>
ナ <i>na</i>	ニ <i>ni</i>	ヌ <i>nu</i>	ネ <i>ne</i>	ノ <i>no</i>
ハ <i>ha</i>	ヒ <i>hi</i>	フ <i>fu</i>	ヘ <i>he</i>	ホ <i>ho</i>
マ <i>ma</i>	ミ <i>mi</i>	ム <i>mu</i>	メ <i>me</i>	モ <i>mo</i>
ヤ <i>ya</i>		ユ <i>yu</i>		ヨ <i>yo</i>
ラ <i>ra</i>	リ <i>ri</i>	ル <i>ru</i>	レ <i>re</i>	ロ <i>ro</i>
ワ <i>wa</i>				ヲ <i>o</i>
ン <i>n</i>				

*The syllables シ, チ, and ツ are romanized as *shi*, *chi*, and *tsu*, respectively, to give a closer English pronunciation.

ガ <i>ga</i>	ギ <i>gi</i>	グ <i>gu</i>	ゲ <i>ge</i>	ゴ <i>go</i>
ザ <i>za</i>	ジ <i>ji</i>	ズ <i>zu</i>	ゼ <i>ze</i>	ゾ <i>zo</i>
ダ <i>da</i>	*ヂ <i>ji</i>	*ヅ <i>zu</i>	デ <i>de</i>	ド <i>do</i>
バ <i>ba</i>	ビ <i>bi</i>	ブ <i>bu</i>	ベ <i>be</i>	ボ <i>bo</i>
パ <i>pa</i>	ピ <i>pi</i>	プ <i>pu</i>	ペ <i>pe</i>	ポ <i>po</i>

*ヂ (*ji*) and ヅ (*zu*) are pronounced the same as ジ (*ji*) and ズ (*zu*), respectively, and have limited use.

キャ <i>kya</i>	キュ <i>kyu</i>	キョ <i>kyo</i>
シャ <i>sha</i>	シュ <i>shu</i>	ショ <i>sho</i>
チャ <i>cha</i>	チュ <i>chu</i>	チョ <i>cho</i>
ニャ <i>nya</i>	ニュ <i>nyu</i>	ニョ <i>nyo</i>
ヒャ <i>hya</i>	ヒュ <i>hyu</i>	ヒョ <i>hyo</i>
ミャ <i>mya</i>	ミュ <i>myu</i>	ミョ <i>myo</i>
リャ <i>rya</i>	リュ <i>ryu</i>	リョ <i>ryo</i>

ギャ <i>gya</i>	ギュ <i>gyu</i>	ギョ <i>gyo</i>
ジャ <i>ja</i>	ジュ <i>ju</i>	ジョ <i>jo</i>

ビャ <i>bya</i>	ビュ <i>byu</i>	ビョ <i>byo</i>
ピャ <i>pya</i>	ピュ <i>pyu</i>	ピョ <i>pyo</i>

The pronunciation of *katakana* and its combinations are the same as those of *hiragana*, except for the following points.

(1) The long vowels are written with ー.

Examples: カー *kaa* (car)
 スキー *sukii* (ski)
 スーツ *suutsu* (suit)
 ケーキ *keeki* (cake)
 ボール *booru* (ball)

When you write vertically, the — mark needs to be written vertically also.

Example:

ボール → $\begin{array}{c} \text{ボ} \\ | \\ \text{ール} \end{array}$

(2) Additional combinations with small vowel letters are used to transcribe foreign sounds that originally did not exist in Japanese.

Examples:	ウィ	ハロウィーン	<i>harowiin</i>	(Halloween)
	ウエ	ハイウェイ	<i>haiwee</i>	(highway)
	ウォ	ミネラルウォーター	<i>mineraruwootaa</i>	(mineral water)
	シェ	シェリー	<i>sherii</i>	(sherry)
	ジェ	ジェームス	<i>jeemusu</i>	(James)
	チェ	チェック	<i>chekku</i>	(check)
	ファ	ファッション	<i>fasshon</i>	(fashion)
	フィ	フィリピン	<i>firipin</i>	(Philippine)
	フェ	カフェ	<i>kafe</i>	(cafe)
	フォ	カリフォルニア	<i>kariforunia</i>	(California)
	ティ	パーティー	<i>paatii</i>	(party)
	ディ	ディスコ	<i>disuko</i>	(disco)
	デュ	デューク	<i>dyuuku</i>	(Duke)

(3) The sound “v” is sometimes written with ヴ. For example, the word “Venus” is sometimes written as ビーナス or ヴィーナス.