

Japanese Cheat Sheet

Formal Verb Forms

Present/Future Tense	~I + masu
Past Tense	~I + mashita
Progressive Tense	~TE + imasu
Negative Present/Future	~I + masen
Negative Past Tense	~I + masen deshita
Command Form	~TE + kudasai
	▲ ~I + nasai <small>(very direct)</small>
Negative Command	~A + naide kudasai
Potential Form	~E + masu
= can/able to	SURU → dekimasu
Want to...	~I + tai desu
Don't want to...	~I + takunai desu
Let's...	~I + mashou
Passive Form	(U-Verbs) ~A + remasu
= to be [verb]ed	(RU-Verbs) ~A + raremasu
	SURU → saremasu
	KURU → koraremasu
Causative Form	(U-Verbs) ~A + semasu
= to allow x to [verb]	(RU-Verbs) ~A + sasemasu
= to force x to [verb]	SURU → sasemasu
	KURU → kosasemasu

Informal Verb Forms

Present/Future Tense	~U	(N)
Past Tense	~TA	(N)
Progressive Tense	~TE + iru	(N)
Negative Present/Future	~A + nai	(N)
Negative Past Tense	~A + nakatta	(N)
Command Form	~TE	
	▲ SURU → SHIRO (U-Verbs) ~E	
	KURU → KOI (RU-Verbs) ~I + ro	
Negative Command	~A + naide	
	▲ ~U + na	
Potential Form	~E + ru	(N)
	SURU → dekiru	
Want to...	~I + tai	(N)
Don't want to...	~I + takunai	(N)
Let's...	~O + u	
Passive Form	(U-Verbs) ~A + reru	(N)
	(RU-Verbs) ~A + rareru	
	SURU → sareru	
	KURU → korareru	
Causative Form	(U-Verbs) ~A + seru	(N)
	(RU-Verbs) ~A + saseru	
	SURU → saseru	
	KURU → kosaseru	

Neutral Verb Forms

If... ~E + ba	If not... ~A + nakereba
~U + to	~A + nai to
~TA + ra	~A + nakattara
Must/have to...	~A + nai to ikenai
	~A + nakereba ikenai
After...	~TE + kara
	~TA + ra
Before...	(N) + mae ni
Because...	(N) + kara
	(N) + node
In order to...	~U + tame ni
While... (at the same time)	~I + nagara
Even (if)...	~TE + mo
Try to... to do and see (the result)	~TE + miru
to make an effort	~O + u to suru
Must not...	~TE + wa ikenai
To do in advance...	~TE + oku
To do too much...	~I + sugiru
To do... and so on.	~TA + ri + suru
Seem to want to...	~TA + garu
COMBINATION VERB	~I + VERB 2
STRINGING PHRASES	~TE + PHRASE 2

Conjugating Verbs

U-VERB	~	RU-VERB	SURU	~	KURU	U-VERB	TE/TA ENDINGS
hana.sa	A	tabe.	shi	A	ko	~	TE TA
hana.shi	I	tabe.	shi	I	ki	U, TSU, RU	tte tta
hana.su	U	tabe.ru	suru	U	kuru	BU, MU, NU	nde nda
hana.se	E	tabe.re	sure	E	kore	KU	ite ita
hana.so	O	tabe.yo	shiyō	O	koyo	GU	ide ida
	TE	tabe.te	shite	TE	kite	SU	shite shita
	TA	tabe.ta	shita	TA	kita		

EXCEPTIONS → iku (to go) in TE/TA-form becomes i.tte/i.tta
 → The A-form ending for verbs ending in う(u) is わ(wa)

U-VERBS (THAT LOOK LIKE RU-VERBS) iru (to need), hairu (to enter), shiru (to know), kiru (to cut) kaeru (to go home), suberu (to slide), keru (to kick)

Forms of de aru (to be)

	FORMAL	INFORMAL
Present Tense	desu	da
Past Tense	deshita	datta
Probable	deshou	▲ darou
Negative Present Tense	de wa arimasen	ja nai
Negative Past Tense	de wa arimasen deshita	ja nakatta
Negative Probable	de wa nai deshō	▲ ja nai darou

▲ darou is very masculine and direct. In most cases, it is better to use deshō.
 ? When made into a noun, da changes to na with no, and de aru with koto.

Adjectives

I-ADJECTIVES		NA-ADJECTIVES	
haya.i	fast	genki na	cheerful
haya.sa	NOUN FORM speed	genki	NOUN FORM cheer
haya.ku	ADVERB FORM quickly	genki ni	ADVERB FORM cheerfully
haya.kute	fast and...	genki de	cheerful and...
haya.katta	was fast		
haya.kunai	not fast		
haya.kunakatta	wasn't fast		
haya.kereba	if fast		
haya.kunakereba	if not fast		
haya.sugiru	too fast		

Adjectives that end in い (i) are I-Adjectives, except where the final い is part of a kanji.

EASILY CONFUSED NA-ADJECTIVES
 美しい(綺麗 / beautiful)
 ていねい(丁寧 / polite)
 不公平(不公平 / unequal)

Drop na or sa if followed by a form of de aru.
 ii (good) always conjugates as yoi.
 It is possible—but uncommon—to add sa to a NA-Adjective to create a noun (ie. genki.sa)

Hiragana

あ	か	が	さ	ざ	た	だ	な	は	ば	ま	や	ら	わ	
A	KA	GA	SA	ZA	TA	DA	NA	HA	BA	PA	MA	YA	RA	WA
い	き	ぎ	し	じ	ち	ぢ	に	ひ	び	み		り		
I	KI	GI	SHI	JI	CHI	JI	NI	HI	BI	PI	MI		RI	
う	く	ぐ	す	ず	つ	づ	ぬ	ふ	ぶ	ぶ	む	ゆる	ん	
U	KU	GU	SU	ZU	TSU	ZU	NU	FU	BU	PU	MU	YU	RU	N
え	け	げ	せ	ぜ	て	で	ね	へ	べ	べ	め		れ	
E	KE	GE	SE	ZE	TE	DE	NE	HE	BE	PE	ME		RE	
お	こ	ご	そ	ぞ	と	ど	の	ほ	ぼ	ぼ	も	よ	ろ	を
O	KO	GO	SO	ZO	TO	DO	NO	HO	BO	PO	MO	YO	RO	WO

Katakana

ア	カ	ガ	サ	ザ	タ	ダ	ナ	ハ	バ	パ	マ	ヤ	ラ	ワ
A	KA	GA	SA	ZA	TA	DA	NA	HA	BA	PA	MA	YA	RA	WA
イ	キ	ギ	シ	ジ	チ	ヂ	ニ	ヒ	ビ	ピ			リ	
I	KI	GI	SHI	JI	CHI	JI	NI	HI	BI	PI	MI		RI	
ウ	ク	グ	ス	ズ	ツ	ヅ	ヌ	フ	ブ	プ	ム	ユ	ル	ン
U	KU	GU	SU	ZU	TSU	ZU	NU	FU	BU	PU	MU	YU	RU	N
エ	ケ	ゲ	セ	ゼ	テ	デ	ネ	ヘ	ベ	ペ			レ	
E	KE	GE	SE	ZE	TE	DE	NE	HE	BE	PE	ME		RE	
オ	コ	ゴ	ソ	ゾ	ト	ド	ノ	ホ	ボ	ポ	モ	ヨ	ロ	ヲ
O	KO	GO	SO	ZO	TO	DO	NO	HO	BO	PO	MO	YO	RO	WO

Caution!

SO	N
ソ	ン
TSU	SHI
ツ	シ

JLPT Level 4 (N5) Kanji (103 in all)

一	二	三	四	五	六	七	八	九	十	百	千	万
ichi	ni	san	yon	go	roku	shichi	hachi	kyuu	juu	hyaku	sen	man
人	子	男	女	日	月	火	水	木	金	土	大	小
person	child	man	woman	sun	moon	fire	water	tree	money	ground	big	small
上	下	左	右	入	出	中	外	前	後	多	少	半
up	down	left	right	in	out	inside	outside	front	back	many	few	half
口	目	手	足	耳	円	本	花	店	川	山	車	道
mouth	eye	hand	foot	ear	Yen	book	flower	store	river	mountain	car	street
父	母	友	今	午	時	週	年	何	北	南	東	西
father	mother	friend	now	noon	hour	week	year	what	north	south	east	west
行	来	見	聞	言	話	語	読	書	買	学	分	休
go	come	see	hear	say	talk	language	read	write	buy	learn	understand	rest
食	飲	生	立	会	古	新	高	安	長	間	先	毎
eat	drink	live	stand	meet	old	new	high	safety	long	interval	previous	each
駅	校	社	国	名	電	天	気	空	魚	雨	白	
station	school	company	country	name	electricity	heaven	spirit	sky	fish	rain	white	

Japanese Cheat Sheet

Layout: Letter (8.5x11in), Hepburn Romanization - Version 2 (updated Jan 2010) - This cheat sheet can be downloaded for free from <http://nihonshock.com>

は

WA - Topic Marker

Written with hiragana "ha", but pronounced "wa"

- Marks the topic of a **sentence**. (non-grammatical)
- **Contrasts** one option or thing from others.
- Used when stating factual information.

kuruma wa watashi ga unten shimashita.
As for the car, I drove it.

Tanaka-san wa o-kane o motte imasu.
Mr. Tanaka has money. (he is rich)

が

GA - Subject Marker

1

- Marks the subject of a **verb**. (grammatical)
- **Separates / calls out** one option or thing from others.
- Used when relating a chain of events.
- Used when describing specific things with adjectives.
- Marks objects of potential form verbs. (can/able)
- Connects clauses with a meaning of "but" or "despite."

nihongo ga sukoshi hanasemasu.
(I) can speak Japanese a little.

Tanaka-san ga o-kane o motte imasu.
Mr. Tanaka has the money. (with him now)

WA vs. GA (Detailed Article) - <http://nihonshock.com/waga>

を

O - Object Marker

Written with hiragana "wo", but the "w" sound is very faint.

- Marks the object of a verb.
- With verbs of motion, shows where the motion occurs.

kutsu o kaimashita.
(I) bought shoes.

sora o tobu
To fly (in) the sky

jibun no koto o hanasu
To talk about (things of) one's self.

に

NI - The "Aiming" Particle

- Marks an indirect object (the person/thing an action is done for/directed toward)
- Marks a destination, direction or specific place for an action. (to/at)
- Marks a specific point in time (ie. Monday / 3pm / 1972 / July) 2
- Marks a period of time that something repeats in. (ie. twice a week)
- Marks direct objects for: naru (to become), au (to meet), noru (to ride)

kanojo ni hon o agemashita.
(I) gave her a book.

doyoubi ni kouen ni aimashou.
Let's meet at the park on Saturday.

ichinichi ni ko-hi- o nihai nomimasu.
(I) drink 2 cups of coffee a day.

と

TO - The "Binding" Particle

When quoting speech, "to" can become "tte" (informal)

- Marks a person that an action is done with.
- Links nouns to create a complete "and" group. 3
- Marks quoted speech or complete ideas.
- Shows a natural, predictable "if-then" relationship between clauses.
- Marks onomatopaeic words. (words that mimic sounds)

bosu to joushi to kenka shimashita.
(I) had an argument with (my) boss and manager.

sore wa chigau to omoimasu.
(I) think that's incorrect.

kosokoso to hanasu
to speak in whispers

で

DE - The "Enabling" Particle

Can become "ni te" in formal, written Japanese.

- Marks a place, area, or length of time inside which something occurs.
- Marks a method/tool or condition/state for an action.
- Marks a material or substance, composition.

kanji o ninen de oboemashita.
(I) learned kanji in two years.

kyou wa densha de kimashita.
Today (I) came by train.

youmou de tsukurareta mafura-
a scarf made of wool

も

MO - Even/Also Marker

- Used with other particles to add a meaning of "also/too" or "even."
(In this usage, MO replaces WA, GA, and O completely, but follows all other particles)
- Turns interrogative words (doko, dare, itsu, etc.) into every~/all~ words.

Osaka ni mo ikimashita.
(I) also/even went to Osaka.

mushi shite mo ii desu yo. kare wa itsumo sou desu.
It's okay even if (you) ignore (him). He is always like that.

か

KA

- Marks a sentence as a question.
- Links nouns to create an "or" group.
- Turns interrogative words into some~ words.
dare (who) + ka = dareka (someone)

へ

E

Can be used instead of NI to mark a destination.

Note: hiragana "he" is used.

の

NO

- Shows possession. (watashi no = my/mine)
- Combines two nouns.

Note: the final noun becomes the "primary" meaning.
kaisha no kuruma = the company car
kuruma no kaisha = a car company

や

YA

Links nouns to create an incomplete "and" group. 3

hon ya empitsu
books and pencils (and such)

だけ

DAKE

- Marks a limited amount or extent of something.
- Used with **dekiru** (and other potential verbs) to mean "as ~ as possible"

ichijikan dake matte kudasai.
Please wait for just one hour.

dekiru dake hayaku kaite kudasai.
Please write it as quickly as you can.

しか

SHIKA

- Marks an extent or amount that the speaker thinks small/insufficient.
- Always used with a negative verb form.

watashi wa sen'en shika mottemasen.
I haven't but one thousand yen.

ほど

HODO

- Marks a degree or extent of something. 4
- Marks an approximate length of time.
- Marks the greater element in a negative comparison.

sono kuruma wa kono kuruma hodo hayakunai desu.
That car is not as fast as this car.

hara ga itaku natta hodo waraimashita.
I laughed so hard that my stomach became painful.

より

YORI

- Marks the lesser element in a positive comparison.
- "From ~" (when closing a private letter)

sono kuruma wa kono kuruma yori hayai desu.
That car is faster than this car.

でも

DEMO

- Marks a possibility or suggestion.
- Turns interrogative words into any~ words.
- (Used as an interjection) means "even so/but/however"

ocha demo nomimashou ka?
Shall we drink some tea or something?

itsudemo denwa shite kudasai.
Please call me anytime.

くらい

KURAI

- Marks an approximate or negotiable degree, amount, or length of time. 5
- Can also be pronounced **gurai**.

kanji o juukai gurai kaku to, wasurenai yo.
If you write a kanji about 10 times, you won't forget it.

ばかり

BAKARI

- Means "only", or "to the exclusion of other things"
- Can be pronounced **bakka/bakkari** for emphasis.

ano kyoushitsu wa onna no ko bakari imasu.
That classroom has nothing but girls in it.

から

KARA

- Marks a starting place or time.
- Marks a source of information.

tomodachi kara kikimashita.
I heard about it from a friend.

kaigi wa ichiji kara sanji made desu.
the meeting is from 1 o'clock until 3 o'clock.

まで

MADE

- Marks an ending place or time.
- When followed by **ni**, means "by/before"

suiyoubi made ni repo-to o kaite kudasai.
Please write the report by Wednesday.

COMMON GRAMMATICAL WORDS / PATTERNS

HAZU	Expectation	kare wa sensei dakara shiteiru hazu desu. He is a teacher, so he should know.
BEKI	Appropriacy	zeikin o chanto harau beki desu. You should pay your taxes properly.
WAKE	Reality	katta wake de wa nai kedo totemo tanoshikatta. Even though I didn't win, it was very fun.
TSUMORI	Intend to...	shukudai o suru tsumori datta kedo... I intended to do my homework, but...
DAKE DE WA NAKU	Not only...	kanojo wa karate dake de wa naku juudou mo dekiru. She can do not only karate, but judo too.
WAKE NI WA IKENAI	Must not...	akirameru wake ni wa ikenai. I mustn't give up.
~ HOU GA	Comparison	densha de itta hou ga yasui desu. It would be cheaper to go by train.
~EBA ~U HODO	The more you~	yareba yaru hodo hayaku naru. The more you do it, the faster you become.
KA MO SHIRENAI	Possibility	kyou Satou-san kara denwa ga aru ka mo shirenai. There might be a phone call from Mr. Sato today.
NO YOU NI/NA	Similarity	kodomo no you ni naku kemuri no you na inoi to cry like a child a smoke-like smell

NI = adverbial usage, NA = adjectival usage.

VERBS FOR GIVING AND RECEIVING

NOTES:

	I give	I receive	You give to me
Informal	ageru	morau	kureru
Humble	sashiageru	itadaku	kudasaru* (becomes kudasai when used)

1 : also marks objects of **wakaru** (understand), **hoshii desu** (want), and **suki desu** (like).

2 : **kyou** (today), **ashita** (tomorrow), **kinou** (yesterday), etc. do not take NI.

3 : a TO group lists all its members, YA only names some.

4 : the speaker thinks the amount/degree is neutral or considerable in size.

5 : the speaker thinks that the exactness of the number or amount is not important.