

THE 6 Worst Mistakes
TO
Avoid at All Costs
WHEN
LEARNING JAPANESE

How to: stay motivated, learn faster, prevent confusion,
discover **the right way** to learn Japanese...
and become the ninja you've always dreamed of becoming



THE Six Worst Mistakes to Avoid at All Costs When
LEARNING JAPANESE

How to: stay motivated, learn faster, prevent confusion, discover the right way to learn Japanese...

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How to Get Started Learning Japanese

[The Right Way]

There are a million wrong ways to Study Japanese and only a few right ways.

Don't make the same mistakes everyone else are making. Read our guide and get an edge.

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JAPANIMAL

ABOUT JAPANIMAL

Japanimal.org is your honest survival guide for Japan. We hold no punches, we're serving up the good, the bad and the weird.

At Japanimal you can:

- 1) [Learn to speak Japanese properly](#) (the way the Japanese actually talk)
- 2) [Travel Japan with no money](#) (and still have fun)
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Introduction

If you're an English speaker and you've ever braved the task of learning the language of the Rising Sun (Japanese) you know first-hand that it is HARD AS HELL.

Many will learn simple words like 'konnichiha' (hello) and 'arigatou' (thank you) and that's as far as it ever gets. Many give up, some come back for more, but only to give up yet again. And very few actually continue on and eventually learn this language.

What students of Japanese don't know is that there are 6 very specific barriers/mistakes in learning the language that will prevent them from learning and over-all cause great difficulty.

Enough talk, let's look at what they are and what you can do about them.



Mistake #1

No Goals or Purposes

Mistake #1 – No Goals or Purposes

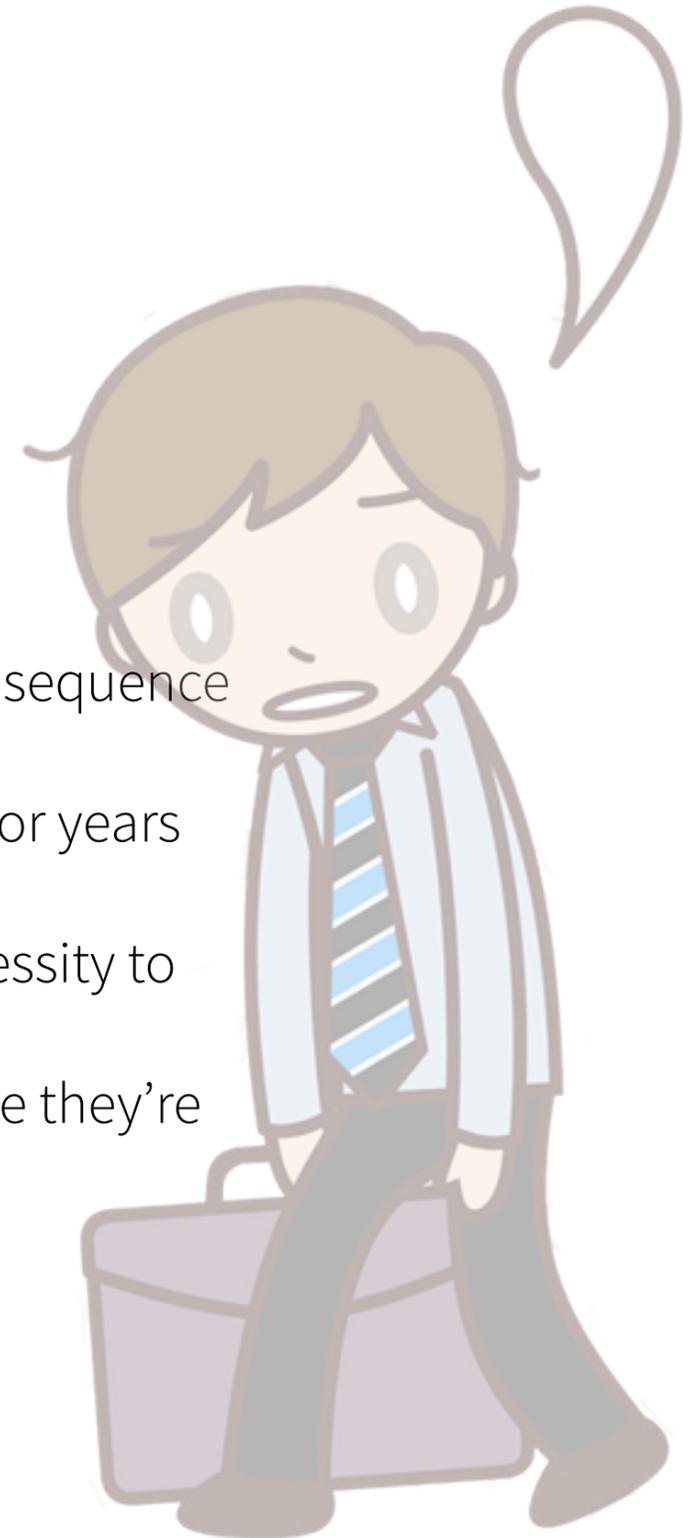
You need a strong reason/urge to make you continue to study Japanese.

In a Nutshell:

If you try studying Japanese without having a firm goal or purpose you will:

1. Often feel like giving up & give up easily (there's nothing to keep you at it during the hard times).
2. Forget what you studied (you have no intention of using it for a specific purpose, so there is no consequence if you forget it).
3. Never become fluent (becoming fluent depends on studying for years, you won't be able to study for years without a strong goal).
4. Avoid studying (it is not important and nobody is going to die if you don't study, so there is no necessity to study).
5. Feel bummed out and vow to never study Japanese again (not progressing makes a person feel like they're wasting their time and feel they'll never make it).

If you get yourself a good strong goal, which you really want to achieve you will:



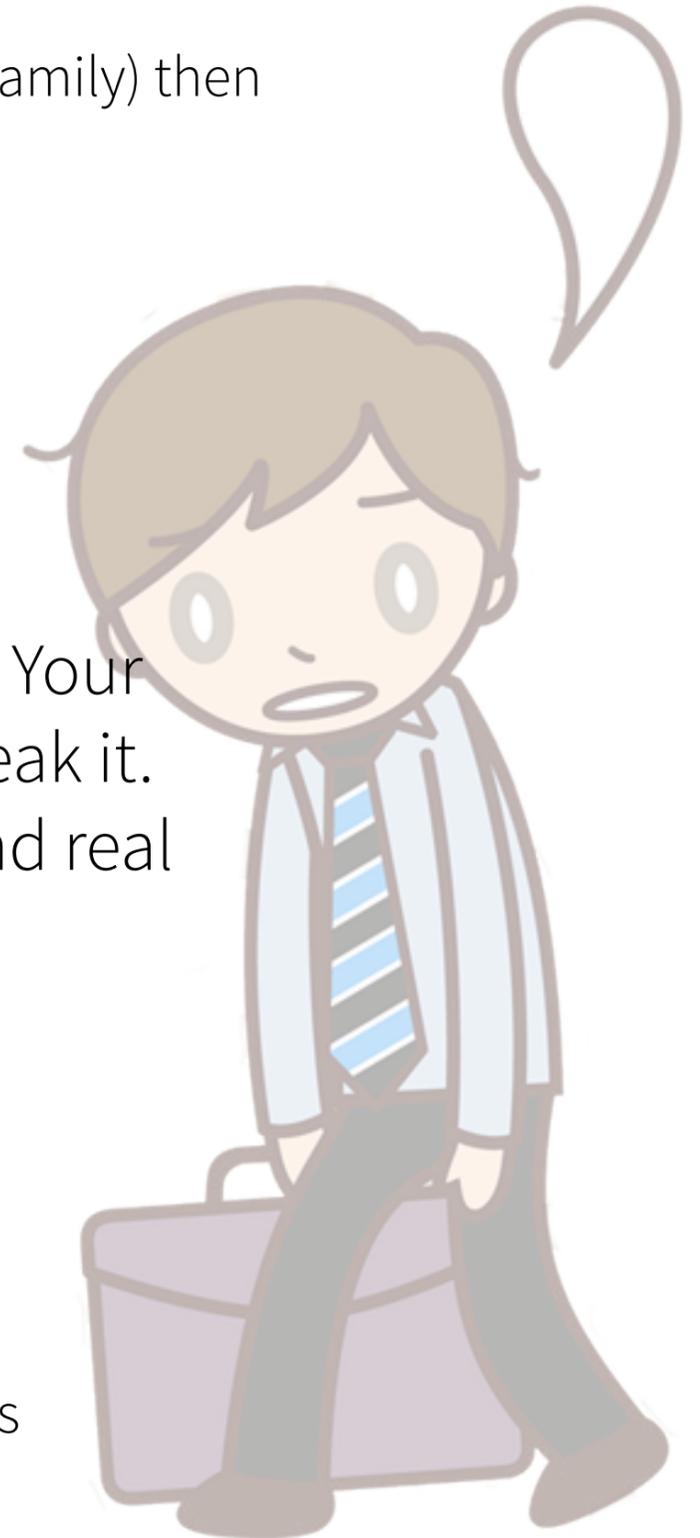
1. Never totally give up. (Even if you quit, you will keep coming back to conquer).
2. Remember what you learned more easily. (you have something you intend to use it for).
3. Increase in skill, because you're in it to win it.
4. Have motivation, to keep you at it, and keep pushing (if people are counting on you (job, partner, family) then you will have pressure, which will keep you at it).
5. Study on your own will, because you want to.

The Details:

Japanese is hard. You need a strong desire (purpose, reason, goal) to keep you at it. Your goal cannot be that you are just curious about it or you think it would be cool to speak it. That will not be enough to pull you through the hard times. You must have a firm and real goal, something you really desire. You really need to want it.

Examples of solid & firm goals would be:

1. Wanting to live and work in Japan
2. Wanting to have a Japanese boyfriend or girlfriend
3. Wanting to be able to read your favorite Japanese manga or watch anime/drama without sub-titles
4. Having family who speaks Japanese and you want to be able to communicate with them



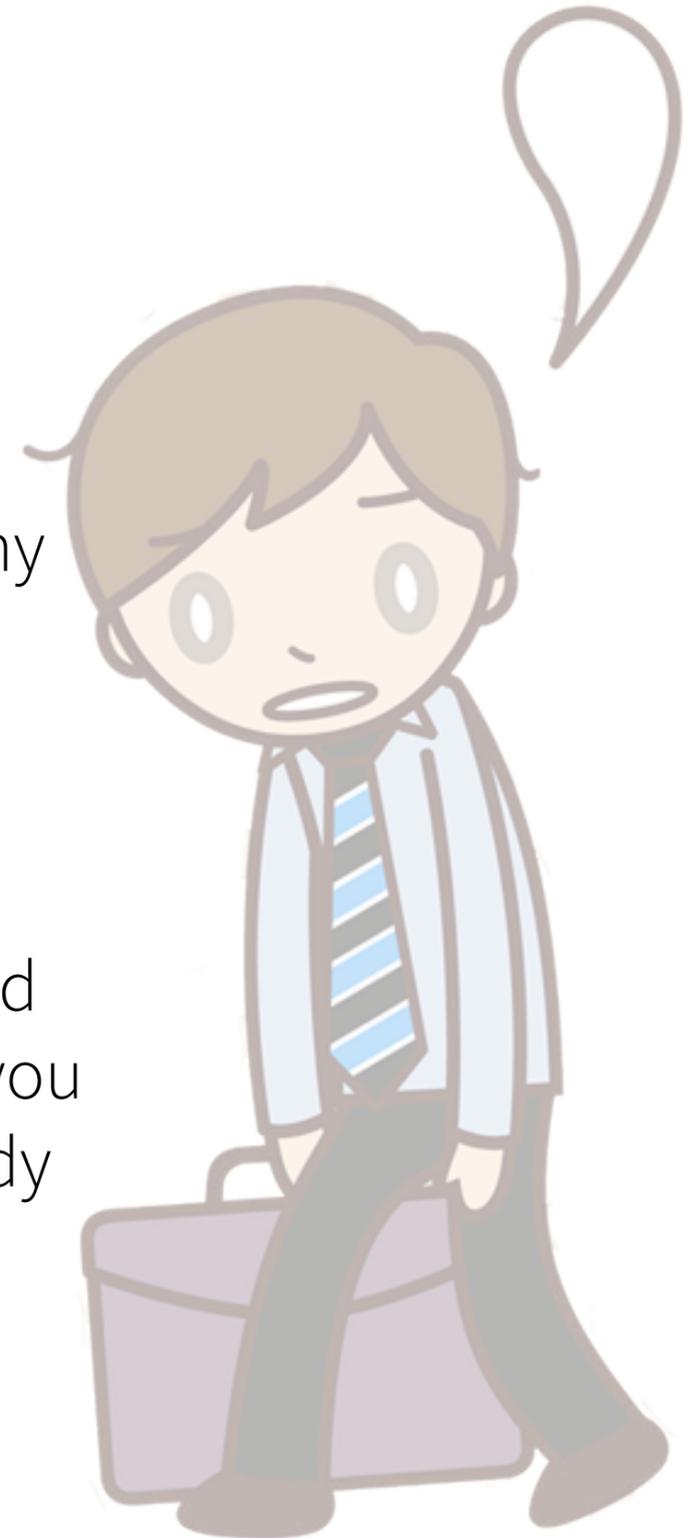
5. Wanting to travel Japan and be able to converse with the locals to get the most out of the experience
6. Wanting to be able to understand your favorite Japanese Pop and Rock songs
7. Wanting to get trained as a Ninja or Samurai

Become a Pro or Not?

Notice, the above list of seven goals all require you to actually become at least an **intermediate** speaker in order to successfully reach them. Therefore, if you have any of those seven goals you **must** realize that you will need to approach your study of Japanese as a pro, and you **MUST** 'go deep' and actually study grammar, sentence structure etc.

If you don't want to 'go deep' and take on the whole language, then your goal should be: **'to learn phrases and slang for fun'**. Learning phrases and slang won't make you fluent but it will be fun. And it is an acceptable goal for those who don't want to study grammar, but are interested in the language.

1. Big goals (1-7) require dedication and lots of work
2. Smaller goals require less dedication and work



3. Choose your goal

4. Your goal determines how much effort you must invest

This is the first thing you should do before you even bother studying any Japanese.

Conclusion

**Any goal is better than no goal. Be honest with yourself.
Decide what yours is and put it up on your wall!**

Use the info in this section to:

1) Stay motivated

2) Prevent yourself from giving up



Mistake #2

Instant Gratification

Mistake #2 – Instant Gratification

In a Nutshell:

If you are studying Japanese and expect to become fluent after one day of study, you will:

1. Become very frustrated every time you study (since you didn't become fluent right away)
2. Not want to study at all (because you feel like you're not making the instant amazing progress you thought you would)
3. Feel overwhelmed. (because there is so much to study, and it seems endless, and you should've been a master by now)

If you throw 'instant gratification' out the window you will:

1. Be chill about your study
2. Be motivated, and want to study
3. Not feel overwhelmed at the huge scope of what you must study. Since you know a language is a huge thing, and it will take years

The Details:



I'm going to be totally honest with you...

Even after your first **several dozen** study sessions of Japanese, you won't feel like you're progressing at all. There is just so much material to go over, it's going to be a while before you feel like you can use what you've learned, and have confidence.

This causes many to give up. We get that.

Learning Japanese is like taking the slow boat to China. It is going to take **years** to become fluent. Yes, **years**. It will not take a few weeks or several months. You won't be able to sit down and after two hours of intense study go from novice to intermediate. But if you study hard for one year you can get up to a decent intermediate level, where you can have basic conversations with people. **That** is doable and realistic.

Learning a foreign language is a commitment. The more you study the faster you will become proficient. People who study 10 hours a week will become fluent faster than people who study 1 hour a week.

So if you are studying 1 hour a week you must not be dismayed if after 6 months of dedicated study you are still a beginner.

It takes a great amount of time, so be patient, grasshopper. It can take months of study for you to notice any improvement in your Japanese ability. Be prepared for that and don't expect instant gratification.

Conclusion

You can avoid this feeling of failure/disappointment by not having expectations, and instead keeping this firmly in mind: “I can master Japanese if I study regularly and practice”.

Maintain your motivation and satisfaction by starting your journey of learning Japanese knowing that it will take years, and be ok with that.

Use the info in this section to:

- 1) Stay motivated**
- 2) Prevent yourself from giving up**



Mistake #3

**Starting with Kanji
and not Roumaji**

Mistake #3 – Starting with Kanji and not Romaji

In a Nutshell

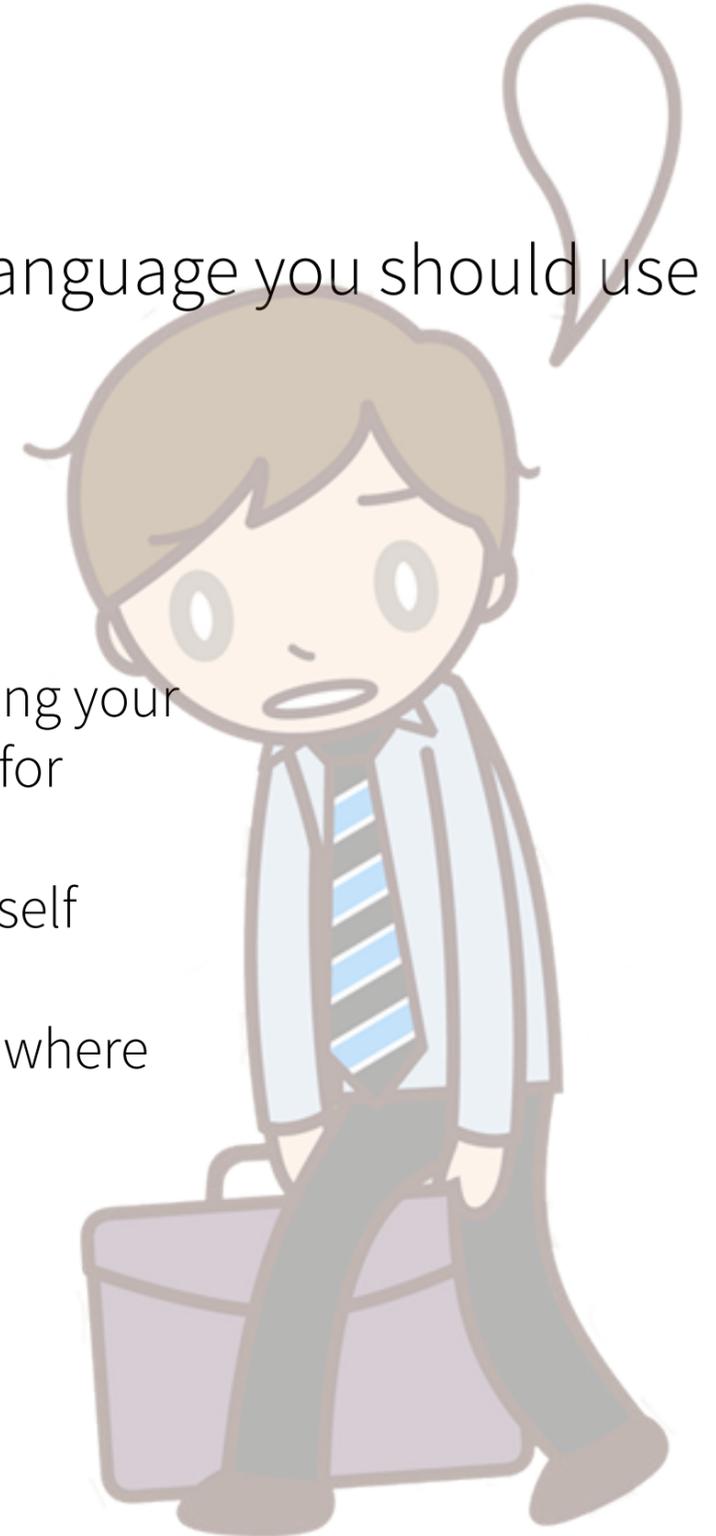
If your goal is to speak Japanese and converse with them, then when studying the language you should use the simplified writing system: Romaji, and not the complex system: Kanji.

If you don't you will:

1. Have a hard time committing new Japanese words to memory, because you're completely bypassing your native alphabet (English), and trying to remember Chinese-based characters, which is very difficult for beginners to do.
2. Take much longer to reach your goal of speaking, because you will be adding an entire subject in itself (Kanji).
3. You will forget your Kanji unless you use it regularly (read it and write it). So, unless you're in Japan where you can use it, you're going to lose it.

But, if you start with Romaji:

1. You'll remember Japanese words no problem. Easy breezy, Japaneasy.



2. You'll be speaking Japanese way sooner than those kids with the pumped up kicks who buried their heads in Kanji workbooks.
3. People will wish they were on your level, because you'll be flying.

The Details

Your focus should be on speaking and listening, as opposed to reading and writing Japanese.

But, in the beginning you will learn most of your initial Japanese from books and websites... so in order to learn Japanese you WILL have to read it. BUT it does not have to be written in the complex Japanese writing systems of Kanji, Hiragana and Katakana!!! Instead one should use the English-based phonetic writing system: 'Roumaji' as training wheels for as long as one needs.

Some 'purists' say you shouldn't use Roumaji, that it's a bad crutch and bad form. Basically, those people are idiots and do not know how to teach people properly.

If you're new to Japanese it is way way way way way slower to: learn a new writing system (Hiragana and Kanji) and then learn/memorize a word written in that writing system, than it is to learn it directly in Roumaji.

It is just adding an unnecessary step and it slows you down and makes you feel stupid (when you actually are not) and makes you frustrated. No one can argue with this point. Learning Japanese using Roumaji initially is fast.

Conclusion

Successful learning is achieved by doing baby steps and not doing things out of sequence. Starting simple, and then adding on complexity.

Speed up your study by starting with Roumaji, then later expanding into Hiragana & Katakana, and lastly, learn Kanji.

Use the info in this section to:

- 1) Speed up your study
- 2) Prevent confusion



Mistake #4

Using Memorization

Mistake #4 – Using Memorization

In a Nutshell

If you use memorization when learning Japanese, you will:

- 1) Forget the meanings of words
- 2) Confuse words together which have similar spellings or meanings
- 3) Think slowly and robotically, not conceptually
- 4) Be less adroit in your ability to use words

If you use our method (see below), you will:

- 1) Retain the meanings of words much longer
- 2) Be able to differentiate words, each word is itself, it is not a mishmash of sounds and spellings
- 3) Think fast, all the words in your vocabulary will be at your fingertips
- 4) Think fluidly, be able to mix or break apart words, and make new words

The Details:



How do you actually go about learning a language? Are there actual procedures? Is it some random activity in which you just soak in the language? Well, you can use workbooks; some people use flash-cards, and some people use computer programs.

Whatever above system you use; you will find that every one of them is making the same mistake...

When they teach you a new Japanese word, they teach by **memorization**. This is indeed a slow boat.

There are a few problems with memorization:

1. It is slow, it works, but it is slow. You have to robotically chant the definition until you've soaked it in.
2. For complex concepts/words, they become forgotten easily and get confused with other words. You have to keep re-looking up the word.
3. It bypasses your mind's natural 'concept creation' procedure. It's just a sound to you, with no understanding. If you have no understanding behind it, then you're just memorizing a symbol, and you won't be able to USE the word. And WANT to be able to use the words. You have to be able to think with it. Memorization sometimes does not have any understanding coupled to it.

How should you learn a new Japanese word?

You should take the new word (be it a noun, verb, adj) and make up tons of little example sentences which clearly show you're using the word correctly. Have fun with it, make them weird, goofy, erotic, whatever, who cares. Just take that new word and start making concepts with it, instead of just chanting its definition. You can write these example sentences down or you can say them to yourself. By doing this you truly understand the concept of the word, and you'll remember it way easier. This is how you OWN a word. And this is how you will be able to rapidly choose the right words for the right situation when you're speaking Japanese.

One example sentence isn't enough. Also, YOU have to make it. It has to be your concept. Reading from a dictionary's example sentences won't work.

Conclusion

Learn to THINK in Japanese and not be a memory robot! Say 'hell no' to memorization, and saying 'hell ya' to example sentences.

Use the info in this section to:



- 1) Speed up your study
- 2) Prevent confusion
- 3) Study Japanese the right way

Mistake #5

Not living in Japan

Mistake #5 – Not living in Japan

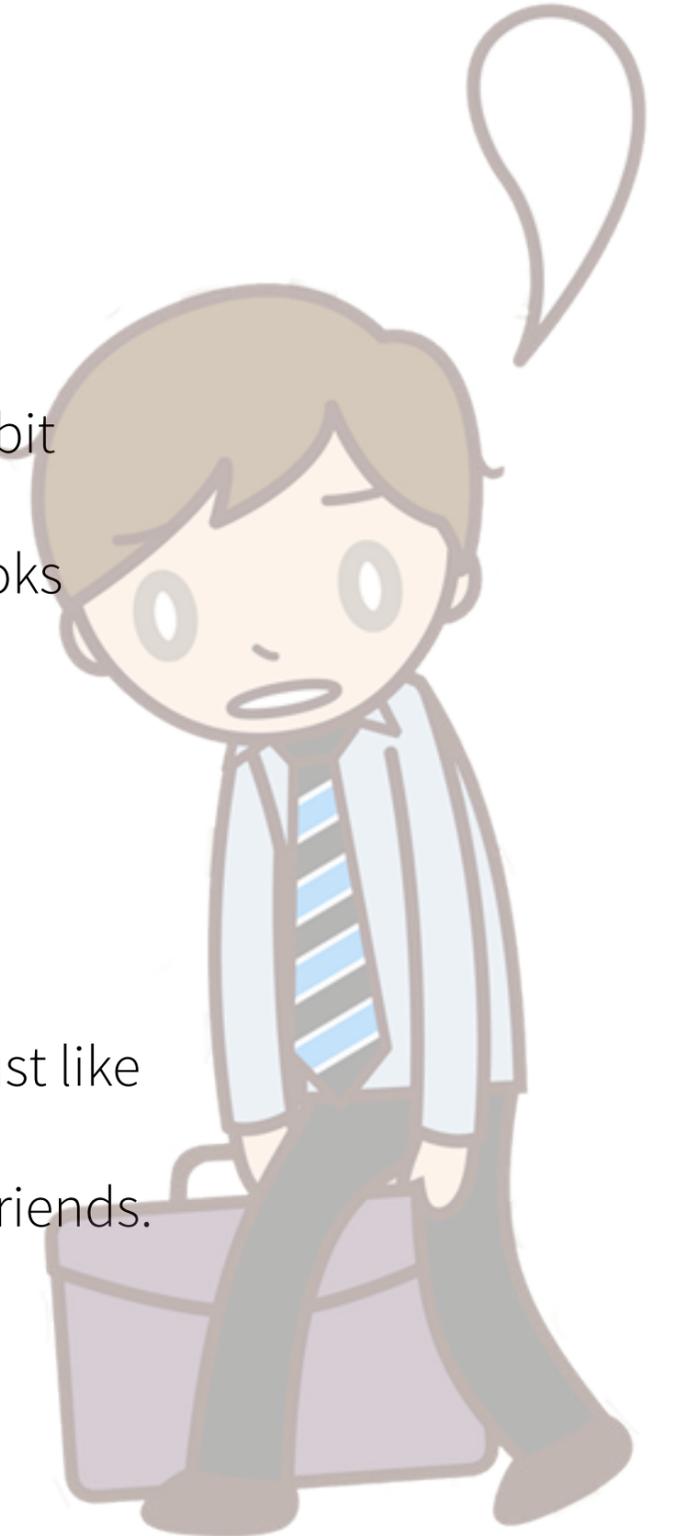
In a Nutshell

If you never live in Japan, you will:

1. Probably never develop a proper Japanese accent, and instead say words totally wrong, and sound a bit stupid.
2. Not learn colloquial Japanese (the way, and words Japanese people actually speak, because textbooks never teach this, you must be with natives to learn it).
3. Never have the invaluable experience of having conversed in all possible types of situations.

If you do visit for an extended period of time and study, you will:

1. Develop your accent to a point where the Japanese think you were born there, because you sound just like them.
2. Learn to speak to them in such a way that they feel you're a close friend or family, and make instant friends.
3. Be way more experienced than others, they will look to you as an authority on Japanese culture and language.



The Details

For your initial learning experience, it will be sufficient to use books, websites and skype chats with Japanese speakers. However, once you have a good command of the basics and are able to construct a variety of sentence types, it will be time for you to take the big trip.

Immersing yourself for a few months in Japan, using Japanese every day in a variety of situations will absolutely sky-rocket your speaking and listening abilities. It will be noticeable to you and you will feel very accomplished when you compare your new speed and command of the language to the time before you had visited.

HOWEVER! ‘immersion’ ONLY works if you:

- 1) Insist on speaking Japanese only (no English or barely any)
- 2) Look up new words, expand your vocab and use the new words in the same day
- 3) Ask questions when you’re confused
- 4) Study while you’re there (grammar and new words)
- 5) Get corrected by native speakers when you say something wrong

There are foreigners who've lived in Japan for 10 years and don't speak a word of Japanese. That is because they did not do the above five things while living in Japan.

Conclusion

Perfect your accent, speed up your learning, increase your speaking ability by taking a long trip to Japan.

Use the info in this section to:

- 1) Speed up your study
- 2) Study Japanese the right way



Mistake #6

Not Understanding English Sentence Structure

Mistake #6 – Not understanding English & Japanese Sentence Structure

In a Nutshell

If you don't understand English and Japanese sentence structure, then you will:

1. Only be able to learn single words, or phrases.
2. Not be able to form your own concepts.
3. Rely on other's sentences.
4. Be unable to have conversation.

If you do learn sentence structure, you will:

1. Be able to use every word you learn, in any way.
2. Be able to create and communicate any concept, in your own way, with your own style.
3. Be totally independent, all you need is a dictionary.
4. Be able to communicate with any Japanese speaker and become a total-bad ass in their eyes.



The Details

This is THE MOST critical and important of all 6 points.

You can learn as many individual words and phrases you want, however one day you will see that if you want to actually form complete concepts and communicate them, you will need to know how to make sentences and all the different structures.

If you're just curious about Japanese and you want to learn some goofy slang words then obviously you don't need to know anything about sentence structure. But if you actually want to be able to 'think in Japanese' and have conversations with natives then you must must must tackle and slay the big dragon: English and Japanese Sentence Structure.

This is a very large subject and beyond the scope of this checklist. But fear not, we've put together a brilliant, easy to understand E-book to give you your introduction called: [**How to Get Started Learning Japanese the Right Way.**](#)

Again, this is the most crucial step in your journey of learning Japanese, and you'll be setting yourself up for

failure if you don't do it.

Ready to cleverly conquer the Japanese Language like a boss? Become the bad-ass samurai ninja you've always dreamed of becoming... learn How to Get Started Learning Japanese now! >>

Use the info in this section to:

- 1) Study Japanese the right way
- 2) Speed up your study

