How to get started

LEARNING JAPANESE

[The Right Way]

A logical step by step guide to

JAPANESE SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Learn how and where to get started on your journey to learning Japanese so you can become the bad-ass ninja master you've always dreamed of becoming...

Learn to Speak Proper Japanese
How to get started
LEARNING JAPANESE
[The Right Way]
A logical step by step guide to
JAPANESE SENTENCE STRUCTURE

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A hand-crafted selection of key Japanese phrases for the clever traveler

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Have our Survival Japanese phrase book on you at all times to ensure that you live.
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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Howdy there! I’m Cameron Scott from Japanimal.

I’ll be taking you through this exciting step by step guide to Japanese sentence structure. I teach English to Japanese people, and I also teach Japanese to Americans. I’ve got a 360-degree view on the subject. You’re in good hands. So, let’s start! :)

Languages are huge!

Where do you even start?

Yes, you could go with any one of the above, but chances are those methods will either:

1) Teach you unnecessary stuff you don’t even need to know (making you frustrated)
2) Start in at too high a level of complexity, and skip the basics (making you confused)
3) Avoid essential grammar (making you confused)
4) Rely on memorization, making you a robot who can’t think in Japanese (>_<)

**To hell with that!**

We at Japanimal are taking an entirely different approach. We’re not making any assumptions.

We’re starting in at the most basic of basics, so that nothing gets missed.

Additionally, our approach is highly organized. We remove the confusion of learning a new language and make things easy to digest.

**Our Method ^-^)**
A language is actually a highly organized thing. If you know all the components, you can break it down into individual pieces and then it becomes way easier to confront and digest.

That’s what we are going to do. We are going to take the most common sentence patterns of Japanese and break it down into logical pieces and make it easy for you to digest. **In this guide we will be taking the one most versatile sentence pattern and then work the hell out of it.**

But it doesn’t stop there... we don’t just dump the Japanese sentence patterns on you and hope you get it. No! We first teach it to you in English, so you can think with it, and make it yours.

Don’t know anything about English grammar or sentence structure?

**No problem! We assume you don’t know any English grammar.**

This is a key point which many others neglect. They assume you already know English grammar. This is a huge mistake. Native speakers of English **rarely** understand the sentence structure of their language.

**This is why learning Japanese can be so confusing.** You’re trying to learn the sentence structure of a foreign language when you don’t yourself have a **full command** of your own language’s sentence structure.
and component parts in the first place!

Before one can understand a foreign language he must must must be able to deeply understand his native language and its component parts, and sentence patterns. So in our approach we teach you both, side by side, so you can have maximum understanding and minimum confusion.

**Kanji and Roumaji ☹️☺️)**

All Japanese in this guide is written in Roumaji. Learning the Chinese character-based writing system of Kanji is a whole subject in itself and is **NOT NECESSARY** when learning the sentence structure of Japanese.

**Expectations**

This step by step guide will give you a solid introduction to Japanese.

By the time you are done with it you will have the ability to **describe** anything, anyone and any place. (with the use of a dictionary). Not sure what that means exactly? Read on.
Let’s get into it, but first, let’s go over some basic basics.

**Takeaways:**

1) Learning Japanese is hard, there are many wrong ways to do it
2) Our method is awesome, and logical
3) Other methods… not so much
4) We keep it very simple
5) You will learn sentence structure, so you can **think in Japanese**
Section One

Basic Grammar
Section One

Basic Grammar

We’re going to start from the most basic basics, (also known as the Parts of Speech):

1) nouns
2) verbs
3) adjectives

ATTENTION!

In this section we won’t be teaching any Japanese. We just want to make sure we’re all on the same page in regards to basic English grammar. Because, if you are not 100% confident on your understanding of this section then you will have tremendous difficulty learning Japanese.

Please do not skim through this section!
If it is confusing, go back to the beginning and re-read.

Nouns

There are basically three types of nouns:

People - anyone that has an identity:
Joe, Bruce Willis, Homer Simpson, Mom, Me, You, I

Places – any location, real or imagined:
Tokyo, Neverland, The Milky Way, Florida, Lake Biwa

Things – any object, item, feeling, thing:
Taxes, sunscreen, apples, beauty, confusion, appetite, happiness

Examples:
1) Tokyo is very nice
2) Bruce Willis is strong
3) Beauty is in you
4) I like apples

Sentences usually start with nouns.

Nouns are either being something, doing something, or having something.

Nouns are usually the main subject of a sentence.

**Verbs**

Verbs tell you if the noun is being, doing or having.

Verbs can tell you what action the noun is doing. These are the three different types of verbs.

**Being (identity):** be, am, is, are, was, were
Doing (action): eat, walk, drive, jump, enter, drink, push
Having: have

Examples:

1) Tokyo is beautiful (Tokyo is being beautiful)
2) Cats eat fish (Cats are doing the action of eating fish)
3) I have chocolate (I am having chocolate)

In this guide, we will only be working with the ‘being’ verbs. (be, am, is, are, was, were).

This is the simplest way to approach the Japanese language. Let’s learn more about the ‘be verb’

The ‘be verb’ (be, am, is, are)

‘Be’, ‘am’, ‘is’ and ‘are’ all mean the same thing. They are just written differently depending on who it refers to. (‘I am’, ‘you are’, ‘he is’, etc).
But what does ‘be’ actually mean?

‘be’ has about nine different meanings. But for the purpose of this guide we will only discuss three of them:

1) identity
2) characteristics/qualities
3) existence

Identity
“I am John”
“I” has the identity of john, “I” is being John

Characteristics
“You are beautiful”
“You” has the characteristics of ‘beautiful’, it has the qualities of it. It doesn’t have the identity of ‘beautiful’ (that is the previous meaning).
Existence

“He is in Japan”

“He” is existing in the location of Japan. That is where he is existing; it is in space. He doesn’t have the quality/characteristics of Japan, and he isn’t being the identity of Japan. He is existing in Japan.

Other Verbs?

Other verbs that are ‘action’ verbs (eat, drink, walk, run, talk) are not discussed in this guide. They require a much deeper and lengthier explanation. For now, we are just talking about the ‘be verb’.

Adjectives

Adjectives can go before or after a noun, it depends on the sentence. They describe a noun and give you details about it.

Adjectives can describe many different qualities of a noun. Such as:
**Color**: pink, brown, black (black car)  
**Distance**: close, far (far hotel)  
**Which one**: this, that, a, an, the (that movie)  
**Qualities**: smart/Stupid, Pretty/Ugly, Fast/Slow, Tall/Short, Heavy/Light (heavy man)  
**Degree**: very, really, so, pretty, kind of (pretty funny)  
**Possession**: my, your, his, her, our, their (my bike)  
**Amount**: any, many, several, some, few (many children)  
**Origin**: American, Japanese, British, French, (French bread)

**Examples:**

1) Tokyo is very beautiful (‘very’ and ‘beautiful’ are both adjectives)  
2) John is short  
3) My hair is black (‘my’ and ‘black’ are both adjectives)  
4) I have many

**Adjectives in Depth**
Adjectives help us give more detail and understanding about nouns (people/things/places).

If I said: “I have an apple”. You might wonder: “what kind of apple? What else could we say about this apple?”

We can use adjectives to describe what kind of apple and what it looks like, or its qualities, like weight and taste, etc.

I have a tasty, crunchy, fresh, green, large, juicy apple. Those are all adjectives. Using those adjectives, we now know a lot about this apple.

You can place adjectives together in pairs. Such as: so heavy, or pretty smart, or very beautiful. ‘so’, ‘pretty’, and ‘very’ are all saying to what degree the next adjective is.


You can say: “a car is heavy”. Heavy is the adjective. But… how heavy is it? “a car is really heavy”. ‘really’ is an adjective and so is ‘heavy’.
Do you see now that adjectives can be used in pairs?

**Bam! Got it?**

You can even use three adjectives in this way: “the apple is really bright green”

**Really** = degree  
**Bright** = quality  
**Green** = color

**Adjective Test**

Some people have difficulty determining if a word is an adjective or not. (because as you saw there are many different types).

There is a quick way you can test if something is an adjective, but it only works on the quality/characteristic adjectives. The test is: If you put ‘very’ before the word, does it sound natural? If so, then it is an adjec-
Example:

Is ‘difficult’ an adjective? Let’s check: ‘very difficult’. Sounds good!

Is ‘beauty’ an adjective? Let’s check: ‘very beauty”. Nope! Does not sound natural. Beauty is a noun.

As I said this does not work on all types of adjectives. ‘that’ and ‘this’ are adjectives. If you put ‘very’ in front of them, it would not make sense.

The best way to find out if a word is an adjective or not, is to look it up in the dictionary. It will tell you clearly.

No Adjectives

Also, sentences don’t have to have adjectives. They are optional.
Examples:

1) I am John
2) You are here
3) This is Earth

In these three examples there are only nouns and verbs.

NOTE: Yes… ‘a’ is an adjective. It tells you how many! Adjectives describe ‘amount’ as well as other things.

Had enough? Ok, let’s move on!

Wrapping it Up

Let’s make a simple sentence with a noun, verb and adjective.

Apples are delicious
Apples = noun
Are = verb
Delicious = adjective
Easy right?

Another:

Japan is so beautiful.

In this example we have two adjectives next to each other. Don’t worry, it’s totally legal, as we mentioned earlier.

‘So’ is an adjective because it tells us how beautiful it is (what degree). Beautiful is an adjective because it describes how Japan is.

‘Japan’ is a place, and is the thing we are talking about, so it is the noun. ‘is’ is the verb. It says that the noun (Japan) has the characteristics of the adjective (beautiful). Japan ‘is being’ beautiful.
Last one:

That movie was pretty funny

‘That’ is an adjective, because it tells us ‘which one’.

‘Pretty’ is an adjective because it tells us how funny it is. ‘Funny’ is an adjective because it describes how the movie was.

‘Movie’ is a thing, and it is what we are talking about, it is the noun.

‘Was’ is the verb. It says that the noun (Movie) has the characteristics of the adjective (funny). The movie ‘was being pretty funny’.

Confused?
If you have any confusions go back to the beginning of this section and read forward and find the section where you are not 100%, and look for a word/term/description you don’t understand, and clarify it.

IMPORTANT!

Some nouns are also verbs. And some nouns are also adjectives. They have multiple definitions/meanings.

Examples:

1) I hate you (hate is the verb)
2) I found no hate in him (hate is a noun)
3) That is so funny (that is the noun) (it tells us ‘the thing that is/exists’)
4) That car is fast (that is an adjective) (It tells us which car)

This is just a heads-up, don’t worry.
Takeaways:

1) Nouns are: people, things or places
2) Verbs mean: action/doing, or just being/identity/existing/having characteristics, or having/owning (be, do, have).
3) Adjectives give more description to nouns. They describe its qualities, size, amount, degree shape, color, etc.
4) You can use many adjectives together: ‘really bright green’ are all adjectives.
5) We are only using the ‘be verb’ (is, am, are, be) in this guide.
6) The definition of ‘be’ which we are using is: the noun has the characteristics/qualities of the adjective. (example: Florida is sunny).
7) Some words can be both verbs and nouns, or even both nouns and adjectives.
8) A quick test which does not always work… put ‘very’ before the word to find out if it is an adjective. It will either sound weird or normal. The best way to know for sure is to look it up in the dictionary.
Section Two

Sentence Structure: Subject, Verb, Adjective
Section Two

Sentence Structure: Subject, Verb, Adjective

You know what nouns, verbs and adjectives are now. These are the pieces that make up a sentence.

Let’s take it to the next level and see how a sentence is made in English and Japanese. And look at the rules.

A sentence must have two things:
1) A subject
2) A verb

Anything else (including adjectives) is optional.

Example:
1) You are.
This is a complete sentence. It has a subject (you) and a verb (are).

**More complex example:**

You are funny.

This is also a complete sentence. It has a subject (you), a verb (are), and it has an adjective (funny).

**What’s a Subject?**

The subject is nearly always a noun, and it is usually the first word of a sentence. It is the main topic of that sentence. It is what we are talking about. It is the person, place or thing we are talking about. The verb (action) is not the subject. The adjective (descriptive words) is not the subject either. The adjective can describe the subject, but it is not the subject.
What’s Verb?

As discussed in Section Two. A *verb* is a word which shows either: 1) *Being*, 2) *Doing*, or 3) *having*. Examples: are, is, have, eat, drink, give, buy.

What’s the Point?

An English sentence is: Subject, Verb, Adjective. (*Kyoto* *is* *awesome*)
A Japanese sentence is: Subject, Adjective, Verb. (*Awesome* *Kyoto* *is*)

Hate to break it to you but, you’re going to have to learn how to speak backwards, if you want to learn Japanese.

But don’t worry, you can do it, and it’s nothing horrifying. Let me explain.

In English we would say: 
**Pikachu is cute.**
In Japanese you would say: 
**Pikachu cute is.**

In English: 
**Japan was fun.**

Japanese: 
**Japan fun was.**

What does this mean? It means the verb goes at the end of the sentence. The subject is at the beginning (same as English), and the adjective goes in the middle (if there is an adjective).

**English:**
Tokyo is so fun

**Japanese:**
Tokyo so fun is

‘Tokyo’ is the subject (and noun).
‘Is’ is the verb.
‘So fun’ is the adjective. (in this case a pair)

**DON’T FREAK OUT!**

The only thing that is happening is the verb is being moved to the end. Everything else stays in place!

NOTE: a long sentence can have TWO subjects. For example: “Tokyo is fun, but Osaka is the best”. In this example there are two small sentences connected together with ‘but’. Tokyo is the subject, and so is Osaka.

**Takeaways:**

1) The smallest sentence has a subject and a verb
2) A sentence does not have to have an adjective
3) The subject is a noun
4) The subject does the action of the verb
5) In Japanese the verb is at the end
6) In English the verb is in the middle
7) ‘is/am/are/be’ is a verb, so it goes at the end of a Japanese sentence
Section Three

Your First Japanese Sentence
Section Three

Your First Japanese Sentence

We’re finally here. It took a while, but we made it.

Every piece of information from the previous sections was needed in order to make your first Japanese sentence enjoyable and understandable.

Let’s do some examples:

**In English:** I am pretty
- I (subject)
- am (verb)
- pretty (adjective)

**In Japanese:** Watashi ha kirei desu
- Watashi (subject)
- ha (subject marker)
kirei (adjective)
desu (verb)

NOTE: desu is pronounced ‘dess’. The ‘u’ is cut off.

What is ‘ha’?

Japanese has a little special something, which English does not have. They are called ‘particles’. In this case it is that little ‘ha’ that goes after ‘watashi’.

‘ha’ is pronounced ‘wa’ but written as ‘ha’.

‘ha’ simply means that just before it is the subject (in this case ‘watashi’ is the subject). It’s simply a marker. Think of it as a little post-it. It says (the word just before me, is the subject for this sentence).

I’ll repeat that. Whatever word is just to the left of ‘ha’ is the subject. So, whenever you write the subject in Japanese you write a ‘ha’ after it, which notes that it is the subject. It has no other meaning.
What is ‘desu’?

‘desu’ is the Japanese verb for ‘be’. Basically, it means: be/am/is/are. Japanese verbs go at the end, so in all of our examples when we use ‘desu’, it will be at the end. In some of our examples we won’t actually need ‘desu’. Yes that is right. It depends on the type of Japanese adjective we are using.

This is a big difference between English and Japanese.

We’ll come back to that in the next section. In the meantime let’s look at a few more examples.

Let’s do another sentence.

In English: Computers are convenient
Computers (subject)
are (verb)
convenient (adjective)
In Japanese: konputa ha benri desu
konputa (subject)
ha (subject marker)
benri (adjective)
desu (verb)

‘Computers’ (konputa) is the subject, therefore ‘ha’ will go right after it (because it is the subject marker). Then we put the adjective for ‘convenient’ (benri) and then we put the verb ‘are’ (desu).

English: Computers are convenient!
Japanese: Konputa ha benrei desu!

Got it?

Pronunciation?

At this point and time don’t even worry about pronunciation. You just need to understand the sentence.
structure. Just remember that the particle ‘ha’ is written as ‘ha’, but pronounced as ‘wa’. And that ‘desu’ is pronounced ‘dess’.

**Takeaways:**

At this point you need to understand 7 critical things:

1) English goes: subject, verb, adjective (*she is smart*)
2) Japanese goes: subject, adjective, verb (*she smart is*)
3) Sentences don’t have to have an adjective (*She is*)
4) The subject is a noun
5) In Japanese the subject is followed by ‘ha’ (pronounced ‘wa’), which is simply a post-it, a marker which says the previous word is the subject
6) **DON’T WORRY ABOUT PRONUNCIATION RIGHT NOW.** You will tackle that later on in your study. We’re doing one thing at a time.
7) ‘desu’ is the Japanese ‘to be’ verb. It means: am, is, are. We do not use it **ALL** the time. It depends on the type of Japanese adjective. We will explain this in the next section.
Section Four

The Japanese Adjective
Section Four

The Japanese Adjective

Reminder!

First we have to remind ourselves that the sentence patterns we are learning in this guide will be about describing things (water is blue). Not doing things (I eat fish) and not being people (I am john). All our example sentences will have adjectives in them.

We spent a lot of time earlier going over the English adjective. Now we must have a very firm understanding of the Japanese adjective! Because it has its own rules and forms which English does not.

Two types of adjectives

Japanese has two types of adjectives.

1. ‘i’ adjectives
2. ‘na’ adjectives
This is unique to Japanese. You will handle them in different ways. Meaning, if you want to make them into present, past, negative, future, etc, you do things differently depending on if it is a ‘i’ or a ‘na’ adjective.

In English we can just say: is beautiful, is not beautiful, was beautiful, was not beautiful, etc etc for all of our descriptive adjectives.

In Japanese the ‘is, is not, was, was not’ changes if it is an ‘i’ or a ‘na’ adjective.

They have their own format.

Let’s look at them.

‘na’ Adjectives

‘Benri’ is a ‘na’ adjective. It means ‘convenient’

It is called ‘na’ because you need to add a ‘na’ after it, if you want it to describe the noun directly to the right.
There are TWO ways we can use a ‘na’ adjective. One with the ‘na’, and one without the ‘na’.

WITH THE ‘na’
Example:
watashi no benri na konputa desu
(my convenient computer)
(‘na’ is connecting ‘benri’ and ‘konputa. It is modifying the noun to the right of it. It needs ‘na’ to connect them. It simply means: ‘convenient computer’, in this sense.)

WITHOUT THE ‘na’
Example:
Konputa ha benri desu
(computers are convenient)
(there is no ‘na’ adjective after ‘computer’. ‘computer is by itself, there is just the ‘ha’. And ‘benri’ is by itself. So you don’t need the ‘na’ to connect it, because there is no noun to the right of ‘benri’. In this case you don’t need to use ‘na’)

Do you see the difference in the position of the word ‘benri’?
Let’s go over it one more time.
If we took the English adjective ‘convenient’ we could use it in two ways:

1. That is a convenient car (sore ha benri na kuruma desu)
2. That car is convenient (sono kuruma ha benri desu)

‘na’ Adjectives: Past, Present, Future, Negative, Positive

It is super easy to change the ‘tense’ of ‘na’ adjectives.

Here it is:

Present
I am pretty (watashi ha kirei desu)

Present Negative
I am not pretty (watashi ha kirei dewanai)
Past
I was pretty (watashi ha kirei deshita)

Past Negative
I was not pretty (watashi ha kirei dewanakatta)

Future
I will be pretty (watashi ha kirei ni naru)

Future Negative
I will not be pretty (watashi ha kirei ni naranai)

‘i’ Adjectives

‘i’ Adjectives always end with an ‘i’. They are easy to spot.

HOWEVER!
There are some Japanese ‘na’ adjectives that end with ‘i’, but they are not ‘i’ adjectives… Common ones are: kirei, benri, genki, etc. Watch out for these imposters!

How do I know if an adjective is an ‘i’ or a ‘na’?

Get this dictionary and look it up:

*Japanese-English English-Japanese Dictionary*
by Seigo Nakao

It will have a (na) next to the word if it is a ‘na’ adjective. And if it is an ‘i’ adjective it will simply say: adj.

Usage

Just like the ‘na’ adjectives you can put an ‘I’ adjective right before a word you want to modify, as a pair, or you can put it by itself.
‘i’ adjective by itself:
Watashi ha kashikoi
(I am clever)
(‘desu’ is not necessary here)

‘i’ adjective modifying the word to its right:
Watashi ha kashikoi hito desu
(I am a clever person)

Got it?

(i) Adjectives: Past, Present, Future, Negative, Positive

Rule: You don’t need to add ‘desu’ to the end of the following sentences. You can, but it is not necessary. If
you do, you are just putting emphasis on the fact, and making it sound more polite.

Rule: Cut off the last ‘I’ from the ‘I’ adjective and add on the ending of your choice when you are changing it from its plain present form:

**Present**
I am hot (watashi ha *atsui*)

**Present Negative**
I am not hot (watashi ha *atsu-kunai*)

**Past**
I was hot (watashi ha *atsu-katta*)

**Past Negative**
I was not hot (watashi ha *atsu-kunakatta*)

**Future**
I will be hot (watashi ha *atsu-kunaru*)
Future Negative
I will not be hot (watashi ha atsu-kunanai)

Exceptions
The word ‘kakkoii’ has a double ‘ii’. In this case you cut off BOTH.

The word ‘utsukushii’ ALSO ends with a double ‘ii’, but in this case you just cut off one. If you are uncertain you should look up individual adjectives on Google, to find out.

Let’s Compare
This is where Japanese differs from English. In this case you are changing the adjective to make it past or future, or negative!

In English we don’t change the adjective. It stays the same. All we change is the ‘be verb’ (was, is, was not, is not). It is interesting to note that the ‘na’ adjectives do follow this pattern of English, but the ‘i’ adjectives do
Takeaways:
1) Two types of adjectives in Japanese: ‘na’ and ‘i’
2) When a ‘na’ adjective is before a noun it needs a ‘na’ in order to modify that noun
3) When an ‘i’ adjective is before a noun, it doesn’t need anything
4) ‘na’ and ‘i’ adjectives have different ways of becoming: past, present, future, negative and positive
5) There are some ‘na’ adjectives which end with ‘i’, so it can be tricky telling them apart
6) Use a dictionary to tell if it is a ‘na’ or an ‘i’ adjective
7) A sentence with an ‘i’ adjective at the end, does not need ‘desu’, but you can add it for politeness
8) A sentence that ends with a ‘na’ adjective needs to have noun to its right, and then a ‘desu’, in order to be correct.

Let’s make this REALLY clear:
Correct: Watashi ha kirei desu (I am pretty)
Incorrect: Watashi ha kirei na desu (remove the ‘na’!)

Correct: Watashi ha kirei na hito desu (I am a pretty person)
Incorrect: Watashi ha kirei hito desu (needs the ‘na’ between ‘kirei’ and ‘hito’)
Correct: Watashi ha kakkoii (I am cool)
Correct: Watashi ha kakkoii hito (I am a cool person)
Section Five

The Sentence Pattern
Section Five

The Sentence Pattern

In this section you will learn the simplest, most versatile sentence pattern in Japanese.

With this sentence pattern you will be able to describe anyone, anything, any place.

Sentence Pattern for (na) adjectives:
[Subject] ha [adj] desu

Sentence Pattern for (i) adjectives:
[Subject] ha [adj] (desu is optional)

Remember that the subject is the noun which is the main topic of the sentence.

Let’s fill in some random words and see what kind of sentences we can create with this pattern:

‘You are clever’ would be:
“I am John” would be: 
[watashi] ha [John] desu
(watashi = I)
(No adjective in this example)

“That movie is great” would be: 
[sono eiga] ha [sugoi]
(sono = that)
(eiga = movie)
(sugoi = great)

“she is so stupid” would be: 
[kanojo] ha [chou baka] desu
(kanojo = she)
(chou = so)
(baka = stupid)
(desu = is)
(‘na’ adjective, so we will use ‘desu’)

“Osaka is really fun” would be:
[Osaka] ha [meccha tanoshii]
(meccha = really)
(tanoshii = fun)
(‘i’ adjective, we don’t need to use ‘desu’)

Powerful!

Take a moment and see what we just did. We just described a person (she), a place (Osaka), and a thing (a movie).
Do you see the potential? At this point all you have to do is learn tons of Japanese nouns and adjectives, and you’ll be able to describe anything, any place, anyone, and have decent conversation!

**BUT wait! We are not done!**

**In the next section we are going to tie it all together, using past, present, future, negative, positive AND different subjects!** (I, you, he, she, they, we)

**Takeaways:**

1) ([subject] ha [adj] desu) is a very versatile sentence pattern
2) If you learn enough nouns and adjectives you will be able to describe anything, making you pretty decent at Japanese
Section Six

Conjugate That Verb & Adjective!
Section Six

Conjugate that Verb & Adjective!

Remember in section four when we took ‘na’ and ‘i’ adjectives and made them: past, present, future, positive and negative? Well THAT process is called: CONJUGATION!

Let’s take the simple verb ‘eat’. If I want to say that I had already eaten in the past, I need to change the spelling of ‘eat’ to show that it is ‘in the past’. It becomes: ate.

Bam, we just conjugated a verb. The meaning went from eating in the present, to eating in the past.

Verbs also are conjugated **differently** according to the subject of the sentence:

**Example:**
I am [adj]
You are [adj]
She is [adj]
He is [adj]
We are [adj]
They are [adj]

Notice that the ‘be verb’ changed from ‘am’ to ‘are’ to ‘is’, etc etc etc.

This is conjugation. In this case (of different subjects) the meaning of the ‘be verb’ didn’t change at all.

Japanese verbs and adjectives also conjugate, but a little bit differently. We already did that in section four.

For ‘na’ adjectives we used ‘desu’: the ‘be verb’

Desu = is/am/are
Dewa nai = is not
Deshita = was
Dewa nakatta = was not
Ni naru = will be (we must use different words for future tense in Japanese)
Ni naranai = will not be (we must use different words for future tense in Japanese)
Sentence pattern for ‘na’ adjectives with different subjects

NOTE: the following conjugation table ONLY works if you are putting a ‘na’ adjective in the brackets [adj]. If you put a verb there it will not work. If you put an ‘i’ adjective, it will sound unnatural.

**Present Positive**
I am [adj] = Watashi ha [adj] desu  
You are [adj] = Anata ha [adj] desu  
He is [adj] = kare ha [adj] desu  
She is [adj] = kanojo ha [adj] desu  
We are [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj] desu  
They are [adj] = karera ha [adj] desu

**Present Negative**
I am not [adj] = Watashi ha [adj] dewa nai  
You are not [adj] = Anata ha [adj] dewa nai  
He is not [adj] = kare ha [adj] dewa nai  
She is not [adj] = kanojo ha [adj] dewa nai  
We are not [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj] dewa nai  
They are not [adj] = karera ha [adj] dewa nai
### Past Positive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Positive Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Watashi ha [adj] deshita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>Anata ha [adj] deshita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>Kare ha [adj] deshita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>Kanojo ha [adj] deshita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Watashitachi ha [adj] deshita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>Karera ha [adj] deshita</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Past Negative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Negative Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Watashi ha [adj] dewa nakatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>Anata ha [adj] dewa nakatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>Kare ha [adj] dewa nakatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>Kanojo ha [adj] dewa nakatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Watashitachi ha [adj] dewa nakatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>Karera ha [adj] dewa nakatta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Future Positive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Positive Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Watashi ha [adj] ni naru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>Anata ha [adj] ni naru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>Kare ha [adj] ni naru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>Kanojo ha [adj] ni naru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Watashitachi ha [adj] ni naru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>Karera ha [adj] ni naru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Future Negative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Negative Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Watashi ha [adj] ni naranai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>Anata ha [adj] ni naranai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>Kare ha [adj] ni naranai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>Kanojo ha [adj] ni naranai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Watashitachi ha [adj] ni naranai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>Karera ha [adj] ni naranai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sentence pattern for ‘i’ adjectives with different subjects:

**Present Positive (‘desu’ is not necessary)**
- I am [adj] = Watashi ha [adj]
- You are [adj] = Anata ha [adj]
- He is [adj] = kare ha [adj]
- She is [adj] = kanojo ha [adj]
- We are [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj]
- They are [adj] = karera ha [adj]

**Present Negative**
- I am not [adj] = Watashi ha [adj] kunai
- You are not [adj] = Anata ha [adj] kunai
- He is not [adj] = kare ha [adj] kunai
- She is not [adj] = kanojo ha [adj] kunai
- We are not [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj] kunai
- They are not [adj] = karera ha [adj] kunai

**Past Positive**
- I was [adj] = Watashi ha [adj] katta
- You were [adj] = Anata ha [adj] katta
- He was [adj] = kare ha [adj] katta
- She was [adj] = kanojo ha [adj] katta
- We were [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj] katta
- They were [adj] = karera ha [adj] katta

**Past Negative**
- I was not [adj] = Watashi ha [adj] kunakatta
- You were not [adj] = Anata ha [adj] kunakatta
- He was not [adj] = kare ha [adj] kunakatta
- She was not [adj] = kanojo ha [adj] kunakatta
- We were not [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj] kunakatta
- They were not [adj] = karera ha [adj] kunakatta
**Future Positive**
I will be [adj] = Watashi ha [adj] ku naru
You will be [adj] = Anata ha [adj] ku naru
He will be [adj] = kare ha [adj] ku naru
She will be [adj] = kanojo ha [adj] ku naru
We will be [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj] ku naru
They will be [adj] = karera ha [adj] ku naru

**Future Negative**
I will not be [adj] = Watashi ha [adj] ku naranai
You will not be [adj] = Anata ha [adj] ku naranai
He will not be [adj] = kare ha [adj] ku naranai
She will not be [adj] = kanojo ha [adj] ku naranai
We will not be [adj] = watashitachi ha [adj] ku naranai
They will not be [adj] = karera ha [adj] ku naranai
Takeaways:

1) In Japanese if you want to make a sentence negative, or make it in past tense, then you must change the spelling of the verb or the adjective; this is called conjugation. If it is a ‘na’ adjective then you change ‘desu’ to its different forms. if it is an ‘i’ adjective then you change the adjective to its different forms.

2) For past positive tense desu become deshita (was) (used for ‘na’ adjectives)

3) For present negative desu becomes dewanai (is not) (used for ‘na’ adjectives)

4) For past negative desu becomes dewa nakatta (was not) (used for ‘na’ adjectives)

5) For past positive ‘i’ adjectives you add: katta (was)

6) For present negative ‘i’ adjectives you add: kunai (is not)

7) For past negative ‘i’ adjectives you add: kunakatta (was not)

8) The above patterns only work if you plug an adjective within the brackets. They will not work if you put a verb instead of an adjective.

9) You can also conjugate other verbs like: swim -> swam, eat -> ate. But that is not within the scope of this guide.
Section Six

Japanese Vocabulary
Section Six

Japanese Vocabulary

Now that you know the sentence structure, and how to change the adjective and verb ‘to be’ into past, present, future, positive and negative… all you need to do now is expand your Japanese vocabulary so you can simply plug words into the sentence pattern, and start putting all your concepts into Japanese!

NOTE: ONLY conjugate the adjectives of **quality** and **color**. Don’t conjugate the rest...

Adjective List:

Adjectives of Quality (do conjugate!)
- Fast = hayai
- Slow = osoi
- Difficult = muzukashii
- Easy = kantan (na)
- Complicated = fukuzatsu (na)
- Simple = shimpuru (na)
- Cool = kakkoii
- Uncool = dasai
- Weird = hen (na)
- Awesome = sugoi
- Cute = kawaii
- Ugly = busai
- Creepy = kimo (na)
- Lovely = suteki (na)

Pretty = kirei (na)  
Beautiful = utsukushii  
Clever = kashikoi  
Stupid = baka (na)  
Heavy = omoi  
Light = karui (weight)  
Dark = kuroi  
Light = akarui (brightness)  
Big = ooki  
Small = chiisai  
Fun = tanoshii  
Boring = tsumaranai  
Close = chikai  
Far = tooi  
Expensive = takai

Cheap = yasui  
Short = mijikai  
Tall = takai  
Dirty = kitanai  
Clean = kirei (na)  
Satisfying = manzoku (na)  
Disappointing = zannen (na)  
Wonderful = subarashii  
Horrible = yabai  
Scary = kowai  
Sweet = amai  
Sour = suppai  
Mean = hidoi  
Kind = yasashii

Adjectives of Color (do conjugate!)
- pink = pinku (na)
- black = kuroi
- blue = aoi
- green = midori
- red = akai
- brown = chairoi
- orange = orenji
- yellow = kiiroi
- white = shiroi
Adjectives of Degree (do not conjugate)

Very = tottemo
Really = honto ni
very = meccha (Osakan Japanese)
Really = honma ni (Osakan Japanese)
Kind of = chotto
So = chou
Super = chou

Adjectives of Amount (do not conjugate)

Any___ = nandemo no___
Many___ = takusan ___
Few___ = chotto ___

Adjectives of Possession (do not conjugate)

My___ = watashi no___
Your___ = anata no___
His___ = kare no___
Her___ = kanojo no___
Our___ = watshitachi no___
Their___ = karera no___

Adjectives of Origin (do not conjugate)

American___ = amerika no___
Japanese___ = nihon no___
British___ = igirisu no___
French___ = furansu no___

Adjectives of indication (pointing things out) (do not conjugate)

This ___ = kono ___
That ___ = sono ___
a, an___ = hitotsu no ___
The ___= sono ___
Example: This car = kono kuruma
Example: That man = sono otoko
### Noun List

#### People
- I = watashi (polite)
- I = boku (male, informal)
- I = ore (male, more informal)
- I = watakushi (very polite)
- I = atashi (female, informal)
- You = anata (polite)
- You = kimi (vulgar)
- You = omae (vulgar)
- He = kare
- She = kanojo
- We = watashitachi
- We = oretachi (male, very informal)
- They = karera (male)
- They = kanojora (female)
- Friend = tomodachi
- Best Friend = mabudachi
- Boyfriend = kareshi
- Girlfriend = kanojo
- Mom = oka-san
- Dad = oto-san
- Brother = oni-san
- Sister = one-san
- Grandpa = ossan
- Grandma = oba-san
- Police Officer = omawari-san
- Office Worker (male) = salariman
- Office Worker (female) = OL

#### Entertainment
- Movie = eiga
- Movie theater = eigakan
- Book = hon
- Music = ongaku
- TV show = terebi bangumi
- Computer = pasokon
- Toy = omocha
- Game = ge-mu
- Hobby = shumi

#### Transport
- Car = kuruma
- Bicycle = jitensha
- Train = densha
- Subway = chikatetsu

#### Buildings
- Building = biru
- Wall outlet = consento
- Table = teburu
- Door = doa
- Room = heya
- Window = mado
- Floor = yuka
- Wall = kabe
- Bathroom = basurumu
- Kitchen = kichin
- Closet = kurozeto

#### Food
- Drink = nomimono
- Food = tabemono
- Water = mizu
- Meat = niku
- Sea food = shifudo
- Veggies = yasai
- Fruit = kudamono
- Ice cream = aisu kurimu
- Chicken = chikkin
- Fish = sakana
- Beef = gyu
- Breakfast = asa-gohan
- Lunch = hiru-gohan
- Diner = ban-gohan
- Donut = donatsu

#### The City
- Restaurant = Resutoran
- Airport = kuukou
- Hospital = byouin
- Fire Station = Shoubousho
- Police Station = Kouban
- Shopping mall = shoppingu mo-ru
- Convenience store = konbini
- Food store = suupa
- School = gakkou
- City hall – shiyakusho
- Ramen shop = ramenya-san
Using the above awesome word list, you can plug those nouns and adjectives into our sentence pattern:

[subject] ha [adj] desu, and make some awesome sentences:

1) Your car is so slow = anata no kuruma ha chou osoi
2) This donut is really sweet = kono donatsu ha meccha amai
3) Japanese food is kind of boring = nihon no tabemono ha chotto tsumaranai
4) That office lady is really pretty = sono OL ha meccha kirei desu
5) Japanese policemen are cruel = nihon no omawari-san ha hidoi

Bam!

Do you see now how versatile this sentence pattern is?

NOTE: the sentences sound even better when you do adjective pairs. Like: ‘so slow’, ‘really sweet’.

Warning!!! We gave you many different types of adjectives. (possession, degree, indication,
amount, origin). Only conjugate adjectives of quality or color!

Example: ‘meccha’ means ‘very’, so you don’t put: ‘Watashi ha meccha deshita’, or ‘watashi wa meccha katta’. That is like saying: “I was very”.

You need to add in an adjective of quality, or color!

Only conjugate the adjectives the first page of the list (qualities and colors).

Home Work

Make a list of 50 made-up sentences! Use our sentence pattern, and plug in different nouns and adjectives. Write them down on a piece of paper. You must get this ingrained in your mind so you can start thinking in Japanese.

Takeaways:
1) Now that you have the sentence pattern to describe anything (past, present, future, and positive & negative) all you need is to learn a bunch of Japanese nouns and adjectives.
2) Make tons of examples using the above word list. Plug them into the sentence pattern. Make them your own.
Section Seven

Practice, Practice, Practice!
Section Seven

Practice, Practice, Practice!

You have what you need now to get a very basic but workable foundation of the Japanese language. At this point all you need to do is practice, over and over, making new sentences with the above pattern and word list. Keep doing this until you feel confident. Then, use a Japanese dictionary to learn some more nouns and adjectives which you can use in the sentence pattern!

Once that is done you’re ready for your next step:

Next Steps

Ready to learn more sentence patterns? Want to be able to communicate any concept? Want to be able to use more verbs than just ‘desu’? And be able to say what you want to do? Where you want to go? How to ask questions?

We hear you!
We are currently creating a full Introduction to Japanese Grammar, which will include:

- all the sentence patterns you will ever need
- explanations of polite and casual Japanese
- a conjugation table so you can conjugate without even thinking
- simple explanations of difficult small words: in, on, of, for, etc

This will take you to an intermediate level, where you will be able to communicate almost any concept you have, in Japanese.

Check out our website Japanimal to see what we have.
Section Eight

BONUS Lesson!
Section Eight

BONUS Lesson!

Because we love you, we want to give you just a little more! Here is an excellent, simple but essential bonus lesson!

How to say: I want [noun]

Here is the sentence pattern:

[subject] ha [noun] ga hoshii

Take any noun from the above noun list and plug them in.

Examples:

1) I want a donut = watashi ha hitotsu no donatsu ga hoshii
2) I want ice cream = watashi ha aisu kurimu ga hoshii
3) She wants dinner = kanojo ha ban-gohan ga hoshii
In this specific sentence pattern, we need to conjugate ‘hoshii’, which is an adjective.

In English we have the verb ‘want’, but in Japanese they use an adjective instead of a verb. Don’t let this confuse you. Just understand that some things don’t transfer over exactly between the languages. Where we use a verb, they might use an adjective which ‘acts’ like a verb.

**Present Negative:**
I don’t want a computer = watashi ha hitotsu no pasokon ga hoshikunai

**Past Negative:**
I didn’t want ice cream = watashi ha aisu kurimu ga hoshikunakatta

**Future Positive:**
I will want ice cream = watashi ha aisu kurimu ga hoshikunaru

**Future Negative:**
I will not want ice cream = watashi ha aisu kurimu ga hoshikunaranai