

HOW TO WRITE HIRAGANA

1. In Japanese, there are three writing systems: Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji. Hiragana and Katakana are phonetic and the same symbol always indicates the same sound.
2. One hiragana represents one syllable and there are five different types in syllables.
 - a. Five basic vowels: [a],[i],[u],[e],[o]
 - b. Consonant or semivowel + vowel: [na],[ki],[yu], etc.
 - c. Syllabic consonant: [n] / [m]
 - d. Any consonant other than [n] / [m] when followed by another identical consonant: e.g. zasshi, kissaten, etc.
 - e. A contracted syllable: [ki] + [ya]=[kya],[chi] + [ya]=[cha],etc.
3. The stroke orders are usually from left to right and top to bottom.
4. There are three ways to finish a stroke.

Tome or 'stop' means that the pen has to make a complete stop and should be lifted it off the paper at the end of the stroke.

Hane or 'jump' means that you leave a jump mark before the end of the stroke.

Lastly, with harai or 'sweeping', you finish the stroke by lifting the pen up gradually.
5. There are 46 basic symbols in Hiragana. In addition, there are Dakuon, Handakuon and Yoon (See 16, 17, & 18).
6. The first five of these are vowels, [a], [i], [u], [e], [o].
7. The second five are these vowels plus the consonant *k*.
8. The third are the vowels plus the consonant *s*.

Shi is used for *si* because the latter sound doesn't exist.
9. The fourth, the vowels plus the consonant *t*..

Chi and *tsu* replace *ti* and *tu*.

10. The fifth, the vowels plus the consonant *n*.
11. The sixth, the vowels plus the consonant *h*..
Fu for hu
12. The seventh, the vowels plus *m*.
13. The eighth, the vowels plus *y*.
Yi and *ye* don't exist.
14. The ninth, the vowels plus *r*
The pronunciation of 'r' can be regarded as the sound between [r] and [l] in English.
15. The vowel plus *w*
wi, wu and *we* don't exist in modern Japanese.
o [を] is used only as a particle.
16. Dakuon
There are three kinds of dakuon. Three consonants used for them are [g,z,d].
17. Handakuon is [pa, pi, pu, pe, po].
18. Yoon
There are three kinds of yoon.
 1. *K, N, H, M, R + Y + A, U, O*
Eg. *K + Y + O = KYO* きよ
 2. *S, C +H+ A, U, O*
Eg. *CH + YA = CHA* ちゃ
 3. *J+A, U, O*
Eg. *JA* じゃ

How to write words

19. Double Vowel [o] + [o]

When double o's occur, the second [o] syllable is written with an [u] in most cases. [e] + [e] → [e] + [i]

20. Double Consonants

Everytime two consonants take place in a row, the first one is always written with a half-sized [tsu].

Nippon にっぽん

The double consonant [n] is not to be treated as above. The first [n] is written with ん.

How to write sentences

Don't confuse the particles [wa,o,e] with ordinary [wa,o,e].