

SOME VERY USEFUL JAPANESE PHRASES

- Good morning - **Ohayo**
- Good afternoon - (late morning until about 5pm) - **Konnichiwa**
- Good evening (as greeting) - **Konbanwa**
- Good night (as a parting phrase) - **Oyasumi**
- Good-bye - **Sayonara**
- Yes—**Hai**
- No- **lie** (rarely used - see my humorous handout on 'The Japanese Reluctance to Say No')
- Thank you - **Arigato**
- Thank you very much – **Domo arigato gozaimasu**
Domo is like 'very', for emphasis. **Gozaimasu** added to any statement means 'I am in a state of being' and personalizes/emphasizes depth of feeling.
 Note: You may hear **Arigato gozaimashita** - this is invoking the past tense of **gozaimasu** to express thanks for something just done for you - roughly equivalent to 'Thanks for that!'
- You're welcome - **Do itashi mashite**
- Excuse me (to get attention or apologize) - **Sumimasen**
- Excuse me (as in pardon me, I am sorry) - **Gomen nasai**
- Please (when requesting something- not service) – **Kudasai**
- Please (when requesting service or an action) – **Onegai-shimasu**
- Please (when offering something) -- **Dozo**
- How are you? - **O genki desu ka?** - Note: **ka** at the end of a sentence indicates a question
- How do you do? – **Hajime mashite**
- Pleased to meet you - more formal - **Dozo yoroshiku**
- I am fine - **Hai, genki desu** And you? -- **Anata wa?**
- Please - **Kudasai**
- Please give me _____. - _____ o kudasai (Example: *Wasabi o kudasai.*)
- Please show me - **Misete kudasai**
- Please write it - **Kaite kudasai**
- Let's go! - **Ikimasho**
- Do you speak English? - **Anata wa eigo o hanashimasu ka?**
- Do you understand? - **Wakarimasu ka?**
- Yes, I understand - **Hai, wakarimasu** (No-- **lie, wakarimasen**)
- Please say it again - **Mo ichido itte kudasai**
- What is your name? - **Anata-no namae wa?**
- My name is _____ - **Watashi no namae wa _____ desu**
- Where is _____? - _____ **doko desu ka?**
- How much is it? - **Ikura desu ka?**
- I will take it - **Sore kudasai**
- No, thank you - **lie kekko desu**
- I like it - **Suki desu** I don't like it - **Kirai desu**
- I like (_____) - (_____) **ga suki des** (Example: *Sushi ga suki des.*)
- It's beautiful - **Kirei desu** (note similarity to above)
- Hello (on telephone only) - **Moshi moshi**
- Where is the toilet? - **Toire wa doko desu ka?**
- Welcome !- **Irrasshaimase !** (this is what you hear on entering sushi bars)
- Please give me the (Eego) menu. - **(Eego) menu o kudasai**
- Size - **saizu** S=Esu saizu M=Emu saizu L=Eru asizu XL= Ekkusu eru saizu
- Thank you for the food I will eat (say this before a meal) - **Itadakimasu**
 (Literally: "I humbly receive", Figuratively: *Bon appetit!*)
- Beer - **biru** Draft beer - **Nama biru** or just **nama**
- Delicious! - **Oishi!**

- "It was a feast!" - **Gochiso-sama !**
- It was outstanding! - **Saiko deshta!**
- Beautiful! – **Kirei!**
- Wonderful! – **Subarishi!**
- Amazing! – **Sugoi!**
- Please give me the bill - **Okanji o kudasai**
- See you again - **Matane!**
- See you later/see you around - **Ja mata**

- **Counting:**

1-**ichi** 2-**ni** 3-**san** 4-**shi** 5-**go** 6-**roku** 7-**nana** 8-**hachi** 9-**ku** 10-**juu**

Note: The above Japanese words are rendered in the Roman alphabet. This is 1 of 4 ways of writing in Japanese, and is known as the *Romaji* system. The 3 other ways are: *Kanji*, which are pictograms derived from ancient Chinese characters, *hirikana* which are a set of Japanese syllabic phonemes used for native words, and *katakana*, which are another set of Japanese syllabic phonemes used for the many borrowed words from other languages. They are often combined in Japanese writing. Thus most linguists agree that the Japanese writing system is one of the world's the most complex and difficult to learnt. But that doesn't stop foreigners from *speaking* Japanese. Give it a try using the above, and you'll very likely be understood (and appreciated).

A tip in terms of pronunciation: Try your best NOT to accent ANY syllable - this best approximates Japanese pronunciation. Try it with the city of **Osaka**: Say O-sa-ka with no emphasis on any syllable, rather than the usual English pronunciation which is O-**SAK**-a with emphasis on the second syllable. Same for Hiroshima and Kanazawa - equal emphasis on each syllable.

- Dr. John Freedman