

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #1

Say Hello in Japanese No Matter What the Time of Day

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DIALOGUE - JAPANESE

KANJI

1. A: おはよう！
2. B: おはようございます。
3. A: こんにちは！
4. B: こんにちは。
5. A:こんばんは！
6. B: こんばんは。

ENGLISH

1. A: Morning!
2. B: Good morning.
3. A: Hello!
4. B: Hello.
5. A: Good evening!
6. B: Good evening.

RŌMAJI

1. A: Ohayō!
2. B: Ohayō gozaimasu.
3. A: Kon'nichi wa!
4. B: Kon'nichi wa.
5. A: Konban wa!
6. B: Konban wa.

HIRAGANA

1. A: おはよう！
2. B: おはようございます。
3. A: こんにちは！
4. B: こんにちは。
5. A: こんにちは！
6. B: こんにちは。

VOCABULARY

| Kanji | Kana | Romaji | English | Class |
|-----------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| こんにちは。 | こんにちは。 | Konbanwa. | Good evening. | sentence |
| こんにちは | こんにちは | kon'nichi wa | hello | expression |
| おはようございます | おはようございます | ohayō gozaimasu | Good morning. (formal) | expression |
| おはよう | おはよう | Ohayō | Good morning! (informal) | phrase |

SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|--|---|
| こんにちは、佐藤さん、今日は寒いですね。 <i>Konbanwa, Satō-san, kyō wa samui desu ne.</i> Good evening, Ms. Sato, it's cold today. | こんにちは! <i>Konbanwa.</i> Good evening! |
| 皆さん、こんにちは。 <i>Mina-san, kon'nichiwa.</i> Hello, everybody. | こんにちは。はじめまして。 <i>Kon'nichiwa. Hajimemashite.</i> Hello. Nice to meet you. |
| 菊川社長おはようございます。 <i>Kikukawa-shachō ohayō gozaimasu.</i> Good morning, President Kikukawa. | まさる君、おはよう！ <i>Masaru-kun, ohayō!</i> Good morning, Masaru! |

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Greeting Someone in Japanese.

Ohayō gozaimasu.

おはようございます。

"Good morning!"

Welcome to Absolute Beginner Season 1! This series is geared toward those who have absolutely no background in Japanese and want to be able to speak Japanese without spending a lot of time studying grammar. You'll learn Japanese through sentence patterns that are easy to grasp and to put together. In the first five lessons, we will focus on the very basics of Japanese to give you a solid foundation to work with. In this first lesson, we will look at different greetings in Japanese.

Greeting Someone in Japanese (at Any Time of Day!)

Let's take a look at how to greet someone in Japanese. Just as there are multiple greetings in English, such as "good morning", "hi"/"hello", and "good evening", depending on the time of day, the greeting you use in Japanese will change depending on the time of day as well.

In the morning:

| Japanese | Romanization | "English" |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------------|
| おはよう* | <i>Ohayō*</i> | "Morning!"* |
| おはようございます | <i>Ohayō gozaimasu</i> | "Good morning!" |

At any time (usually during the day):

| Japanese | Romanization | "English" |
|----------|---------------------|----------------|
| こんにちは | <i>Kon'nichi wa</i> | "Hi!" "Hello!" |

In the evening/at night:

| Japanese | Romanization | "English" |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| こんばんは | <i>Konbanwa</i> | "Good evening!" |

* Note that *ohayō* is the casual version of the phrase *ohayō gozaimasu*, and we should only use it with close family members or friends. With people you don't know very well, you should use the full phrase *ohayō gozaimasu*.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Formal and Informal Speech

One important thing to know about Japanese is that there are two distinct types of speech: formal speech and informal speech.

You should use formal speech with strangers, people older than you, and family members you do not know well.

Informal speech is casual speech you should use with close friends and family members and those who are the same age or younger than you.

Because it can be rude to use informal speech in certain situations, this series mainly uses formal speech, which is safe to use with anyone.

Japanese Writing System

The Japanese writing system is made up of three scripts: hiragana, katakana, and kanji. Hiragana and katakana are phonetic scripts (meaning each character represents one sound), while kanji is a script that uses Chinese characters that have meanings.

Hiragana is the most basic of the scripts: it is the one Japanese children learn to read and write first, and technically we can write every Japanese word using hiragana.

In the Lesson Notes for this Absolute Beginner series, the Japanese you see is written using hiragana. If you don't know hiragana or katakana yet and want to learn how to read and write it, check out our Kantan Kana video series: [Learn Hiragana with Worksheets](#) and [Learn Katakana with Worksheets](#).