

Japanese Course Level Guide

Last updated October 19, 2022

Links below will take you to each level in order of increasing experience. Please read the grammar points at that level to see if they are familiar to you. Note that the categories “Beginner,” “Intermediate,” and “Advanced” below are approximations.

Level 1-9: the best level for you is likely the one *after* the level with the most familiar grammar points, even if you don’t know all of the vocabulary listed at that level.

Level 10 and above: instead of grammar points, please reference the sample documents linked in each level.

Beginner Levels

[Level 1](#)

[Level 2](#)

[Level 3](#)

[Level 4](#)

[Level 5](#)

[Before Level 6](#)

Intermediate Levels

[Level 6](#)

[Level 7](#)

[Level 8](#)

[Level 9](#)

[Before Level 10](#)

High Intermediate & Advanced Levels

[Level 10](#)

[Level 10+](#)

[Level 11](#)

[Level 12](#)

[Level 13](#)

[Still have questions? Unsure about your level?](#)

Beginner Levels

Level 1

(covers *textbook GENKI 1* Lesson 1-3 & *Hiragana*)

For complete beginners of the Japanese language. Basic vocabulary, elementary conversation and simple sentence structure will be taught in *romaji* (Japanese written phonetically in the English alphabet). *Hiragana* (a Japanese syllabary) and some introductory *kanji* will be introduced. The required textbook is *GENKI* Vol. I. The following are the sentence patterns that you will be expected to master in each chapter.

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 1	Numbers (1-100) Time Telephone numbers The particle <i>no</i> <i>X wa Y desu</i> Questions sentences	<i>Watashi wa nihonjin desu.</i> <i>Ima nanji desuka.</i> <i>Takeshi-san no denwa bangou wa nan desuka.</i>
L. 2	Numbers (100-100,000) <i>Kore/Sore/Are/Dore</i> <i>Kono/Sono/Ano/Dono</i> + noun <i>Koko/Soko/Asoko/Doko</i> <i>Dareno</i> + noun The particle <i>mo</i> Noun + <i>janai desu</i> The particles <i>ne</i> and <i>yo</i>	<i>Are wa nan desuka. Ano tokei wa sen-en desu. Toire wa asoko desu.</i> <i>Kore wa dare no kaban desuka.</i> <i>Otousan wa nihonjin desu. Okaasan mo nihonjin desu.</i> <i>Watashi wa gakusei ja naidesu. Kore wa sakana desuyo.</i>

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 3	Verbs (present tense) The particles <i>o</i> , <i>de</i> , <i>ni</i> , and <i>e</i> Time expressions <i>-masenka</i> Word order Frequency adverbs The topic particle <i>wa</i>	Tanaka-san wa kaisha de koohii o nomimasu. Nichiyoubi ni nihon ni kaerimasu. Ashita, eiga o mimasenka. Maki-san wa zenzen manga o yomimasen. Kyou wa nani o shimasuka.

Level 2

(covers textbook *GENKI 1* Lesson 4-5 & *Katakana*)

Students will continue to develop their beginners' level language skills in basic Japanese as they begin to apply the past tense and are introduced to new words, grammar, and expressions.

Recognition of *hiragana* is expected as less *romaji* will be used. *Katakana* and a few more *kanji* will be introduced.

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 4	<i>X ga arimau/imasu</i> <i>X wa Y no mae desu</i> Nouns (past tense) Verbs (past tense) The particle <i>mo</i> <i>-jikan</i>	Asoko ni sensei ga imasu. Getsuyoubi ni kurasu ga arimasu. Ginkou wa kissaten no tonari desu. Yamashita sensei wa ryuugakusei deshita. Watashi wa kinou benkyou shimasen deshita. Senshuu resutoran ni ikimashita. Hon-ya nimo ikimashita. Kinou nihongo o sanjikan benkyou shimashita.

	Objectives	Example Sentences
	<i>takusan</i> The particle <i>to</i>	Kouen de shashin o takusan torimashita. Nihongo to eigo o hanashimasu. Tomodachi to kankoku ni ikimasu.
L. 5	Adjectives (present and past) <i>Suki (na)/ Kirai (na)</i> <i>-shimashou ka</i> <i>-mai</i> (counter for stamps)	Nihongo wa tanoshii desu. Tomodachi wa totemo genkina hito desu. Yamashita sensei wa manga ga suki deshita. Kissaten de koohii o nomimasenka? Lee-san wa kitte o sanmai kaimashita.

Level 3

(covers textbook *GENKI 1* Lesson 6-7 & Kanji)

You must be able to use both *Hiragana* and *Katakana* comfortably. This course will focus on the introduction and use of the て form of verbs, and students will continue to build upon their conversational skills and vocabulary.

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 6	The て-form of verbs ～て ください ～ても いいです ～ては いけますん The て-form for describing two activities ～から ～ましょうか	かんじを おしえてください。 きょうかしょを みてもいいですか。 ここのしゃしんを とってはいけません。 けさ6じにおきて、しゅくだいを しました。 こんばん うちで べんきょうします。あした テストがありますから。 にもつを もちましょうか。

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L.7	～て いる Describing people The て-forms of adjectives/nouns Verb stem + に いく	おとうさんは、いま テレビをみています。 キムさんは けっこんしています。 トムさんは かみが ながいです。 あのホテルは きれいで、よかったです。 デパートに かばんをかいに きました。 クラスに イギリスじんのがくせいが ひとりいます。

You may also be interested in: we may offer Special Topic: Casual Japanese through Anime.

Prerequisite: Japanese 3 or equivalent and students must be comfortable with using the te form.

Level 4

(covers textbook *GENKI 1* Lesson 8-9 & Kanji)

Students will practice the informal speech style in both present and past tenses, and will learn the ない form of verbs. The た form will be introduced, and students will learn to modify nouns with verbs, as well as practice phrases using ～とおもいます (“I think”) and ～と いいます (“he/she says”).

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L.8	Short Forms, affirmative: ないform:	(Verb) たべる、よむ (Adj) かわいい、げんきだ (Noun) がくせいだ (Verb) たべない、よまない、こない、しな (Adj) かわいくない、げんきじゃない (Noun) がくせいじゃない

[Back to top of document.](#)

	Objectives	Example Sentences
	Informal speech: ～とっていました ～とおもいます ～ないでください ～のがすきです ～がきましたか？ なにか and なにも	今日、行く？ ううん、行かない。
L.9	Short Forms, past affirmative: Short Forms, past negative: Qualifying Nouns with Verbs and Adjectives: まだ～ていません Explanation から, Situation	(Verb) たべた、よんだ (Adj) かわいかった、げんきだった (Noun) がくせいだった (Verb) たべなかった、よまなかった (Adj) かわいくなかった、げんきじゃなかった (Noun) がくせいじゃなかった これは母がつくったケーキです。 あしたテストがあるから、べんきょうします。

You may also be interested in: we may offer Special Topic: Casual Japanese through Anime.

Prerequisite: Japanese 3 or equivalent and students must be comfortable with using the te form.

Level 5

(covers textbook *GENKI 1* Lesson 10-11 & Kanji)

Students will learn various usages of the た form, and comparative sentence patterns will be introduced.

[Back to top of document.](#)

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L.10	Comparatives: AのほうがBより～ Superlatives: Groupのなかで、Aがいちばん～ Adjective/Nounの: その小さいのをください。 ～つもりです Adjective + なる どこかに and どこにも ～で: はしでごはんを食べます。	
L.11	～たいです ～たり～たりする ～たことがある Noun AやNoun B: コーヒーやおちゃを飲みます。	

You may also be interested in: we may offer Special Topic: Casual Japanese through Anime.

Prerequisite: Japanese 3 or equivalent and students must be comfortable with using the te form.

Before Level 6

Review: Genki I

(covers material from *GENKI 1 textbook*)

This course is designed for students who have completed Level 5, but feel the need to review the content of Genki I before moving up to Level 6.

The course focuses on reviewing the grammar points and increasing vocabulary so that students gain more confidence in speaking Japanese with an accurate command of grammar. Special focus will be placed on: verb conjugation, adjective conjugation, *te*-form/*ta*-form, and *nai*-form. Also,

[Back to top of document.](#)

common mistakes in the use of particles (は、が、を、に、で、と) and expressions such as これ／この、どの／どんな、なに／なん will be addressed.

Intermediate Levels

Level 6

(covers textbook *GENKI 1* Lesson 12, *GENKI 2* Lesson 13-14 & Kanji)

Students will learn how to use various modifying clauses to create complex sentences.

Recognition of 100 *kanji* is expected.

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 12	～んです ～すぎる ～ほうがいいです ～ので ～なければなりません ～でしょう	今日は日曜日なので、ぎんこうは休みです。 あしたは雨でしょう。
L. 13	Potential Form ～し ～そうです ～てみる ～なら 一週間に三回	日本語をはなせます。 あのみせは安いし、家に近いし、よく行きます。 この本はむずかしそうです。
L. 14	ほしい ～かもしれません あげる/くれる/もらう	

	Objectives	Example Sentences
	~たらどうですか #も、#しか~ない	ともだちは、ねこを四ひきも かっています。

Level 7

(covers textbook *GENKI 2* Lesson 15-17 & Kanji)

Students will be introduced to the volitional form, and will learn to describe the giving and receiving of services (instead of goods). The structure for reporting hearsay (そうです) will be practiced. Theたら variation of conditional sentence structures will be taught.

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 15	Volitional Form Volitional+と思っています ~ておく Using Sentences to Qualify Nouns	食べに行こう。 日本で見れないえいが
L. 16	~てくれる/あげる/もらう, ~といい ~時, ~てすみませんでした	
L. 17	~そうです (I hear...), ~って ~たら ~なくてもいいです, ~みたいです ~前に/~てから	

You may also be interested in: we may offer Special Topic: Intermediate Japanese with Anime. This course is recommended for students considering Levels 7-9.

[Back to top of document.](#)

Level 8

(covers textbook *GENKI 2* Lesson 18-20 & Kanji)

Transitive and intransitive verbs will be compared extensively, and honorific verbs will be introduced. *はずです* (supposed to be the case) will be taught. Students will practice “extra-modest expressions” followed by “humble expressions.” Students will also study how to include a question as a part of a longer sentence such as “Do you know when David will go to Japan?”

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 18	Transitivity Pairs : ～てしまう ～と,～ながら ～ばよかったです	ドアをしめます v s ドアがしまります
L. 19	Honorific Verbs : Giving Respectful Advice : ～てくれてありがとう,～てよかったです ～はずです	いらっしゃる、めしあがる、おっしゃる お読みください
L. 20	Extra-Modest Expressions : Humble Expressions : ～ないで Questions within Larger Sentences : NameというItem,～やすい/にくい	おります、申します、ございます お会いします、本をいただきました Japan Societyがどこにあるか知っていますか。

You may also be interested in: we may offer Special Topic: Intermediate Japanese with Anime. This course is recommended for students considering Levels 7-9.

[Back to top of document.](#)

Level 9

(covers textbook *GENKI 2* Lesson 21-23 & Kanji)

This is the last level in which students learn essential grammar. Students will learn passive and causative sentence patterns along with other expressions such as *ば*, *のに* and *ても* to achieve more effective communication skills.

	Objectives	Example Sentences
L. 21	Passive Sentences : ～である ～間に Adj + する ～てほしい	カードを使われました
L. 22	Causative Sentences : Verb+なさい ～ば ～のに ～のような/ように	野菜を食べさせます
L. 23	Causative-Passive Sentences : ～ても ～ことにする ～まで ～方	勉強させられました

You may also be interested in: we may offer Special Topic: Intermediate Japanese with Anime. This course is recommended for students considering Levels 7-9. Kanji N4 or JLPT N4 is also recommended for students at this level.

[Back to top of document.](#)

Before Level 10

Review: Genki II

(covers material from *GENKI 2* textbook)

This course is designed for students who have completed Level 9 or are taking it concurrently with Level 9 and feel the need to review the content of Genki II before moving up to Level 10. This course offers a guided review on these notorious grammar points, including Causative-Passive, Transitive vs. Intransitive verbs, and Keigo.

Culture, Conversation & Manners

This course is recommended for students who have completed Level 9 or are in Level 10. This course is taught in alternating semesters of odd and even numbered lessons.

We will focus on developing speaking skills for professional, respectful, adult-level Japanese with honorific expressions. During this course, students will learn new phrases and vocabulary, participate in speaking drills and interactive dialogue exercises, and read conversations reflecting authentic Japanese work-related contexts.

Kanji N4 or JLPT N4

(Prerequisite: Japanese 8 or equivalent)

N4 rotates through the following courses: Kanji, JLPT preparatory, or JLPT prep & Kanji. The description below is for the JLPT & Kanji course; please see each semester for the course topic and description.

This course is structured to help prepare students for the N4 level of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), which requires knowledge of approximately 210 new kanji (in addition to the 120 required for N5). Students will focus on mastering some of these kanji for the N4 test, as well as study other JLPT N4 content such as reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary. This course is conducted almost entirely in Japanese.

[Back to top of document.](#)

PLEASE NOTE: Courses above Level 9 and JLPT & Kanji courses are designed to be taken repeatedly. Enrollment in a JLPT or kanji course is recommended for students at these levels.

High Intermediate & Advanced Levels

Level 10

Level 10 courses include both textbook based courses and sometimes special topic courses.

Currently, Japan Right Now has been offered regularly every 10-week semester.

Level 10 (non-special topic):

This class follows level 9 in the progression from the *Genki II* textbook, continuing a formal study of Japanese grammar. More advanced grammar, vocabulary and kanji will be introduced over several semesters. A particular emphasis will be placed on speaking practice. *Text: An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese (Revised Edition)*

Level 10 is offered in 4 Parts: they can be taken in any order and each Part is separate and self-contained. All Parts are recommended at least once before moving to Level 11.

[Click here to see the schedule of Level 10 Parts.](#)

Please see this link for a sample of class textbook material:

http://ij.japantimes.co.jp/IJ-textbook_sample.pdf

Special Topic Level 10: Japan Right Now

This class will reveal current Japanese society and language by exploring only the latest news in Japan every week.

Please see this link for a sample of class material:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aMP-DbLVa5Plf0uq1odQQ2HL65ZAefXw/view?usp=sharing>

[Back to top of document.](#)

Kanji N3 or JLPT N3

(Prerequisite: Japanese 9 or equivalent)

N3 rotates through the following courses: Kanji, JLPT preparatory, or JLPT prep & Kanji. The description below is for the JLPT & Kanji course; please see each semester for the course topic and description.

This course is structured to help prepare students for the N3 level of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), which requires knowledge of approximately 350 new kanji (in addition to the 330 required for N4 and N5). Students will focus on mastering some of these kanji for the N3 test, as well as study other JLPT N3 content such as reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary. This course is conducted in Japanese.

PLEASE NOTE: Courses above Level 9 and JLPT & Kanji courses are designed to be taken repeatedly. Enrollment in a JLPT or kanji course is recommended for students at these levels.

Level 10+

Keigo & Business courses, for students who have taken Level 10 several times, or above, are offered in 3 parts.

Keigo & Business: Fundamentals

Starting with a review of keigo, self-introductions and greetings, students will also study:

- パーティーへの招待 / invitations to parties
- 目上の人へ質問 / asking questions to superiors
- 上司や取引先に許可を求める / getting permission/authorization from your boss and clients
- 上司や取引先に失礼のないように断る / politely refusing offers from your boss and clients

Please see this link for a sample of class material:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/17HaID31-4eSgfUz6GsJQiO2d1vRHJkuF/view?usp=sharing>

[*Back to top of document.*](#)

Keigo & Business: Part 2

(Prerequisite: Keigo & Business: Fundamentals, , or equivalent.)

Students will study:

- アポイントをとる・変更する / making an appointment / asking to change the date or time
- もうしでる / offering help
- おわびする / expressing apologies
- 意見をいう / expressing opinion
- 喜んでもらう / complimenting/congratulating

Keigo & Business: Part 3

(Prerequisite: Keigo & Business: Fundamentals, or equivalent.)

Students will study:

- ・ 相談を受ける・アドバイスする / giving advice
- ・ 報告をする / making a report
- ・ 面接を受ける / having an interview
- ・ スピーチをする / making a speech
- ・ メールの敬語、電話の敬語 / keigo for email and the telephone

PLEASE NOTE: Courses above Level 9 and JLPT & Kanji courses are designed to be taken repeatedly. Enrollment in a JLPT or kanji course is recommended for students at these levels.

Level 11

Level 11 courses include a general course which covers a wide-range of topics, and sometimes special topic courses. Examples of previous special topic courses are listed below.

[Back to top of document.](#)

Level 11 (non-special topic):

Reading materials include short articles and stories of current interest. Listening comprehension is improved by the use of television programs, including Japanese drama. Use of idioms is emphasized in both speaking and writing. Recognition of approximately 500 kanji is necessary to take this course. Topic based courses may also be offered.

Please see this link for a sample of class material:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IF3B-kZgnWv9bJOhtDBJuGxnWRbMZVtw/view?usp=sharing>

Special Topic Level 11: NYC Local News (offered Fall 2022)

Special Topic Level 11: Vocabulary Builder (offered Summer 2022)

Special Topic Level 11: Japanese Society through Manga (offered Spring 2021)

Special Topic Level 11: Short Stories (offered Fall 2020)

Please see this link for a sample of class material:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A1IQvb9BiGFn_htvRmglt8k-RGPaC-Jq/view?usp=sharing

PLEASE NOTE: Courses above Level 9 and JLPT & Kanji courses are designed to be taken repeatedly. Enrollment in a JLPT or kanji course is recommended for students at these levels.

Kanji N2 or JLPT N2

(Prerequisite: Japanese 11 or equivalent)

N2 rotates through the following courses: Kanji, JLPT preparatory, or JLPT prep & Kanji. The description below is for the JLPT & Kanji course; please see each semester for the course topic and description.

This course is structured to help prepare students for the N2 level of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), which requires knowledge of approximately 500 new kanji (in addition to the 680 required for N3 - N5). Students will focus on mastering some of these kanji for the N2 test,

[Back to top of document.](#)

as well as study other JLPT N2 content such as reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary. This course is conducted in Japanese.

PLEASE NOTE: Courses above Level 9 and JLPT & Kanji courses are designed to be taken repeatedly. Enrollment in a JLPT or kanji course is recommended for students at these levels.

Level 12

Level 12 courses include a general course which covers a wide-range of topics, and sometimes special topic courses. Examples of previous special topic courses are listed below.

Level 12 (non-special topic):

Students will use real-life sources, such as Japanese TV shows, J-dramas, news, etc., to continue increasing their knowledge of written and spoken Japanese. Vocabulary and common expressions will be emphasized. Students will study and discuss a wide range of subjects.

Please see this link for a sample of class material:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SSOpRKb2-B-kRge2iMUL8fwLWnGOJu8X/view?usp=sharing>

Special Topic Level 12: Japanese Films (offered in Fall 2022)

Special Topic Level 12: Poetic Expressions

Special Topic Level 12: Breaking News in Japan (offered in 2017 Fall)

Special Topic Level 12: J-Drama (offered in 2021 Spring)

Please see this link for a sample of class material (note that it is specific to the J-Drama used that semester):

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ma_Gh4vy2sRgoa4w46QZkd_zN2EjArAB/view?usp=sharing

PLEASE NOTE: Courses above Level 9 and JLPT & Kanji courses are designed to be taken repeatedly. Enrollment in a JLPT or kanji course is recommended for students at these levels.

[Back to top of document.](#)

Level 13

The most advanced level. Original source materials from current events from television programs, Japanese newspapers and magazines, as well as drama, movies, etc. will be used to increase knowledge of useful expressions and idioms. Discussion will be encouraged to promote oral communication. Writing is also emphasized. Students should be able to recognize at least 1200 kanji. Topic based courses may also be offered.

Please see this link for a sample of class material:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-we_Zwc72GyhBrKhokQd3Kc5hwMJWCQ8/view?usp=sharing

Kanji N1 or JLPT N1

(Prerequisite: Japanese 12 or equivalent)

N1 rotates through the following courses: Kanji, JLPT preparatory, or JLPT prep & Kanji. The description below is for the JLPT & Kanji course; please see each semester for the course topic and description.

This course is structured to help prepare students for the N1 level of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), which requires knowledge of approximately 940 new kanji (in addition to the 1,180 required for N2 - N5). Students will focus on mastering some of these kanji for the N1 test, as well as study other JLPT N1 content such as reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary. This course is conducted in Japanese.

PLEASE NOTE: Courses above Level 9 and JLPT & Kanji courses are designed to be taken repeatedly. Enrollment in a JLPT or kanji course is recommended for students at these levels.

Still have questions? Unsure about your level?

Please call the Language Center office at 212-715-1269 or 212-715-1293, or email

language@japansociety.org.

It may also be possible to arrange a level assessment with the Director, Kamimura sensei. Level assessment appointments are typically on Wednesdays between 2-3 pm Eastern Time, and can be arranged by emailing language@japansociety.org.

We hope to see you soon!