

Writing Systems:

Japanese language has **three** scripts

1. The first script: **Kanji (漢字)**
*originated in China.

2. The second script: **Katakana (カタカナ)**
*this is used for words which originated from foreign countries. For example, in Japanese, coffee is **Kohi**. And instead of written in Hiragana, we use **Katakana for this word**. So it would be **コーヒー**



3. the third script: **Hiragana (ひらがな)**
*this is used for words that **originated in Japan**.

So Japanese writing system consists of **these main three scripts**.

Those who have not learned **Hiragana/Katakana** often use **Romaji**. **Romanized Japanese script** is essential since this script is needed in order to type these main scripts on a computer.

Ex) watashi wa nihonjin desu. (**this is romaji**)— 私は、日本人です (**hiragana/kanji**)。

Traditionally these scripts are written **vertically from right to left**, but we mostly write horizontally today. **It is actually a much more common form of writing right now**.

I recommend that you learn **Romaji** and then **Hiragana** first. We often use computers nowadays so it is very convenient if you know how to write **Romaji** accurately, and this converts into **Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji**. But you will have to know these scripts to choose the right syllable.



Hiragana Chart

あ	い	う	え	お
a	i	u	e	o
か	き	く	け	こ
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko
さ	し	す	せ	そ
sa	shi	su	se	so
た	ち	つ	て	と
ta	chi	tsu	te	to
な	に	ぬ	ね	の
na	ni	nu	ne	no
は	ひ	ふ	へ	ほ
ha	hi	hu	he	ho
ま	み	む	め	も
ma	mi	mu	me	mo
や		ゆ		よ
ya		yu		yo
ら	り	る	れ	ろ
わ		を		ん
wa		wo		n (type nn or nl on your computer)

*For Katakana, you will learn the same syllables.

Katakana Chart

ア	イ	ウ	エ	オ
a	i	u	e	o
カ	キ	ク	ケ	コ
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko

サ	シ	ス	セ	ソ
sa	shi	su	se	so
タ	チ	ツ	テ	ト
ta	chi	tsu	te	to

ナ	ニ	ヌ	ネ	ノ
na	ni	nu	ne	no

ハ	ヒ	フ	ヘ	ホ
ha	hi	fu	he	ho

マ	ミ	ム	メ	モ
ma	mi	mu	me	mo

ヤ		ユ		ヨ
ya		yu		yo

ラ	リ	ル	レ	ロ
ra	ri	ru	re	ro

ワ		ヲ		ン
wa		wo		n (type nn or nl on computer)

Kanji

example

川 : かわ : river

山 : やま : mountain

we will introduce you to Kanji in later lessons!