

1 Adjectives

There are two types of adjectives in Japanese. One type is called “い-adjectives,” and the other type “な-adjectives.” い and な are their last syllables when they modify nouns.

い-adjectives:

おもしろい映画 *an interesting movie*

きのう、おもしろい映画を見ました。 *I saw an interesting movie yesterday.*

こわい先生 *a scary teacher*

山下先生はこわい先生です。 *Professor Yamashita is a scary teacher.*

な-adjectives:

きれいな写真 *a beautiful picture*

京都できれいな写真を撮りました。 *I took a beautiful picture in Kyoto.*

元気な先生 *an energetic teacher*

山下先生は元気な先生です。 *Professor Yamashita is an energetic teacher.*

Japanese adjectives conjugate for tense (present and past), polarity (affirmative and negative), and so forth, just as verbs do. The two types of adjectives follow different conjugation patterns.

い-adjectives い-adjectives change shape as follows. You will want to be very careful here, because the pattern is rather complicated.

		affirmative	negative
	present	<u>おもしろいです</u> <i>It is interesting.</i>	<u>おもしろくありません</u> <i>It is not interesting.</i>
	past	<u>おもしろかったです</u> <i>It was interesting.</i>	<u>おもしろくありませんでした</u> <i>It was not interesting.</i>

Unlike verbs, adjectives conjugate fairly regularly. The only irregularity worth noticing at this stage is the behavior of the adjective いい (good). The first syllable of いい is changed to よ in all forms except the dictionary form and the long present tense affirmative form.²

いい (irregular)	affirmative	negative
present	いいです	よくありません
past	よかったです	よくありませんでした

な-adjectives The conjugation pattern of な-adjectives is much more straightforward. It actually is exactly the same as the conjugation table of です which follows a noun, as discussed in Lesson 4.³

元気(な) げんき	affirmative	negative
present	元気 <u>です</u> げんき	元気 <u>じゃありません</u> げんき
	<i>She is healthy.</i>	<i>She is not healthy.</i>
past	元気 <u>でした</u> げんき	元気 <u>じゃありませんでした</u> げんき
	<i>She was healthy.</i>	<i>She was not healthy.</i>

The final syllable な is dropped in these long forms of な-adjectives.