

WRITING WORDS

If you can write all of the *HIRAGANA* characters, along with their voiced and bilabialized counterparts and combination characters, you have only a short way to go before you can read and write words, phrases, and sentences.

This section will teach you how double consonants and long vowels are made, and give you some practice at writing words. Words in this section were selected for writing practice only, not for vocabulary study. We advise that you NOT waste time looking up their meanings.

DOUBLE CONSONANTS

There are certain consonant sounds in the Japanese sound system that may be doubled, specifically /K/, /S/ (including /SH/), /T/ (including /CH/), and /P/. Note that only voiceless consonants may be doubled.

In each case the double consonant is represented in *HIRAGANA* by a small *TSU* (っ) placed immediately BEFORE the consonant sound to be doubled, as in the examples below.

HAKKIRI

HA	K	KI	RI
はっきり			

MASSUGU

MA	S	SU	GU
まっすぐ			

NESSHIN

NE	S	SHI	N
ねっしん			

MATTAKU

MA	T	TA	KU
まったく			

KETCHIN

KE	T	CHI	N
けっちん			

IPPIKI

I	P	PI	KI
いっぴき			

Notice that the *TSU* (っ) character is smaller than it would normally be written. Compare the following pairs:

っ as DOUBLE
CONSONANT

vs.

っ as *TSU*

NEKKI
"hot air"

NE	K	KI
ねっき		

NETSUKI
"sleepfulness"

NE	TSU	KI
ねつき		

っ as DOUBLE
CONSONANT

vs.

っ as *TSU*

KATTE
"kitchen"

KA	T	TE
かって		

KATSUTE
"formerly"

KA	TSU	TE
かって		

KUSSHIN
"flex"

KU	S	SHI	N
くっしん			

KUTSUSHITA
"socks"

KU	TSU	SHI	TA
くっした			

TASSEI
"achievement"

TA	S	SE	I
たっせい			

TATSUSE
"[solid] position"

TA	TSU	SE
たっせ		

Practice writing the following words that have double consonants. First, **TRACE** the **HIRAGANA** characters as shown, being careful to follow correct stroke order and direction as learned previously. Then write the words, character for character, in the blank spaces. These words were selected for writing practice only. We advise that you NOT waste time looking up their meanings.)

ASSARI

あっさり

BASSAI

ばっさい

HASSEN

はっせん

ISSOKU

いっそく

HASSHA

はっしゃ

JISSHIN

じっしん

OSSHARU

おっしゃる

ZASSHI

ざっし

TOTTSUKI

とっつき

MITTSU

みつつ

OTTSUKE

おっつけ

SHITTSUI

しっつい

TATTOBU

たっとぶ

ZETTAI

ぜったい

KUTTAKU

くったく

MUTTO

むっと

ETCHAN

えっちゃん

KITCHIRI

きっちり

SATCHI

さっち

SOTCHOKU

そっちょく

KEKKYOKU

けっきょく

SEKKEN

せっけん

MAKKA

まっか

FUUKATSU

ふっかつ

EPPEI

えっぺい

CHOPPIRI

ちょっぴり

TEPPEN

てっぺん

GEPPU

げっぷ

NOTE: Don't be confused when you see words that are romanized with double N, such as *ZANNEN*, *KONNICHI*, *MINNA*, etc. These are not treated as double consonants in *HIRAGANA*, since the first N is represented by the character *ん*, as follows:

ZANNEN

ZA	N	NE	N
ざんねん			

KONNICHI

KO	N	NI	CHI
こんにち			

MINNA

MI	N	NA
みんな		

The character for *TSU* (つ) is NEVER used to double the consonant N.

LONG VOWELS

Long vowels are usually represented in *RŌMAJI* by a vowel with a line over it, as in *OKĀSAN*, *SENSHŪ*, *ONĒSAN*, *ŌSAKA*. The vowel I (and in some other forms of romanization, A, O, E, and U as well, may be romanized by repeating the vowel, as in *ONIISAN* and *CHIISAI*.

In *HIRAGANA* long vowels are usually represented by placing あ (A), い (I), う (U), え (E), or お (O) immediately after the character that has the corresponding vowel sound. In other words, as follows:

OKĀSAN

O	KA	A	SA	N
おかあさん				

ONIISAN

O	NI	I	SA	N
おにいさん				

SENSHŪ

SE	N	SHU	U
せんしゅう			

ONĒSAN

O	NE	E	SA	N
おねえさん				

ŌSAKA

O	O	SA	KA
おおさか			

The exception to this rule is that the vowel O is often elongated by use of the character う (U), instead of お (O). Ordinarily, お is used to elongate an O that BEGINS a word, as in *ŌSAKA* (おおさか) and *ŌKII* (おおきい). When the long O is in the MIDDLE of a word or at the END of a word, the character う is more often used, as in

GAKKŌ

GA	K	KO	U
がっこう			

RYŌSHIN

RYO	U	SHI	N
りょうしん			

Rare exceptions to this rule should be memorized as you come across them. (Appendix B includes a brief list of common exceptions.)

Now practice writing the following words that have long vowels. First, **TRACE** the *HIRAGANA*, then write each word, character for character, in the space provided. Always be careful to follow the appropriate stroke order as learned previously.

BĀYA

ばあや

OKĀSAN

おかあさん

MĀ

まあ

OGYĀ

おぎゃあ

ATARASHII

あたらしい

OJISAN

おじいさん

CHII

ちい

IIE

いいえ

KŪKI

くうき

RAISHŪ

らいしゅう

TSŪSHIN

つうしん

SEIYŪ

せいゆう

Ē

ええ

ONĒSAN

おねえさん

ĒTO

ええと

HĒ

へえ

ŌKII

おおきい

ŌSAKA

おおさか

ŌJO

おおじょ

ŌI

おおい

RYOKŌ

りょう

SHŌKAI

しょうかい

SHACHŌ

しゃちょう

HIKŌKI

ひこうき

OBĀSAN

おばあさん

ONIISAN

おにいさん

FŪTŌ

ふうとう

SŪ

すう