

Introduction: Learn Japanese Visually

Getting started with learning Japanese can seem a tall order, with so many unfamiliar words!

Luckily, there are great resources to learn from, including <u>WaniKani</u>, <u>DuoLingo</u> and <u>Genki</u>. These resources help you learn using various approaches, such as *audial* and *kinaesthetic* techniques (e.g. games).

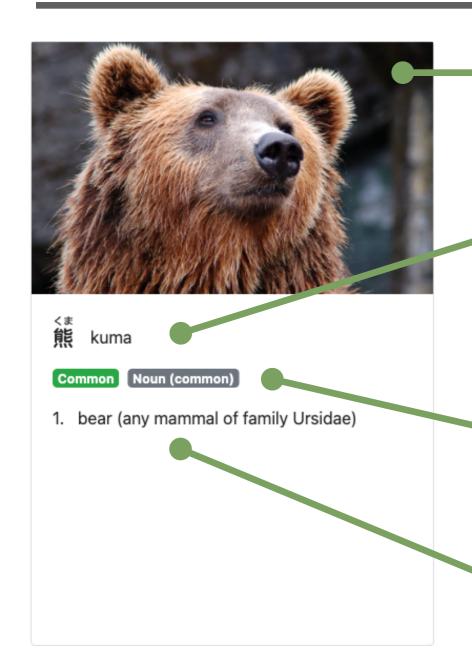
<u>Kuma Learn</u> offers you a *visual* approach to learning Japanese vocabulary. Some words lend themselves well to visual presentation and that's why we've made you a picture dictionary for Japanese: *Kumadex*.

We looked at the frequently occurring words [*] to select the 50 JLPT-N5 words in this mini-eBook. They are only a fraction of all the words in the Japanese language but I hope it serves as a useful guide to get started.

^{*} See Acknowledgements: Centre for Translation Studies, Leeds University.



How to read this eBook



Image

Photograph to help you learn the Japanese word.

Word

The Japanese word, in *kanji* with one reading in *furigana* (hiragana to help you read kanji). The reading is also written in *romaji*, or romanised Japanese, for convenience.

<u>Only one reading is shown</u>. Some words have multiple readings but we focus on the common reading to make it easier for you to learn.

Tags

Words are labelled with parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.), how common the reading is and where they might appear (Genki, JLPT).

Meanings

Words can have several meanings. Some words have over ten meanings. But we've focused on the top three to five, so that it's easier for you to learn.

The Japanese number system is logical. Once you can count up to ten, you'll know how to count up to 99. This is because, after ten, numbers are expressed as sums of numbers we've already learned: eleven is "ten-and-one" (十一, jiu-ichi); 99 is "nine-tens-and-nine" (九十九, kyuu-jiu-kyuu).

When reading and writing Japanese, you'll often see decimal digits (numbers 0 to 9) being used instead of kanji, as it can get a bit difficult to read for larger numbers!



2. best

の-adj. Suffix **EXAMPLE**

これが一番好き。

I like this one best.

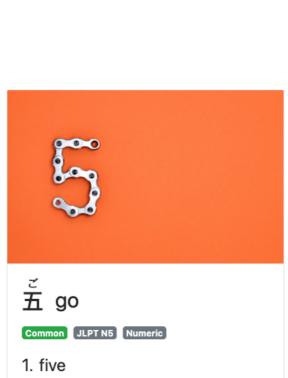
3. first; foremost

EXAMPLE わたし いちばん 私が一番。

I'm first.

の-adj.





















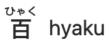


Once you can count up to 100, you'll be able to count up to 999. The number 999 is "nine-hundreds-nine-tens-and-nine" (九百九十九, kyuu-hyaku-kyuu-jiu-kyuu). Similarly, count up to 1,000 and you can count up to 9,999!

From 10,000, it's a bit different to the Western system because 10,000 has its own name: 万, man. So, 34,000 is "three-ten-thousands-four-thousands". That's a mouthful!

The Japanese currency denominations are: 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, 500, 1,000, 5,000 and 10,000 \exists (*yen*). So, learn to count up to 10,000 and you can count money.







1. 100; hundred

EXAMPLE

まっぷ ひゃく 切符は百ユーロです。

The ticket costs 100 euros.



±^ん sen

Common JLPT N5 Numeric

1. 1,000; thousand

EXAMPLE

せんえん た 千円で足りる?

Is a thousand yen enough?



声 man



1. 10,000; ten thousand

Numeric

EXAMPLE

1 万円でたりる?

Is ten thousand yen enough?

2. myriad

Noun (common) の-adj.

3. everything; all

Adv. noun

EXAMPLE

かぜ まんびょう もと 風邪は万病の元。

A cold often leads to all kinds of disease.

How to say "I"

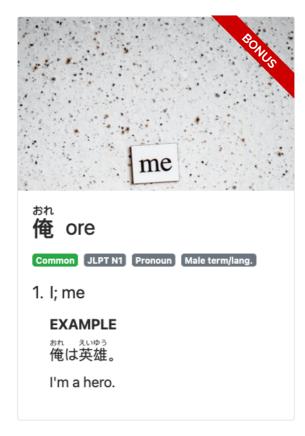
There are many ways to "I" in Japanese. It's often dictated by age, gender and situation.

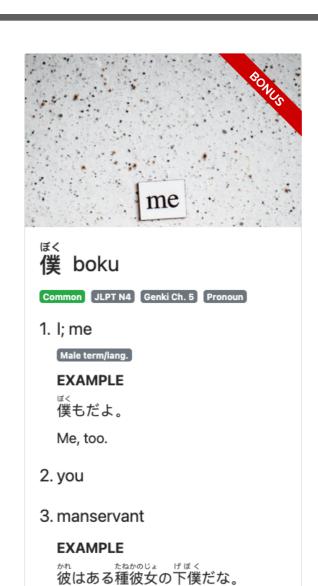
For example, boys will use 僕 (boku), until they grow out of it in their teenage years when they adopt 俺 (ore). 俺 (ore) is predominantly used by men, whereas 私 (watashi) is used by both men and women in formal contexts. In informal contexts, women still use 私 (watashi) but men often revert back to 俺 (ore) or 僕 (boku)!

There's also an extremely polite version of 私: watakushi. In day-to-day Japanese however, you'll hear women abbreviate it to atashi.

How to say "I"







He's some kind of manservant for

her.



Kansai-ben

3. you

EXAMPLE

じぶんがって やっこ 自分勝手な奴だな。

You always try to get what you want.





Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 4 Noun (co

1. man; person

EXAMPLE

あの人誰?

Who is that person?

2. human being; mankind; people

EXAMPLE

人がいる。

There are people.

3. human (Homo sapiens); humans as a species

Written w/ kanji only

4. character; personality

EXAMPLE

彼は味のある人だ。

He is quite a character.



とし 年 toshi

Common JLPT N5 Noun (common)

1. year

EXAMPLE

よいお年を。

Happy New Year!

2. age; years

EXAMPLE

もう年だよ。

I feel my age.

3. past one's prime; old age

EXAMPLE

彼も年のせいで弱くなった。

He's become frail in his old age.



naka

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 4 Noun (cor

1. inside; in

EXAMPLE

中に入れて。

Let me in.

2. among; within

EXAMPLE

リスは枝の中に隠れた。

A squirrel hid among the branches.

3. center (centre); middle

EXAMPLE

^{みずうみ まんなか} 湖の真中に、その島がある。

In the middle of the lake lies the island.

4. during; while



何 nani

Common JLPT N3 JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 1

1. what

Pronoun

EXAMPLE

なに 何?

What?

2. you-know-what; that thing

Pronoun

EXAMPLE

まか みぎて も 君が右手に持っているものは何で すか。

What's that thing in your right hand?

3. whatsit; whachamacallit; what's-his-name; what'-sher-name



時間 jikan

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 14 Noun (com

1. time

EXAMPLE

じかんしゅうりょう時間終了。

Time's up.

2. hour

EXAMPLE

3時間待った。

We waited three hours.

3. period; class; lesson

EXAMPLE

五時間目ですか。

Is it fifth period?



^{まえ} 前 mae

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 4

1. in front (of); before (e.g. the house)

Noun (common) Suffix

2. ago; before; previously; prior; (minutes) to (the hour)

Adv. noun Noun (temporal) Suffix

EXAMPLE

7時前にね。

See you a little before 7.

3. front (of something); head (e.g. of a line); fore part

Noun (common)

4. front (e.g. seat); previous (e.g. entry in a list); prior; former

の-adj.



かた **方** kata

Common JLPT N5 Noun (com

1. direction; way

EXAMPLE

がれ い かた あらた 彼は生き方を改めた。

He amended his way of living.

2. person; lady; gentleman

Honorific/respectful lang.

EXAMPLE

Each person has his own way of doing things.



自分 jibun

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 17 Pronoun

1. myself; yourself; oneself; himself; herself

EXAMPLE

じぶん 自分を信じて。

Believe in yourself.

2. l; me

EXAMPLE

自分でも負けた。

Even I was defeated.

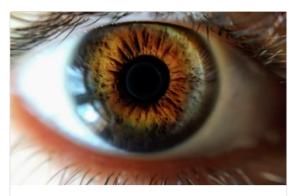
3. you

Kansai-ben

EXAMPLE

じぶんがって やっこ 自分勝手な奴だな。

You always try to get what you want.





JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 7 Noun (com

- 1. eye; eyeball
- 2. eyesight; sight; vision
- 3. look; stare; gaze; glance
- 4. notice; attention; observation; eyes (of the world, public, etc.)
- 5. an experience



本 hon

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 2

1. book; volume; script

Noun (common)

EXAMPLE

いい本だ。

It's a good book.

2. counter for long cylindrical things; counter for films, TV shows, etc.; counter for goals, home runs, etc.; counter for telephone calls

Suffix Counter



hanashi

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 19 Noun (common)

1. talk; speech; chat; conversation

EXAMPLE

なに はなし 何の話?

What're you talking about?

2. topic; subject

EXAMPLE

話をそらすなよ。

Don't change the subject.

3. discussions; negotiation; argument

EXAMPLE

そういった話をしていると議論に なってしまう。

That kind of talk leads to arguments.



うえ 上 ue

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 4 Noun (common)

1. above; up; over; elder (e.g. daughter)

の-adj. Adv. noun Noun, as suffix

EXAMPLE

その上に座るな。

Don't sit upon it.

2. top; summit; head (e.g. of a staircase)

EXAMPLE

いえ おか うえ 家は丘の上にある。

The house is on top of the hill.

- 3. surface
- 4. before; previous

の-adj. Adv. noun

5. superiority; one's superior; one's elder





Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 14

1. same; identical; equal; uniform; equivalent; similar; common (origin); changeless; alike

Prenominal noun/verb Noun (common)

EXAMPLE

^{おな}もの くだ 同じ物を下さい。

Please give me the same thing.

2. anyway; anyhow; in either case Adverb



仕事 shigoto

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 1 Noun (common)

1. work; job; labor; labour; business; task; assignment; occupation; employment

Noun/participle taking aux. verb する

EXAMPLE

仕事中です。

I am working.

2. work



ぃぅ **言う iu**

Common JLPT N3 JLPT N5

Godan verb w/ う ending

1. to say; to utter; to declare

EXAMPLE

あらた 改めて言う事はない。

I have nothing particular to say.

- 2. to name; to call
- 3. to go (e.g. "the alarm went ping"); to make a noise



เหลิ 家 ie

Common JLPT N5 Noun (common)

1. house; residence; dwelling

EXAMPLE

家はどこ?

Where's your house?

2. family; household

EXAMPLE

がれ いえ ほま 彼は家の誉れだ。

He is an honor to his family.

3. lineage; family name

EXAMPLE

かのじょ かれ いえがら かれ けっこん 彼女は彼の家柄のために彼と結婚 した。

She married him for the sake of his family name.



会社 kaisha

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 7 Noun (common)

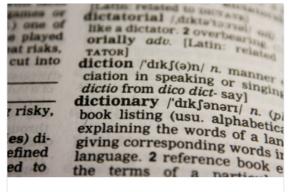
1. company; corporation

EXAMPLE

会社が赤字になる。

The company is in deficit.

2. workplace



意味 imi

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 12 Noun (common)

Noun/participle taking aux. verb する

1. meaning; significance; sense

EXAMPLE

どういう意味?

What's the meaning of this?



kuni

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 7 Noun (comm

1. country; state

EXAMPLE

かれ くにちゅう たび 彼は国 中を旅した。

He traveled around the country.

2. region

EXAMPLE

その国のその地域ではよく嵐が 発生した。

There were storms in that region of the country.

- 3. national government; central government
- 4. home (i.e. hometown, home country)



彼 are

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 2

1. that (indicating something distant from both speaker and listener (in space, time or psychologically), or something understood without naming it directly)

Pronoun Written w/ kanji only

2. that person

Pronoun

3. hey; huh?; eh?

Interjection (kandoushi) Written w/ kanji only





JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 7 Noun (cor

- 1. hand; arm
- 2. handle
- 3. hand; worker; help
- 4. trouble; care; effort
- 5. means; way; trick; move; technique; workmanship



多い ooi

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 12 Adj.

1. many; numerous; a lot

EXAMPLE

きは火事が多い。

There are a lot of fires in the winter.

- 2. large quantity; large amount
- 3. frequent; common

EXAMPLE

かれ でいます できょうつうてん まお 彼らには、共通点が多い。

They have a lot in common.



言葉 kotoba

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 13 Noun (common)

1. language; dialect

EXAMPLE

ことば まな まもしろ 言葉を学ぶのは面白い。

Learning languages is interesting.

2. word; words; phrase; term; expression; remark

EXAMPLE

合言葉?

Password?

3. speech; (manner of) speaking

EXAMPLE

がれ ことばすう すく 彼は言葉数が少ない。

He is brief of speech.

4. learning to speak; language acquisition



他 hoka

Common JLPT N3 JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 18

1. other (place, thing, person); the rest

Noun (common) の-adj.

EXAMPLE

彼はついにクラスの他の者を抜い た。

He finally got ahead of the rest of class.

2. outside; beyond

Noun (common) Ø-adj. Written w/ kanji only

3. nothing except; nothing but; nothing apart from; nothing aside from; no choice (but to)

Adv. noun Written w/ kanji only

EXAMPLE

霧の他には何も見えなかった。

We could see nothing but fog.



良い yoi

Common JLPT N1 JLPT N3 JLPT N5

Genki Ch. 3 Adj.

1. good; excellent; fine; nice; pleasant; agreeable

EXAMPLE

。 良い旅を!

Have a nice trip.

2. sufficient; enough; ready; prepared

EXAMPLE

彼は酒を飲んでも良い年齢だ。 He is old enough to drink.

- 3. profitable (deal, business offer, etc.); beneficial
- 4. OK; all right; fine; no problem



みせ **店** mise

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 13 Noun (con

1. store; shop; establishment; restaurant

EXAMPLE

がれるせいが彼は店に行った。

He went to the store.



先生 sensei

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 1 Noun (common)

1. teacher; instructor; master

EXAMPLE

せんせい 先生が来る。

There comes our teacher.

2. intimate or teasing form of address

Familiar lang. Jocular, humorous





Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 3 Noun (common)

の-adj.

1. movie; film

EXAMPLE

映画に行くの?

Are you going to a movie?



子供 kodomo

JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 4 Noun (com

1. child

EXAMPLE

こどもたち みなね 子供達は皆寝た。

All the children went to bed.



少し sukoshi

Common JLPT N5 Adverb Noun (common)

1. small quantity; little; few; something

EXAMPLE

すこ はだきむ 少し肌寒い。

There is a little chill in the air.

2. little while

EXAMPLE

もう少しいてはいかがですか。 Why don't you stay a little while?

3. short distance



写真 shashin

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 4 Noun (common)

1. photograph; photo; picture; snapshot; snap

EXAMPLE

しゃしん み 写真見せて。

Show me the picture.

2. movie

EXAMPLE

ニューズウィークでは、その元 ^{えいが} 映画スターが警察署に入っていく 写真を大きく載せていた。

Newsweek had a big picture of the ex-movie star entering the police station.



見る miru

Common JLPT N5 Ichidan verb

1. to see; to look; to watch; to view; to observe

Transitive verb

EXAMPLE

この番組見る?

Do you want to watch this program?

2. to examine; to look over; to assess; to check; to judge

Transitive verb

3. to look after; to attend to; to take care of; to keep an eye on

Transitive verb

EXAMPLE

きみ やくめ 君の役目だ。

Now that he is old, it is your duty to look after him.





Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 1 Noun (common)

1. university; college

EXAMPLE

だいがくせい 大学生です。

I am a college student.

- 2. former central university of Kyoto (established under the ritsuryo system for the training of government administrators) Abbr.
- 3. the Great Learning (one of the Four Books)



だれ **誰** dare

Common JLPT N1 JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 2

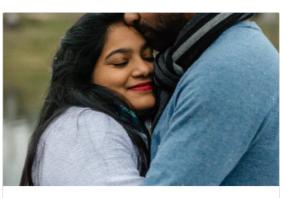
Pronoun

1. who

EXAMPLE

だれ **誰?**

Who?



^{すき} Suki

Common JLPT N5 Noun (common)

1. liked; well-liked; favourite;

favorite な-adj.

EXAMPLE

好きな食べ物は?

What's your favourite food?

2. in love (with); loved; romantically interested (in)

な-adj.

EXAMPLE

が 彼らはそれが好きでした。

They loved it.

3. faddism; eccentricity

な-adj.

4. the way one likes; (as) it suits one

な-adj.



大きな ookina

Common JLPT N5 pre-noun adj. (rentaishi)

1. big; large; great

EXAMPLE

大きな一歩だよ。

That's a big step.





JLPT N1 JLPT N5

Godan verb - いく special Intransitive verb

1. to go; to move (in a direction or towards a specific location); to head (towards); to be transported (towards); to reach

EXAMPLE

行くべきだ。 I ought to go.

- 2. to proceed; to take place
- 3. to pass through; to come and go
- 4. to walk

EXAMPLE

そこまで歩いて行くのはめんどう くさい。

It's too much trouble to walk there.



電話 denwa

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 1 Noun (com

の-adj.

1. telephone call; phone call

Noun/participle taking aux. verb する

EXAMPLE

電話しよう。

Let's make a phone call.

2. telephone (device); phone

Abbr.

EXAMPLE

^{でんわ} 電話です。

You are wanted on the phone.



学校 gakkou

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 3 Noun (common)

1. school

EXAMPLE

^{がっこう} 学校はどう?

How's school?



物 mono

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 12 Noun (common)

1. thing; object; article; stuff; substance

EXAMPLE

たず もの 忘れ物ない?

Did you forget anything?

2. one's things; possessions; property; belongings

EXAMPLE

ブライアンは自分の物を置き忘れ た。

Brian left his belongings behind.

3. things; something; anything; everything; nothing

EXAMPLE

たず もの 忘れ物ない?

Did you forget anything?



一番 ichiban



1. number one; first; first place

Noun (common) の-adj.

EXAMPLE

かたしいちばん私が一番。

I'm first.

2. best; most

Adverb

EXAMPLE

はんこう いちばん 健康が一番です。

Health is the most important thing.

3. game; round; bout

Noun (common)

EXAMPLE

^{みずうみ} 湖 はこの辺りが一番深い。

The lake is deepest around here.



音楽 ongaku

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 3 Noun (common)

1. music

EXAMPLE

_{おんがく}す 音楽は好き?

Do you like music?



あたらしい 新しい atarashii







1. new; novel; fresh; recent; latest; up-to-date; modern

EXAMPLE

たまご あたら この卵は新しい。

These eggs are fresh.



たかい 高い takai



Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 2 Adj.

1. high; tall

EXAMPLE

^{なみ} たか 波が高い。

The waves are high.

2. expensive; high-priced

EXAMPLE

でも高いよ。

It's expensive though.

- 3. high (level); above average (in degree, quality, etc.)
- 4. loud

EXAMPLE

彼は高いびきをかいて寝ていた。

He was snoring loudly while he slept.







Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 3 Noun (common)

- 1. water (esp. cool, fresh water, e.g. drinking water)
- 2. fluid (esp. in an animal tissue); liquid

EXAMPLE

水は液体である。

Water is a liquid.

3. flood; floodwaters

EXAMPLE

はし おおみず なが 橋は大水で流された。

The bridge was carried away by the flood.

4. water offered to wrestlers just prior to a bout



英語 eigo

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 1 Noun (common)

の-adj.

1. English (language)



質問 shitsumon

Common JLPT N5 Genki Ch. 11 Noun (common)

Noun/participle taking aux. verb する の-adj.

1. question; inquiry; enquiry

EXAMPLE

よい質問だ。

It's a good question.



所 tokoro

Common JLPT N5 Noun (common) Suffix

1. place; spot; scene; site

EXAMPLE

わが家にまさる所なし。

There is no place like home.

2. address

Written w/ kanji only

3. district; area; locality

Written w/ kanji only

EXAMPLE

その商店街は私達の家から簡単に 行ける便の良い所にある。

The shopping district is easily accessible from our house.

4. one's house

Written w/ kanji only

5. point; aspect; side; facet

About the Author

Hi, I'm Mario! I speak three languages (English, German, Japanese) and make software for a living.

Thanks for reading this mini-eBook. I started the Kumadex project for those who want to explore a visual approach to learning Japanese.

Your feedback and support is greatly appreciated, and will help shape <u>Kuma Learn</u> in the future. Reach out to me at <u>mario@kumalearn.com</u> if you have any comments or suggestions.

If you enjoyed the visual content in this mini-eBook and want to learn more with pictures, subscribe to <u>Kuma Learn</u>'s email newsletter.



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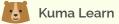
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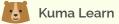
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The data used in Kumadex comes from a number of projects. Kuma Learn is extremely thankful to the creators and contributors of these projects, who have made projects like Kumadex possible.

JMdict

JMdict is a project created by Jim Breen. It's a general,
Japanese-English dictionary managed by the Electronic
Dictionary Research and Development Group (EDRDG), Jim
Been and a team of volunteers. The vast majority of words that appear in Kumadex come from JMdict.

Tatoeba

Example sentences that appear in Kumadex come from the <u>Tatoeba</u> project, which is a large database of sentences and translations.

Wanakana

<u>Wanakana</u> is an open-source Javascript library for detecting and transliterating between Hiragana, Katakana and Romaji.

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Kuroshiro

<u>Kuroshiro</u> is an open-source Javascript library for converting Japanese sentences to Hiragana, Katakana or Romaji with furigana.

Centre for Translation Studies, Leeds University

The <u>Centre for Translation Studies of Leeds University</u> offers a word frequency list based on their Japanese language corpus. This list is used by Kumadex to order words by their frequency in Japanese text that the Centre for Translation Studies has studied.

Wiktionary

<u>Wiktionary's</u> JLPT word list has been used to help select words to include in this mini-eBook.

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Wikimedia

Wikimedia is another source of images used in Kumadex.

Flickr

A small number of images are also sourced from Flickr.

If you would like to give back to the community of people who make projects like Kumadex possible, some of the projects listed above accept for contributions and/or donations.