

Reading and Writing Practice: Greetings and Common Expressions

Cover the two columns on the right, and practice reading the Japanese words. Then, cover the hiragana words on the left. Using the downloadable gridded paper from this site, see if you can write the words correctly.

Gozaimasu indicates politeness and formality. People who know each other well (family members, good friends) can use the short form. You should never use the short form with your superiors (teacher, boss, supervisor).

おはよう	ohayō	good morning
おはようございます	ohayō gozaimasu	good morning (polite)

Konnichiwa and *konbanwa* cover both formal and informal situations.

こんにちは	konnichiwa	hello (for during the day)
こんばんは	konbanwa	good evening

Dōzo is used to offer things or invite people to go ahead. *Arigatō* (*gozaimasu*) expresses thanks in general. You should never use the short form with your superiors (teacher, boss, supervisor). *Dōmo* expresses gratitude or apology. It can also be placed in front of *arigatō gozaimasu* ("Thank you very much") or *sumimasen* ("I'm very sorry"), for polite emphasis. *Gozaimashita* indicates the past and is used after an act is completed.

1. どうぞ	dōzo	please (offering something)
2. どうも	dōmo	thank you
3. ありがとう	arigatō	thanks (casual)
4. ありがとうございます	arigatō gozaimasu	thank you
5. どうもありがとうございます	dōmo arigatō gozaimasu	thank you very much
6. ありがとうございます	arigatō gozaimashita	thank you (for what you did)
7. いえいえ	ieie	no, no
8. どういたしまして	dō itashimashite	you are welcome;
9. とんでもない	tondemo nai	not at all
10. とんでもありません	tondemo arimasen	not at all
11. いただきます	itadakimasu	I'll start eating; I'll humbly receive it
12. ごちそうさま	gochisōsama	thanks for the food/drink (casual)
13. ごちそうさまでした	gochisōsama deshita	thanks for the food/drink.

~*san* is a title that can be attached to a given name, a family name, and even some roles. Don't attach it to your own name or the names of people in your group when talking to outsiders.

~*sensei* is a title that can be attached to teachers, professors, doctors, etc. You should not use ~*san* to refer to your teacher.

(name) さん	X-san	Mr/s. X
(name) せんせい	X-sensei	Prof/Dr. X (or for any teacher)

～です

X desu

(it) is X

Hajimemashite literally means “for the first time.” It is a ritual expression used when first meeting people. You can respond with your own *hajimemashite* or *dōzo yoroshiku onegai shimasu*.

1. はじめまして	hajimemashite	nice to meet you; first time meeting you
2. おねがいします	onegai shimasu	I request; thank you in advance
3. おねがいいたします	onegai itashimasu	I request; thank you in advance (polite)
4. よろしく	yoroshiku	thank you in advance; nice to meet you (casual)
5. よろしくおねがいいたします。	Yoroshiku onegai itashimasu.	Thank you in advance; nice to meet you (polite)

Sumimasen expresses apology or gratitude when you are about to trouble or have troubled someone. *Sumimasen deshita* expresses apology or gratitude when you have troubled someone. *Shitsurei shimasu* literally means “I’m going to do something rude” and is used when entering a room, interrupting, or leaving. *Shitsurei shimashita* is used to apologize for something you’ve done. *Itte kimasu* is used when leaving the house or stepping out the office for an errand. It implies that you are coming back.

1. すみません	sumimasen	I’m sorry; excuse me; thank you
2. すみませんでした	sumimasen deshita	I’m sorry for what I did; thank you for what you did
3. ごめん	gomen	I’m sorry (casual)
4. ごめんなさい	gomen nasai	I’m sorry (gentle, but still casual)
5. しつれいします	shitsurei shimasu	excuse me; it’s rude of me
6. しつれいしました	shitsurei shimashita	it was rude of me
7. 行ってきます	itte kimasu	I’m going (and coming back later)
8. 行ってらっしゃい	itte rasshai	see you later (when you come back)
9. ただいま	tadaima	I’m back (home)
10. おかえり	okaeri	welcome back (casual)
11. おかえりなさい	okaerinasai	welcome back
12. さよなら (さようなら)	sayonara (sayōnara)	goodbye
13. きをつけて	ki o tsukete	safe trip
14. おげんきで	ogenki de	take care and stay well (for a long while)
15. おやすみ	oyasumi	good night (casual)
16. おやすみなさい	oyasumi nasai	good night
17. じゃ、また	ja, mata	see you; till next time
18. おさきに	osaki ni	after you; sorry for going before you

Otsukare and its variations are common greetings between co-workers during a work day. They are also used to acknowledge anyone’s hard work.

1. おつかれ	otsukare	thanks for your hard work (casual)
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2. おつかれさま	otsukaresama	thanks for your hard work
3. おつかれさまです	otsukaresama desu	thanks for your (ongoing) hard work
4. おつかれさまでした	otsukaresama deshita	thanks for the hard work you did

Gomen kudasai is used when entering a store or someone's home.

1. ごめんください	gomen kudasai	hello; is anyone here?
2. いらっしゃい	irasshai	welcome
3. いらっしゃいませ	irasshaimase	welcome (polite)
4. どうぞごゆっくり	dōzo goyukkuri	take your time; enjoy
5. ようこそ	yōkoso	welcome
6. おめでとう	omedetō	congratulations
7. おめでとうございます	omedetō gozaimasu	congratulations (polite)
8. ひさしぶりですねえ	hisashiburi desu nē	long time no see
9. ごぶさたしました	gobusata shimashita	sorry for not staying in touch
10. おげんきですか	ogenki desu ka	How have you been?
11. おかげさまで	okagesama de	thanks to you
12. おだいじに	odaiji ni	take care (to a sick person)
13. がんばって	ganbatte	good luck; do your best (casual)
14. がんばってください	ganbatte kudasai	good luck; best wishes
15. がんばります	ganbarimasu	I'll do my best
16. たのしみです	tanoshimi desu	looking forward to it
17. たのしみにしています	tanoshimi ni shite imasu	looking forward to it