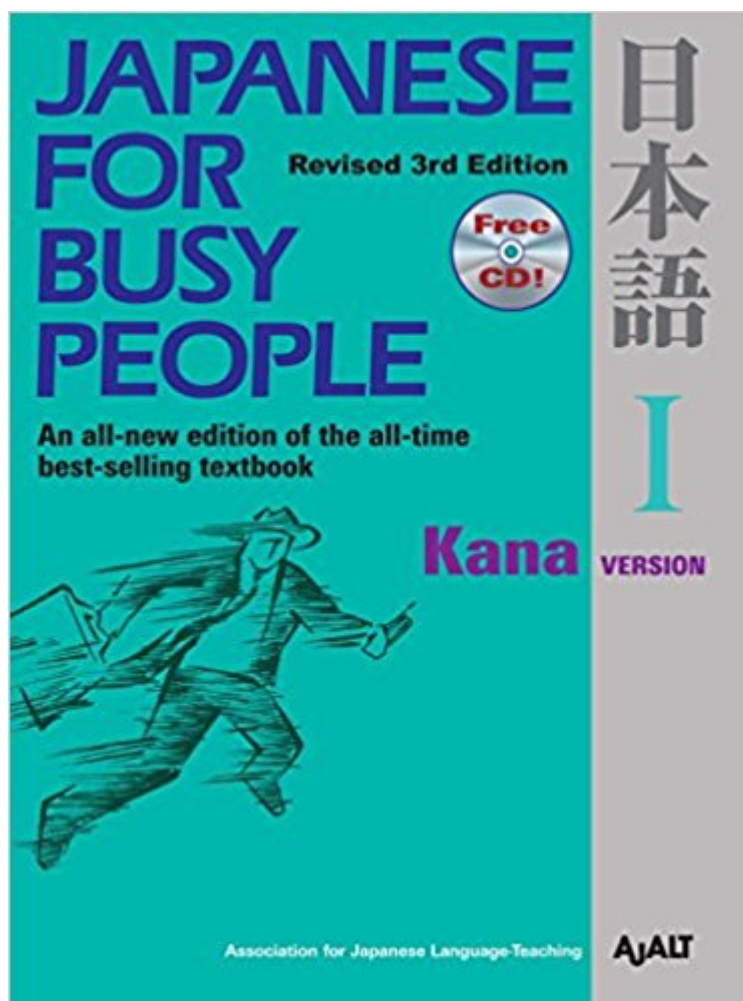


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Japanese For Busy People I: Kana Version (Japanese For Busy People Series)



Synopsis

Japanese for Busy People is the most popular Japanese language textbook series in the world. With over 20 components including texts, workbooks, CDs, videos and teacher's manuals, it is also one of the most comprehensive. Now, a decade after its first revision, the entire series is being redesigned, updated and consolidated to meet the needs of 21st-century students and businesspeople who want to learn natural, spoken Japanese as effectively as possible in a limited amount of time. The book features not only a sleek, new design but also a unit structure that groups thematically linked lessons together, making it easier than ever to learn Japanese. Moreover, it now comes with a CD containing audio for the dialogues and listening exercises from the text. The exercises in the book have also been thoroughly revised to incorporate more comprehension and production tasks. Many of these exercises are illustrated, making for a stimulating learning experience, and the purpose of each one is clearly stated. This first of three volumes introduces "survival Japanese" – the absolute minimum amount of Japanese needed to live in Japan. Thus, the vocabulary and grammatical items it introduces are limited to about a third of what is typically introduced in a first-year course. In addition, the book features notes on Japanese culture intended to expand the learner's understanding of Japan, its customs and people. Japanese for Busy People I is available in two formats: romanized and kana. The Romanized Version uses romanized Japanese throughout, with kana in the Opening Dialogues of each lesson. The Kana Version – exposing students to hiragana and katakana from the very beginning – uses only kana. The content of the two books is otherwise exactly the same. The companion volume, Japanese for Busy People 1: The Workbook for the Revised 3rd Edition contains a variety of illustrated exercises for mastering the basic sentence patterns presented in the main text.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Association of Japanese-Language Teaching (AJALT) was established to meet the practical needs of people who are not necessarily specialists in Japanese but who wish to communicate effectively. The AJALT was recognized as a nonprofit organization by the Ministry of Education in 1977.

Four stars: For ONE REASON! Like so many other Japanese lessons plan it is solely in Kana and almost no Kanji. If they had slowly introduced the Kanji from the beginning I would have been much happier. But, I am picky like that. Otherwise, this book is great if you are teaching yourself as it gives you the opportunity to write the Kana out as well as read it right from the beginning, which many of the traditional classes lack.

I've studied Japanese for a few years in both classroom and self-study formats. Japanese for Busy People (JFBP) is probably the single best option for self-study, both elementary acquisition and for review. I use it for both review of previous learning and for continued additional learning. I highly recommend the kana version, again for both new students and review. It will take practice and a kana learning book for self-starters, but that's true even in a classroom setting -- you'll be forced to learn kana very quickly and it's mostly a routine exercise of practice. JFBP excels for self-learners for three reasons: (1) the content is deliberately reduced to cover only what's required; it has much, much less vocabulary than a typical college text such as Genki. (2) the situations are more focused on adult learners and business travelers (e.g., business introductions, going to restaurants, shopping) and not those of younger people (movies, home visits). (3) the books are very affordable and are in a semi-workbook format instead of a text. The only limitation is that the audio materials are skimpy; it would be nice to have many hours of extended dialog and practice instead of just a couple hours of minimal dialog and vocabulary. Japanese Pod 101 or similar audio podcasts might help supplement that (and are certainly not enough on their own to learn well). I have the 2nd edition as well, and highly prefer the 3rd edition. The lessons flow much better and it is much more modern

in the general presentation style; it's highly worth the moderate cost to get the new version. Good luck! Ganbatte kudasai!

This book has its merits. It teaches much more formal speech than you will find in Genki. I love how every page has the vocabulary for the chapter at the bottom, or at the very least the vocab on that particular page. You won't have to constantly consult the vocab page or index. All-in-all Genki is the better book as this one teaches no kanji that I saw. I would strongly recommend this book as a supplement to other books or courses, not a main teaching tool. Also, in case you are not aware from the title; this book is oriented for people of business to function in a Japanese environment.

First of all, don't bother with the Romaji version - get a good Hiragana book (Mitamura's Let's Learn Hiragana or the one from Tuttle Library). You should be able to learn all hiragana within a month. When I first picked up this book, being all kana was a little scary, although now that I've been working with it for 2 mos. it's not bad at all. This book has a lot going for it, although now I wish it had some kanji in it so I could start getting used to seeing it. The vocabulary and dialogues in this book all seem very useful and I can envision myself needing to use the vocabulary, which is good. You don't want to waste time learning words you're not likely to use. The bad news is that (at least for the first few chapters) the exercises are not very challenging - they are all substitution exercises with the words you're supposed to replace already in Japanese so you could successfully complete the exercises without fully comprehending what you're writing. There are no translation exercises, nothing to really challenge your understanding. Vocabulary (and grammar) as stated in the book has been thinned down to 1/3 that of a typical college course, and I feel that there really could be more vocabulary included (e.g. when you're taught colors, you learn a total of just 4 colors, although if you look in the back of the book you'll find some more that are not incl. in the text). Although it's stated that this book is for the self learner as well as the classroom, the self learner may find that the grammar explanations are a little thin. I do like how the chapters are organized into units (2-3 chapters/unit) with a one-page grammar summary at the beginning of ea. unit (so you can see what you're getting into). The incl. CD is good although be forewarned that it does not start out at a beginner pace. EDIT: I have now been using this text for 10 months and am just about done with it. Many of my initial observations still stand: exercises are not very challenging, grammar explanation is rather brief and not very in-depth, and the lack of kanji is a real drawback. You'll find you need to supplement this text with others for additional grammar and some kanji. Also, some of the grammar could be better taught. When learning the -Te form for verbs, this book presents the reader with a

short list and says "memorize these", while nowhere are the rules on how they are formed. Verbs are presented already conjugated into the -masu form, with no mention of the originating dictionary form, so consequently students would be unable to conjugate new verbs into the -masu form, let alone even find the known verbs in their dictionaries. Also, it takes about 1/2 of the book before you actually get into using verbs other than "to be". So, for those who are willing to study every day and want to be challenged, this book disappoints. For those who don't have the time to study, this book will not overload you too much.

I am very glad that it's full kana, as relying on romanji is a terrible habit. However, I am disappointed to note that it does not teach kanji (at least not through half the book that I've seen so far). You'll need to supplement learning kanji elsewhere. Though really, for the price, this is a very good deal, and I highly recommend "Basic Kanji Book" for learning kanji. I personally already know Chinese, so I cannot attest to the Heisig method, but I have heard success stories from other people. I recommend retyping the sentences taught in the book and then finding the correct kanji and then writing them in to the book to help you at least build a basic memory of what they look like. Use Anki to do flashcard tests of the kanji and sentences.

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