

# Lesson 1

## The dictionary form and the masu form

Plain		Polite	
does	does not	does	does not
did	did not	did	did not

← What we learn in this Lesson

There are two types of ending styles in Japanese sentences, *polite* and *plain* (or non-polite). The *polite endings* express formality of speech and are used in socially formal situations. A verb form ending with *-masu* is a polite form. On the other hand, the *plain endings* are used in informal situations. The dictionary form of a verb is a plain form. Note however that 'politeness' here refers to politeness in speech. When written, the polite forms express 'casualness' and 'informality' and are never used in formal writing. On the other hand, the plain forms are predominantly used in formal writing since their 'abruptness' produces a kind of 'gravity'. The plain forms of verbs are also used in certain grammatical contexts where the use of the polite forms would be unacceptable.

Polite forms	Plain forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formal meetings</li><li>• University lectures</li><li>• News broadcasts</li><li>• A conversation between two persons who are yet to establish intimacy</li><li>• To one's superior</li><li>• Personal letters</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A conversation between close friends</li><li>• A conversation between family members</li><li>• To one's subordinate (though it is up to the speaker to decide)</li><li>• Newspapers</li><li>• Official documents</li><li>• Academic papers</li><li>• Certain grammatical environments</li></ul>

**FORMATION**

dictionary form → masu form

**RU-verbs:** Replace the final *-ru* of a dictionary form with *-masu*.Ex. [to eat] たべる taberu → たべます tabemasu[to see] みる miru → みます mimasu**U-verbs:** Replace the final *-u* of a dictionary form with *-imasu*.Ex. [to read] よむ yomu → よみます yomimasu[to buy] かく kaku → かきます kakimasu**EXERCISE 1**

Change the dictionary form into the polite form as in the examples. れい (Rei) means 'example'

れい (Rei) 1 [to eat] たべる taberu → たべます tabemasuれい (Rei) 2 [to read] よむ yomu → よみます yomimasu1) [to see] みる miru →6) [to wait] まつ matsu →2) [to hurry] いそぐ isogu →7) [to read] よむ yomu →3) [to speak] はなす hanasu →8) [to play] あそぶ asobu →4) [to eat] たべる taberu →9) [to take] とる toru →5) [to buy] かう kau →10) [to die] しぬ shinu →



Analyse the following verbal sentences as in the example above.

1) なおみさんが、さかなを食べます。 [Naomi eats fish.]

Naomi sa n ga, sa ka na o tabemasu. \*sakana 'fish'

( ) ↓ ( ) ↓ ( )

( ) ( )

2) なおみさんが、ほんをかいます。 [Naomi buys a book.]

Naomi san ga, ho n o kaimasu.

( ) ↓ ( ) ↓ ( )

( ) ( )

3) なおみさんが、テレビをみます。 [Naomi watches TV.]

Naomi san ga, te re bi o mimasu. \*terebi 'television'

( ) ↓ ( ) ↓ ( )

( ) ( )

4) なおみさんが、ほんをとります。 [Naomi takes a book.]

Naomi sa n ga, ho n o torimasu.

( ) ↓ ( ) ↓ ( )

( ) ( )

5) なおみさんが、せんせいを待ちます。 [Naomi waits for a teacher.]

Naomi sa n ga, sensei o machimasu. \*sensei 'a teacher'

( ) ↓ ( ) ↓ ( )

( ) ( )

6) なおみさんが、ほんをかきます。 [Naomi writes a book.]

Naomi sa n ga, ho n o kaki ma su.

( ) ↓ ( ) ↓ ( )

( ) ( )

7) なおみさんが、にほんごをはなします。

[Naomi speaks Japanese.]

Naomi sa n ga, ni ho n go o hanashimasu. \*nihongo 'Japanese language'

( ) ↓ ( ) ↓ ( )

( ) ( )

8) なおみさんが、いそぎます。 [Naomi hurries.]

Naomi sa n ga, i so gi ma su.

(            ) ↓ (            )  
(            )            (            )

9) なおみさんが、しにます。 [Naomi dies.]

Naomi sa n ga, shinimasu.

(            ) ↓ (            )  
(            )            (            )

10) なおみさんが、ともだちとあそびます。

[Naomi plays with her friend.]

Naomi sa n ga, tomodachi to asobimasu. \*asobimasu 'to play'

(            ) ↓ (            ) ↓ (            ) \*to 'see below'  
(            )            (            )            (            )



What is "to", ma'am?

Sensei! "To" tte nan desu ka?

*The particle と (to) means "with". In this sentence, it indicates a person with whom the subject carries out an action.*



Have you mastered *kana*? Do you know there'll be no more *romaji* from Review 7 onward?

# Review 1

# 復習

Change the following polite verbs into plain verbs.

れい：なおみさんが、ほんをよみます。 [Naomi reads a book.]

Naomi sa n ga, ho n o yomimasu. \*hon 'a book'

→ よむ。

yomu.

1) なおみさんが、さかなを食べます。 [Naomi eats fish.]

Naomi sa n ga, sa ka na o tabemasu. \*sakana 'fish'

→

2) なおみさんが、ほんをかいます。 [Naomi buys a book.]

Naomi sa n ga, ho n o kaimasu.

→

3) なおみさんが、テレビをみます。 [Naomi watches TV.]

Naomi sa n ga, te re bi o mimasu.

→

4) なおみさんが、ほんをとります。 [Naomi takes a book.]

Naomi sa n ga, ho n o torimasu.

→

5) なおみさんが、せんせいを待ちます。 [Naomi waits for a teacher.]

Naomi sa n ga, sensei o ma chi ma su.

→

6) なおみさんが、ほんをかきます。 [Naomi writes a book.]

Naomi sa n ga, ho n o ka ki ma su.

→

7) なおみさんが、にほんごをはなします。[Naomi speaks Japanese.]  
Naomi sa n ga, ni ho n go o hanashimasu.

→

8) なおみさんが、いそぎます。[Naomi hurries.]  
Naomi sa n ga, i so gi ma su.

→

9) なおみさんが、しにます。[Naomi dies.]  
Naomi sa n ga, shinimasu.

→

10) なおみさんが、ともだちとあそびます。[Naomi plays with her friend.]  
Naomi sa n ga, tomodachi to asobimasu. \*asobimasu 'to play'

→



Hi, it's me again. Learn *kana* now!