りことパス

理工学図書館パスファインダー

How to Learn Japanese Effectively

りことパスは、主に理工学分野の授業に関連するトピックについて、学習の初めの一歩となる資料やWebサイトを紹介するテーマ別調べ方ガイドです。理工学図書館のラーニング・サポーター （LS） が作成しています。学習やレポート作成に活用してください。

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1. Introductions

This Pathfinder is aimed for beginner of Japanese learner. There are 3 writing systems that you need to know in order to be able to read in Japanese language: Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji.

In this document, we introduce some efficient ways on how to learn not only these 3 writing systems, but also grammar in an effective way.

2. How to learn Japanese

2-1. Learn the writing systems

First, you should start from learning Hiragana and Katakana, which are the basic alphabets of Japanese. They have 46 characters each, 92 in total. Learn the both pronunciation and the writing order of each character.

Once you completely memorizing Hiragana and Katakana, you should start learning Kanji. It is said that there are over 50,000 kanji character exists, but actually learning around 1,000～2,000 Kanji should be sufficient for everyday use.

To learn Kanji, there is nothing more than memorizing each characters, their meaning, their pronunciation and the writing order. Having a correct writing order is a key to write Kanji beautifully. An effective way to learn Kanji is using flashcard and spaced repetition. We recommend an flashcard application called "Anki"(See "3-4 Online resources").

2-2. Learn the grammar

Japanese grammar is different from other languages. It has a structure of Subject + Object + Verb, which is different from SVO languages such as English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and so on. Here are some tips for learning grammar:

● Create an example immediately when you come across a new grammar. As soon as you learn something new, you should create a sentence by using the new grammar you learn, and write in your notebook or post it on SNS. The more you use, the more likely you will remember and master it.

● Do not try to translate from your language directly into Japanese. Generally, each language is unique in their own way. You cannot really find an identical translation in other language sometimes. The tip is to learn and understand new grammar concept in target language.

3. Recommended resources

3-1. General textbooks

■みんなの日本語 / スリーエーネットワーク編著（Minnna no nihongo）
【ID=2003393585】

A famous Japanese textbook for Japanese learner. It covers reading, writing, listening and speaking in balance overall. You will learn not only the language, but also the Japanese culture from this textbook.

3-2. Grammar books

■ A guide to Japanese grammar: a Japanese approach to learning Japanese grammar / Tae Kim, 2015 　　　　　　【ID=2004399750】

This book will help you understand the particles and break down grammatical concepts. It helps you understand from simple to complex grammar structures.

■ Basic Japanese grammar / Everett F. Bleiler, 2011 　【ID=2004212873】

This book teaches sufficient grammar in order to speak and understand simple spoken Japanese. Also, it helps the reader understand the logic of Japanese grammar with straightforward explanations and clear examples.

3-3. Kanji books

■ The first 100 Japanese kanji : The quick and easy way to learn the basic Japanese kanji / introduction by Eriko Sato, 2018 【ID=2004143665】

This book makes learning Kanji easy by taking a logical and natural approach. It teaches you the origins of the symbols and how they morphed into the modern symbol, and you will remember what they mean easily.

■ Read Japanese today : the easy way to learn 400 practical kanji / by Len Walsh, 2009 　　　　　　　　　　【ID=2004143641】

This book teaches you a brief history of Japanese writing system, how the parts of each Kanji are related to the whole, guidelines for writing Kanji and pronouncing words using them, etc.

3-4. Online resources

■ NHK world
https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/
Aside from being a TV and radio station,
NHK also offers a Japanese learning program.
They have a lot of free materials from PDFs
to audio files.

■ NHK news web easy
https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/easy/
News is summarized in easy Japanese and
there is Hiragana telling you the pronunciation
of every Kanji.

■ Minato
https://minato-jf.jp/
It is a Japanese language e-learning platform of
Japan Foundation.

■ BBC
http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/japanese/
The BBC is the world's leading public service
broadcaster.
They also provides some Japanese lessons.

■ ANKI
https://apps.ankiweb.net/
A powerful flashcard application for learning language.