

JP

JAPANESE LESSON

Question Words

? Question Words — 疑問詞

Six short conversations built entirely around asking questions — meeting someone, finding your way, shopping, and making plans. Natural, polite Japanese for everyday situations.

① Meeting Someone New — 初めまして

A:

すみません、あなたはどなたですか？

Sumimasen, anata wa donata desu ka?

Excuse me, who are you?

B:

田中です。あなたは？

Tanaka desu. Anata wa?

I'm Tanaka. And you?

A:

山田です。よろしくお願いします。

Yamada desu. Yoroshiku onegaishimasu.

I'm Yamada. Nice to meet you.

② Asking Where — どこですか

A:

すみません、駅はどこですか？

Sumimasen, eki wa doko desu ka?

Excuse me, where is the station?

B:

あそこです。まっすぐ行ってください。

Asoko desu. Massugu itte kudasai.

It's over there. Please go straight.

A:

何分かかりますか？

Nanpun kakarimasu ka?

How many minutes does it take?

B:

五分ぐらいです。

Gofun gurai desu.

About five minutes.

③ Asking the Price — いくらですか

A:

これはいくらですか？

Kore wa ikura desu ka?

How much is this?

B:

千円です。

④ Asking Age — 何歳ですか

A:

失礼ですが、何歳ですか？

Shitsurei desu ga, nansai desu ka?

Excuse me for asking, but how old are you?

B:

二十五歳です。あなたは？

Sen'en desu.

It's 1000 yen.

A:

じゃあ、どちらがおすすめです
か？

Jaa, dochira ga osusume desu ka?

Then, which one do you recommend?

B:

こちらの方が人気です。

Kochira no hou ga ninki desu.

This one is more popular.

Nijuugo-sai desu. Anata wa?

I'm 25. And you?

A:

私は三十歳です。

Watashi wa sanjussai desu.

I'm 30.

⑤ Asking Why — どうしてですか

A:

どうして日本語を勉強しています
か？

*Doushite nihongo wo benkyou shite imasu
ka?*

Why are you studying Japanese?

B:

アニメが好きだからです。

Anime ga suki dakara desu.

Because I like anime.

A:

いつから勉強していますか？

Itsu kara benkyou shite imasu ka?

Since when have you been studying?

B:

一年前からです。

Ichinen mae kara desu.

Since a year ago.

⑥ Making Plans — 予定について

A:

いつ会いますか？

Itsu aimasu ka?

When shall we meet?

B:

土曜日はどうですか？

Doyoubi wa dou desu ka?

How about Saturday?

A:

いいですね。誰と行きますか？

Ii desu ne. Dare to ikimasu ka?

Sounds good. Who are you going with?

B:

友達と行きます。

Tomodachi to ikimasu.

I'm going with a friend.



Vocabulary — ごい

20 key question words. All kanji are shown with their romaji reading right beneath, since kanji study hasn't started yet — read the romaji line to confirm the pronunciation.

#	JAPANESE	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	だれ (誰)	dare	who	pronoun
2	どなた	donata	who (polite)	pronoun
3	なに／なん (何)	nani / nan	what	pronoun
4	どこ	doko	where	adverb
5	いつ	itsu	when	adverb
6	なぜ	naze	why (formal)	adverb
7	どうして	doushite	why (everyday)	adverb
8	どう	dou	how	adverb
9	どうやって	douyatte	how (by what method)	adverb
10	いくつ	ikutsu	how many / how old (casual)	pronoun
11	いくら	ikura	how much (price)	pronoun
12	何歳 (なんさい)	nansai	how old	phrase
13	何分 (なんぷん)	nanpun	how many minutes	phrase
14	どの	dono	which (+ noun)	adjective
15	どちら	dochira	which (of two, polite)	pronoun
16	どれ	dore	which one (of three+)	pronoun
17	何時 (なんじ)	nanji	what time	phrase
18	誰の (だれの)	dare no	whose	phrase

#	JAPANESE	ROMAJI	ENGLISH	TYPE
19	どんな	donna	what kind of	adjective
20	どこから	doko kara	from where	phrase

Real Japanese Tip — なに becomes なん: 何 is read nani on its own (何が好きですか? — "What do you like?"), but it switches to nan right before "n," "d," "t" sounds and before most counters — which is exactly why 何歳 is nansai (not naniseai), 何時 is nanji, and 何分 is nanopun. There's no need to memorise a rule for this yet — just notice that あなたの誕生日は何歳ですか-style questions about a specific unit of measurement almost always use the nan reading, and it'll start to feel automatic with practice.