

Information for Term 2

Term 2

7th April - 21st June
(11 weeks)

Public Holiday Replacement

We all love our holidays but we love our Japanese classes more. Please see below for replacement dates.

Monday class:

21st Apr → 31st Mar
9th Jun → 23rd Jun

Friday class:

18th Apr → 4th Apr
25th Apr → 27th Jun

Saturday class:

19th Apr → 5th Apr

Term 2 Event

Language Exchange Meeting & Dinner

29th March Saturday

Language Exchange Meeting

Time : 3:30pm – 6:00pm

Place : iJapanese

Cost : \$5

Dinner Party

Let's enjoy a fun evening of language exchange and delicious Japanese cuisine!

Ojigi (Bowing) – What does it mean in Japan?

You may have seen people in Japan are always bowing in many situations. They do not normally shake hands when greeting each other, let alone a hug! Japanese of all ages will bow when greeting each other. It is ingrained in to our culture and society. But what does it mean?

In Western culture, they shake hands which is said to originated from an ancient gesture showing that the hand holds no weapons. Whereas in East Asian culture, they bow. It is originally meant to express no hostility against the opponent while holding out their neck.

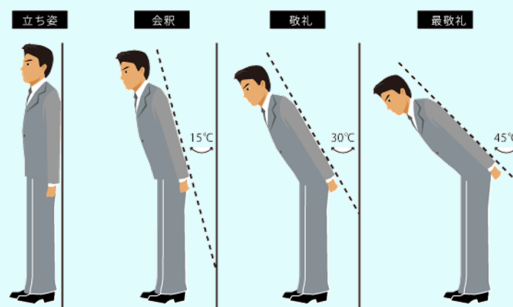
In Japanese society today, bowing expresses not only greeting but also appreciation, respect, as well as words of apology.

Basically bowing shows respect for the person and they can be formally categorised 3 types depending on the deepness of the waist bend.

In all bows, while women fold their hands slightly in front of their body when bowing, men's hands rest on their flanks.

Eshaku (casual greeting): 15 degrees bow

The casual bow is the "eshaku" bow. In this bow, the waist is generally bent at about a 15 degree angle. It is common to lightly dip the head and give an "eshaku" bow when exchanging a casual greeting or passing by someone. It may be used when you enter or leave the room, or when you bow in response to shop staff.



Keirei (common greeting): 30 degrees bow

In this bow, the torso is lowered to about 30 degrees. A deep bow is made when you exchange business cards, or when you meet someone of a higher social status, such as your boss, guests or customers.

Saikeirei (formal bowing): 45 degrees bow

The most polite bow, consists of lowering the torso about 45 degrees. The very deep bow is made when you meet your executives. Also when you attend a wedding or funeral, or when you express gratitude. This is also used with an apology and indicates true remorse.

Bowing is deeply rooted in Japan and you will see lots of bowing situations, such as a respect bow between opponents before and after a sports match, or between teacher and students in the classroom. They often bow on the telephone, too!

When you are bowed from Japanese people, you can reply with a small nod of the head.

By Noriko

Student from iJapanese

Adam Sloane san

Adam san has just returned from a trip to Japan. Let's share his fantastic experience !

I recently had the chance to visit Japan with my brother, this was my second trip and his first. Given my previous trip I have some idea of what to expect, for him it was quite an experience, the look on his face when he saw the sheer number of people moving about made me smile.

While we spent most of our time in Tokyo, we did visit Kyoto, Matsumoto and Nikko as well.

Matsumoto is where one of four castles that are considered national treasures are located and we were lucky enough to get a guided tour from a volunteer tour guide that just happened to be there for a meeting.

Nikko is a remarkably beautiful place with some stunning scenery and beautiful temples. There is a sight called Yomeimon Gate or Higurashino-mon the One day gate, because you can spend all day looking at it and not see everything.

And in Kyoto we walked along the Philosopher's Path and visited some of the temples along the path.



Imperial Palace in Tokyo

Kisai-sensei was kind enough to give me some challenges to complete while I was in Japan, the big one was to buy a nengajo (New year's greeting card) and post it. This gave me an excellent opportunity to use my Japanese. Buying the card and the stamp went well, although I ran in to a couple of issues when the person at the post office tried to explain that I couldn't send it before the 18th Dec - but I got there eventually.

We visited many places in Tokyo and saw many things, and even got to meet some great people. I loved my time in Japan and am looking to go back again when I'm able.

Meishin Quiz – Superstitions

"Never open an umbrella in the house" This is one of many superstitions known to Australians. In Japan, we also have many superstitions which are still strongly believed since ancient times. Here, I will introduce you to some Japanese superstitions and then you will need to guess the correct answer.

- You will die young if you sleep with your head pointing toward the _____.
A. North B. South C. East D. West
- If a baby's lower tooth falls out, or if a baby's higher tooth falls out _____.
A. throw it under the floor B. throw as far as possible C. throw it up onto the roof
D. leave it under the pillow
- If you make a paper doll called "teruteru bozu" and hang it outside the window, it will _____.
A. rain B. be clear weather C. be hot D. be cold
- If you sneeze once, it means someone is talking about you _____.
If you sneeze twice, it means someone is talking about you _____.
If you sneeze three times, someone is in love with you.
If you sneeze four times, you have a cold.
A. in a good way B. in a funny way C. in a serious way D. in a bad way



by Kisai

Ambiguous culture

As an Australian I sometimes find it difficult to understand Japanese people. It seems not to be a lack of understanding, but a differences in culture, so I would like to share with you a few of those notable culture differences I have encountered in my years of dealing with Japanese people.

The first one is TIME, perhaps the most obvious and notable characteristic of all Japanese people however unless you are living or working with a Japanese person you may not even notice it until you have meet the JR (Japan Railway) system. There you will see the efficacy of the Japanese nation.

Japanese people are extremely punctual in there dealings with other people. For example when meeting a Japanese friend he or she will always arrive on time and for those of you who are living with a Japanese person planning to go out you must leave at the pre arranged time, if not, if even a minute late, you find an unhappy and frustrated person standing next to you. As an Australian I am not as punctual as my fellow Japanese staff members or friends, creating tension and frustration, yet not always apparent which brings me to my next culture difference, INDIRECTNESS.

Japanese have a tendency to be indirect. Close friends or colleagues will naturally mention an issue that may not be so apparent to the discussion at hand. The ability to read between the lines is a must when talking with Japanese people, a talent that all Japanese people possess but unfortunately most westerners are yet to develop. This creates significant differences when communicating and understanding. Let's take a simple email between a westerner and Japanese client or colleague. A westerner would tend to be short and straight to

the point but on the other hand, when reading a Japanese email you would need to first scroll down to the next paragraph before you even found out if they were asking you a question or relaying information.

The fact is a Japanese person would never say "no" directly. Alternatively they'll respond with an "ummm maybe" which often translates into a "No" anyway. You just need to develop that inner 'read between the lines' ability. As a westerner we would find this difficult to except and frustrating that you can not get a direct answer from a Japanese person even if it is as simple as asking them would you like the air-conditioning on. The response would be "Oh, if you like" despite the fact they are sweating like crazy and the temperature is above 40 degrees.

The hard truth is that Japanese do not like to be direct. To be direct can be interpreted as being harsh, mean or even rude at times. They do not like conflict, nor to feel embarrassed. The result of this is for them to be ambiguous with all their answers, that way they seamlessly avoid all negative situations.



Oh! It's already 2 o'clock.

By Phillip

Noriko's Thought

Looking back on the first page, nodding is an important sign for Japanese people to indicate 'I am listening to you'. They are frequently nodding while talking with others. So it is difficult for Japanese people to know whether western people are listening to them, because they do not nod.

When talking to a Japanese person, remember to nod your head from time to time to show you are listening to them!

On the other hand from a western point of view when we are talking with a Japanese person who is nodding, this doesn't necessarily guarantee you that he/she agrees with you. This purely means 'they are listening to you' - an Important fact to

remember when dealing with Japanese clients in a business meeting.

In addition please remember, in Phil's article, if the Japanese person said 'umm, muzukashii desune...' (well, it sounds difficult...) in a business meeting, this means 'No'!

Umm, Muzukashii desune..



No way!

Fortune-telling by blood type !

Do you know your blood type?

Just as fortune-telling such as horoscope or palmistry (palm reading), 'fortune-telling by blood type' has also become popular in Japan. I can say 99.9% of Japanese people know their blood type and interestingly they relate their blood types with their personality types. They believe people can be divided into 4 types of personalities depending on their blood type. Among young people, it sometimes relates to their relationships. For example if your blood type is B and your boyfriend/girlfriend is blood type O, they can get along well with each other. If your blood type is A, then blood type AB people will be trustworthy for you and you will get good advice or cooperation from them.

Personally, I don't agree with the idea, but people might tend to judge others by their blood type. At the same time, when I think about my family or my friends' characteristics, the blood type description suits them very well.

In this article, I would like to introduce 'general personality' based on blood types which is well known in Japan.



[Type A] They consider discipline, public rules and human relationship very important. Always be prudent and well organised. This blood type is the largest number in Japan and it's reflected in Japanese society. When you think of a Japanese person, you can be convinced of it, can't you?



[Type B] They don't like being bound by discipline and rules. They are freewheeling and very positive. It's said that many artists are blood type B. It's hard to think what they're thinking and sometimes have changeable personalities. I am blood type B and I think it matches my character...!



[Type AB] They are calm all the time and they can think about things objectively. In addition, they're also said to have blood type A and blood type B characteristics (double personalities). Some of my friends are this blood type and they always give me good advice.



[Type O] They are realistic and romantic. They don't care about small things and are good at becoming natural leaders as they take care of people below them. My thinking about blood type O is they are very calm and cheerful. It's also said that they can get along well with anybody.

Do these match your character? There is no scientific evidence to prove or disapprove blood types and the association with people characters. Have a think about yourself, and your family or friends. Maybe you can categorise them into the 4 types of personalities.

Japanese people may ask for your blood type when first meeting you, for them this is an ice-breaker, a way to find common ground with you!

By Ayano

Answers from Kisai

1. = A

The north-east is considered unlucky. It's also thought to be unlucky to sleep with the head towards the north "kita makura", since this is how dead bodies are laid to rest.

2. Lower tooth = C / Higher tooth = A

This is a good luck charm rather than a superstition, but it means they wish that new teeth will grow strongly.

We sometime can't explain original meanings. However a lot of Japanese people are still superstitious. To learn superstitions, it will give you a better understanding about Japanese culture. What superstitions do you have in your country?

3. = B

Hanging the doll means a sacrifice to the Gods.

4. Sneeze once = A / Sneeze twice = D

Ancestors believed sneezing is caused by a curse or someone's spirit nearby.

