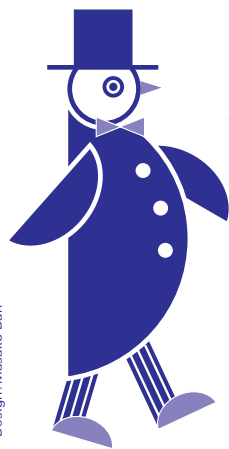


Design: Masako Ban



su... su... su... hakushon

It has been one year since I met you in April, Hirayama-san. You have told me so many things about Japan, and I have begun to understand Japanese culture. But please continue to give me your advice because I believe what I know about Japan is only the tip of the iceberg.

You might have noticed that Japanese people make some weird sounds that make you irritated. But there is no need for you to try making those sounds. (It may be hard to slurp your noodles without practice!?)

Please draw lines between (A to G) and (1 to 7) in order to make the match.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>A) スー
sū
(e.g. Well...)</p> <p>B) スー スー
sū-sū
(sniff, sniff)</p> <p>C) スー
sū
(slurp)</p> <p>D) ズルズルズル
zuru-zuru-zuru
(slurp, slurp, etc.)</p> <p>E) ハクション
hakushon
(achoo)</p> <p>F) おひすいいね
o hi sui i ne
(It's delicious!)</p> <p>G) スー スー
sū-sū</p> | <p>1) This is the sound of sucking air through one's teeth. It indicates that the person is thinking.</p> <p>2) This is the sound you hear when someone sneezes. It is not rude to sneeze in public, and there is no need to say, "Excuse me," after you sneeze or, "Bless you," after someone else sneezes.</p> <p>3) This is the sound of slurping noodles (udon, soba, etc.). Slurping them loudly gives the impression that you are really enjoying eating them. Many Japanese people try not to slurp when they eat spaghetti.</p> <p>4) This is the sound of sniffing when you have a runny nose. It is rude to blow your nose loudly in public, but it is acceptable to sniff when you have a very runny nose. If you are desperate to blow your nose, just excuse yourself and go to the bathroom.</p> <p>5) This is the sound of slurping when drinking hot coffee, tea or soup. Slurping cools the hot liquid, and it is quite acceptable in Japan. Interestingly, you are supposed to slurp the last drop of your tea when you are invited to tea ceremony. It means that you have finished your tea.</p> <p>6) This is the sound of inhaling the air between the teeth when removing the bits of food with a toothpick (yōji). It is mainly done by men, or people who have poorly aligned teeth.</p> <p>7) This is what people sound like when they try to say, "oishī ne" (This is delicious) with their mouths full.</p> |
|--|---|

Answers 1) ... A), 2) ... E), 3) ... D), 4) ... B), 5) ... C), 6) ... G), 7) ... F)

When in Japan, do as the Japanese do.

Here is a list of things that are considered bad manners in Japan. People may cringe when you do them.

- Do not blow your nose in public, particularly into your handkerchief. Please try to use tissues. (They are often handed out on streets as advertisements.) Handkerchiefs are supposed to be used as handtowels or napkins. If you are desperate to blow your nose, say, "shitsurê-shimasu" (Excuse me).
- It is not good manners to eat and drink while you are walking.
- Do not put your feet up on your desk at the office. It is also rude to sit on tables or desks.
- It is rude to speak while chewing gum.



Pera Pera Penguin's

5 minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama Vol. 18

■■■ Time does fly! (kōin ya no gotoshi) Yes, please feel free to ask me when you have questions. In fact, I've been receiving a lot of e-mails from people worldwide (takusan no e-mail arigatōgozaimasu). Those heartwarming messages are my encouragement and have given me energy. And I always look forward to reading them. Now, I am going to give you a question for a change! Did you know that Japanese people think differently from people in other cultures in regard to onomatopoeia, the naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it? It may be hard to describe the sounds, but please try to use your imagination.

These are typical questions taxi drivers may ask you in informal language. The question form "...desu ka?" is usually omitted in casual conversation.

Key words:

If Japanese people ask you questions using these words, please reply in your own words.

どこ doko where	国 kuni country	食べ物 tabemono food	好き suki like	どう dō How is...?	家族 kazoku family	歳 toshi age
---------------------	----------------------	-------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	------------------------	-------------------

driver: お客さん どの国?
okyaku-san doko no kuni

Where are you from?

Mr.Pole: I'm from the South Pole.

南極
nankyoku
です。
desu

driver: 日本の食べ物は何が好き?
Nihon no tabemono wa nani ga suki

What is your favorite Japanese food?

Mr.Pole: Oh, I love sakana (fish)!!!

魚
sakana
が 好きです。
ga suki desu

driver: 日本はどう?
Nihon wa dō

How is your life in Japan?

Mr.Pole: I'm getting used to it.

少し慣れました。
sukoshi naremashita

driver: 家族は?
kazoku wa

Do you have a family?

Mr.Pole: I'm single.

独身
dokushin
です。
desu

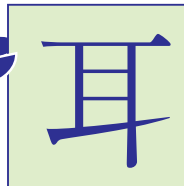
driver: 歳はいくつ?
toshi wa ikutsu

How old are you?

Mr.Pole: How old do I look?

いくつに見えますか。
ikutsu ni miemasu ka

It seems like Mr. Pole is being interviewed by an employer of a company. But it is not unusual for Japanese people to ask even private things to a person whom they are meeting for the first time in order to find out what kind of person he/she is. By the way, when you are asked to count your family members, you are supposed to include yourself. (e.g. you, your wife and two children. yo nin desu)



mimi
ears

Let's practice !

A 百聞は一見にしかず
hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu
(hundred) (seeing it once)
(listening)

"Seeing is believing," or literally, "Seeing it once is much better than hearing about it a 100 times." It means that it is much easier to understand something if you see it once with your own eyes, instead of hearing about it 100 times from other people.

B 耳を貸さない
mimi o kasanai
(ear) (not lend)

"Turning a deaf ear." To not pay attention to what someone says.

C 耳を疑う
mimi o utagau
(doubt, suspect)

"Doubting your own ears," or unable to believe what you have just heard because you are so fazed

D. 耳が早い
mimi ga hayai
(quick)

"Having a quick ear." Describes a person who is quick to hear the latest rumors.

① No matter what I say, he just turns a deaf ear to me.

何を言ってもあの人
nani o ittemo ano hito wa
no matter what that person
turns a deaf ear
です。
desu

② I have heard many explanations of it, but I think, after all,

いろいろ説明を聞きましたが、やっぱり
iroiro setsumē o kikumashita ga yappari
various explanation listen but after all

"Seeing is believing."

Seeing is believing
です。
desu ne

③ When I heard about it, I couldn't believe my ears. Really!

その話を聞いた時
sono hanashi o kita toki
that story listened when
couldn't believe
my ears
。 本
hontō ni
indeed

④ What? You heard the rumor already?

え? もうその噂を知っているんですか。
e mō sono uwasa o shitte-irun desu ka
What? already rumor have known

You have a quick ear.

a quick ear
です。
desu ne

Answers

- ①..... B mimi o kasanai ②.....A hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu
③..... C mimi o utagaimashita ④..... D mimi ga hayai