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Information Desk Support Staff (English)

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## Yasashii Nihongo (Plain Japanese)

Have you ever heard of the term “easy Japanese” or “simple Japanese”? What kind of Japanese do you imagine? Two Kanji characters apply to the word “yasashii.” One is gentle and the other is easy. I'm sure there are many definitions, but given these kanji, one would mean caring for others, and the other would mean easy to understand and simple. This can be said to be designed for children, the elderly, and non-Japanese people living in Japan. The Japanese language has honorifics, which expresses one's respect toward the other person. Honorifics may give the impression of talking without being rough and rude. For Japanese people, it is very difficult to speak without using any honorifics at the beginning.

First of all, let's consider the requirements for plain Japanese.

### When we talk

1. Change the difficult words into easy-to-understand ones

e.g.) Garbage collection day for burnable waste →

The day they collect the burnable garbage

2. Speak specifically without using idioms.

e.g.) Food products → Tabemono, Collapse → to break down

Emergency → sudden illness or injury



3. Write short sentences and include only one information

e.g.) Please evacuate to the nearest elementary or junior high school due to the earthquake. →An earthquake occurred. Run to the nearby elementary or junior school.

4. Speak slowly

#### When we write

5. Put furigana (hiragana/katakana) on kanji characters to make them easier to read

6. Write Japanese with a space between words; leave a space between words

e.g.) Please apply to the City Office by email or phone.

7. Draw a picture to explain

#### Let's practice

I came up with some example sentences, so please think together about how we can make this Japanese plainer to understand.

e.g.) It is open day tomorrow. We will be open all day, so please feel free to attend.

(Example)

Ashita gakkouwa zutto aiteimasu. Kodomotachini ainikitekudasai.

(Sample answer)

The school will be open all day tomorrow. Come and see the children.



There is no correct answer. If it is conveyed to the other party, it will be the best solution in any form. If everyone can understand what you want to say, it will be the best solution in any form.

As of May 2025, there are 28,031 international residents in Nerima City. It is predicted that the number of residents will be 61,583 by 2054. By the time 30 years come around from 2024, we'll have almost 2.6 times of the current figure. Nationalities vary widely, and many residents may be learning Japanese. More and more people may be able to understand and speak plain Japanese.

It is good that people from various countries can talk with each other using plain Japanese.

I am also a tourist guide for people from overseas, and they are very interested not only in tourist spots and Japanese food, but also in the Japanese language. It makes me very happy when they say “arigato” “sayonara” and so on. I am often asked by such visitors, “Please tell me the one Japanese phrase I should memorize. What would you think of? I tell tourists “sumimasen” (excuse me) which has many meanings in a single word. I think it will be useful and convenient while traveling

1. “sumimasen” to start a conversation.  
e.g.) “sumimasen” Where is Nerima station?
2. “sumimasen” to ask forgiveness.  
e.g.) “sumimasen” I’m getting off. (on the train)
3. “sumimasen” in a restaurant or a store.  
e.g.) “sumimasen” I’d like to order, please. “sumimasen” May I have the check, please?
4. “sumimasen” to say sorry.  
e.g.) When you bump into someone while passing them.
5. “sumimasen” for thank you.  
e.g.) When they were kind to you. When someone picked up something you dropped.

I wish I could speak freely with people from various countries in only one language in the whole world. The language is an important culture created by the deep history of people in the past, and I want to understand each other and hope to be able to speak various languages as well.



## Information from Nerima City Regional Promotion Section

### <Welcome to Information Desk at Cultural Exchange Square>

We provide all sorts of useful information in some languages for your daily life, including Japanese language classes and so on.

【Venue】 3-1-1、Hikarigaoka, Nerima City

【Telephone number】 03-3975-1252

【Open】 Weekday 10:00a.m.-1:00p.m.

Saturday, Sunday, holidays 1:00-4:00p.m.

※Closed: When Culture Exchange Square is closed, and the end of year and new year holidays.

【Languages】 English : Tue. Thu. Sat. Chinese: Wed. Fri. Sun.

Korean : Mon. ※Please make inquiries for other languages.

### <Please visit the Information Desk at Nerima City Office>

Counseling service in English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog and Japanese is available at Nerima City Regional Promotion Section. Counseling on phone is also available.

【Venue】 Regional Promotion Office, 9<sup>th</sup> floor of Nerima City Main Building

6-12-1, Toyotamakita, Nerima City

【Telephone Number】 03-5984-4333

【Open】 1:00p.m.-5:00p.m.

【Languages】 English : Mon.~Fri. Chinese : Mon.~Fri.

Korean : Fri. Tagalog : Mon.

※For other languages, please make inquiries.

**We hold events where Japanese and foreigners can interact with each other.**

**For more information**

【Nerima City Official HP】

<https://www.city.nerima.tokyo.jp/gaikokunohitomuke/bunka.html>

【QR】



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