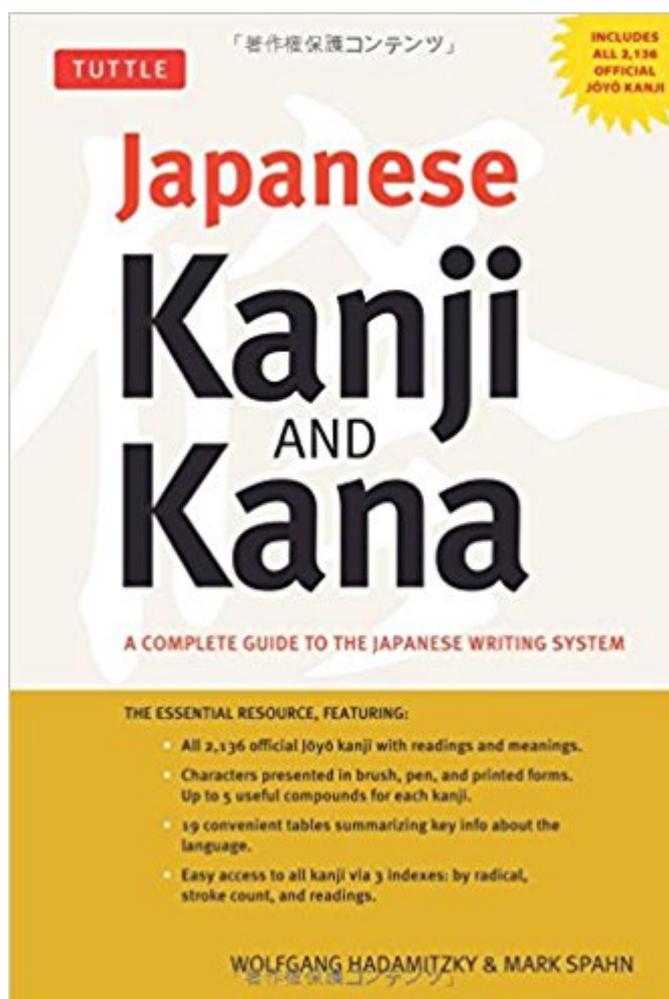


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# Japanese Kanji & Kana: A Complete Guide To The Japanese Writing System



## Synopsis

This comprehensive book helps you learn the 92 basic Kana characters and 2,136 standard Kanji characters. Complete, compact and authoritative – this Japanese language book provides all the information needed to learn kanji and kana, including the 92 basic hiragana and katakana phonetic symbols (known collectively as Japanese Kana) and the 2,136 standard Joyo Kanji characters that every Japanese person learns in school. This new and completely revised edition reflects recent changes made to the official Joyo kanji list by the Japanese government. The kana and kanji are presented in an easy and systematic way that helps you learn them quickly and retain what you have learned and improve your mastery of the Japanese language. The ability to read Japanese and write Japanese is an essential skill for any student and will build on their previous knowledge and improve on their overall capacity to learn Japanese. A concise index allows you to look up the Kanji in three different ways (so the book also serves as a Japanese Kanji dictionary) and extra spaces are provided to allow you to practice writing Japanese. Japanese Kanji and Kana contains: All 2,136 official Joyo kanji with readings and definitions. Characters are graded by their JLPT examination levels. Up to 5 useful vocabulary compounds for each kanji. Brush and pen cursive forms as well as printed forms. 19 tables summarizing key information about the characters. Kanji look-up indexes by radicals, stroke counts and readings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm no longer an active learner of the Japanese language, nor any longer attempting to maintain

literacy in that language which uses the most difficult writing system of all modern languages I'm aware of. However, I just took this most recent edition off the shelf in our library and can't refrain from posting a review. This book is the closest thing to a complete rundown for the beginner that I've encountered. We all imagine the Sino-Japanese characters, the kanji, to be the main thing and that is certainly understandable. However, Spahn and Hadamitzky give the beginner the whole story. Those of us working on our own need the whole story, since acquiring literacy in Japanese makes such heavy demands on our memory, analytical and combinatory powers. Sections (visible in the "search inside feature", but I have comments):  
I Romanization: There are two systems in common use, kunrei-shiki and Hepburn. Students should be aware of this at the outset. A transliteration table is included.  
II Kana syllabaries: The chief and resounding superiority of this book over competing works is this section on the kana syllabaries. I do not know of a comparable work which includes even a substantial part of the information offered here. There is brief history of both kana (such stuff as hiragana's origins in "onna-de"; they were used by women; one might compare early scripting of Yiddish by-and-for women) and tables showing the kanji from which each was derived. The "alphabetical" or dictionary look-up order as well as the older "iroha" order are displayed. Stroke order is demonstrated. Combinations and the various ways of writing long vowels are discussed fully but concisely. The authors tell us what they are currently used for.

Kanji can cause pain. Those tiny symbols with multiple pronunciations and an often dizzying array of strokes and shapes scourge the stalwart and whittle down the weary. Those traveling this pictorial path beware! The Kanji do not give up their secrets easily. Not to mention that seekers of fluency will require at least some knowledge of over 2,000 characters and shapes. Some differ by as little as a single stroke. All are immensely beautiful and they deeply reward the persistent. But learning Kanji takes more than rote memorization. It takes a lifestyle change. Many have nonetheless succeeded. Cheap melodrama aside (though more will surely follow), the Kanji remain one of the highest hurdles for fluency in one of the world's most difficult languages. Those who have some knowledge know that they represent far more than letters. In fact, they are not letters, they are units of meaning that combine subunits of meaning. They can express ideas and concepts. Kanji are little salads of meaning. Everything said about the difficulty of learning them is true, but good tools can make the punishing task far easier. The justifiably classic text "Kanji & Kana" will spare many people frustration. After repeated use, many may find themselves clutching this book to their bosom and spewing endless tears of joy. Anyone new to Kanji should read the incredible introduction that includes so much useful and time-saving information that beginners will nearly feel unworthy. As the

book's title suggests, the Kana, which includes Hiragana and Katakana, also receive more than adequate coverage. Sound and stroke order charts, punctuation, usage, long and short vowels and numerous other fascinating tidbits and necessary information lurk here.

This book is a must-have resource for anyone learning Japanese because it is so versatile: \* get a detailed explanation of the Japanese writing system \* look up Kanji through a number of indexes \* learn Kanji in a logical order In my opinion, the most important use of this book is for learning Kanji. As a student of Japanese who has mastered the Kana, you want to get started on the Kanji, but you want to learn them efficiently and without wasting time on Kanji like "convex" that you'll never need in real life. What this book does, apart from the detailed description of the writing system itself and a few pages on the Kana, is present all 2000+ JĀ•yĀ• Kanji in a logical order in which to learn them, going from simple to complex (e. g. æ—¥ and æœ̃ before æ^ ) and from frequent to infrequent. This makes this book the ideal companion for your Japanese studies, better than "Remembering the Kanji" in my opinion, because you don't need to complete the whole book in order to learn the Kanji for lesson 1 of your textbook. The Kanji that come up early in textbooks will come up early in this book and the rare Kanji have been relegated to the back, where they belong. Even after you are proficient in Japanese, you won't want to chuck out this book, because it also makes for a great Kanji reference book, in which you can look up the characters you may have forgotten. Each character is introduced with full info: stroke order, radical and composition, ON and KUN pronunciations along with different meanings that these imply (very useful for me!), as well as several example words or phrases that can be created with these Kanji.

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