Maudric
Everyday Japanese, one walk at a time

Japanese phrases for your trip

Polite phrases with pronunciation · 旅行(りょこう)で使(つか)えるフレーズ

The essentials

すみません	***Sumimasen.*** Excuse me. / Sorry. The most useful word: getting attention, apologising, even thanking someone who went out of their way.
ありがとうございます	***Arigatō gozaimas.*** Thank you.
お願(ねが)いします	***Onegai shimas.*** Please. (asking for something)
大丈夫(だいじょうぶ)です	***Daijōbu des.*** I'm fine, thanks. / No need. A soft, polite way to say no.
わかりません	***Wakarimasen.*** I don't understand.
英語(えいご)は話(はな)せますか	***Eigo wa hanasemas ka?*** Do you speak English?
もう一度(いちど)お願(ねが)いします	***Mō ichido onegai shimas.*** Once more, please.
ゆっくりお願(ねが)いします	***Yukkuri onegai shimas.*** Slowly, please.

Greetings

おはようございます	***Ohayō gozaimas.*** Good morning. Until about 10 or 11 a.m.
こんにちは	***Konnichiwa.*** Hello. (daytime)
こんばんは	***Konbanwa.*** Good evening.
はじめまして	***Hajimemashite.*** Nice to meet you.
お邪魔(じゃま)します	***Ojama shimas.*** Said as you enter someone's home.
失礼(しつれい)します	***Shitsurei shimas.*** Said as you enter or leave a room or office.

Eating out

何名様(なんめいさま)ですか	***Nanmei-sama des ka?*** How many people? (you'll hear this)
一人(ひとり)です・二人(ふたり)です	***Hitori des · Futari des*** One person · Two people
三人(さんにん)です・四人(よにん)です・五人(ごにん)です	***Sannin des · Yonin des · Gonin des*** Three · Four · Five people Holding up fingers works too.
いただきます	***Itadakimas.*** Said just before you start eating. Not like "bon appétit": you say it yourself, not to other people.
これをお願(ねが)いします	***Kore o onegai shimas.*** This one, please. (point at the menu)
おすすめは何(なん)ですか	***Osusume wa nan des ka?*** What do you recommend?
～のアレルギーがあります	***… no arerugī ga arimas.*** I'm allergic to … 卵(たまご) tamago egg · 小麦(こむぎ) komugi wheat · えび ebi prawns · ナッツ nattsu nuts
お会計(かいけい)をお願(ねが)いします	***Okaikei o onegai shimas.*** The bill, please. You usually pay at the till by the door. There's no tipping.
ごちそうさまでした	***Gochisōsama deshta.*** Thank you for the meal. Say it after eating, and to the staff on the way out: a lovely touch.

Hear every phrase spoken, and practise on the go:
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Shopping

これはいくらですか	*Kore wa ikura des ka?* How much is this?
カードは使えますか	*Kādo wa tsukaemas ka?* Can I pay by card?
袋はいりません	*Fukuro wa irimasen.* I don't need a bag.
見てるだけです	*Miteru dake des.* I'm just looking.
免税の手続きはできますか	*Menzei no tetsuzuki wa dekimas ka?* Can I buy this tax-free?

Tax-free shopping: the new system

- From 1 November 2026, you pay the full price, including tax, and show your passport.
- Spend at least ¥5,000 before tax in one shop on one day.
- Keep the goods in your hand luggage and confirm them at the customs tax-free kiosk at your departure airport or port within 90 days (at major airports you can use Visit Japan Web).
- The shop or its refund agent then pays the tax back. Food and cosmetics used up in Japan don't count.

Getting around

～はどこですか	*… wa doko des ka?* Where is …? トイレ toire toilet · 駅 eki station · コインロッカー koin rokkā lockers
この電車は～に止まりますか	*Kono densha wa … ni tomarimas ka?* Does this train stop at …?
～までお願いします	*… made onegai shimas.* To …, please. (taxi) Taxi doors open and close by themselves.
道に迷いました	*Michi ni mayoimashta.* I'm lost.

Hotels and onsen

予約しています	*Yoyaku shite imas.* I have a reservation.
荷物を預かっていただけますか	*Nimotsu o azukatte itadakemas ka?* Could you keep my bags?
タトゥーがありますが、大丈夫ですか	*Tatū ga arimas ga, daijōbu des ka?* I have a tattoo. Is that OK? Rules vary, so ask first. Wash before you get in; no swimsuits.

Manners

写真を撮ってもいいですか	*Shashin o totte mo ii des ka?* May I take a photo?
靴を脱ぎますか	*Kutsu o nugimas ka?* Should I take my shoes off?

Good to know

- Shrine: bow twice, clap twice, bow once. Temple: hands together quietly, no clapping.
- No tipping anywhere. Queue, keep quiet on trains, and carry your rubbish with you.

Help

助けてください	*Tasukete kudasai!* Help!
救急車を呼んでください	*Kyūkyūsha o yonde kudasai.* Please call an ambulance.
気分が悪いです	*Kibun ga warui des.* I feel unwell.
財布をなくしました	*Saifu o nakushimashta.* I've lost my wallet.
交番はどこですか	*Kōban wa doko des ka?* Where's the police box?

Emergency numbers

110 Police	**119** Ambulance, fire	**050-3816-2787** Japan Visitor Hotline: 24 hours, in English

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