

It's a...

This simplest structure in Japanese is the "...です。" structure. です is pronounced 'dess' as the u becomes silent. Simply put, ____です means "It is", "Those are", or "I am." ____ ,. It's ____.

Note: In Japanese, cat = ねこ dog = いぬ.

ねこです。
いぬです。
ジョンです。

It's a
cat. or Those
are cats.
It's a
dog. or Those
are dogs.
I am John.

There is usually no difference between plural and singular things in Japanese. To distinguish what is being said, one must rely on context or add an adjective to describe *how many* dogs or cats or whatevers you have.

To make a sentence a question in Japanese, you add "か" to the end.

ねこですか。 Is it a cat?
いぬですか。 Is it a dog?
ジョンさんですか。 Are you John? Is it John?

Note that the suffix 'san' was added to the end of John when it became a question. This is because you are referring to someone else, rather than yourself. It is considered polite to add -san to people's names other than your own. Be very carefull not to add it to the end of your own name though, as it is considered very rude and unusual.

To say "It's **not** a cat." or "I'm **not** John." you have to use the form *dewa arimasen* or *janai desu*. Either form means the same thing, but *dewa arimasen* is more formal. **Note:** The above romanization uses *wa* in *dewa* while the phonetic characters below use *ha*. This is because the phonetic character *ha* in this case is *pronounced* as *wa*.

ねこじゃないです。
ねこではありません。
いぬじゃないです。
いぬではありません。
ジョンさんじゃないです。

It's not a cat.
It's not a cat.
It's not a dog.
It's not a dog.
I'm not John.

Note that, in the example above, you are not John, therefore referring to him with -san is ok.

If someone asks you "Is it a cat?" you can respond with yes (はい) or no (いいえ).

<p>ねこですか。 はい、ねこです。 いいえ、ねこじゃないです。</p>	<p>Is it a cat? Yes, it is a cat. No, it's not a cat.</p>
<p>If you don't know what something is, you can point to it and ask "Nan desu ka?"</p> <p>Nan means 'what', so the sentence means "What is it?" Do not use <i>nan</i> to refer to people. It is very rude.</p>	
<p><u>Examples:</u></p> <p>なんですか。 いぬです。</p> <p>なんですか。 ねこです。</p>	<p>What is it? It's a dog.</p> <p>What is it? It's a cat.</p>
<p><u>Lesson 1 Vocabulary:</u></p>	
<p>-さん</p>	<p>polite ending for other people's names</p>
<p>... です.</p>	<p>It's a ...</p>
<p>... じゃないです.</p>	<p>It's not a ...</p>
<p>... ではありません.</p>	<p>It's not a ...</p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>はい</p>	<p>yes</p>
<p>いいえ</p>	<p>no</p>
<p>なん</p>	<p>what</p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>か</p>	<p>particle added to the end of a sentence to make it a question</p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>ねこ</p>	<p>cat</p>
<p>いぬ</p>	<p>dog</p>

Vocabulary:

cat
dog
book
pencil

ねこ
いぬ
ほん
えんぴつ

Number a piece of paper from 1 to 14.

Translate the following into Japanese:

[1] I am John.

[2] It's a cat.

[3] It's a dog.

[4] It's a book.

[5] They're dogs.

[6] Is it a cat?

[7] Is it a book?

[8] Are you Hana?

[9] It's not a cat.

[10] It's not a dog.

[11] I'm not Sally.

[12] Yes, it's a book.

[13] No, it's not a pencil.

[14] What is it?

Answer:

[1] ジョン です。

[2] ねこ です。

[3] いぬ です。

[4] ほん です。

[5] いぬ です。

[6] ねこ ですか。

[7] ほん ですか。

[8] はなさん ですか。

[9] ねこ じゃない です。 / ねこ では ありません。

[10] いぬ じゃない です。 / いぬ では ありません。

[11] サリーさん じゃない です。 / サリーさん では ありません。

[12] はい、ほん です。

[13] いいえ、えんぴつ じゃない です。 / いいえ、えんぴつ では ありません。

[14] なん ですか。