

# Japanese Greetings

- ▶ Greetings in Japan are much more formal and ritualistic than in India or US.
- ▶ How a person greets another is considered not only reflection of his personality but also his family background and organization to which he belongs.
- ▶ **Japanese** greetings are called 挨拶 (**aisatsu**), and they're one of the first things you should study when learning **Japanese**.
- ▶ The word aisatsu consists of two kanji: 挨 (push open) and 拶 (imminent). So, a greeting (挨拶) is when you begin to push open an imminent relationship.
- ▶ Japanese greetings are more than just an arbitrary custom, but are rather an important gesture which signals to another person you are acknowledging, respecting their presence and are open to communicating with them now and in the future.

## Vocabulary

Sr.No.	JAPANESE	ENGLISH
1.	OHAYOU GOZAIMS(U)	<i>Good Morning</i>
2.	KONNICHIWA	<i>Hello/Good Afternoon</i>
3.	KONBANWA	<i>Good Evening</i>
4.	OYASUMINASAI	<i>Good Night</i>
5.	DEWA MATA	<i>See you again</i>
6.	SAYOUNARA	<i>Good bye</i>
7.	ARIGATOU GOZAIMASU	<i>Thank you</i>
8.	DOU ITASHIMASHITE	<i>You are welcome</i>
9.	GOMEN NASAI	<i>Sorry</i>
10.	SUMIMASEN	<i>Excuse me/ Sorry</i>
11.	SHITSUREISHIMASU	<i>Pardon me/ I am going to be rude/Sorry</i>
12.	ITTEKIMASU	<i>I am leaving (home for the day)</i>
13.	ITTEIRASHAI	<i>Come back safe</i>
14.	TADAIMA	<i>I am back home</i>
15.	OKAERINASAI	<i>Welcome home</i>
16.	ITADAKIMASU	<i>I humbly receive the food</i>
17.	GOCHISOU SAMA DESHITA	<i>Thanks for the food</i>

## 表現ノート (Expression Notes)

### Good morning.

Ohayou / Ohayou gozaimasu

おはよう (Ohayou) is the informal way to say “Good morning” in Japanese. If you’re speaking with someone you should be formal with (i.e. not your friend), you would use おはようございます (Ohayou gozaimasu). Ohayou is used up until about 11am, after which you use...

### Good afternoon. / Good evening.

Konnichiwa / Konbanwa

こんにちは (今日は) means “Good day” in Japanese, but it is often translated to just “Hello.”

今日は。

Konnichi wa!

Good day. (Good afternoon; Hello)

こんばんは (今晚は) means “Good evening” in Japanese, and you use it—you guessed it—in the evening!

### Goodbye.

Sayounara

さようなら, as you may already know, means “Goodbye” in Japanese. What you may not know is that さようなら has the connotation of saying goodbye for a long time. So it’s not usually something you would say to a classmate or co-worker at the end of the day (unless you plan on not seeing them for a long, long time).

The closest word, in English, is probably ‘farewell.’

If you’re talking to a friend, and you expect to see them again fairly soon, you can just say:

じゃあ、また。

Jaa, mata/ Dewa mata

See you later. (literally: “then, later”). If you’re in a formal situation, maybe saying bye to your boss or teacher, then you can say:

失礼します。

Shitsureeshimasu.

Goodbye. (literally: “I am about to behave rudely.” We’ll talk a lot more about this phrase in future lessons.)

## **Goodnight.**

Oyasuminasai

おやすみなさい (Oyasuminasai) means “Good night” in Japanese. You might say this when you’re actually going to bed, or if, say, you were leaving to go home after a night out with friends.

## **Thank you.**

Arigatou / Arigatou gozaimasu

ありがとう (Arigatou) might be the most widely known Japanese word in existence. You’re fine just saying arigatou with friends. If you’re being really informal, you might even just say どうも. In any formal situation, drop ございます onto the end, same way you do with おはようございます。

## **Excuse me. / I’m sorry.**

Sumimasen

すみません (Sumimasen) is a pretty versatile word, and you’ll be hard-pressed to live in Japan without hearing it at least once a day. It can have a few meanings:

1. “Excuse me,” to get someone’s attention.  
すみません、トイレはどこですか。  
Sumimasen, toire wa doko desu ka.  
Excuse me, where is the bathroom?
2. “I’m sorry,” to apologize for the trouble you have caused.
3. “Thank you,” to show appreciation for what one has done for you.

Don’t worry too much about when to use sumimasen. You should pick it up quite naturally, because of how often it is used.

## Coming and Going

Ittekimasu / Itterashai / Tadaima / Okaerinasai

Both **いってきます / 行ってらっしゃい** (ittekimasu/itteirashai) and **ただいま / おかえりなさい** (tadaima/ okaerinasai) are common exchanges for coming and going from one's home.

So, say you're leaving your house.

You would say: **いってきます!** (Ittekimasu) (literally: "I'll go and come back.")

Whoever you live with (not leaving the house) would say: **行ってらっしゃい!**

(Itteirashai) (meaning: "Please go and come back.")

**ただいま** (Tadaima) and **おかえりなさい** (Okaerinasai) (often shortened to just **おかえり**) are used for when you return home.

So, say you're returning to your house after work or school.

You walk in the door and say: **ただいま!** (I am home right now.)

And whoever is already home says: **おかえりなさい!** (Welcome home.)

## Eating meals.

Itadakimasu / Gochisousama

**いただきます** (Itadakimasu) and **ごちそうさま** (Gochisousama) are two words/phrases that you're going to hear nonstop if you ever move to Japan.

Itadakimasu can be a tricky word. The simple translation, the one in most intro to Japanese books, says something like "Thank you for the meal (before eating

**ごちそうさま** means, "Thank you for the meal (after eating)." And it's something you say when you've just finished eating, or as you're walking out of a restaurant. The most common way of saying it is to add 'deshita' to the end of it: **ごちそうさまでした!** "Thank you for the meal!"

The literal meaning of **ごちそうさま** is something akin to "It's been a feast."

So, before eating: itadakimasu.

After eating: gochisousama.