

EXAMPLES OF PREDICATES

Noun plus Copula



These together mean "(He) is a friend." We infer a subject.



This means "(It) is awesome."



This means "(I) think (of something)."

EXAMPLES OF LONGER SENTENCES



The sentence to the left, *Anata wa tomodachi desu*, means "You are a friend." The noun *Anata* (You) is followed by the particle *Wa*, which, as the card says, marks the noun before it as the subject. The subject is marked, so we don't need to infer one. In the sentence *Anata no furaigaeshi ga sugoi* below, which means "Your spatula is awesome" (a suitable response to the question, "What's awesome?"), we've given *Sugoi* (Awesome) a subject, namely "your spatula." In English, we use the possessive adjective "your" when something belongs to the person to whom we are speaking. In Japanese, the concept of possession is instead represented by the particle *No*. As the card says, whatever precedes *No* is the possessor or owner; whatever follows it is the owner's possession or attribute. You could also translate *No* as the word "of" in reverse order: "The spatula of you is awesome." But that sounds weird in English

even though it sounds normal in Japanese. A more normal-sounding instance of "of" would be *Kuruma no ushiro wa bakuhatsu shita* = "The back of the car exploded." *Kuruma* means car and *ushiro* means rear/back, so *kuruma no ushiro* means "the back of the car." (Japanese doesn't use *a/an/the*.) Don't worry if this takes some getting used to; you still get the points if you don't quite understand it yet.

All verb cards in this game are in what is called "plain form" AKA "dictionary form" unless noted otherwise. Plain form is an "imperfect tense," meaning the verb is in progress or will happen, like present and future tense put together. The plain-form verb *Hashiru* means "(I) run" or "(I) will run." The plain-form verb *Neru* means "(I) lie down" or "(I) will lie down." Plain form is a Japanese verb's most basic state, but verbs can be conjugated into past tense, polite form, passive voice, and more. Plain form is not polite, so conjugate to the polite "masu" form (see Mini-Expansion instructions) when speaking formally or to your superiors. Verbs are conjugated in many of the cards' example sentences. To perform these conjugations yourself, use the Conjugations Expansion, which is available on www.JapaneseTheGame.com along with expansions for Anime, Travel, Monsters, and more.

The sentence *Testugaku o kangaeru* to the right means "(I) will think about philosophy." The particle *O* marks the noun before it as the direct object of the sentence, meaning it's the thing that's having something done to it; Philosophy is the "victim" of the verb. No subject is marked, so we infer whatever subject makes sense to us. In this case "I" as the subject makes a lot of sense.

Even if your sentence doesn't sense, like "your spatula will think about my dog's lake" for example, it's still grammatically correct as long as it follows the color pattern and you still get points. Have fun with it, make silly sentences, and enjoy learning the structure of the language! Reminder: You don't have to use every type of card in the color pattern; only a predicate is essential.

ADVANCED CONCEPT: Use whole sentences to modify nouns! You can place an adjective before a noun to describe it, ex: *Chiisai neko* "small cat." You can also place a verb before a noun so that the verb describes the noun, like *Hashiru hannin* "the criminal who runs." Here's a sample that uses whole sentences to modify nouns... twice! If it's a little confusing, again, don't worry. You'll get used to Japanese and be ready for it soon!



Kore wa ookii hon wo taberu inu desu above means "This is a dog that eats large books." The adjective *Ookii* (Large) modifies the noun *Hon* (Book) by going before it. *Ookii hon wo taberu* ("Eat large books") modifies the noun *Inu* (dog) by going before it. It's that simple. These are "sub-sentences" that can have fully developed grammar with particles, nouns, adverbs, etc., working together to describe a noun within a larger sentence.

POLITENESS MINI-EXPANSION

The Politeness Mini-Expansion consists of two "Polite" Verb Conjugation cards, two Godan Conjugation Table (also just called "Table") cards, and one extra copy of Desu (see right). Set aside the Politeness Mini-Expansion cards before you play if you do not wish to use them, or keep the Desu in if you prefer. If you choose to use this expansion, place the Table cards next to the Deck on the table. They don't go into the deck or your hand; you'll just grab one whenever you need to use it. The Polite card enables you to conjugate Japanese verbs into a more polite form that is pleasing to the Japanese ear. Note: Sub-sentences described in the Advanced Concept section cannot be conjugated into polite form.

ICHIDAN VERBS: To play Polite with an Ichidan or Irregular Verb, simply place Polite after the Verb. Polite changes the last syllable of an Ichidan Verb from *ru* to *masu* (pronounced like "moss"). In the example to the right, *Ageru* loses the *ru* and gains *masu*, giving us *Agemasu*.

IRREGULAR VERBS: Placing Polite after an Irregular Verb changes the verb as written on the card. *Iku* becomes *Ikimasu*, for example.

GODAN VERBS: Conjugating Godan Verbs requires the Table card. Pick one up when you need it and place it after the verb you wish to conjugate. Find the Japanese hiragana character on the left side of the Table card that matches the last character of the Godan Verb you're conjugating and line it up with the Japanese word on the Godan Verb card, as you see below.

POLITE VERB CONJUGATION 2

FOR ICHIDAN VERBS: RU MA-SU
る → ます

FOR GODAN VERBS: MA-SU
BASE I + ます

FOR IRREGULAR VERBS:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| SU-RU する SHI-MA-SU します | I-KU 行く IKI-MA-SU 行きます | KU-RU 来る KI-MA-SU 来ます |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|

This conjugation makes a sentence polite. It doesn't change the meaning of the sentence at all, but it sounds more pleasant to the Japanese ear.

Shichimenchou o yakimasu.
七面鳥を焼きます。
I will roast a turkey.

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GODAN CONJUGATION TABLE

Last Character of Godan Verb

| BASE A | BASE I | BASE U | BASE E | BASE O | BASE TE | BASE TA |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| う | わ | い | う | え | おう | て |
| く | か | き | く | け | こう | た |
| ぐ | が | ぎ | ぐ | げ | ごう | だ |
| す | さ | し | す | せ | そう | だ |
| つ | た | ち | つ | て | とう | だ |
| ぬ | な | に | ぬ | ね | のう | だ |
| ぶ | ば | び | ぶ | べ | ぼう | だ |
| む | ま | み | む | め | もう | だ |
| る | ら | り | る | れ | ろう | だ |

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DESU COPULA 1

DE-SU

です
is

This copula, like the copula Da, means "is/am/are" but is more polite. It can also follow an adjective to make the adjective polite. In that case Desu ceases to be a copula and simply becomes a "polite"ifier.

Kore wa pen desu. Midori desu.
これはペンです。緑です。
This is a pen. (It) is green.

PREDICATE 述

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Perfect Match!

GODAN VERB

TATAKU
たたく
hit

Strike, hit, bash, tap, knock... there are so many ways to tatakau.

Taiko o tatakau.
太鼓を叩く。
(I) beat a drum.

を TRANSITIVE PREDICATE 述

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AGERU ICHIDAN VERB 1

A-GE-RU

あげる
give

This verb literally means "to raise up," but it's typically used as a polite way to say "give."

Kappukeeki o ageru.
カップケーキを上げる。
(I'll) give you a cupcake.

を TRANSITIVE PREDICATE 述

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POLITE VERB CONJUGATION 2

FOR ICHIDAN VERBS: RU MA-SU
る → ます

FOR GODAN VERBS: MA-SU
BASE I + ます

FOR IRREGULAR VERBS:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| SU-RU する SHI-MA-SU します | I-KU 行く IKI-MA-SU 行きます | KU-RU 来る KI-MA-SU 来ます |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|

This conjugation makes a sentence polite. It doesn't change the meaning of the sentence at all, but it sounds more pleasant to the Japanese ear.

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Once you've aligned those hiragana, we then align the "base." You will see that the Polite card has a black circle with "BASE I" written on it. "Base I" means that we will be changing the last vowel sound of the Godan Verb we're conjugating from "u" to "i". The Table card helps you make that change correctly. (Other Verb Conjugation cards in the full Conjugations Expansion may use any of the seven bases you see on the Table: a, i, u, e, o, te, and ta.) Aligning the base involves simply laying the conjugation card over the Table to cover up any columns to the right of the base you're using. In this case we're covering up anything to the right of BASE I, as indicated on the Polite card, so we will cover everything from BASE U rightward (see below, with a little help in green).

So we've changed the final syllable of our Godan Verb from *ku* to *ki* for the result *Tataki*. That's called the verb's "Base i." Now it's time to finish it off. You can see on the Polite card that our complete conjugation is BASE I + MASU, so we take the Godan Verb's Base i (which in this case is *Tataki*) and add *masu* to it, and we end up with *Tatakimasu* (pronounced "tah-tah-kee-moss") and our conjugation is complete. You can practice with different Godan Verbs or in your head a couple times. The Godan Verb *Kau* (buy) changes its last syllable to *i* and becomes *Kaimasu* ("ky-moss"). The Godan Verb *Hashiru* (run) changes its last syllable to *ri* and becomes *Hashirimasu* ("ha-she-ree-moss"). Japanese speakers do this in their heads all the time. It's much easier than memorizing several versions of every single word as we do in English, such as hide, hides, hid, and hidden. English conjugation uses rules that are sometimes unique and often confusing. But Japanese conjugation is remarkably consistent compared to many other languages.

GODAN VERB

TATAKU
たたく
hit

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Taiko o tatakau.
太鼓を叩く。
(I) beat a drum.

を TRANSITIVE PREDICATE 述

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Please check JapaneseTheGame.com/QR for the most recent rules updates and other resources.