Want to learn to learn the Japanese Hiragana FAST? Sounds impossible? Yeah? Well of course, you haven't even tried this yet. And, you can. Under a few conditions.

- You actually try.
- You don't aim for perfection. Only slow learners do that. (*You'll perfect 'em all once you start reading and writing.*)
- You skip the slow one character-at-a-time tutorials and hiragana rap songs. Pick up a pen and paper.
- You immediately jump into reading and writing right after you learn the alphabet. Otherwise, you'll forget it as fast as you've learned it.

Ready? Good. This will take you an hour or less to get all the characters in your head so you can read and write Japanese. Will it be slow and awkward at first? Of course; just like your first kiss. But that's how language goes and there's no way around that.

### This tutorial will comprise of a few steps.

- 1. Get a sheet that shows all the hiragana characters all at once.
- 2. Separate them into groups and match them with their romanized/ English versions.
- 3. Memorize these groups at least the English versions.
- 4. Get acquainted with the stroke order or... the writing style for these funky characters.
- 5. Write them out.
- 6. Repeat steps 3 6 for all groups.

I was considering doing association like I did with the Russian Alphabet and the Korean Hangul but I think that'd take more time and effort. Hiragana characters are pretty unique looking and it'll take a stretch of creativity to think of some association for each one. Time is the name of the game here and we're looking to learn this in an hour or less.

## Step 1. The Hiragana Chart that you must cherish and constantly refer to in your beginner times.

Print it. Love it.

Hiragana									
a	あ	Ι	い	u	う	e	え	0	đ
ka	か	ki	き	ku	<	ke	け	ko	Σ
sa	さ	shi	l	su	す	se	ゼ	so	そ
ta	た	chi	ち	tsu	5	te	τ	to	と
na	な	ni	に	nu	ぬ	ne	ね	no	の
ha	は	hi	V	fu	şv	he	~	ho	ほ
ma	ま	mi	み	mu	む	me	め	mo	も
ya	Þ			yu	ゆ			yo	よ
ra	ĥ	ri	Ŋ	ru	る	re	れ	ro	ろ
wa	わ							wo	を
n	ん								

# Step 2. Separate them into groups and match them with their romanized/ English versions.

Luckily the chart above already does it does it for you. However, we still got to do it anyway, just for the sake of grouping them.

We'll separate all Hiragana Characters into 10 groups.

A あ, I い, U う, E え, O お KA か、KI き, KU く, KE け, KO こ SA さ, SHI し, SU す, SE せ, SO そ CHI ち, TSU つ, TE て, TO と TA た、 NE ね, NO の NA な, NI に, NU ぬ, HA は, HI ひ, HU ふ, HE へ, HO ほ MA ま、 MI み, MU む, ME め, MO も YU ゆ, YO よ YA や, RA ら, RI り, RU る, RE れ, RO ろ WA b, WO c, N b

**Note about pronunciation**: A is Ah (ah in Bah), I is Ee (ee in meet), U is Ooh like (like moo), E is Eh (like meh), O is O (like Ou in Cough or O in Or).

When you read these aloud, KA is KAH, KI is actually KEE, KU is actually KOO, KE is KEH, and KO is KO.

## Step 3.1. Memorizing the first 5 groups.

So, going group by group, starting with the first one, you're going to memorize JUST the English/Romanized parts. This is not hard at all because all mostly follow the A, I, U, E, O pattern. There are a few exceptions that are bolded below.

Sit down, take the first 5 groups and memorize them. We'll do the first 5 for the sake of simplicity.

Say them out loud. Close your eyes. Write them down. This will take you a minute or three at most.

A I U E O KA KI KU KE KO SA SHI SU SE SO TA **CHI TSU** TE TO NA NI NU NE NO

**Quick test:** Can you repeat these 25 sounds without looking at this page? Yes? Good. Now, lets line them up with their Japanese Counterparts.

### linguajunkie.com



Step 4.1: Get acquainted with the stroke order for these characters.

#### Step 5.1 Write 'em out.

Well you didn't expect to learn them just by reading an article did you? Now that you've memorized the English/Romanized sounds, write them down on a piece of paper and start practicing the hiragana characters across the page for each one.

It should look something like this.

And yes, expect as much cross-outs and mess-ups as I have.

No start is perfect.



This first half should take you 30 minutes if not less. Most of the time would go into writing these characters out, I assume. Before we proceed to part 2 and the next groups, 6-10, make sure to take some time to quickly drill quiz yourself on the newly learned characters.

Remember all 25 English sounds, write them down on the left side of the paper as I've done above. Then, for review, write in the Japanese Hiragana characters too.

**Association Tips.** I was thinking of not including association but some characters can be made simpler. Here are some of my ideas that may help you remember them easier. You don't have to agree but feel free to use them as a guide.

 $\hat{z}$  Looks like a Z with a line on top and the bottom has a squiggle. Think of it as a Z squiggle.

- $\mathcal{O}$  pretty much looks like a lower case n except that the left side is rounded out.
- < is a K minus the vertical line.
- t is a lower case t with a line next to it. Call it line-t.
- $\Im$  is a sideways U with a line on top. Call it sideways U-line.
- t is pretty much a lowercase t with a ko ( $\mathcal{Z}$ ) next to it. You can call it a T-ko.
- $\supset$  is a backwards C.

U, pronounced SHI, looks like a C or a U depending on how you want to look at it. For me, I associated U with SHI is C because that rhymes and it's indeed almost a C minus the top part being straight.

#### Done? Move on to Part 2: How To Learn Japanese Hiragana in Under 1 Hour PDF.

#### Want to learn Japanese Hiragana with video Lessons?

Click here to check out JapanesePod101 for actual Audio & Video lessons on Japanese.