

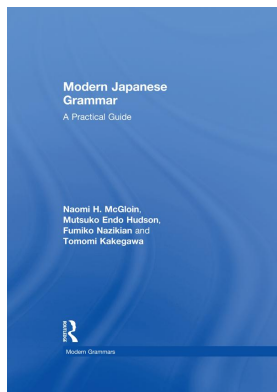
This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 21 Sep 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

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Modern Japanese Grammar A Practical Guide

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Needs

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203856628.ch52>

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Published online on: 04 Oct 2013

How to cite :- Naomi H. McGloin, Mutsuko Endo Hudson, Fumiko Nazikian, Tomomi Kakegawa.

04 Oct 2013, *Needs from: Modern Japanese Grammar, A Practical Guide* Routledge

Accessed on: 21 Sep 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203856628.ch52>

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Needs

In Japanese you can express needs or lack of needs with the verb **iru** ‘to need,’ the nominal adjective **hitsuyoo na** ‘necessary’ or with an expression such as **V-nakereba naranai** ‘need to, have to.’

52.1 Expressing needs with regard to oneself and others

52.1.1 *hitsuyoo*

Hitsuyoo, which means ‘need,’ can be a noun or a **na**-adjective. As a **na**-adjective, it is **hitsuyoo na** when it modifies a noun, and **hitsuyoo da** when it is used as a predicate.

▶ 13.2

Hitsuyoo as a noun:

必要に応じて作ります。

Hitsuyoo ni oojite tsukurimasu.

(I) will make it depending on needs.

健康に注意する必要がある。

Kenkoo ni chuui suru hitsuyoo ga aru.

There is a need to be careful about one’s health. (You need to be careful about your health.)

Hitsuyoo as a **na**-adjective:

何か必要なものがあつたら、言ってください。

Nani ka hitsuyoo na mono ga attara, itte kudasai.

If there is anything you need, please tell me.

毎日練習することが必要だ。

Mainichi renshuu suru koto ga hitsuyoo da.

It is necessary to practice every day.

52.1.2 *iru*

The verb **iru** ‘to need’ can be used to enquire about and state one’s needs. The item one needs is marked by the particle **ga**, unless it is a topic.

お金はいくらぐらいありますか。

O-kane wa ikura gurai irimasu ka.

How much money do (we) need?

これ、いる？

Kore, iru?

Do you need this?

新しいことを始めるには勇気がいる。

Atarashii koto o hajimeru ni wa yuuki ga iru.

You need courage to begin a new thing.

52.1.3 V-nakereba naranai, V-nakereba ikenai

The **ba** conditional form of the negative form (i.e. **-nakereba**) followed by **naranai** or **ikenai** generally expresses obligation. However, in some contexts, it also expresses personal needs, as in the following examples.

▶ 24.2; 80.1

お金がないから仕事をしなければならない。

O-kane ga nai kara shigoto o shinakereba naranai.

Since I don't have money, I need to (have to) work.

あした朝早いから、早く寝なければいけない。

Ashita asa hayai kara, hayaku nenakereba ikenai.

Since my day starts early tomorrow, I need to (have to) go to bed early.

Another form that is similar to this is **-nakute wa ikenai/naranai**, and this also expresses one's obligation or needs.

もっと勉強しなくてははいけません。

Motto benkyoo shinakute wa ikemasen.

I need to (have to) study more.

▶ For subtle differences between **-naranai** and **-ikenai**, see 80.1.2.

-Nakereba is often contracted to **-nakya**, and **-nakute wa** to **-nakucha** in conversation.

早く寝なきゃ。(I)

Hayaku nenakya.

I have to (need to) go to bed early.

もっと勉強しなくちゃ。(I)

Motto benkyoo shinakucha.

I need to (have to) study more.

52.2 Expressing lack of needs

There are various ways of expressing that one does not need anything or one does not need to do something.

■ V(plain, nonpast) **hitsuyoo wa nai**

図書館にあるから買う必要はないでしょう。

Toshokan ni aru kara kau hitsuyoo wa nai deshoo.

Since it is in the library, there is probably no need to buy it.

■ **Iranai** (negative form of **iru**)

お金はいらない。

O-kane wa iranai.

I don't need any money.

■ **V-nakute mo ii**

忙しかったら、来なくてもいいよ。

Isogashikattara, konakute mo ii yo.

If you are busy, you don't have to (need to) come.

■ V(plain, nonpast) **made mo nai**

勉強しなければ成績が悪くなるのは言うまでもない。

Benkyoo shinakereba seeseiki ga waruku naru no wa yuu made mo nai.

Needless to say, if you don't study, your grade goes down.

- V(plain, nonpast) **ni wa oyobanai**
悪いことをしたんじゃないんだから、謝るには及ばない。
Warui koto o shita n ja nai n da kara, ayamaru ni wa oyobanai.
Since (I) did not do anything wrong, (I) don't need to apologize.
- V(plain, nonpast) **koto wa nai**
アクセントの間違ひはそんなに気にすることはない。
Akusento no machigai wa sonna ni ki ni suru koto wa nai.
You don't need to be concerned so much about making mistakes in the accent.

52.3

Asking people about their needs

You can enquire about other's needs by saying:

何が必要ですか。

Nani ga hitsuyoo desu ka.

What do you need?

何か必要なものがありますか。

Nani ka hitsuyoo na mono ga arimasu ka.

Is there anything you need?

何がいますか。

Nani ga irimasu ka.

What do you need?