

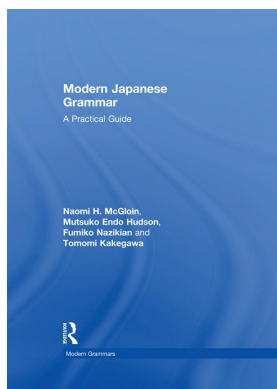
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Modern Japanese Grammar A Practical Guide

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Advice and suggestions

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IV

Speaking as performing acts

72

Advice and suggestions

72.1 Seeking advice or suggestions

There are various ways to ask for advice or suggestions, including the following.

どうすればいいでしょうか。

Doo sureba ii deshoo ka.

What should I do?

どうしたらいいと思う？

Doo shitara ii to omou?

What do you think I should do?

何かいい方法はないかな。

Nani ka ii hoohoo wa nai ka na.

Do you know any good way to do it?

ちょっと相談にのってもらえませんか。

Chotto soodan ni notte moraemasen ka.

Could I consult you about something?

アドバイスをお願いします。

Adobaisu o onegai shimasu.

Please advise me.

The issue on which one is seeking advice is often introduced by the phrase **n desu ga/kedo** or **n da kedo**.

何度ダイエットをしてもやせられないんですが、どうすればいいでしょうか。(F)

Nando daietto o shite mo yaserarenai n desu ga, doo sureba ii deshoo ka.

No matter how many times I go on a diet, I can never lose weight, so what should I do?

5年間もつきあって (い) る彼がプロポーズしてくれないんだけど、

どうしたらいいと思う？(I)

Gonenkan mo tsukiatte (i)ru kare ga puropoozu shite kurenai n dakedo, doo shitara ii to omou?

My boyfriend, whom I have been dating for five years, has not proposed to me, so what do you think I should do?

When the addressee already knows about the issue, the speaker can bring up the topic by saying **X no koto na n desu ga/kedo**.

推薦状のことなんですけど、誰にお願いすればいいでしょうか。

Suisenjoo no koto na n desu kedo, dare ni onegai sureba ii deshoo ka.

About the letter of recommendation, who(m) should I ask?

72.2

Giving affirmative advice or suggestions

To express affirmative advice or suggestions, the V-**tara** (conditional structure) + **doo desu ka** ‘why don’t you . . . , how about . . .’ is commonly used. **Ta** in **tara** is the plain past affirmative form of the verb.

▶ 12.1; 24.3

専門家に相談したらどうですか。(F)

Senmonka ni soodan shitara doo desu ka.

Why don’t you talk with a specialist?

V-**tara doo desu ka** is shortened to V-**tara doo** or V-**tara** in casual speech.

医者に行ったらどう？(I)

Isha ni ittara doo?

How about going to the doctor?

もう少し待って見たら？(I)

Moo sukoshi matte mitara?

Why don’t you wait a little longer and see?

Another phrase often used to give affirmative advice is V-**ta hoo ga ii** ‘you had better do. . .’ While the expression V-**tara doo desu ka** is phrased as a question, the expression using **hoo ga ii** is in the form of a statement. Therefore the expression with **hoo ga ii** sounds more assertive. The plain past affirmative form of verbs is used before **hoo ga ii**.

よく考えたほうがいいですよ。

Yoku kangaeta hoo ga ii desu yo.

You had better think carefully.

毎日運動したほうがいいですよ。

Mainichi undoo shita hoo ga ii desu yo.

You had better exercise every day.

薬を飲んだほうがいいよ。

Kusuri o nonda hoo ga ii yo.

You had better take the medicine.

You can use **n ja nai**, **n ja nai desu ka** or **n ja arimasen ka** following **hoo ga ii** to make it sound less assertive.

本当のことを言ったほうがいいんじゃない？(I)

Hontoo no koto o itta hoo ga ii n ja nai?

Wouldn’t it be better if you told the truth?

別の店で買ったほうがいいんじゃないですか。(F)

Betsu no mise de katta hoo ga ii n ja nai desu ka.

Wouldn’t it be better if you bought it at another store?

早く帰ったほうがいいんじゃないじゃありませんか。(F)

Hayaku kaetta hoo ga ii n ja arimasen ka.

Wouldn’t it be better if you went home early?

Another commonly used expression is V-**ba ii/daijoobu desu yo**.

▶ 24.2

新しいのを買えばいいですよ。

Atarashii no o kaeba ii desu yo.

All you have to do is buy a new one.

(Lit. It’ll be fine if you buy a new one.)

知って (い) る人に聞けば大丈夫だよ。

Shitte (i)ru hito ni kikeba daijoobu da yo.

All you have to do is ask someone who knows.

(Lit. It'll be fine if you ask someone who knows.)

V-ba ii/daijoobu is used to present what seems to be an easy solution to the issue at hand. Therefore this expression is often used to give reassurance.

72.3 Giving negative advice or suggestions

To give negative advice, V(plain, nonpast, neg.) **hoo ga ii** 'You had better not do ...' is commonly used.

あのレストランには行かないほうがいいですよ。

Ano resutoran ni wa ikanai hoo ga ii desu yo.

You'd better not go to that restaurant.

嘘をつかないほうがいいよ。

Uso o tsukanai hoo ga ii yo.

You'd better not lie.

Advice given with **hoo ga ii** sounds assertive. You can use **n ja nai**, **n ja nai desu ka** or **n ja arimasen ka** following **hoo ga ii** to make it sound less assertive.

あせらないほうがいいんじゃない? (I)

Aseranai hoo ga ii n ja nai?

Wouldn't it be better if you didn't hurry so much?

気にしないほうがいいんじゃないですか。 (F)

Ki ni shinai hoo ga ii n ja nai desu ka.

Wouldn't it be better if you didn't worry?

今は引越さないほうがいいんじゃないありませんか。 (F)

Ima wa hikkosanai hoo ga ii n ja arimasen ka.

Wouldn't it be better if you didn't move house right now?

Another commonly used negative advice phrase is V (plain, nonpast, neg.) **kereba ii/daijoobu desu yo**.

▶ 24.2

誰にも言わなければいいですよ。

Dare ni mo iwanakereba ii desu yo.

All you have to do is not tell anyone.

(Lit. It'll be fine if you don't tell anyone.)

写真 (を) 見せなければ大丈夫だよ。

Shashin (o) misenakereba daijoobu da yo.

All you have to do is not show the photos.

(Lit. It'll be fine if you don't show the photos.)

V(plain, nonpast, neg.)-**kereba ii/daijoobu** is used to present what seems to be an easy solution to the issue at hand. Therefore advice given in this form sounds reassuring.

72.4 Responding to advice or suggestions

How one responds to advice or suggestions will depend on the content of the advice or suggestions. However, regardless of the content, in polite conversation, Japanese speakers tend to avoid totally rejecting an addressee's advice or suggestions. The following phrases may be used

in one's initial response. The **te**-form of verbs and the auxiliary verb **miru** 'to try, to see' are frequently used when responding to advice or suggestions to express 'I will (V) and see what happens.'

▶ 19.2.3

そうですね。もう少し考えてみます。

Soo desu ne. Moo sukoshi kangaete mimasu.

That's right, isn't it. I will think about it a bit more.

そうかもしれませんね。

Soo kamoshiremasen ne.

That may be right, isn't it.

分かりました。よく検討してみます。

Wakarimashita. Yoku kentoo shite mimasu.

All right. I will consider that carefully.

そうかもしれないね。とりあえず、やってみるよ。(I)

Soo kamoshirenai ne. Toriaezu, yatte miru yo.

That may be right. For now, I will try that.

To mildly express one's rejection or doubt toward a given piece of advice, the following phrases may be used.

えー、でもなあ…。(I)

Ee, demo naa...

Um, but...

うーん、そうですかねえ…。(F)

Uun, soo desu ka nee...

Hmm, I wonder if that would work...

そうは言ってもねえ…。(I)

Soo wa itte mo nee...

You say so, but...