

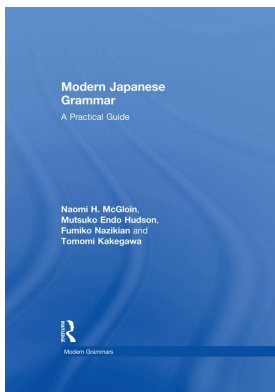
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## **Modern Japanese Grammar A Practical Guide**

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### **Offers and invitations**

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# 74

## Offers and invitations

### 74.1 Making an offer of something or to do something

When you are offering or suggesting specific items, expressions such as **ikaga desu ka** (formal) or its more informal variants **doo desu ka** and **doo?** are useful. Sometimes a suggested item is followed by the particle **demo** ‘or something,’ which suggests that there are other alternatives and hence the offer sounds less imposing (and more polite.)

お茶でもいかがですか。

**O-cha demo ikaga desu ka.**

How about some tea?

一杯どう？

**Ippai doo?**

How about a drink?

When you want to offer to do something for an interlocutor, **V-mashoo ka** ‘shall I do . . .’ or more informal V(volitional form) **ka** can be used.

#### ▶ 12.1

お手伝いしましょうか。/お手伝いいたしましょうか。(VF)

**O-tetsudai shimashoo ka. / O-tetsudai itashimashoo ka.**

May I help?

手伝いましょうか。(F)

**Tetsudaimashoo ka.**

May I help?

手伝おうか。(I)

**Tetsudaoo ka.**

May I help?

In very formal situations, the humble expression **o-V(stem) suru** is used to refer to your own action that pertains to someone superior to you.

#### ▶ 29.4

### 74.2 Accepting or declining an offer

In accepting an offer, the following expressions can be used.

お茶でもいかがですか。

**O-cha demo ikaga desu ka.**

あ/ええ、いただきます。

**A/Ee, itadakimasu.**

Yes, thank you. I will.

手伝いましょうか。/お手伝いしましょうか。  
**Tetsudaimashoo ka. / O-tetsudai shimashoo ka.**  
 May I help?

あ/ええ、お願いします。  
**A/Ee, o-negai shimasu.**  
 Yes, please.

手伝おうか。  
**Tetsudaoo ka.**  
 May I help?

あ、すみません。  
**A, sumimasen.**  
 Thank you. (I am sorry.)

うん、ありがとう。  
**Un, arigatoo.**  
 Yes, thank you.

In turning down an offer, you have to be careful not to hurt the other person's feelings. It is generally better to express some appreciation for the offer first and then give the reason why the offer is not accepted.

### ▶ 22.4; 39.2

お茶でもいかがですか。  
**O-cha demo ikaga desu ka.**  
 How about some tea?

あ、ありがとうございます。でも、今日はちょっと用事がありますので。  
**A, arigatoo gozaimasu. Demo, kyoo wa chotto yooji ga arimasu node.**  
 Yes, thank you, but I have some things I have to do today, so . . .

荷物、持ちましょうか。/お持ちしましょうか。  
**Nimotsu, mochimashoo ka / o-mochi shimashoo ka.**  
 May I help you with your luggage?

あ、だいじょうぶです。軽いですから。  
**A, daijoobu desu. Karui desu kara.**  
 I am fine – it's not heavy (Lit. because it is light).

一杯どう？  
**Ippai doo?**  
 How about a drink?

うん、ありがとう。でも、今日は仕事がたくさんあるから、ちょっと遠慮しとく。  
**Un, arigatoo. Demo, kyoo wa shigoto ga takusan aru kara, chotto enryo shitoku.**  
 Yes, thank you, but I have a lot of work today, so I will pass on it today.

手伝おうか。  
**Tetsudaoo ka.**  
 May I help?

うん、でも、大丈夫だよ。もうほとんど終わったから。  
**Un, demo, daijoobu da yo. Moo hotondo owatta kara.**  
 Yeah, thanks, but I am OK, because the work is almost finished.

## 74.3

### Inviting someone to a place or an event

The most common way of inviting someone to a place or an event is to use the nonpast negative form of verbs followed by the question marker **ka** (formal style) or followed by a question intonation (informal style.) Using the exalting form of verbs makes it more polite, and this is the form used in inviting someone superior to you.

### ▶ 29.3

今週末遊びにいらっしゃいませんか。(VF)  
**Konshuumatsu asobi ni irasshaimasen ka.**  
 Won't you come visit me this weekend?

一度遊びに来ませんか。(F)

**Ichido asobi ni kimasen ka.**

Won't you come visit me sometime?

一度遊びに来ない？(I)

**Ichido asobi ni konai?**

Come visit me sometime.

Another way of inviting someone is to first introduce your plan and ask if the interlocutor would like to join you. This is probably the most polite way of inviting someone superior to you.

今週末日本食のレストランに行こうと思っているんですけど、先生もいかがですか。(VF)

**Konshuumatsu nihonshoku no resutoran ni ikoo to omotte iru n desu kedo, sensee mo ikaga desu ka.**

We are thinking of going to a Japanese restaurant this weekend, and how about you joining us, Professor X?

みんなで野球の試合を見に行こうと思っているんだけど、ジョンもどう？(I)

**Minna de yakyuu no shiai o mi ni ikoo to omotte iru n da kedo, Jon mo doo?**

We are thinking of going to a baseball game. Why don't you join us, John?

## 74.4

## Accepting or declining an invitation

### 74.4.1

### Accepting an invitation

The following responses can be given to accept an invitation to a place or an event.

是非お願いします。

**Zehi o-negai shimasu.**

Yes, I'd love to.

是非ご一緒させてください。

**Zehi go-issho sasete kudasai.**

Certainly, please let me join you.

喜んで。

**Yorokonde.**

Gladly.

遠慮なくお邪魔します。(when invited to someone's home.)

**Enryo naku o-jama shimasu.**

I will gladly accept your invitation.

ぜったい行く。(I)

**Zettai iku.**

I will definitely go/come.

うん、もちろん。ありがとう。(I)

**Un, mochiron. Arigatoo.**

Yes, of course. Thank you.

### 74.4.2

### Declining an invitation

Japanese people prefer not to be too direct in declining invitations, since a refusal could hurt the other person's feelings. Therefore, when they cannot accept an invitation, they tend to do it indirectly. The expression such as **chotto** 'a little' with or without a reason is a standard way of declining invitations. When the speaker says **chotto**, it is understood that it means 'a little inconvenient.'

その日はちょっと・・・。

**Sono hi wa chotto ...**

That day is kind of ...

私はちょっと・・・。

**Watashi wa chotto ...**

I am a bit ...

すみません。その日はちょっと。別の用事がある。

**Sumimasen. Sono hi wa chotto. Betsu no yooji ga atte.**

I am sorry. I have other business to take care of on that day, so ...

These phrases can be preceded by remarks of regret such as **mooshiwake nai n desu ga** 'I am sorry but,' **zannen desu ga** 'regretfully,' or **warui kedo** 'I am sorry but,' or the like.

残念ですが、その日はちょっと・・・。

**Zannen desu ga, sono hi wa chotto ...**

I am sorry but that day is a little ...

悪いけど、先約がある。(I)

**Warui kedo, sen'yaku ga atte.**

Too bad, I have a previous engagement, so ...

Thus, in declining an invitation, the Japanese speaker takes great care not to hurt the other person's feelings. At the same time, the person who does the invitation also shows concern for the feelings of the person who has to refuse the invitation. One does this by displaying understanding for the person's refusal, thereby making it easier for the person to refuse the invitation. The following is an example of such an interchange.

A: 今週の週末にみんなで野球の試合を見に行くんだけど、行かない?  
**Kondo no shuumatsu ni minna de yakyuu no shiai o mi ni iku n da kedo, ikanai?**

We are going to watch a baseball game this coming weekend. Would you like to come?

B: 今週の週末はちょっと・・・。  
**Konshuu no shuumatsu wa chotto ...**  
This weekend is a little ...

A: 何かほかに予定があるの?  
**Nani ka hoka ni yotee ga aru no?**  
You have some other plans?

B: うん、ちょっとね。  
**Un, chotto ne.**  
Yes, kind of.

A: じゃあ、仕方ないね。  
**Jaa, shikata nai ne.**  
Then, it can't be helped.

B: ごめんね。また今度誘ってね。  
**Gomen ne. Mata kondo sasotte ne.**  
Sorry. Please ask me again.