

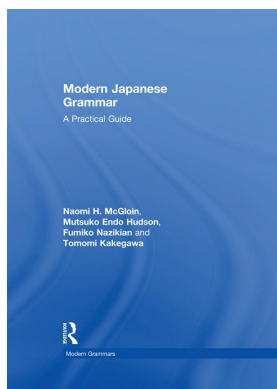
This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 03 Oct 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



Modern Japanese Grammar A Practical Guide

Naomi H. McGloin, Mutsuko Endo Hudson, Fumiko Nazikian, Tomomi Kakegawa, Sarah Butler

Obligation and duty

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203856628.ch80>

Naomi H. McGloin, Mutsuko Endo Hudson, Fumiko Nazikian, Tomomi Kakegawa

Published online on: 04 Oct 2013

How to cite :- Naomi H. McGloin, Mutsuko Endo Hudson, Fumiko Nazikian, Tomomi Kakegawa. 04 Oct 2013, *Obligation and duty from: Modern Japanese Grammar, A Practical Guide* Routledge
Accessed on: 03 Oct 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203856628.ch80>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

While the **-naranai** version speaks of obligation that is generally true for everyone, the **-ikenai** version expresses obligation that is based on individual circumstance, needs and expectations. Therefore, it is often directly aimed at the addressee, giving strong advice, a command, a strong request, or the like.

80.1.3 *beki*

This form follows the plain nonpast tense form of verbs and carries the sense of ‘one should do . . .’ When the verb is **suru** ‘to do,’ both **suru beki** and **su beki** are possible. Compared with **-nakereba naranai/ikenai** and **-nakute wa naranai/ikenai**, **beki** expresses a stronger sense of obligation, which is almost a personal conviction that one ought to do it.

政治家は国民の意見を聞くべきだ。

Seejika wa kokumin no iken o kiku beki da.

The politicians ought to listen to the opinions of the people.

留学生は日本に行ったら、ホームステイをすべきだ。

Ryuugakusee wa Nihon ni ittara, hoomusutee o su beki da.

Students should participate in a homestay program when they go to Japan.

A: 日本語で書こうか、英語で書こうか、迷っているんです。

Nihongo de kakoo ka, Eego de kakoo ka, mayotte iru n desu.

I am wondering whether to write it in Japanese or in English.

B: そりゃあ、日本語で書くべきだよ。

Soryaa, Nihongo de kaku beki da yo.

Of course, you should write it in Japanese.

The negative version of this construction is **V beki de wa nai**.

いったん結婚したら離婚するべきではないと言う人がいる。

Ittan kekkon shitara rikon suru beki de wa nai to yuu hito ga iru.

There are people who say that once one gets married, one should not get divorced.

私は、女性は子供が生まれても、仕事をやめるべきではないと思う。

Watashi wa, josee wa kodomo ga umarete mo, shigoto o yameru beki de wa nai to omou.

I think women should not quit their jobs even after having children.

Since **beki da** imparts a sense of strong personal conviction, this expression is inappropriate for stating what one has to do as part of social custom. Consider the custom in Japan where one has to take off one’s shoes before entering the house.

日本では家にあがる時、靴を脱がなければなりません。

Nihon de wa ie ni agaru toki, kutsu o nukanakereba narimasen.

In Japan, when (before) you enter the house, you have to take off your shoes.

?日本では家にあがる時、靴を脱ぐべきだ。

?**Nihon de wa ie ni agaru toki, kutsu o nugu beki da.**

In Japan, when (before) you enter the house, you ought to take off your shoes.

Here, if **beki da** is used, it sounds as if the speaker is indignant that someone did not take off his/her shoes. In an ordinary situation, **nakereba naranai** ‘have to’ is an appropriate expression.

80.2 Other ways of expressing obligation and duty

80.2.1 With the word *gimu* 'obligation'

国民は税金を払う義務がある。

Kokumin wa zeekin o harau gimu ga aru.

People have an obligation to pay taxes.

子供は小学校と中学校に行くことを義務づけられている。

Kodomo wa shoogakkoo to chuugakkoo ni iku koto o gimu-zukerarete iru.

It is obligatory that children attend elementary and junior high schools.

80.2.2 *-neba naranai*

-neba is the written form of *-nakereba*.

借りたお金は返さねばならない。

Karita okane wa kaesaneba naranai.

One has to repay the money one borrows.

80.2.3 *-nai to ikenai*

To here is a conditional form, and *-nai to ikenai* literally means 'it's not OK if (you) don't.'

贈り物をもらったら、お返しをしないとイケない。

Okurimono o morattara, okaeshi o shinai to ikenai.

If one receives a gift, one has to give a return gift.

80.2.4 *V-nai wake ni wa ikanai*

This expression is used when one feels obliged to do it although one does not really want to do it. It has the connotation that one has no choice but to do it. The sense of obligation is based on social, moral, or situational reasons.

上司に頼まれたらやらないわけにはいかない。

Jooshi ni tanomaretara yaranai wake ni wa ikanai.

When I am asked by my superior (to do something), I am obliged to do it.

パーティーには部長もいらっしゃるので行かないわけにはいかない。

Paatii ni wa buchoo mo irassharu node ikanai wake ni wa ikanai.

Since the head of the department is coming, I have no choice but (am obligated) to attend the party.

NOTE

When the verb is affirmative in this construction, the sentence means 'can't very well do (something).'

上司が帰る前に帰るわけにはいかない。

Jooshi ga kaeru mae ni kaeru wake ni wa ikanai.

I can't very well go home before my superior goes home.

80.2.5 *V-zaru o enai*

This construction is similar in meaning to *V-nai wake ni wa ikanai*, but it is more literary in flavor. It is, however, used in colloquial speech. *Zaru* is a classical negative form. For verbs, *nai* can be simply replaced by *zaru*, as in *ikanai* 'not go' to *ikazaru*, *tabenai* 'not eat' to *tabezaru*. For *suru* 'to do,' however, *sezaru* is the appropriate form. This construction has the connotation that one does not really want to do something, but is forced to do it because of social, personal or moral reasons.

自分の間違いを認めざるを得ないでしょう。

Jibun no machigai o mitomezaru o enai deshoo.

(He/she) would probably have to admit his/her mistake.

悪天候のため会議をキャンセルせざるを得なかった。

Aku tenkoo no tame kaigi o kyanseru sezaru o enakatta.

We were forced to cancel our meeting due to bad weather.