



Japanese the Manga Way: An Illustrated Guide to Grammar and Structure

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Japanese difficult? Study boring? No way! Not with this “real *manga*, real Japanese” approach to learning. Presenting all spoken Japanese as a variation of three basic sentence types, *Japanese the Manga Way* shows how to build complex constructions step by step. Every grammar point is illustrated by an actual *manga* published in Japan to show how the language is used in real life, an approach that is entertaining and memorable. As an introduction, as a jump-start for struggling students, or (with its index) as a reference and review for veterans, *Japanese the Manga Way* is perfect for all learners at all levels.

Wayne P. Lammers has taught Japanese at the college level and is an award-winning literary and commercial translator. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

Japanese the Manga Way: An Illustrated Guide to Grammar and Structure Details

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Author : Wayne P. Lammers

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Mel says

I'm still working my way through this but I love it!

I bought 4 Japanese language books at once and this is probably my favorite.

I had a decent grasp of kana but wanted to learn how to make a sentence and practice my reading skills. I really think this helped me in learning basic sentence structure.

I supplement it with a dictionary and vocab book.

Ladislav says

Wow, wow and wow once again. This is perfect. The sections in the book are skillfully assembled, individual puzzle pieces simple, comprehensive yet not shallow in the knowledge delivered. Notes on colloquial language, cultural background, grammar and syntax analysis. Just perfect, I mean it!

Sara says

This really is the best Japanese learning book I've seen. I've been through a lot of them from libraries and bought a bunch myself. But this one is (and one other) are my absolute favorites. This is by far the most adorable, lovable, and fun study book I've come across. I think those are very important qualities in a language study book (or class). It's very important to keep motivated and if you love your book, you're more likely to come back to it. This one is worth the buy.

Ws says

Very good book on basic Japanese Grammar, the manga examples are interesting and prevents the content from being too dry. Also gives a good exposure to Japanese culture and politeness levels. This will likely be a book where you read once and review often as you learn the Japanese language.

Patrick says

Up through "Lesson 2: Sentence Particles".

Melanie says

I really liked this one! According to the description on the back it covers the grammar for the first two years of study, and I think that is quite accurate (at least, it is for me, so it covers about the material for *Minna no Nihongo* books 1&2). The book feels comprehensive in scope and I personally didn't feel that anything I had encountered elsewhere up until now was missing here.

It is well-organised and has a pleasant lay-out, and I very much enjoyed all the examples. The grammatical explanations are very good: clear, thorough and with attention paid to the various nuances in usage. Each grammatical element/phrase comes with one example taken from a manga; this might seem like not much at all, but the examples are treated in detail with the context given and the sentences fully analysed, so you truly get a lot out of them. Idiomatic usage of certain verbs and phrases is always addressed, as well as some often used abbreviations of common words/forms. And since the examples come from actual published Japanese manga, you are reading real Japanese and not textbook creations, which is awesome^^. Highly recommended!

Jakub says

Brilliant book!

It might be not the best thing to rely on, if you don't know anything about Japanese - it doesn't really attempt to teach you both phonetic scripts (hiragana and katakana). If you know that (that is, can both fluently read and write them), pick up that book - it's indispensable compendium of basic Japanese knowledge.

Biggest upside of this book is the fact that it teaches you both polite and colloquial language - which is extremely important with Japanese, if you want to *understand* the verb conjugation and forms. Each of examples is illustrated by a manga snippet which is very useful - as it uses the normal language, as present in Japanese society, not some made up examples.

I had a really good time reading this book slowly over last month, reviewing and refreshing my knowledge. If you're serious about learning Japanese, get this book!

Carol says

Quite possibly one of the best self-study books I have found!

The biggest upside of this book is the fact that it teaches both polite and colloquial language. Each of examples is illustrated by a manga snippet which is very useful & prevents the material from becoming dry. I highly recommend anyone who takes their Japanese learning seriously!

Chris Feldman says

Recommended additional reading for students.

Sam says

tl;dr Very fun book, great explanations, worth checking out. Downsides are non conventional categorization of grammar names, no exercises, and romaji throughout. (Covers N5 and N4 for JLPT)

Not tl;dr:

Not to be confused with "Japanese in Mangaland", this book is entirely different. (And imo, much better!) This book covers you from start to JLPT N4, beginning with pronunciation and some history on the language. I was surprised at how extensive the preface was to really get learners started.

Unfortunately, right off the bat I have some gripes. Despite introducing the kana alphabet at the start, romaji is used throughout the book. While I can understand not wanting to scare off potential buyers of your product, it's only elongating the crutch of using Latin letters for the Japanese language. Had they only used it for the first few chapters and dropped it, like Genki does, this book would've been MUCH better. (I mean, they're getting into N4 grammar [even N3+] in this book. There is absolutely no excuse for them to have kept romaji!) It just makes it more difficult for someone like me to read, as I'm around an N4 level. (And in the beginning of this book, they say it's for beginner all the way to more experienced learners :/) By the way, there is no furigana, only romaji. Which is just more frustrating.

Another big issue is the random out of left field terminology for politeness. In every other book and resource I've read, it's dictionary form, masu form, etc. Here, they label things "politeness level #" which is horribly confusing and 1000% unnecessary. (I constantly forget the order, is PL1 the most polite? Or PL4?) Why try to fix what isn't broken? Their labeling systems make no sense at all, and I think just again, make things worse in the long run for new learners. :/

Along with politeness, they do the same thing with verbs. Everywhere else, there is a standard. Even native Japanese people use this standard. There are u-verbs, ru-verbs, and irregular verbs. Here, they're "group 1", "group 2", and for some reason, they kept the name "irregular verbs", which at this point...why? Again, this only makes things MORE difficult if someone chooses to pursue their education further outside of this book, only for them to come across standards they were never taught. (I also constantly mix up which one is which, since they use arbitrary numbers as labeling.)

But to not be entirely negative (it's hard when I'm so immediately bombarded with wrong LOL), I do appreciate the depth of which they go into with their examples. The manga pages used are great and match the level that you are in the book. As you progress, the panels get more lengthy with the dialogue, covering the grammar you've learned up to that point. They do a nice job of breaking things down to be as simple to understand as possible, which was helpful.

I also enjoy the little cultural tid-bits scattered throughout the book. I think it makes it more fun to read through. You're not only learning a language, but learning about a people.

While I do find this book to be an enjoyable and easy read, I did try to imagine how it would go for a beginning student. I think due to the lack of exercises and vocabulary to practice with, the information would be difficult to retain. (Including the lack of kana :/) Using this book as a reference or as an additional guide to go alongside another book, like Genki for example, I think would work much better. Genki can definitely get tiring after a while, especially if you're learning on your own, so having a book like this would be perfect to helping motivation and interest. Plus, seeing real Japanese manga with authentic sentences and being able

to read them could be a great benefit to some. (Compared to Genki's texts, which were built specifically with learners in mind. They give off a different feel.)

An aside: I did enjoy the "give/receive" chapter. I think of most all the resources I've read, I like how they've worded things the best. Most places tend to lump ?????????? all together in a more connected way, which can make things confusing, but I think here, they make them quite distinct and unique. I found it quite helpful. The last chapter, about appearance/hearsay was also a particular favorite of mine.

In the end, I really enjoyed this book and am very happy with my purchase. If you're looking to add another reference to your collection, or just need some more entertaining methods to learn (this book really does make it fun!), I say give this one a glance. :)

Erin says

This has a LOT of good information in it and works well as a supplement to a traditional classroom setting. It's a great refresher on grammar/structure for people who have studied the language. I think it would be difficult to jump right into this as a beginner who had never had any formal Japanese classes, however.

Drew says

Not what I hoped. Helped cement some concepts for me, but I prefer the Tae Kim Grammar Guide. I felt like this was an okay grammar guide with Manga sentences instead of example sentences.

Eustacia Tan says

The best Japanese self-study course that I've ever read. (Any comparisons would be to another famous series - Japanese in Mangaland)

The introduction itself is excellent, with a clear guide on how to use the book. The index and content page was excellent (unlike book 1 of Japanese in Mangaland), which made it very good to use as a supplement to my Japanese classes.

I liked the extensive use of Manga panels, which included context, so that we could understand the words (unlike Japanese in Mangaland, which was a lesson followed by some examples).

The focus on grammar was also much appreciated, since it's fairly easy to find ways of learning the vocab on the internet for free.

The only thing that wasn't up to par, although it wasn't so horrible that it warranted a star to be taken away, was the extensive use of Romaji. One advantage of Japanese in Mangaland was that after the first book, Romaji was taken away completely, which allowed for practice. But it isn't that bad, since you can ignore the kanji by just reading the panel (not the dialogue that is written out)

Cas says

Who says studying has to be boring? I found this book at the library and extending it five times wasn't enough, I had to have my own! This book uses excerpts from manga to illustrate various tenses of verbs, colloquialisms and politeness levels in basic/intermediate Japanese speech. An indispensable book if you love not just Japanese but the art and customs too.

Mary says

While helpful, I strongly recommend the use of the Genki texts.
