

ROBO-SENSEI: Personal Japanese Tutor

Noriko Nagata

Japanese Typing Instructions

- (1) Japanese typing (on any Japanese word processor) requires hitting “Enter” (or “Return”) after typing a character or a word, which will then allow you to choose hiragana, katakana, or kanji. For example, when using hiragana input mode to type “nihon”, you will see にほん with a **dotted underline** (type “n” twice to obtain hiragana ん). At this stage, if you want to change it to kanji, hit the “Space” key, and you will automatically obtain 日本 with a **straight underline**. If the kanji you see are not the ones you intended, hit the “Space” key twice, then you will obtain a menu of kanji from which you can select. During this **kanji selection stage**, you will still see underlining (a dotted one for hiragana and a straight one for kanji). **In order to make the computer accept your typing, you must hit “Enter”**. Then the underlining will disappear and the word is entered into the text. You can type a whole sentence without hitting “Enter” until the end, but it is recommended to hit “Enter” after typing each word, especially when you convert hiragana to kanji.
- (2) In the ROBO-SENSEI exercises, you will be asked to type in your answer and hit “Enter” (or “Return”) to obtain feedback. As explained in (1), the Japanese word processor requires hitting “Enter” (or “Return”) to complete your typing, so this means that you **need to hit “Enter” twice at the end of your sentence**: one (to the word processor) for completing your typing and the very last one (don’t forget!) for obtaining ROBO-SENSEI feedback regarding your input. Otherwise, ROBO-SENSEI won’t analyze your input.
- (3) For commonly used katakana words, you can type them in hiragana and hit the space key which will automatically convert hiragana to katakana (the same way as converting hiragana to kanji). All katakana words used in ROBO-SENSEI can be obtained this way, so you don’t have to change the tool bar selection from hiragana to katakana. Also, each exercise provides romanizations for katakana words if there are any, so please follow such romanizations to obtain correct katakana. The second vowel in any long vowel in katakana words is spelled with the dash mark “ー”.

Examples:

ku-pa- → くーぱー → クーパー (Cooper)

sa-finn → さーふいん → サーフィン (surfing)

makudonarudo → まくどなるど → マクドナルド (MacDonald’s)

- (4) The following particles require special typing:
the particle wa: type ha → は
the particle o: type wo → を
the particle e: type he → へ

- (5) The following hiragana have two alternative spellings:

shi or si → し
sha or sya → しゃ
shu or syu → しゅ
sho or syo → しょ
ji or zi → じ
ja or zya → じゃ
ju or zyu → じゅ
jo or zyo → じょ
chi or ti → ち
cha or tya → ちゃ
chu or tyu → ちゅ
cho or tyo → ちょ
tsu or tu → つ
hu or fu → ふ

- (6) Two different hiragana may have the same pronunciation. You need to memorize which hiragana is used, depending on the words (e.g., ちず “map” is not ちづ).

ji sound: typing ji or zi → じ, and typing di → ぢ

zu sound: typing zu → ず, and typing du → づ

- (7) The small っ is obtained by typing any double consonants and a vowel.

Examples:

kka → っか

tte → って

ssi or sshi → っし

- (8) ん is obtained by typing “n” twice.

nn → ん