

2011 Japanese-Language Proficiency Test

Test date: Sunday, December 4

Levels offered: Five levels from N1 to N5

The application deadline is approximately three months before the test date. For details including application method and deadline, please check with the local host institution in the country/area where you plan to take the test.

Apply early!

Latest test
information is
available here!



Official website

The Official Worldwide JLPT Website offers a great deal of information about the test registration process, cities and institutions hosting the test as well as a detailed description of the new JLPT and sample questions for each level. Please take a look to find out more about the test. Information is available in Japanese, English and Chinese.

<http://www.jlpt.jp/>

Local host institution (Test Guide (including Application Form) is available at the institution below.)

2011.06

Japanese- Language Proficiency Test

にほんごのうりょくしけん

日本語能力試験

JLPT Japanese-Language
Proficiency
Test

<http://www.jlpt.jp/>

December
4

Guide to the 2011
Japanese-Language
Proficiency Test (JLPT)

What is the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test?

The largest Japanese-language test in the world

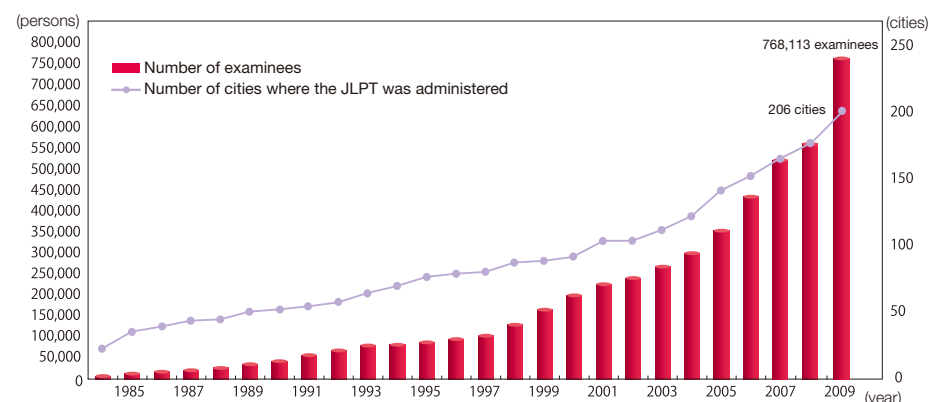
The JLPT is a test for non-native speakers of Japanese which evaluates and certifies their Japanese-language proficiency. The test is simultaneously conducted twice a year* in Japan and various locations overseas. The JLPT began in 1984. While at the beginning just 7,000 people applied to take the test in 15 countries and areas worldwide, by 2009 the number of examinees had risen to as many as 770,000 in 54 countries and areas around the world. Currently, it is the largest Japanese-language test in the world.

* Until 2008, the JLPT was administered once a year in December. Since 2009, it has been administered twice a year in July and December. In some cities overseas, the July test is not administered and only the December test is held.

● Cities where the JLPT was administered (December test in 2009) ● Cities where the JLPT was administered



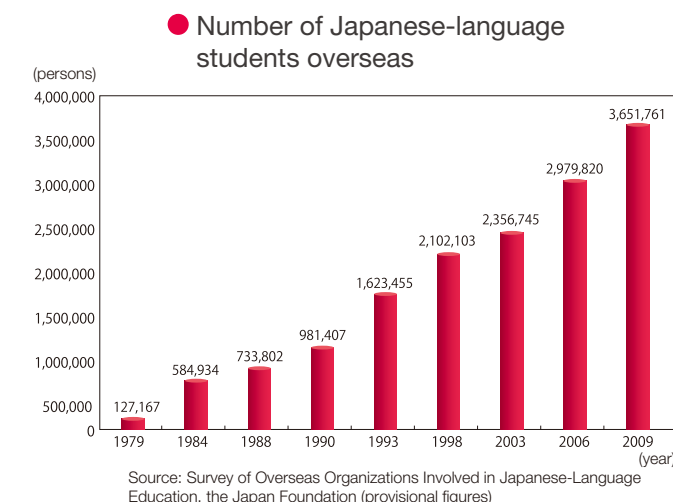
● Number of examinees and cities where the JLPT was administered



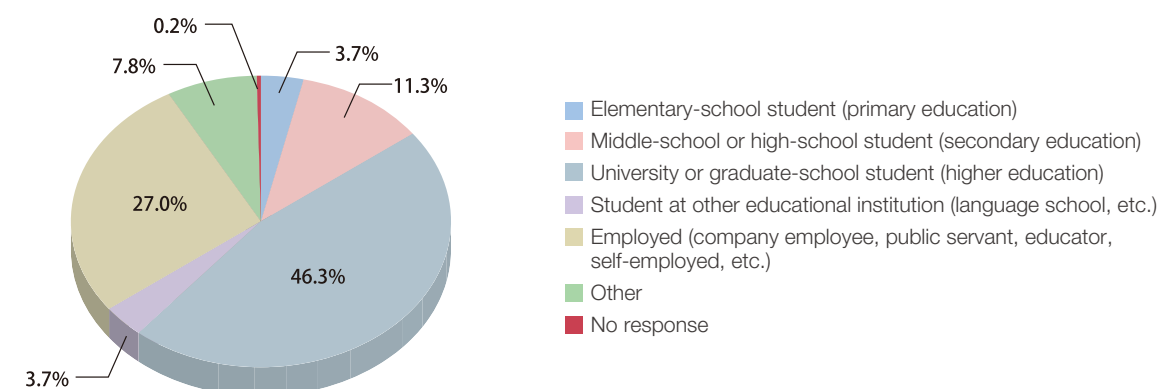
Serves a variety of purposes

According to the Survey of Overseas Organizations Involved in Japanese-Language Education conducted by the Japan Foundation every three years, the number of students studying Japanese outside of Japan grew from 127,000 in 1979 to 3.65 million in 2009.

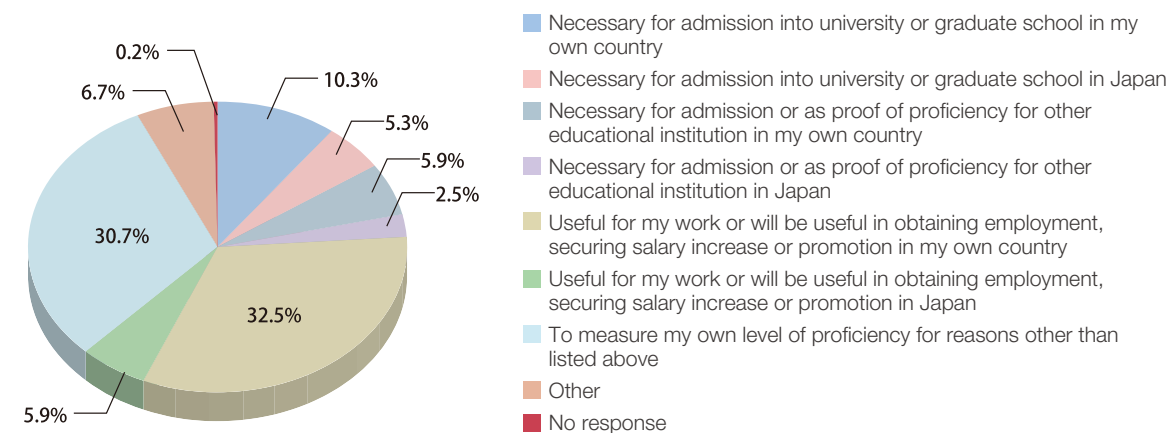
Along with the increase in students, the number of JLPT examinees has increased. Today, people of various ages, from elementary school students to working individuals, take the JLPT. In addition, the JLPT is used not only to measure ability but also for a variety of purposes, including employment screening and evaluation for pay raises and promotions as well as to recognize qualifications.



● Breakdown of examinees



● Reasons for taking the JLPT



* Respondents: Overseas examinees taking the December test in 2009 (valid samples: N=423,961) in 170 cities in 52 countries where the Japan Foundation administered the JLPT.

Characteristics of the New JLPT

The new JLPT started in 2010.

Over the course of the JLPT's nearly three decades of history, the number of Japanese-language students has increased and their reasons for studying and using Japanese have become more diverse. In July 2010, the JLPT was revised to meet this changing environment. The new JLPT (new test) incorporates those revisions while inheriting content from the previous test (old test).

Four key points of the new JLPT

POINT 1

Increased focus on communicative competence

The new test emphasizes not only (1) [knowledge of Japanese-language vocabulary and grammar](#) but also the (2) [ability to use the knowledge in actual communication](#). Thus, it measures (1) through the Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) test section and (2) through the Reading and Listening test sections. The new test comprehensively measures communicative competence in Japanese through a combined assessment of these sections.

* As with the old test, the new test is a multiple-choice exam that is scored by computer. There is no test section where applicants' speaking or writing abilities are directly evaluated.

POINT 2

Five levels offered; examinees can select the right level

The new test offers five levels (N1, N2, N3, N4, N5). Each level has different test items in order to measure each examinee's Japanese-language proficiency as accurately as possible.

The old test offered four levels (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4). The new test adds one new level that falls between Levels 2 and 3 in the old test; with a total of five levels, the new test allows examinees to select the level that is right for them.

● Summary of linguistic competence required for each level & corresponding levels of new and old tests

Level	Summary of linguistic competence required for each level	Corresponding levels of new and old tests
N1	The ability to understand Japanese used in a variety of circumstances.	Approximately the same level as the old Level 1 test, but designed to measure slightly more advanced abilities.
N2	The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations, and in a variety of circumstances to a certain degree.	Approximately the same level as the old Level 2 test.
N3	The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations to a certain degree.	Positioned at a level bridging the old Level 2 and Level 3 tests. Newly established
N4	The ability to understand basic Japanese.	Approximately the same level as the old Level 3 test.
N5	The ability to understand some basic Japanese.	Approximately the same level as the old Level 4 test.

* Please see Page 6 for details of linguistic competence required for each level.

POINT 3

More accurately measures Japanese-language competence

The new test adopted a new scoring method to more accurately reflect examinees' Japanese-language competence in scores. Scores are calculated as "scaled" scores instead of raw scores.

Scores in the old test were raw scores calculated by the number of questions answered correctly. It is inevitable that the level of difficulty of the test changes slightly from session to session no matter how carefully questions are designed. Depending on test difficulty, this sometimes results in different scores for the same competency when raw scores are used.

With scaled scores of the new test, how individual examinees answer particular questions (which questions are answered correctly and incorrectly) is reviewed and scores are calculated based on scales for each level. The same scale is always used for the same-level test. Therefore, regardless of difficulty of tests at different times, examinees with the same proficiency have the same score.

As outlined here, scaled scores can more accurately and fairly indicate Japanese-language competence at the time of tests.

* Please see the Official Worldwide JLPT Website (www.jlpt.jp) for details of scaled scores.

Score report

Examinees receive a Score Report that shows pass or fail, scores of scoring sections and total score (scaled scores) as well as reference information. (See Page 5 for scoring sections.)

The reference information indicates the percentages of correct responses* for each component (ex. Vocabulary and Grammar) according to three levels, A, B and C, when a scoring section has multiple components (ex. Language Knowledge [Vocabulary/Grammar]). This allows examinees to learn how well they performed in each component and plan for their future Japanese-language study.

* The percentage of correct responses is the ratio of correctly answered questions to the total number of questions in each component. The reference information indicates "the number of questions answered correctly," which differs from scaled scores. It is not used to determine pass or fail.

Score report (Sample: For N1-N3)



Criteria

- A: Number of correct responses is 67% or higher
- B: Number of correct responses is between 34% and 66%
- C: Number of correct responses is less than 34%

Scoring sections (scaled scores)

Reference information (percentages of correct responses)

- N1, N2, N3.....Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) → "Vocabulary" and "Grammar"
- N4, N5.....Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading → "Vocabulary," "Grammar" and "Reading"

POINT 4

Insights on Japanese-language activities that can be performed

A survey is being conducted on what Japanese-language activities (listening, speaking, reading, writing) successful examinees of each level believe they can do. The result will be titled "Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Can-do Self-Evaluation Report" and released as an interim report in July 2011 and the final report will be due out in March 2012. Examinees and others will be able to refer to this report to get an idea of "how people who successfully passed this level are able to use Japanese in academic, living and work situations."

Test Composition and Linguistic Competence Required for Each Level

Test sections and test times, scoring sections and range of scores

Test sections at the time of tests are shown in the “Test sections and test times” table at left.
Scoring sections in test results are shown in the “Scoring sections and range of scores” table at right.

● Test sections and test times

Level	Test sections	Test times		Scoring sections	Range of scores (scaled scores)
N1	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading	110 min		Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)	0 – 60 points
	Listening	60 min		Reading	0 – 60 points
N2	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading	105 min		Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)	0 – 60 points
	Listening	50 min		Reading	0 – 60 points
N3	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)	30 min		Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)	0 – 60 points
	Language Knowledge (Grammar) • Reading	70 min		Reading	0 – 60 points
	Listening	40 min		Listening	0 – 60 points
N4	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)	30 min		Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading	0 – 120 points
	Language Knowledge (Grammar) • Reading	60 min		Listening	0 – 60 points
	Listening	35 min			
N5	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)	25 min		Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading	0 – 120 points
	Language Knowledge (Grammar) • Reading	50 min		Listening	0 – 60 points
	Listening	30 min			

Please compare the two tables from left to right to see how test sections and scoring sections correspond.
With N1 and N2, one test section, “Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading,” is divided into two scoring sections, “Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)” and “Reading.”
With N3, two test sections, “Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)” and “Language Knowledge (Grammar) • Reading,” are restructured as two scoring sections, “Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)” and “Reading.”
With N4 and N5, two test sections, “Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)” and “Language Knowledge (Grammar) • Reading,” are combined as one scoring section, “Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading.”
With all levels, the “Listening” test section and scoring section are identical.
These differences by level are to ensure a more accurate measurement of an examinee’s Japanese-language competence according to the characteristics of individual study stages.

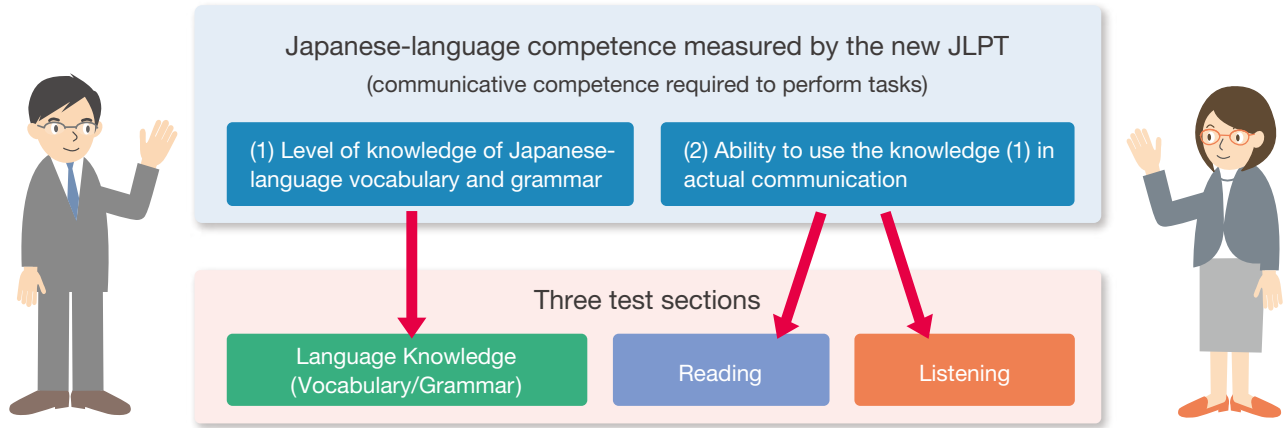
Summary of linguistic competence required for each level

The table below shows the summary of the linguistic competence required for each level. This table outlines what is expected of examinees for each level of the new JLPT in terms of Reading and Listening. The linguistic knowledge needed to execute the behaviors described will be required by the examinees to pass their respective levels.

Level	Summary of linguistic competence required for each level	
N1	The ability to understand Japanese used in a variety of circumstances.	
	Reading • One is able to read writings with logical complexity and/or abstract writings on a variety of topics, such as newspaper editorials and critiques, and comprehend both their structures and contents. • One is also able to read written materials with profound contents on various topics and follow their narratives as well as understand the intent of the writers comprehensively. Listening • One is able to comprehend orally presented materials such as coherent conversations, news reports, and lectures, spoken at natural speed in a broad variety of settings, and is able to follow their ideas and comprehend their contents comprehensively. One is also able to understand the details of the presented materials such as the relationships among the people involved, the logical structures, and the essential points.	
N2	The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations, and in a variety of circumstances to a certain degree.	
	Reading • One is able to read materials written clearly on a variety of topics, such as articles and commentaries in newspapers and magazines as well as simple critiques, and comprehend their contents. • One is also able to read written materials on general topics and follow their narratives as well as understand the intent of the writers. Listening • One is able to comprehend orally presented materials such as coherent conversations and news reports, spoken at nearly natural speed in everyday situations as well as in a variety of settings, and is able to follow their ideas and comprehend their contents. One is also able to understand the relationships among the people involved and the essential points of the presented materials.	
N3	The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations to a certain degree.	
	Reading • One is able to read and understand written materials with specific contents concerning everyday topics. • One is also able to grasp summary information such as newspaper headlines. • In addition, one is also able to read slightly difficult writings encountered in everyday situations and understand the main points of the content if some alternative phrases are available to aid one's understanding. Listening • One is able to listen and comprehend coherent conversations in everyday situations, spoken at near-natural speed, and is generally able to follow their contents as well as grasp the relationships among the people involved.	
N4	The ability to understand basic Japanese.	
	Reading • One is able to read and understand passages on familiar daily topics written in basic vocabulary and <i>kanji</i>. Listening • One is able to listen and comprehend conversations encountered in daily life and generally follow their contents, provided that they are spoken slowly.	
N5	The ability to understand some basic Japanese.	
	Reading • One is able to read and understand typical expressions and sentences written in <i>hiragana</i>, <i>katakana</i>, and basic <i>kanji</i>. Listening • One is able to listen and comprehend conversations about topics regularly encountered in daily life and classroom situations, and is able to pick up necessary information from short conversations spoken slowly.	

New JLPT Test Item Examples

The new test measures an examinee's level of knowledge of Japanese-language vocabulary and grammar as the Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) test section and his or her ability to use that knowledge in actual communication as the Reading and Listening test sections.



The new test measures examinees' "communicative competence required to perform tasks." For this purpose, all test item formats of the old test were reviewed and revisions were made. Test item formats of the new test include those directly inherited from the old test, those incorporating partial changes and those newly adopted starting with the new test. Below, test item examples mainly of new format items are described.

Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)

Vocabulary

Level: N3
Test item type: Usage

問題 つぎのことばの使い方として最もよいものを、1・2・3・4 から一つえらびなさい。

- かわいがる
- 山田さんは子どもをとともかわいがっています。
 - あの人は親をとともかわいがっています。
 - 田中さんは、いただいた時計をとともかわいがっています。
 - あの人は自分の家をとともかわいがっています。

Test item on determining accurate use of a word in a sentence. Test item also found in the old test.

[Answer: 1]

Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)

Grammar

Level: N2
Test item type: Text grammar

問題 次の文章を読んで、文章全体の内容を考えて、1から5の中に入る最もよいものを、1・2・3・4 から一つ選びなさい。

街にはおもちゃがあふれています。贈り物におもちゃを買おうと思っても、おもちゃ屋に並ぶ多種多様なおもちゃの前でどれを選んだらいいか迷ってしまったという方もいるかもしれません。

そこで、ある団体が、おもちゃを選ぶ時の参考にしてみらおうと、毎年、1の中から優良なおもちゃ、「グッド・トイ」を選定しています。お店で見えすぐにわかるように、選定されたグッド・トイには2ので、おもちゃを買うときにも参考になります。

グッド・トイ3、「遊び力」を引き出してくれるのだそうです。「遊び力」というのは、見る力、聞く力、感じる力、コミュニケーションする力、夢見る力。人が生きていくのに必要な力のことです。

グッド・トイの選考では、まず推薦されたおもちゃをいろいろな年代の人に実際に遊んでみてもらい、専門家が遊ばれ方を見て評価をします。その後も様々な視点から何度も検討を重ねてグッド・トイは選定されています。

おもちゃというと、ただ子どもが遊ぶためのものだと4。塾や参考書は熱心に選んでも、おもちゃを真剣に選ぶという方はあまり多くないのではないのでしょうか。5、おもちゃには大きな力を持つものがあります。次におもちゃを選ぶ時は、グッド・トイのように、生きる力を引き出してくれるものを探してみたいかがでしようか。

- 1 たくさんの贈り物 2 選んだ贈り物 3 数あるおもちゃ 4 迷ったおもちゃ

- 1 グッド・トイマークがつけられていきました 2 グッド・トイマークがつけられています
3 グッド・トイマークをつけておきました 4 グッド・トイマークをつけてみます

- 1 が 2 に 3 とか 4 とは

- 1 考えられつつあります 2 考えられがちです
3 考えられてはいません 4 考えられなければいけません

- 1 しかし 2 それどころか
3 すなわち 4 さらに

Test item on sentence composition while taking overall text flow into consideration. Instead of focusing only on or the particular sentence, sentences before and after the sentence and overall text need to be carefully read to answer. New test item.

[Answer: 1] 3 [2] 2 [3] 4 [4] 2 [5] 1]

Reading

Level: N1
Test item type: Integrated comprehension

問題 次のAとBはそれぞれ別の新聞のコラムである。AとBの両方を読んで、後の問いに対する答えとして最もよいものを、1・2・3・4 から一つ選びなさい。

A

1 AとBのどちらの記事にも触れられている内容はどれか。

- 新たに盛り込まれた語の意味
- 選定する時検討された語の数
- 今回新たに収録された語の数
- 今回不採用だった語の具体例

2 この辞書が多くの新語を取り入れたことについて、Aの筆者とBの筆者はどのような立場をとっているか。

- AもBも、ともに明確にしていない。
- AもBも、ともに批判的である。
- Aは批判的であるが、Bは明確にしていない。
- Aは明確にしていないが、Bは批判的である。

B

Test item on reading while comparing and matching multiple texts in order to understand. New test item.

[Answer: 1] 3 [2] 4]

(注1) 改訂：本や辞書を直して新しく出版すること

Listening

Level: N4
Test item type: Utterance expressions

問題 このもんだいでは、えを見ながら しつもんを聞いてください。➡(やじるし)の人は何と言いますか。

1から3の中から、いちばん いい ものを一つ えらんで ください。

(Script)

仕事が終わって帰ります。何と言いますか。

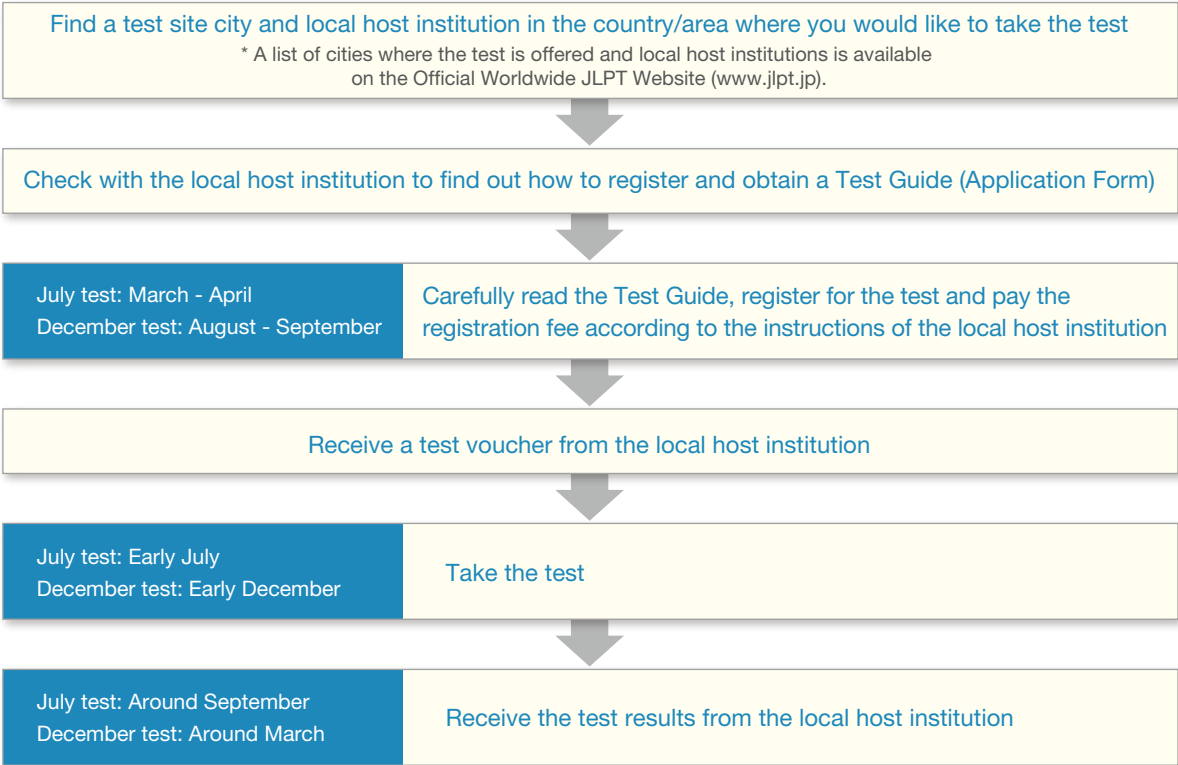
- お邪魔します。
- お大事に。
- お先に失礼します。

Test item on determining the appropriate response of the person indicated with an arrow (➡) in a particular situation. While looking at an illustration, explanation and questions must be listened to carefully in order to grasp the situation. New test item.

[Answer: 3]

* A test item type is a group of test items having the same format. Please see the Official Worldwide JLPT Website (www.jlpt.jp) for the composition of test item types for each level. The website also has sample questions of all test item types for all levels.

Test Registration Process: Taking the Test Overseas



* Above is the general process for overseas. Details may differ by country/area. Please inquire at your local host institution. In addition, some cities overseas will only offer the test in December and not in July. Please check the Official Worldwide JLPT Website (www.jlpt.jp) for July test availability.

* If you take the test in Japan, please see the Japan Educational Exchanges and Services website (<http://www.jees.or.jp/jlpt/>).

FAQ

Q1 Are any special qualifications needed to take the JLPT?

The JLPT is open to all non-native Japanese speakers. There are no age restrictions for the JLPT.

Q2 When will the JLPT be held?

Twice yearly, in July and December. In 2011, the tests will be conducted on Sunday, July 3 and Sunday, December 4. However, some cities overseas will only offer the test in December and not in July. Please check the Official Worldwide JLPT Website (www.jlpt.jp) for July test availability.

Q3 At the time of registration, I will not be in the country/area where I want to take the test. What should I do?

Please make sure to apply with the local host institution conducting the test in the country/area where you plan to take it. Registration methods differ by country. Please contact the local host institution. If you cannot apply for the test yourself, please ask a friend or acquaintance in the country/area where you want to take the test for help with registration.

Q4 How should I decide on which test level to take?

Please see the summary of linguistic competence required for each level on Page 6 and corresponding levels of new and old tests on Page 3. In addition, test item examples listed on the Official Worldwide JLPT Website (www.jlpt.jp) can help you determine which level is appropriate for you.

Q5 How is pass or fail determined?

In order to pass the JLPT, (1) the total score needs to be at or above the point required for passing (overall pass mark) and (2) the scores of each scoring section need to be at or above the minimum point required for passing (sectional pass mark). If there is even one scoring section where the score is below the sectional pass mark, examinees are determined to have failed, no matter how high the total score he/she might have.

Overall pass marks and sectional pass marks for each level are shown in the table below. (N1, N2 and N3 have three scoring sections each: (1) Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar), (2) Reading, and (3) Listening. N4 and N5 have two scoring sections each: (1) Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading, and (2) Listening.)

Level	Total score		Scores by scoring section							
			Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)		Reading		Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading		Listening	
	Range of scores	Overall pass marks	Range of scores	Sectional pass marks	Range of scores	Sectional pass marks	Range of scores	Sectional pass marks	Range of scores	Sectional pass marks
N1	0 - 180 points	100 points	0 - 60 points	19 points	0 - 60 points	19 points	—	—	0 - 60 points	19 points
N2	0 - 180 points	90 points	0 - 60 points	19 points	0 - 60 points	19 points	—	—	0 - 60 points	19 points
N3	0 - 180 points	95 points	0 - 60 points	19 points	0 - 60 points	19 points	—	—	0 - 60 points	19 points
N4	0 - 180 points	90 points	—	—	—	—	0 - 120 points	38 points	0 - 60 points	19 points
N5	0 - 180 points	80 points	—	—	—	—	0 - 120 points	38 points	0 - 60 points	19 points

Q6 When and how will I receive my test results?

All examinees will receive their own Score Report. Successful examinees will receive a Certificate of Proficiency. For examinees outside of Japan, the Score Reports will be sent via the local host institution. Examinees will receive their report for the July test in mid-September and in early March for the December test. If you do not receive your report by the end of the month, please contact the local host institution in the city where you took the test.

Book Information

New Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Guidebook: An Executive Summary and Sample Questions for N1, N2 and N3

● B5, 129 pages, 1 CD included

Price: 900yen (+tax)
Publisher: Bonjinsha Inc.
ISBN: 978-4-89358-734-3

New Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Guidebook: An Executive Summary and Sample Questions for N4 and N5

● B5, 87 pages, 1 CD included

Price: 800yen (+tax)
Publisher: Bonjinsha Inc.
ISBN: 978-4-89358-735-0



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