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たか~~~~い **very expensive**  
**takā ~ ~ ~ ~ i**

**Pera Pera Penguin's**  
 5-minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama

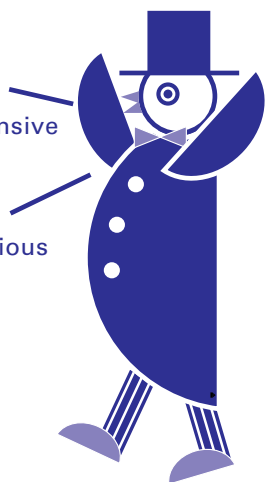
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One of my colleagues bought a new car, and he invited me to go to Mt. Fuji for a drive. He also invited some girls to come with us. While he was driving, one of the girls asked him how much the car cost. When she heard the price, she was surprised and said, "**takā ~i!**" (How expensive!). When his car was going really fast on the highway, the other girl said, "**hayā~i!**" (How fast!). When we arrived at the foot of Mt. Fuji, the girls were amazed and said, "**kirē~i!**" (How beautiful!), "**sugō~i!**" (How wonderful!). When we got hungry, we went to a restaurant and I had **o-soba** noodles. And I tried to imitate those girls and said, "**oi~~~~shii!**" (How delicious!). I didn't know where to make the long vowel and how long to make it, and everybody laughed at me when I finished saying the word. Ms. Hirayama, please tell me how long I am supposed to make the long vowel.

■■■ I would say, "**oishi~i o-soba o tabemashita ne**" (I guess you had some delicious soba). Japanese people, especially young girls, often use these kinds of expression when they are surprised or amazed. Instead of using Japanese words that are equivalent to English words such as "very," "extremely," etc., you simply make the i-adjective and na-adjective longer than usual. There is no rule for the length of the long vowel. You can make the long vowel as long as you want, depending on your feelings. (But please note that making it too long is strange.) The length of the long vowel and where to make it depend on the individual, but there are some basic rules. Please see the list below.

■ **i-adjective**.....Make a vowel longer before "i". The length varies according to one's feelings.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| delicious<br>おいし~~~~い<br><b>oishi~~~~i</b>        | far<br>とお~~~~い<br><b>tō~~~~i</b>                        |
| good<br>い~~~~い<br><b>i~~~~i</b>                   | high, expensive<br>たか~~~~い<br><b>takā~~~~i</b>          |
| near<br>ちか~~~~い<br><b>chikā~~~~i</b>              | wide, spacious<br>ひろ~~~~い<br><b>hirō~~~~i</b>           |
| fast, quick, early<br>はや~~~~い<br><b>hayā~~~~i</b> | hot, thick<br>あつ~~~~い<br><b>atsū~~~~i</b>               |
| cold (weather)<br>さむ~~~~い<br><b>samū~~~~i</b>     | funny, interesting<br>おもしろ~~~~い<br><b>omoshirō~~~~i</b> |
| cold (object)<br>つめた~~~~い<br><b>tsumetā~~~~i</b>  | bad-smelling, stinky<br>くさ~~~~い<br><b>kusā~~~~i</b>     |
| late, slow<br>おそ~~~~い<br><b>osō~~~~i</b>          | dirty<br>きたな~~~~い<br><b>kitanā~~~~i</b>                 |
| cheap<br>やす~~~~い<br><b>yasū~~~~i</b>              | bad<br>わる~~~~い<br><b>warū~~~~i</b>                      |



■ **na-adjective**.....There are four categories (from A to D) for identifying the long vowel in na-adjectives. An example is shown for each category. Please try to put the other words in the correct category. Note that some words fit in more than one category.

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
inconvenient ふべ ~ ン <b>fubē ~ n</b>	beautiful きれ ~ い <b>kirē ~ i</b>	wonderful すてき ~ <b>suteki ~</b>	being good at じょう ~ ず <b>jō ~ zu</b>
1) complex, complicated ふくざつ <b>fukuzatsu</b>	2) weird, strange へん <b>hen</b>	3) dislike きらい <b>kirai</b>	4) unpleasant, disappointing いや <b>iya</b>
5) like すき <b>suki</b>	6) no problem, OK だいじょうぶ <b>daijōbu</b>	7) important たいせつ <b>taisetsu</b>	8) hate, disgusting だいきらい <b>daikirai</b>
9) love, very fond of だいすき <b>daisuki</b>	10) busy, lively にぎやか <b>nigiyaka</b>	11) necessary ひつよう <b>hitsuyō</b>	12) quiet, silent, calm しずか <b>shizuka</b>
13) safe あんぜん <b>anzen</b>	14) simple かんたん <b>kantan</b>	15) strong, sturdy じょうぶ <b>jōbu</b>	16) sudden, urgent きゅう <b>kyū</b>
17) serious, sincere (personality) まじめ <b>majime</b>	18) terrible, horrible たいへん <b>taihen</b>		

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
a long vowel before "n"	a long vowel before "i"	a long vowel at the end of the word	the long vowel (o) in the letter "jo"
2) 18) 13) <b>a ~ nzen</b> 14) <b>ka ~ ntan</b>	3) 6) 7) 18) 8) <b>da ~ ikirai</b> 9) <b>da ~ isuki</b>	1) 2) 4) 5) 7) 10) 11) 12) 16) 17)	6) 15)



**convenient,  
simple**

There are three ways of saying "convenient" in Japanese with different nuances from English. Please note that it is not polite to apply "convenient" to a human being.

- 1) For an object: "**benri**"
- 2) For a timetable or schedule: "**tsugō ga i**"
- 3) For money: "**tegoro na**" (convenient to buy)

"Simple" and "easy" can be confusing, too. Here are some examples to consider.

- 4) For a procedure that is "simple" (not troublesome, or time-consuming): "**kantan**"
- 5) For the antonym of "difficult": "**yasashi**"

I'm looking for an inexpensive car (literally, a car that is convenient for me to buy).

**A** な 値段 の 車 を 探 して います。  
**na nedan no kuruma o sagashite-imasu**  
(price) (car) (look for)

The test was easy.

テスト は **B** です。  
**test wa desu**

Cupped noodles are simple to make.

カップラーメン は **C** です。  
**cup-rāmen wa desu**  
(Chinese noodles)

The afternoon is convenient for me.

午後 なら **D** が いい です ね。  
**gogo nara ga i desu ne**

I don't have much time, so keep it simple!

時間 が ない の で **E** に 話 して !  
**jikan ga nai node ni hanashite!**  
(time) (there is no)

Microwave ovens are convenient.

電子レンジ は **F** です。  
**denshi-range wa desu**  
(microwave)

I have no idea what you mean, so please make it easier to understand.

全然 わか ら ない の で も っ と **G** 説 明 して 下 さ い。  
**zenzen wakaranai node motto setsumē shite-kudasai**

Answers			
A - 3) 手ごろ <b>tegoro</b>	B - 5) 易しかった <b>yasashi-katta</b>	C - 4) 簡単 <b>kantan</b>	
D - 2) 都合 <b>tsugō</b>	E - 4) 簡単 <b>kantan</b>	F - 1) 便利 <b>benri</b>	G - 5) 易しく <b>yasashiku</b>