

Introduction to Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)

www.jlpt.jp/e/index.html

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What sort of test is the JLPT?

- The test evaluates and certifies Japanese-language proficiency of non-native speakers.
- It has over 30 years of history since its establishment in 1984.
- The test has been jointly conducted by the Japan Foundation (JF) and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services (JEES).
- The test in Hong Kong is co-organized by Society of Japanese Language Education Hong Kong (香港日本語教育研究會) and the JF.

Number of test-takers of JLPT in Hong Kong (excluding Makau)

		N1	N2	N3	N4	N5	Total
2018	July	1,232	1,249	1,031	1,140	1,323	5,975
	December	1,327	1,337	1,062	1,261	1,488	6,475
2019	July	1,294	1,361	1,079	1,308	1,463	6,505
	December	1,190	1,235	1,045	1,217	1,668	6,355
2020	July	canceled					
	December	canceled					
2021	July	1,558	1,790	1,334	2,005	2,510	9,197
	December	1,501	1,503	1,335	1,883	2,404	8,626
2022	July	1,005	1,098	1,075	1,407	1,450	6,035

For further details about the past test data; <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/statistics/archive.html>

Place of learning Japanese-Language for test takers In Hong Kong and Macau

below 2 %

85%~93%

	1. Primary Education	2. Seondary Education	3. Higher Education (major)	4. Higher Education (minor)	5. Other Educational Institutions	6. Not study in 1 - 5.
N1	0.1%	0.8%	8.4%	5.6%	17.8%	67.3%
N2	0.1%	1.4%	6.4%	6.0%	34.7%	51.3%
N3	0.5%	1.5%	1.5%	6.8%	43.3%	46.4%
N4	0.4%	1.7%	0.6%	5.1%	56.6%	35.5%
N5	0.3%	1.9%	0.6%	4.1%	72.1%	21.1%

Based on the **raw data (not elaborated) from the application forms of JLPT in July 2021*

4 Key Characteristics of the JLPT (2010~)

1. Measures communicative competence required to perform tasks
2. Select a suitable level from among five levels.
3. More accurately measures Japanese-language proficiency with scaled score.
4. "JLPT Can-do Self-Evaluation List" is offered.

1. Measures communicative competence required to perform tasks

Japanese-language proficiency that the JLPT measures

- ① Knowledge of the Japanese language:
How much a test taker knows about the Japanese language, including vocabulary and grammar
- ② Ability to use the knowledge of ①
How well a test taker makes use of language knowledge in actual communication

Measured through 3 test sections

Language Knowledge
(Vocabulary/Grammar)

Reading

Listening

2. Select a suitable level from among five levels.

Level	Summary of Linguistic Competence Required for Each Level
N1	The ability to understand Japanese used in a variety of circumstances
N2	The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations and in a variety of circumstances to a certain degree
N3	The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations to a certain degree
N4	The ability to understand basic Japanese
N5	The ability to understand some basic Japanese

For further details <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/levelsummary.html>

Summary of Linguistic Competence Required for N1 & N2 Level

N1	<p>The ability to understand Japanese used in a variety of circumstances.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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. <p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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	<p>The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations, and in a variety of circumstances to a certain degree.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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. <p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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.

Summary of Linguistic Competence Required for N3 Level

N3	<p>The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations to a certain degree.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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. <p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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.
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For further details <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/levelsummary.html>

Summary of Linguistic Competence Required for N4 & N5 Level

N4	<p>The ability to understand basic Japanese.</p> <p>Reading · One is able to read and understand passages on familiar daily topics written in basic vocabulary and <i>kanji</i>.</p> <p>Listening · One is able to listen and comprehend conversations encountered in daily life and generally follow their contents, provided that they are spoken slowly.</p>
N5	<p>The ability to understand some basic Japanese.</p> <p>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>.</p> <p>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.</p>

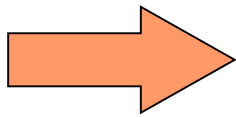
For further details <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/levelsummary.html>

Level	Corresponding Levels of the current (2010~) and the former (1984~2009) tests
N1	Approximately the same level as the former Level 1 test, but designed to measure slightly more advanced abilities
N2	Approximately the same level as the former Level 2 test
N3	Positioned at a level bridging the former Level 2 and Level 3 tests Newly established
N4	Approximately the same level as the former Level 3 test
N5	Approximately the same level as the former Level 4 test

3. More accurately measures Japanese-language proficiency with scaled score.

JLPT uses Scaled scores \Leftrightarrow Raw scores

- The same competency is given the same number of points in each test
- The same scale is always used to calculate scores for the same-level test



- * The highest degree of fairness can be maintained, as scaled scores never fluctuate based on the difficulty level of tests
- * Scaled scores can indicate an applicant's proficiency more accurately than raw scores do

For further details about the scaled score;

https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/pdf/scaledscore_e.pdf

Example: A-san's test results in raw scores and scaled scores



A-san took N2 level tests in July as well as in December.
Below are his Listening test results.

N2 Listening	July	December (More difficult than July test)	Both numbers are the same, 10.
The number of correctly answered questions	10 out of 20	10 out of 20	
Score per item X Number of correctly answered questions = Raw scores	2 x 10 = 20	2 x 10 = 20	Not sure if A-san's listening ability improved.
Scaled scores	20 → 25		Clear that A-san's listening ability improved.

※The data shown is only an example to explain the current JLPT scoring system,
not for actual score calculation.

4. "JLPT Can-do Self-Evaluation List" is offered.

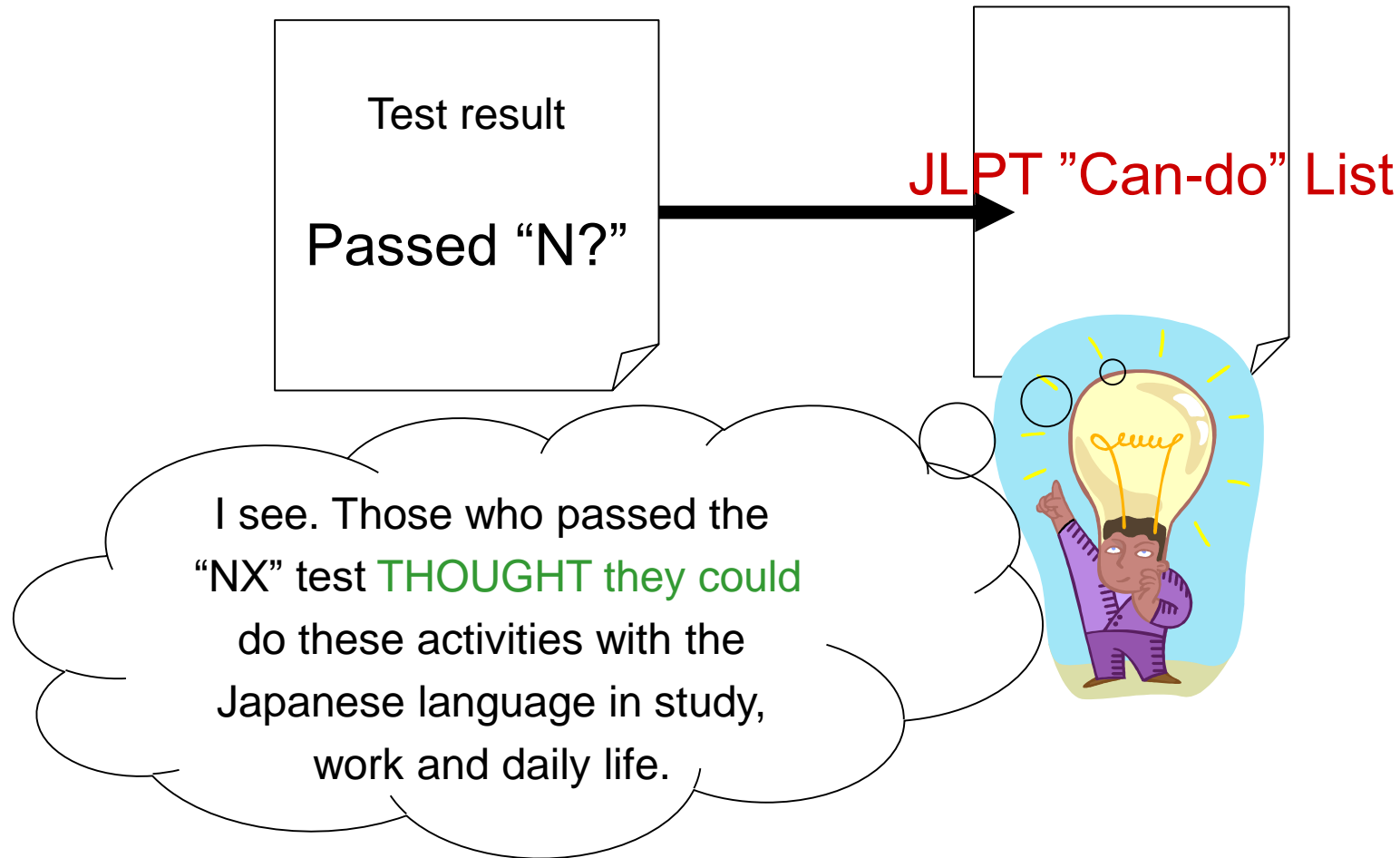
The list can be used by test takers and others as a reference to get an idea of "what successful test takers of a particular level can do in Japanese."

Sample

Listening	I can understand the general content when I hear announcements at school, work or public places.
Speaking	I can speak in detail of my hopes and experience at interviews such as for a job or part-time work.
Reading	I can understand the content of newspaper or magazine articles about topics I am interested in.
Writing	I can write letters or emails to express my emotions such as appreciation or apology.

For further details: <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/candolist.html>

With the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test “Can-do” list,



We can better understand the test results in terms of practical Japanese-language use.

For further details: <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/candolist.html>

FAQs

Q. What are the test sections and times ?

Level	Test Sections and Test Times		
N1	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) ▪ Reading 110 min		Listening 55 min (Des. 2022~)
N2	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) ▪ Reading 105 min		Listening 50 min
N3	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary) 30 min	Language Knowledge (Grammar) ▪ Reading 70 min	Listening 40 min
N4	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary) 25 min	Language Knowledge (Grammar) ▪ Reading 55 min	Listening 35 min
N5	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary) 20 min	Language Knowledge (Grammar) ▪ Reading 40 min	Listening 30 min

Q. How should I decide which test level to take?

A.

- See the table “Summary of Linguistic Competence Required for Each Level”

<https://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/levelsummary.html>

- See the references on our official website (free of charge)

★ “New Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Sample Questions”

<https://www.jlpt.jp/e/samples/sample09.html>











★ “JLPT Official Practice Workbook” (2012)

★ “JLPT Official Practice Workbook Vol. 2” (2018)

<https://www.jlpt.jp/e/samples/sampleindex.html>



Test items				
	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading			Listening
	Vocabulary	Grammar	Reading	
N1	 (907KB)	 (492KB)	 (2.3MB)	 (1.4MB)
N2	 (956KB)	 (711KB)	 (1.9MB)	 (1.5MB)

Listening audio files						
	Task-based comprehension	Point comprehension	Summary comprehension	Utterance expressions	Quick response	Integrated comprehension
N1	Q1  (12.8MB)	Q2  (16.6MB)	Q3  (11.5MB)	-	Q4  (8.9MB)	Q5  (9.5MB)
N2	Q1  (10.3MB)	Q2  (13.2MB)	Q3  (9.8MB)	-	Q4  (7.8MB)	Q5  (8.4MB)

Q. How can I receive test results?

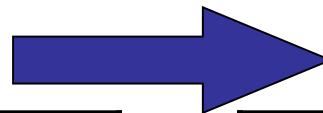
Level	Scoring Sections	Range of Scores
N1 N2 N3	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)	0~60
	Reading	0~60
	Listening	0~60
 Total Score	0~180
N4 N5	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)・Reading	0~120
	Listening	0~60
 Total Score	0~180

▪ Scores are indicated by scaled scores.

For further details: <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/guideline/results.html>

Corresponding Sections

In test



In test results

Level	Test Sections	Scoring Sections	Range of scores
N1 N2	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)	0~60
	Listening	Reading Listening	0~60 0~60
N3	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)	0~60
	Language Knowledge (Grammar) • Reading	Reading	0~60
	Listening	Listening	0~60
N4 N5	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary)	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) • Reading	0~120
	Language Knowledge (Grammar) • Reading		
	Listening	Listening	0~60

For further details: <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/guideline/results.html>

Determination of pass/fail

Level	Total score		Scores by Scoring Sections					
			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
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

Level	Total score		Scores by Scoring Sections			
			Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar) · Reading		Listening	
	Range of scores	Overall pass marks	Range of scores	Sectional pass marks	Range of scores	Sectional pass marks
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

For further details: <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/guideline/results.html>

For further details of the JLPT;



New Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Guidebook Executive Summary

The new test is outlined.

* Please note that this guidebook contains the test time and the approximate number of test items for N4 and N5 before the change. For more information about the changes in test time and approximate number of test items, please refer to this website's "Test sections and test times" and "News," respectively.

- ▣ Executive Summary (Japanese) (PDF/214KB)
- ▣ Executive Summary (English) (PDF/490KB)
- ▣ Executive Summary (French) (PDF/280KB)

You can download from the JLPT website;
https://www.jlpt.jp/e/reference/pdf/guidebook_s_e.pdf

日本語能力試験

JLPT Japanese-Language
Proficiency
Test

Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)

Application Procedures and Timeline



香港日本語教育研究會
SOCIETY OF JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION HONG KONG

Application Procedures

Online application

Website:

<https://www.japanese-edu.org.hk/jp/jlpt/zh/news.html>

日本語能力試験

JLPT Japanese-Language
Proficiency
Test

Application periods

- July JLPT:

Mid-March ~ Early-April

- December JLPT:

Mid-August ~ Early-September

日本語能力試験

JLPT Japanese-Language
Proficiency
Test

Test Fee

HK\$ 700 (as of July 2022)

- Test fee once paid for a specific level is not refundable or transferrable nor can it be used for application for change of test level.
- No subsequent request for change of test venue or test level will be entertained.



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Payment

- Payment must be settled by exact amount before deadline (based on transaction time).
- Failure to do so will be treated as invalid payment and refund process will take approximately two months.

Special Circumstances

The Japanese Language Proficiency Test is conducted in various parts of the world on the same day, **no supplementary test would be offered.**

Special Circumstances

Under exceptional circumstances, such as typhoon signal, black rainstorm warning, act of nature, civil commotion... etc., the test will be cancelled.

In such cases, candidates may opt to sit for the next test without re-application or request a refund of 50% of test fee paid. **SOJLEHK will not be liable for any claim for loss due to such cancellation.**



Payment methods of online application

https://www.japanese-edu.org.hk/jp/jlpt/subpages/payment_net.html

- 1 PPS Payment by Phone
- 2 PPS Payment by Internet
- 3 Internet Payment thru e-banking
- 4 Pay by cash at appointed convenience stores (Circle K & VanGO)
with barcode given

Timeline

日本語能力試験

JLPT Japanese-Language
Proficiency
Test

July JLPT

Time	Procedures
Late-February ~ Early-March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Announcement of details of JLPT through publicity on Facebook, newspapers, sending poster to schools, colleges, and universities○ Send application information to HKEAA to be circulated to Secondary schools
Mid-March~ Early-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Application Period
May ~ June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sending Test Voucher to Candidates
1st Sunday of July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ TEST DAY OF JLPT
Late-August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Online Result Preview of JLPT
Early-October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Certificates Distribution of JLPT

日本語能力試験

JLPT Japanese-Language
Proficiency
Test

December JLPT

Time	Procedures
Late-July ~ Early-August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Announcement of details of JLPT through publicity on Facebook, newspapers, sending poster to schools, colleges, and universities○ Send application information to HKEAA to be circulated to Secondary schools
Mid-August ~ Early-September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Application Period
October ~ November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sending Test Voucher to Candidates
1st Sunday of December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ TEST DAY OF JLPT
Late-January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Online Result Preview of JLPT
Early-March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Certificates Distribution of JLPT

Enquires:

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Thank you for your kind attention.



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