

LESSON NOTES

# All About #11

## Top 5 Tools for Learning Japanese

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# GRAMMAR

## The Focus of This Lesson is the Top Five Tools for Learning Japanese

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The focus of this lesson is to suggest the top five useful tools you can use to learn Japanese.

Some great tools to aid you in your Japanese studies include the following:

### 1. Rikaichan

Rikaichan is a popup dictionary extension for the Firefox Internet browser that translates Japanese into English, German, French, or Russian. With this extension installed, you can easily look up the meaning of Japanese words that show up on webpages by simply hovering the cursor over the word. A box will instantly pop up with the reading and definition of the word. Rikaichan is very easy to use and is a must when navigating Japanese webpages.

Link: Rikaichan website: <http://www.polarcloud.com/rikaichan/>

### 2. Rikaichan Kanji Dictionary

Rikaichan not only translates words, but also gives you detailed information on *kanji*. Hover the cursor over any *kanji*, whether it is part of a compound or by itself, and press the Shift or Enter key to toggle between the word, *kanji*, and name dictionaries. The *kanji* dictionary gives detailed information that include the *kanji*'s meaning, all possible readings, radicals that make up the *kanji*, number of strokes, and more. This *kanji* dictionary is a part of the Rikaichan add-on mentioned above, so there's no need for a separate program.

Link: Rikaichan website: <http://www.polarcloud.com/rikaichan/>

### 3. Eijiro Dictionary

Eijiro is an English-Japanese/Japanese-English dictionary with an extensive database of translations and sample sentences. A group of professional translators put it together and continue to update it regularly. As a result, Eijiro contains a huge number of difficult and obscure terms, colloquial expressions, and technical terms. You can buy Eijiro online at the ALC Online Shop website in the form of a CD-R or a downloadable dictionary file, and a free online version of Eijiro is available through the SpaceALC Japanese website portal.

Links: ALC Online Shop: <http://shop.alc.co.jp/top/>

SpaceALC (free online version of Eijiro): <http://www.alc.co.jp/>

### 4. Anki

Anki is a flashcard program that lets you review vocabulary, *kanji*, or both! This program is based on a theory called spaced repetition, which means it presents the learner with flashcards at certain calculated intervals. This system is based on research that shows that when you repeat new material to learn it, the interval at which you repeat it makes a big difference. The flashcard system in Anki is very flexible and customizable, making it a great tool for learning and retaining vocabulary and *kanji*.

Link: Anki website: <http://ichi2.net/anki/index.html>

### 5. Lang-8

Lang-8 is a Social Networking Service (SNS) created for the purpose of language exchange and international communication. Once you register, which is free, you can write a journal entry in the language you are studying, and other users who are native speakers of that language can correct your entry. In turn, you can also correct the journal

entries of those who are studying your native language. Many people studying Japanese use Lang-8 to have native speakers correct their journal entries written in Japanese. Even if you are just getting started with Japanese, this is a good way to practice reading and writing in Japanese as well as receive valuable feedback!

Link: Lang-8: <http://www.lang-8.com/>