

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #9

One of These Things is Not Like the Other One in Japan

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KANJI

1. (At customs)
2. OFFICER: パスポート おねがいします。
それは なんですか。
3. テイラー: これは おみやげです。
メキシコ の アルコール です。
4. OFFICER: テキーラ ?
5. テイラー: はい。
6. OFFICER: これは なんですか。
7. テイラー: それは、 サラ の Diaper です。
8. OFFICER: Diaper ? Diaper は なんですか。

ROMANIZATION

1. (At customs)
2. OFFICER: Pasupōto onegaishimasu.
Sore wa nan desu ka.
3. TEIRĀ: Kore wa omiyage desu.
Mekishiko no arukōru desu.
4. OFFICER: Tekīra ?

CONT'D OVER

5. TEIRĀ: Hai.
6. OFFICER: Kore wa nan desu ka.
7. TEIRĀ: Sore wa, Sara no Diaper desu.
8. OFFICER: Diaper? Diaper wa nan desu ka.

ENGLISH

1. (At customs)
2. OFFICER: Passport, please.
What is that?
3. TAYLOR: This is a souvenir.
It's Mexican alcohol.
4. OFFICER: Tequila?
5. TAYLOR: Yes.
6. OFFICER: What is this?
7. TAYLOR: Those are Sarah's diapers.
8. OFFICER: Diaper? What are diapers?

VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
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メキシコの	メキシコの	Mekishiko no	Mexican
これ	これ	kore	this (one)
なんですか。	なんですか。	Nan desu ka.	What is it?
パスポート	パスポート	pasupōto	passport
それ	それ	sore	that (one)
おねがいします	おねがいします	onagai shimasu	please
テキーラ	テキーラ	tekīra	tequila
なん	なん	nan	what
おみやげ	おみやげ	omiyage	a small gift, a souvenir
アルコール	アルコール	arukōru	alcohol

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>これはメキシコのおかしです。 <i>Kore wa Mekishiko no okashi desu.</i></p> <p>This is a Mexican sweet.</p>	<p>これは、ようかんです。 <i>Kore wa yōkan desu.</i></p> <p>This is soft sweet red bean jelly.</p>
<p>これはなんですか。 <i>Kore wa nan desu ka?</i></p> <p>What is this?</p>	<p>パスポートがあります。 <i>Pasupōto ga arimasu.</i></p> <p>I have a passport.</p>
<p>それはカメラです。 <i>Sore wa kamera desu.</i></p> <p>That's a camera.</p>	<p>みずとメニュー、おねがいします。 <i>Mizu to menyū, onagai shimasu.</i></p> <p>Some water and a menu, please.</p>
<p>テキーラがだいすきです。 <i>Tekīra ga daisuki desu.</i></p> <p>I love tequila.</p>	<p>これはなんですか。 <i>Kore wa nan desu ka.</i></p> <p>What's this?</p>

これはおみやげです。
Kore wa omiyage desu.

This is a small gift for you.

これはアルコールですか。
Kore wa arukōru desu ka.

Is this alcohol?

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

アルコール (*arukōru*)

Arukōru means "alcohol" or "alcoholic beverage." We commonly use another Japanese word for "alcohol," *o-sake*, in daily conversation. In conversation, we use *arukōru* and *o-sake* interchangeably.

Let's check some names of other beverages...

Japanese	"English"
<i>mizu</i>	"water"
<i>jūsu</i>	"juice"
<i>o-cha</i>	"tea"
<i>kōhī</i>	"coffee"
<i>bīru</i>	"beer"

メキシコの (*Mekishiko no*)

In the dialogue, we had the phrase *mekishiko no arukōru*, which literally means "alcohol of Mexico" and translates to "Mexican alcohol." You can tell from which country the item comes by adding *no* to a name of a country.

- **[Name of a Country] + no + [Noun]**
Nihon no okashi → "Japanese sweets"
Furansu no mizu → "French water"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Asking What Something Is.

それはなんですか。

Sore wa nan desu ka. "What is that?"

In this lesson, you'll learn how to say "what's this?" and "what's that?" in Japanese.

Review: *Kore*, *Sore*, and *Are*

Let's review how to say "this" and "that" in Japanese!

- We use ***kore*** for an item close to the speaker. → "this one"
- We use ***sore*** for an item far from the speaker but close to the listener. → "that one near you"
- We use ***are*** for an item far from both the speaker and the listener. → "that one over there"

Review: Asking What Something Is

Let's review how to ask "what is it?" in Japanese!

Formation

- **[A] *wa nan desu ka.*** → "What is [A]?"
**Nan* is a question word meaning "what."

For Example:

[A]	<i>wa</i>	<i>nan desu ka.</i>	"English"
<i>Kore</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>nan desu ka.</i>	"What's this?"
<i>Sore</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>nan desu ka.</i>	"What's that?"
<i>Are</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>nan desu ka.</i>	"What's that over there?"

Sample

Sentences

1. A : *Yōkan wa nan desu ka.*
B: *(Yōkan wa) Nihon no o-kashi desu.*
A: "What's yōkan?"
B: "It's a Japanese sweet."
2. A : *Tekīra wa nan desu ka.*
B: *(Tekīra wa) Mekishiko no o-sake desu.*
A: "What's tequila?"
B: "It's Mexican alcohol."

Reference

- *onegaishimasu* → Absolute Beginner Season 1 Lesson 5
- *nan desu ka?* → Absolute Beginner Season 1 Lesson 11