

LESSON NOTES

Survival Phrases S2 #25

Riding the Rails 3

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KANJI

1. 東京駅まで行きますか？

KANA

1. とうきょうえきまで行きますか？

ROMANIZATION

1. Tōkyō eki made ikimasu ka?

ENGLISH

1. Will this train go to Tokyo Station?

VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
東京	とうきょう	Tōkyō	Tokyo (current capital of Japan)
駅	えき	eki	station
行きますか	いきますか	ikimasu ka	does it go (polite form)

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>日本の全人口 1億2800万人のうち、10分の1にあたる1300万人が東京に住んでいます。</p> <p><i>Nihon no zen jinkō ichi-oku ni-sen happyaku-man-nin no uchi, jū-bun no ichi ni ataru sen san-byaku-man-nin ga Tōkyō ni sunde imasu.</i></p> <p>Out of the Japanese population of 128 million people, 13 million, which is almost one-tenth, reside in Tokyo.</p>	<p>出身は東京です。</p> <p><i>Shusshin wa Tōkyō desu.</i></p> <p>I'm from Tokyo.</p>
<p>次の駅は大阪です。</p> <p><i>Tsugi no eki wa Ōsaka desu.</i></p> <p>The next station is Osaka.</p>	<p>このバスは成田に行きますか。</p> <p><i>Kono basu wa Narita ni ikimasu ka.</i></p> <p>Does this bus go to Narita?</p>

GRAMMAR

Language Tip

When you're on the platform, and you want to confirm if the train is going to your destination, you can ask a fellow passenger or an employee of the railway company, "Will this train go to _____?" followed by a destination.

In today's lesson, we'll use Tokyo Station as our destination. In Japanese, "Will (this train) go to Tokyo Station?" is *Tōkyō eki made ikimasu ka?* The first words *Tōkyō eki* mean, "Tokyo Station." The following word *made* means, "to" as in "to a destination." *Ikimasu ka* means, "Will it go?" The dictionary form of the verb "to go" is *iku*. *Ikimasu* is the polite way of saying "it will go." The last sound *ka* is a particle that turns a sentence into an interrogative. Altogether, *Tōkyō eki made ikimasu ka?* means, "Will this train go to Tokyo Station?"

When you use this phrase, be sure to point to a train because the phrase itself does not contain the subject "this train." Japanese sentences can function without subjects so there is nothing wrong with this sentence. We could have taught the full sentence, but since this is SurvivalPhrases.com, we decided to introduce short simple sentences.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Sachiko's Secret: Caution, Courtesy, and the Rush Hour Crush on Trains

Tip #1

Today's portion of Sachiko's Secret is about what to be careful of when riding trains. My first tip is to always double check where your train is headed. Be careful, because some train lines split into different train lines at certain stations. That's really convenient for people who need to transfer to that other line because they won't have to go up and down the stairs to get to another train line. But when you're taking the train for the first time, it can be a nightmare! There is one indicator of a train line splitting. If the train on the opposite side of the platform is painted a different color than the train you're on, the train on the opposite track belongs to another train line. Another reason to check constantly is that local trains and express trains make different stops. So if you get on an express train, it may not stop at the local station you want to get off at. And some express trains make different stops depending on the time of day. So it really pays to constantly double check!

Another tip is about manners. On Japanese trains, we have many rules to abide by so as not to disturb other passengers. They may sound trivial, but when the trains are packed with people, the slightest disturbance can really raise the irritation level. And you don't want to cause a riot on a packed train! So let's go over some of those rules. First of all, if you're on a packed train, obviously don't take up seats with your bag or other luggage. There are overhead racks to store your bags. Also, if you're standing on the train and wearing a backpack, don't keep the bag on your back. It takes up so much space! Put the bag on the overhead rack or on the ground where there is more space. Second, cell-phone use is discouraged, so keep your cell phone on vibrator mode, and when it rings, don't pick it up. Let the answering machine get the message and call back later. Some people who need to pick up urgent calls will answer their phones and whisper quickly, "On the train; call you back." But generally, we're advised to not use the phone. And last, keep the so-called "Silver Seat" or "courtesy seats," reserved for the elderly, physically challenged, or pregnant people. You can sit in these seats if there is no one around, but once a person who fits the above description comes on the train, you should give up your seat. Simply, look the person in the eye, point to the seat and say *Dōzo*, which means, "Please take it."

Tip #2

While we're on the topic of packed trains, let me describe rush hour hell in Japan! On a packed train during rush hour (between 6:00 AM and 9:00 AM, depending on how far you are from central Tokyo), I would feel at least four people pressing up against me from all sides! The other passengers would be so close to me, I'd feel every muscle in their bodies, see every wrinkle on their faces, and smell every drop of sweat! And because I'm not very tall (158cm), I often get men's chests pressing against my face. Sometimes, I seriously worry that I might suffocate!

And the lack of leg space! With people sitting in front of me, and everyone else putting their

bags on the ground instead of on the overhead rack because that too is full during rush hour, I was once stuck standing in an awkward position where my legs were crossed and bent. And I had nothing to hold onto because there weren't enough straps for everyone to hang onto, so I had to put strength into my legs to balance myself whenever the train shook sideways. After thirty minutes in that position, I pulled my calf muscles as I got off the train!

Interestingly, railway company employees on the platform will push passengers farther into the train. Without this effort, the train doors will not close! I suppose they do this also to prevent people's arms and legs from being caught in the doors. But I would prefer that they simply stop passengers from boarding when the trains are moderately full!