



## Japanese Sayings

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Expression	Reading	Meaning	Example	Translation
猿も木から落ちる	さるもきからおちる	Even monkeys fall from trees; even experts make mistakes.	先生でも漢字を間違えることがある。猿も木から落ちるね。	Even teachers sometimes make mistakes with kanji. Even monkeys fall from trees.
二兎を追う者は一兎をも得ず	にとをおうものはいっともをえず	He who chases two rabbits catches neither; trying to do two things at once may lead to failure in both.	勉強とバイトを両立するのは大変だ。二兎を追う者は一兎をも得ずだね。	Balancing studying and a part-time job is hard. If you chase two rabbits, you'll catch neither.
花より団子	はなよりだんご	Dumplings over flowers; practicality over aesthetics.	花見より屋台のほうが楽しみだ。花より団子だね。	I'm more excited about the food stalls than the cherry blossoms. It's dumplings over flowers.
石の上にも三年	いしのうえにもさんねん	Three years on a rock; perseverance pays off.	毎日練習すれば、きっと上手くなる。石の上にも三年だ。	If you practice every day, you'll surely get better. Perseverance pays off.
猫に小判	ねこにこばん	Gold coins to a cat; giving something valuable to someone who doesn't appreciate it (like pearls before swine).	彼に高いワインをあげても、猫に小判だ。	Giving him expensive wine is like pearls before swine.
口は災いの元	くちはわざわいのもと	The mouth is the source of disaster; careless words can cause trouble.	秘密をうっかり話してしまった。口は災いの元だね。	I accidentally told the secret. Careless words cause trouble.
案ずるより産むが易し	あんずるよりうむがやすし	Giving birth is easier than worrying about it; doing something is often easier than dreading it.	やってみたら意外と簡単だった。案ずるより産むが易しだ。	When I tried it, it was surprisingly easy. Doing it was easier than worrying about it.
塵も積もれば山となる	ちりもつもればやまとなる	Even dust, if piled up, becomes a mountain; small efforts add up to great results.	毎日少しずつ貯金しよう。塵も積もれば山となるよ。	Let's save a little every day. Small amounts add up.
馬の耳に念仏	うまのみみにねんぶつ	Buddhist prayers to a horse's ear; speaking to someone who doesn't understand or listen (in one ear and out the other).	何度言っても聞かない。馬の耳に念仏だ。	He won't listen no matter how many times I say it. It's like preaching to a horse's ear.
犬も歩けば棒に当たる	いぬもあるけばぼうにあたる	When a dog walks, it hits a stick; if you venture out, you might encounter trouble or	新しいサークルに入ったら、いい友達ができただ。犬も歩けば棒に当たるね。	When I joined a new club, I made a good friend. Sometimes going out leads to unexpected good luck.

Expression	Reading	Meaning	Example	Translation
		good luck (dual meaning).		
豚に真珠	ぶたにしんじゅ	Pearls before swine; giving valuable things to those who don't appreciate them.	彼にこの絵を見せても、豚に真珠だ。	Showing him this painting is like pearls before swine.
頭隠して尻隠さず	あたまかくしてしりかくさず	Hiding the head but not the butt; a half-hearted cover-up that leaves obvious evidence.	彼はうそをついたが、すぐばれた。頭隠して尻隠さずだ。	He lied, but it was found out right away. He hid his head but not his butt.
蛙の子は蛙	かえるのこはかえる	Like father, like son; a child follows in their parent's footsteps.	医者の子は、やっぱり蛙の子は蛙だね。	The doctor's son is just like his father, like father, like son.
井の中の蛙 大海を知らず	いのなかのかわずた いかいをしらず	A person with a narrow view doesn't know the wider world.	彼は地元しか知らない。井の中の蛙大海を知らずだ。	He only knows his hometown. He's like a frog in a well.
虎穴に入らずんば虎子を得ず	こけつにいらずんば こじをえず	Nothing ventured, nothing gained.	失敗を恐れるな。虎穴に入らずんば虎子を得ずだよ。	Don't be afraid of failure. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.
急がば回れ	いそがばまわれ	More haste, less speed; take the long way around to save time.	急がば回れで、電車で行こう。	Let's take the train; more haste, less speed.
七転び八起き	ななころびやおき	Perseverance; never giving up despite repeated failures.	七転び八起きで、また挑戦しよう。	Let's try again with the spirit of falling seven times and standing up eight.
郷に入っては郷に従え	ごうにいつてはごう にしたがえ	When in Rome, do as the Romans do.	ここでは靴を脱ごう。郷に入っては郷に従えだ。	Let's take off our shoes here. When in Rome, do as the Romans do.
泣きっ面に蜂	なきつつらにはち	Adding insult to injury; misfortunes never come singly.	財布を落として、雨まで降ってきた。泣きっ面に蜂だ。	I lost my wallet, and then it started raining too. That's adding insult to injury.
出る杭は打たれる	でるくいほうたれる	The nail that sticks out gets hammered down; standing out invites criticism.	彼は目立ちすぎて、出る杭は打たれると言われた。	He stood out too much, and people said the nail that sticks out gets hammered down.
仏の顔も三度	ほとけのかおもさんど	Even Buddha's patience runs out if you push too far.	また遅刻? 仏の顔も三度だよ。	Late again? Even Buddha's patience has limits.
一石二鳥	いっせきにちょう	Kill two birds with one stone; achieve two things at once.	歩いて通勤すれば、運動にもなって節約もできる。一石二鳥だ。	If you walk to work, you get exercise and save money. It's killing two birds with one stone.
棚からぼたもち	たなからぼたもち	Unexpected luck; a windfall.	抽選で旅行が当たった。棚からぼたもちだ。	I won a trip in a lottery. It was like a windfall.
渡りに船	わたりにふね	A timely help; a godsend; exactly what you needed.	困っていたら友達が助けてくれた。渡りに船	A friend helped me when I was in trouble. It was a godsend.

Expression	Reading	Meaning	Example	Translation
			だった。	
お疲れ様です	otsukaresama desu	Good work / thanks for your effort	Common workplace phrase.	Good work / thanks for your effort
よろしくお願ひします	yoroshiku onegaishimasu	Please treat me well	Used when asking a favor.	Please treat me well
いただきます	itadakimasu	Thanks for the food (before eating)	Said before meals.	Thanks for the food (before eating)
ごちそうさまでした	gochisōsama deshita	Thanks for the meal (after)	Said after meals.	Thanks for the meal (after)
お先に失礼します	osaki ni shitsureishimasu	Leaving before others (work)	Excuse me for leaving first.	Leaving before others (work)
お邪魔します	ojamashimasu	Sorry to intrude	Said when entering someone's home.	Sorry to intrude
いってきます	ittekimasu	I'm leaving	Said when leaving home.	I'm leaving
いってらっしゃい	itterasshai	Take care / see you	Response to ittekimasu.	Take care / see you
ただいま	tadaima	I'm home	Said when returning home.	I'm home
おかえりなさい	okaerinasai	Welcome back	Response to tadaima.	Welcome back
しょうがない	shōganai	It can't be helped	Resigned acceptance.	It can't be helped
仕方がない	shikata nai	Nothing can be done	Same as shōganai.	Nothing can be done
まあまあ	mā mā	so-so; not bad	Moderate assessment.	so-so; not bad
なるほど	naruhodo	I see; indeed	Showing understanding.	I see; indeed
そうですね	sō desu ne	That's right; let me see	Agreement / thinking.	That's right; let me see
どういたしまして	dō itashimashite	You're welcome	Response to thanks.	You're welcome
お大事に	odaji ni	Get well soon	To someone ill.	Get well soon
気をつけて	ki wo tsukete	Take care	When someone leaves.	Take care
頑張って	ganbatte	Do your best / good luck	Encouragement.	Do your best / good luck
おめでとうございます	omedetō gozaimasu	Congratulations	Celebrations.	Congratulations
継続は力なり	keizoku wa chikara nari	Continuity is strength	Persistence is power.	Continuity is strength
知らぬが仏	shiranu ga hotoke	Ignorance is bliss	Not knowing is Buddha.	Ignorance is bliss

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井の中の蛙	i no naka no kawazu	Limited perspective	A frog in a well.	Limited perspective
笑う門には 福来る	warau kado ni wa fuku kitaru	Fortune comes to a merry door	Laughter brings fortune.	Fortune comes to a merry door
花鳥風月	kachō fūgetsu	Beauty of nature	Flowers, birds, wind, moon.	Beauty of nature
一期一会	ichigo ichie	Treasure each encounter	Once in a lifetime meeting.	Treasure each encounter
以心伝心	ishin denshin	Tacit understanding	Heart-to-heart communication.	Tacit understanding
自業自得	jigō jitoku	You reap what you sow	One's own doing, one's own result.	You reap what you sow
十人十色	jūnin toiro	Everyone is different	Ten people, ten colors.	Everyone is different
三人寄れば 文殊の知恵	sannin yoreba monju no chie	Two heads are better than one	Three people have the wisdom of Monju.	Two heads are better than one
能ある鷹は 爪を隠す	nō aru taka wa tsume wo kakusu	Talented people stay humble	A skilled hawk hides its claws.	Talented people stay humble
頭がいい	Atama ga ii	Smart; intelligent	Smart; intelligent	Smart; intelligent
頭が切れる	Atama ga kireru	Sharp-minded; quick- thinking	Sharp-minded; quick- thinking	Sharp-minded; quick- thinking
頭が上がら ない	Atama ga agaranai	Unable to stand up to someone; indebted to someone	Unable to stand up to someone; indebted to someone	Unable to stand up to someone; indebted to someone
顔が広い	Kao ga hiroi	Well-connected; knows many people	Well-connected; knows many people	Well-connected; knows many people
顔が立つ	Kao ga tatsu	To save face; maintain honor	To save face; maintain honor	To save face; maintain honor
顔に出る	Kao ni deru	To show on one's face	To show on one's face	To show on one's face
口が軽い	Kuchi ga karui	Loose-lipped; cannot keep secrets	Loose-lipped; cannot keep secrets	Loose-lipped; cannot keep secrets
口が堅い	Kuchi ga katai	Trustworthy with secrets	Trustworthy with secrets	Trustworthy with secrets
口がうまい	Kuchi ga umai	Good with words; persuasive	Good with words; persuasive	Good with words; persuasive
口に合う	Kuchi ni au	To suit one's taste	To suit one's taste	To suit one's taste
耳が痛い	Mimi ga itai	Hard to hear because it is true	Hard to hear because it is true	Hard to hear because it is true
耳に入る	Mimi ni hairu	To hear about; to come to one's attention	To hear about; to come to one's attention	To hear about; to come to one's attention
目が高い	Me ga takai	Have a good eye; good judgment	Have a good eye; good judgment	Have a good eye; good judgment
目がない	Me ga nai	Crazy about; weak for	Crazy about; weak for	Crazy about; weak for
目に入る	Me ni hairu	To catch one's eye	To catch one's eye	To catch one's eye
目を通す	Me o tōsu	To look through; to read over	To look through; to read over	To look through; to read over

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目を疑う	Me o utagau	Cannot believe one's eyes	Cannot believe one's eyes	Cannot believe one's eyes
鼻が高い	Hana ga takai	Proud	Proud	Proud
鼻につく	Hana ni tsuku	Annoying; get on one's nerves	Annoying; get on one's nerves	Annoying; get on one's nerves
胸がいっぱい	Mune ga ippai	Filled with emotion	Filled with emotion	Filled with emotion
胸を張る	Mune o haru	To be proud; hold one's head high	To be proud; hold one's head high	To be proud; hold one's head high
腹が立つ	Hara ga tatsu	To get angry	To get angry	To get angry
腹を割る	Hara o waru	Speak frankly; open up honestly	Speak frankly; open up honestly	Speak frankly; open up honestly
腹が黒い	Hara ga kuroi	Scheming; malicious	Scheming; malicious	Scheming; malicious
気がつく	Ki ga tsuku	To notice	To notice	To notice
気が合う	Ki ga au	To get along well	To get along well	To get along well
気が強い	Ki ga tsuyoi	Strong-willed	Strong-willed	Strong-willed
気が弱い	Ki ga yowai	Timid; weak-nerved	Timid; weak-nerved	Timid; weak-nerved
気が重い	Ki ga omoi	Feel reluctant; feel heavy-hearted	Feel reluctant; feel heavy-hearted	Feel reluctant; feel heavy-hearted
気が利く	Ki ga kiku	Thoughtful; attentive	Thoughtful; attentive	Thoughtful; attentive
手が足りない	Te ga tarinai	Not enough help; short-handed	Not enough help; short-handed	Not enough help; short-handed
手が出ない	Te ga denai	Cannot afford; cannot manage	Cannot afford; cannot manage	Cannot afford; cannot manage
手を貸す	Te o kasu	To lend a hand	To lend a hand	To lend a hand
手を抜く	Te o nuku	To cut corners; do less than one should	To cut corners; do less than one should	To cut corners; do less than one should
足を引っ張る	Ashi o hipparu	Hold someone back	Hold someone back	Hold someone back
足が出る	Ashi ga deru	Go over budget	Go over budget	Go over budget
足が遠のく	Ashi ga tōnoku	Stop going somewhere	Stop going somewhere	Stop going somewhere
首になる	Kubi ni naru	To get fired	To get fired	To get fired
首を長くする	Kubi o nagaku suru	Wait eagerly	Wait eagerly	Wait eagerly
肩を持つ	Kata o motsu	To side with; support someone	To side with; support someone	To side with; support someone
肩の荷が下りる	Kata no ni ga oriru	A burden is lifted	A burden is lifted	A burden is lifted
猫の手も借りたい	Neko no te mo karitai	Extremely busy	Extremely busy	Extremely busy

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猫をかぶる	Neko o kaburu	Pretend to be sweet or innocent	Pretend to be sweet or innocent	Pretend to be sweet or innocent
犬猿の仲	Ken'en no naka	Like cats and dogs; bitter relationship	Like cats and dogs; bitter relationship	Like cats and dogs; bitter relationship
馬が合う	Uma ga au	Click naturally with someone	Click naturally with someone	Click naturally with someone
狐につままれる	Kitsune ni tsumareru	Feel puzzled as if tricked	Feel puzzled as if tricked	Feel puzzled as if tricked
手が焼ける	Te ga yakeru	Hard to handle	Hard to handle	Hard to handle
骨が折れる	Hone ga oreru	Takes a lot of effort	Takes a lot of effort	Takes a lot of effort
腰が低い	Koshi ga hikui	Humble; modest	Humble; modest	Humble; modest
腰が重い	Koshi ga omoi	Slow to act	Slow to act	Slow to act
舌を巻く	Shita o maku	Be astonished by skill	Be astonished by skill	Be astonished by skill
手に負えない	Te ni oenai	Out of control; impossible to handle	Out of control; impossible to handle	Out of control; impossible to handle
しなければならぬ	しなければならない	must	must	must
行ってきました	いってきました	went	went	went
エレクトリック	エレクトリック	electric	electric	electric
このようにして	このようにして	thus	thus	thus
ソリューション	ソリューション	solution	solution	solution
お久しぶりです	ohisashiburi desu	Long time no see	Greeting after absence.	Long time no see
ご苦労様	gokurōsama	Thanks for your hard work (casual)	To subordinates/peers.	Thanks for your hard work (casual)
失礼します	shitsureishimasu	Excuse me (entering/leaving)	Polite entry/exit.	Excuse me (entering/leaving)
申し訳ありません	mōshiwake arimasen	I am very sorry (formal)	Deep apology.	I am very sorry (formal)
恐れ入ります	osoreirimasu	Sorry to trouble you	Business polite.	Sorry to trouble you
かしこまりました	kashikomarimashita	Certainly / understood	Service industry.	Certainly / understood
承知しました	shōchi shimashita	Understood	Business acknowledgment.	Understood
よろしくお願いたし	yoroshiku onegai itashimasu	Please treat me well (formal)	Very polite request.	Please treat me well (formal)

Expression	Reading	Meaning	Example	Translation
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