# Judo Japanese Vocabulary

## Numbers
Japanese use different words for counting different types of things. Judo practices use the same numbers that the Japanese military does for exercises. Some of the words for numbers used in a different context, like judo belt ranks, are different than the ones used for exercises. These alternatives are provided in parenthesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ichi</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>san</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shi (yon)</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roku</td>
<td>six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shichi (nana)</td>
<td>seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hachi</td>
<td>eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ku (kyu)</td>
<td>nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ju</td>
<td>ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ju-ichi</td>
<td>eleven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ju-ni</td>
<td>twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niju</td>
<td>twenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hachiju-roku</td>
<td>eighty-six</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Judo Basics

- **Jigoro Kano**: founder of judo
- **seiryoku zenyō**: maximum efficiency with minimal effort (first principal of judo)
- **jita kyoei**: mutual benefit and welfare (second principal of judo)
- **dojo**: training place
- **judoka**: person who studies judo
- **sensei**: teacher
- **sempai**: higher-ranked student
- **kohai**: lower-ranked student
- **-dan (suffix)**: major (black-belt) rank
- **yudansha**: black belt judoka
- **-kyu (suffix)**: minor (white-belt) rank
- **mudansha**: white belt judoka

## Judo Class

- **joseki / shomen**: place of honor (front wall of dojo)
- **tatami**: mat
- **judogi**: judo uniform
- **uwagi**: judo jacket
- **zubon**: judo pants
- **obi**: belt
- **eri**: lapel (of jacket)
- **seiza**: kneeling
- **kiotsuke**: attention
rei  bow
ritsurei standing bow
zarei kneeling bow
hajime begin
matte stop
sore-made finished, time is up
tori judoka performing a technique
uke judoka receiving a technique
ukemi fall
zempo kaiten ukemi forward rolling fall
onegai-shimasu please (work with me)
kudasai please (do something)
domo arigato thanks (for the practice)
arigato gozaimasu thank you (more polite)
domo arigato gozaimasu thank you very much (formal)
gomen nasai sorry

Body Parts
tai body
te hand
ashi foot
koshi (goshi) hip
kata shoulder
ude forearm
kote wrist
hiza knee
momo thigh
ashikubi ankle
kibisu heel
mune chest
atama head
kubi neck
ago chin

Technique
waza technique
tachi-waza standing technique
katame-waza holding technique
ne-waza ground technique
nage-waza throwing technique
osaekomi-waza pinning technique
shime-waza choking technique
kansetsu-waza joint lock technique
tokui-waza favorite technique
renshu practice
uchikomi fitting in practice
keiko trading techniques
randori free practice
kata form practice

zanshin awareness
kamae posture
maai engagement distance
ki spirit or vital energy
kiai spirit shout
tai sabaki body movement
kuzushi unbalancing
tsukuri fitting in
kake completion

kumi kata gripping
ai-yotsu similar grip (that is, right to right or left to left)
kenka-yotsu opposing grip (that is left to right or right to left)
tsurite lifting hand (sometimes called the power hand)
hikite pulling hand
tsuri-komi lifting/pulling action
mawari turning
otoshi drop
gaeshi (kaeshi) reversal
sukashi counter
sutemi sacrifice
renraku combination
gatame / katame hold, or holding technique

shizentai natural posture
jigotai defensive posture
suriai walking on the balls of the feet
ayumi-ashi alternate steps
tsugi-ashi trailing foot steps

hidari left
migi right
kami upper
mae front
ushiro back
yoko side
soto outside
uchi inside
ura upside-down
kuzure modified (position)
ko- (prefix) small
o- (prefix) big
gari sweep or reap
shiho four corners
ebi shrimp (a form of escape in newaza)

**Tournaments**
shiai  competition
ippon  full point (victory)
wazaari  half point
yuko  minor score
shido  minor penalty
hansoku-make  major penalty (disqualification)
osaekomi  pin
toketa  pin is broken
sonomama  freeze (i.e., do not move)
hikiwake  tie
hantei  decision
yoshi  continue
maitta  “I give up” (submission)

ippon gachi  victory by ippon
yusei gachi  victory by judges’ decision
kiken gachi  victory by withdrawal / injury
sogo gachi  compound victory by points plus penalties
Pronouncing Japanese Words

The Japanese language is phonetically structured, so pronouncing words is often simpler than in English. Also, unlike many other languages, no syllable is accented: each syllable in Japanese gets the same intonation (see below). Use the following guidelines to help find the correct pronunciation:

- Each syllable in a Japanese word is one of the following:
  1. A vowel on its own: a / e / i / o / u
  2. A consonant followed by a vowel (e.g., “ni”)
  3. The syllabic “n” (e.g., “dan” is “da”-“n”)

- All syllables have the same emphasis, no accent (e.g., “gatame” is “ga”-“ta”-“me”, not “GA”-“ta”-“me” / “ga”-“TA”-“me”)

- Vowels always have the same pronunciation:
  1. a => “aa”, like “hah”
  2. e => “eh”, like “day”
  3. i => “ee”, like “fee”
  4. o => “oh”, like “hoe”
  5. u => “oo”, like “you”

  There are no diphthongs, each vowel is pronounced independently.
  (e.g., “shiai” is pronounced “shi”-“a”-“i”)  

- A double vowel has twice the length, but is unbroken: “oo” is “o-”

- A double consonant represents pause before the syllable (e.g., “maitta” is “ma”-“i”-(pause)-“ta”)

- A “i” or “u” after a soft consonant at the end of a word is typically undervoiced. Examples:
  “ichii” => “each”
  “kuzushi” => “ku”-“zu”-“sh_”
  “masu” => “mas”

  “gari” => “gah”-“ree”
  “kubi” => “koo”-“bee”

Last revised: 7/20/2013 by Matt Plavcan