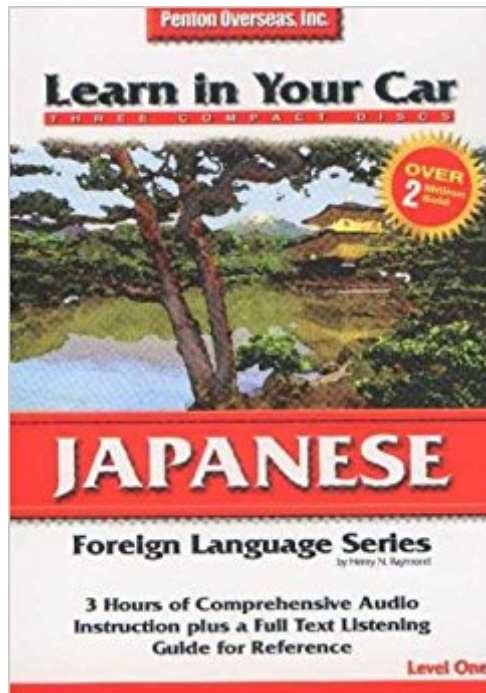




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Learn In Your Car Japanese Level One (Japanese Edition)



Synopsis

Listeners learn pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar of a new language without the need of a textbook. Convenient to use while driving, working out... or anywhere!

Book Information

Series: Learn in Your Car

Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

Look ma, no textbooks! The Learn in Your Car series treats you like a child--in the best possible way--starting with one-word phrases ("please," "good-by"), counting exercises, and simple nouns ("bus," "train") designed to imitate a child's learning process. First you hear the words in English, then they are repeated slowly in clear, unaccented pronunciations. The method is extremely effective for those who don't know a thing, or for those who want to brush up by testing themselves when the English words are spoken. The tapes emphasize the building blocks of communicating in a foreign country rather than rote phrases that only apply on the tape and not in real-life exchanges. Level 1 painlessly covers basic verb forms, essential prepositions, near future and past tenses, as well as shopping, hotel reservations, and other travel-related situations. The series includes French, German, Italian, Russian, Japanese, and Spanish in three levels that can be purchased individually or in boxed sets. Each level contains two 90-minute cassettes (or CDs) and an accompanying booklet (not for use behind the wheel) with helpful explanations and scripts for the lessons. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

If your goal is to communicate verbally while traveling and you prefer to learn from interaction and

practice rather than studying a book, this is an excellent resource. This gave me enough skills to get around Japan and greatly added to the enjoyment of my trip. If you have the impression that 'everyone' speaks English in Japan, then don't leave Tokyo. My simple interactions opened a lot of doors and made folks happy to deal with me rather than ignoring the tourist. It also made folks more comfortable to try a little English, after they heard my efforts at Japanese. Between the two it worked out great. The tapes covered all the standard phrases dealing with travel and they can take you a long way. 'Denshya no eki, a doko des ka?' or 'Where is the train station?' got me out of a lot of trouble, everytime I got lost doing walking tours in the countryside. I've also used the German tapes and have just ordered the French. I've bought many a language book and so far these are my favourite.

For the price, this is much better than other ones out there, like Living Language and the CDs that went with some textbooks I've had, because it speaks the English AND the Japanese for each word/phrase being taught. You really can learn in your car. It has a good variety of lessons, lots of material (although there are a few strange items thrown in). I don't recommend the audio download since you don't get a booklet with the written phrases, and that would have been really helpful since sometimes it's hard to catch all the sounds. Also, I wouldn't want to lose even an ounce of clarity in the download quality. I recommend this over starting with a textbook approach, or at least do audio and written study together, because speaking and listening are the most important part of learning a language. Having read a book doesn't help you a bit when you are out in Japan trying to understand what people are saying to you.

This came late and was not complete.

The process of learning a language while driving is ideal. Stating the word or sentence in English and repeating the Japanese version twice with adequate pauses works very well.

I love making use of car time. It has always helped me to listen to a language before I go to a country

I'm a US citizen currently residing in Japan (US military). I've purchased several books and audio instructions to help me learn enough Japanese to get by while I'm here, and nothing has really helped until these CDs. Awesome and wonderful for the beginner!

This is a review for Levels 1, 2, and 3 (the "complete" set), but many of my points apply to this Level 1 course. I have found this "listen and repeat" audio course very useful in my studies. It's not all-encompassing, but for the price it is a good value. Don't be turned off by the first few tracks, which are for travelers going to Japan. After track six it goes into vocab and sentences that you would learn from a basic textbook. I've been able to turn lots of wasted time driving, doing chores, and exercising into something more productive. By breaking each track into smaller ones using iTunes (~1 min in length), this course has become even better for me. Learn in Your Car (LIYC) is great for building up vocabulary and essential sentence patterns quickly in Japanese. If you are looking for an audio course that explains grammar, try Michel Thomas. LIYCJ may be a bit too fast-paced for complete beginners, but if you are even semi-familiar with some of the basics (kana sounds, basic grammar: the "o," "wa," "ga," "ni," and "no" particles, the concept of counters for counting objects, etc.), you'll be fine. I think LIYCJ is best suited for supplementing material you are learning currently, or to brush up on Japanese you've forgotten. However, beginners, even complete beginners, can still learn a lot from doing this course if they don't mind looking up grammar online for more details. If you have the money and you don't have much experience with Japanese, I highly suggest using Michel Thomas' course(s) first, then LIYCJ. Both combined are still much cheaper than Pimsleur. While I think the popular audio courses are very different from each other, and it's a bit unfair to directly compare them, comparisons are still useful, especially since you probably can't afford all three for lack of time/money. With that said, here's a comparison of some of them:

Comparison to Other Audio Programs (from what I've read and learned from listening to samples, I only own LIYCJ and Michel Thomas):

- Michel Thomas: Slower-paced. Lesson/classroom format with two other students that explains grammar. Small amount of vocab (couple hundred), but you'll know it well. Has you build your own sentences with lots of practice. Lesson overview booklet included. Good value for the price. 8 hours of audio for beginner course, 4 hours for advanced course. Tracks are roughly 5-6 min in length, so easy to skip back and forth. Would pair nicely with LIYC Japanese (I suggest using it before LIYCJ). The "slow" student in the lessons may get on your nerves after a while. I've found it very engaging and fun so far! Best audio course for complete beginners.
- Learn in Your Car: Faster-paced. Listen and repeat (no lessons that explain grammar). Transcripts (with brief grammar notes) included. Focuses on building vocabulary and learning basic sentence patterns, covers major verb tenses. Incorporates previously learned vocab in new sentences to reinforce. Good value for price. 9 hours of audio. Tracks are short, easy to skip around. Better for semi-beginners than complete beginners.
- Pimsleur: Very slow pace. Listen and

repeat. Better than other courses for pronunciation, since it says each sentence at varying speeds and even backwards. No transcripts. Has Graduated Interval Recall method which asks you to repeat phrases you learned before at consistent intervals. Small amount of vocab (~500), but you'll know it well. Focuses on memorizing dialogue. Lessons are generally 30 min long, so it's harder to skip around to repeat something specific. Good, but seems overpriced for the material you learn. ~45 hours of audio for all 3 levels of comprehensive package, but most of that is repetition. OK for complete beginners, but MT is better.-Drive Time Japanese (Living Language): Some people seem to really like this series. It sounds extremely similar to LIYC, mostly listen and repeat.

Reinforces/repeats previously learned words in new sentences. Comes with a booklet with transcripts. Relatively inexpensive.-Japanesepod101: Podcasts plus other materials for beginner to advanced learners. Each podcast normally has a fun dialogue, slower version of the dialogue, then they explain the vocab and grammar. The newer podcasts (Newbie series and later seasons of beginner, intermediate, and advanced) seem more structured and efficient than the earlier ones. You can get a free 7 day trial to see if you like it. A basic subscription is \$8/month (can download all podcasts and transcripts), but you can often get it for \$4/month. Or you could pay for a few months and download everything you want and then quit. The latest podcasts are free on iTunes.

Unfortunately, their website is a bit confusing and extremely commercialized (feels like an infomercial!), but the podcasts are actually quite good.-Behind the Wheel: At this time I haven't been able to find much reliable information about this course, so I'm hesitant to recommend it. From reviews it sounds like it helps you build up your own sentences, and is similar to this course in that it has a lot of "listen and repeat" material. One reviewer mentioned that it does not have the most logical grouping of words. (Note that some of the reviews for it are fishy...they are written by reviewers who recommend Behind The Wheel in every single one of their reviews, and the only reviews they've written are for similar language courses. There aren't very many "real" reviews left after you discard those, so beware.)-----Learn in Your Car Japanese:Pros:-Learn ~2000 words/short sentences-Covers quite a bit of material in terms of sentence patterns and verb tenses (see detail below). While I wouldn't say you'd be an upper-beginner after finishing this course (especially since you aren't writing anything), it's certainly an excellent foundation and you'd be able to blaze through parts of your textbook since you already know some of the vocabulary and grammar. You'll have many "Aha!" moments when you connect the grammar explanation from the textbook with the sentences you learned on the CDs.-Comes with booklets that contain transcripts. They have the pronunciation in romaji and kana (Pimsleur does not have transcripts). They also have brief grammar notes.-Most words are spoken clearly. There were a couple of words/phrases

per track that I couldn't understand well, but I just looked them up when I got home. The "g" is a bit soft and sometimes sounds like an "m." Sometimes I can't differentiate between the "wa" and "o" particles if the speaker says things too quickly.-Progressively builds on previous knowledge so sentences get longer/more complex over time (though they are still pretty short when compared to a fluent speaker, I think sentences from Michel Thomas are longer)-Vocabulary is repeated throughout to reinforce memory-For the most part, words/sentences are grouped logically together-Each word/phrase is repeated once in English, then twice in Japanese. There is normally enough time in between to say it out loud (assuming you know the answer and are relatively quick about it)-Good for beginners who want to learn some basic Japanese words/phrases without worrying about grammar (assuming they don't mind blindly memorizing).-Can be used as a supplement to a textbook if you are currently studying Japanese (correct pronunciation is important, plus it reinforces vocab and grammar)-Also good for reviewing Japanese you have learned in the past-Easy to listen to while you drive, exercise, do chores, etc.-Tracks vary from a couple minutes to ten minutes in length, so it's easy to skip ahead or go back.Cons:-Just like Pimsleur, you aren't going to be "taught" anything in this course. It's purely listen and repeat. The transcripts do have brief grammar notes, so I suggest reading them before getting in your car or exercising, etc. Unfortunately, they hardly explain anything about counters. It's a relatively easy concept to grasp but you'll be confused as to why the phrase "one person" ("hitori") is its own word that does not include the words "one" or "person" ("ichi" and "nin").-Does not cover the kana sounds in the audio. There is a brief description in the booklet about basic Japanese sounds.-Don't expect to understand all of the grammar that you hear. This course is designed for you to memorize the pattern first, and then learn the grammar behind it from a textbook. You can either just copy the speaker and blindly memorize, or you can look up more information online.-Covers mainly polite Japanese only-Doesn't cover much adjective conjugation (i.e. negative adjectives)-I wish the tracks had been broken into 1 to 2 minute segments. They vary from 1 to 10 minutes in length. Over 2 minutes is too many words at once! I had to keep rewinding or fast forward to the part I wanted to learn. I solved this by importing the songs into iTunes, right-clicking on the track to get the info, changing the stop/start time of the track, and then creating an AAC file copy. This makes it easier to digest the material in small chunks! I can just repeat 1-2 minute sections and then move onto the next one when I'm ready.-There are no dialogues, just words and short sentences. You won't practice your listening comprehension very much (for that I've heard *Â Living Japanese: Diversity in Language and Lifestyles (Conversations with Native Speakers)* *Â* is good)-The pacing and lesson order makes sense for the most part, but I'm not sure why basic things like colors, clothes, and days of the week

are on the last CD (the vocab is put into more complex sentences though, so it's not just a list of words)-You aren't encouraged to make your own sentences, which Michel Thomas (and supposedly Behind the Wheel) does.Overview of Lessons (I did not list all tracks because some are continuations (e.g. "More numbers")):LEVEL 1Basics (I, you, he, she...)Basic PhrasesTransportation NounsTransportation PhrasesMoneyHotelDirections (right, left, corner, street...)NumbersAt the Restaurant (no food names though)ShoppingTime, GeneralTime of DayQuestionsShopsNounsAdjectives and AdverbsVerbsPrepositional PhrasesPrepositional PronounsPossessive AdjectivesConjunctions and Similar WordsWanting to Do SomethingForming QuestionsHaving to Do SomethingLEVEL 2Sentences with Negative AdjectivesGetting AroundThe Verb Desu - To BeThe Verbs Imasu and Arimas (to be or exist, present tense)To have or to own somethingPresent tense practiceFuture TensePast TenseThe TelephoneIru and Aru in negative sentencesDesu with Adjectival nounsDesu with verbal adjectivesNegative past tenseLEVEL 3To be able to do somethingPresent progressive tense (I am eating)Using direct object pronouns in sentencesUsing indirect object pronouns in sentencesPronouns in negative sentencesThe CarNeeding to Do SomethingSomeone should do somethingSomeone might do somethingDays of the WeekMonths of the YearAt the doctor's officeAt the dinner tableReflexive and Reciprocal constructions (the man washes himself)Clothes (vocab is placed in full sentences here)Colors (vocab is placed in full sentences here)Compared to Pimsleur, I think LIYC is a much better value. It's not as dialogue-focused, and it doesn't have the "Graduated Interval Recall" method (which basically just asks you to remember sentences you learned before), but it goes through much more vocabulary and at least the same amount of grammar. I really like the LIYCJ transcripts in case you don't catch what the speaker said. Michel Thomas is also good if you want more of a classroom/lesson format. In fact, you should try doing Michel Thomas first to understand the grammar, and then use LIYCJ to build your vocabulary and practice the grammar. Every language course has its pros and cons, so I recommend seeing if your library has these courses to figure out which is best for your learning style.A little about my Japanese studies: I'm using
 Japanese for Everyone: A Functional Approach to Daily Communication
 as my main textbook. For Kanji I use
 Remembering the Kanji, Vol. 1: A Complete Course on How Not to Forget the Meaning and Writing of Japanese Characters. To review vocab/grammar/kanji I use Anki, a free flashcard software with spaced-repetition.If you want some more ideas for well-reviewed resources, I've made a Listmania List called The "Best" Books/Resources for Learning Japanese: Beginner to Advanced. I'll post the link in the comments in case you are interested.I hope you have fun Learning Japanese!

In general I found these discs (Level 1 to 3) good for covering basic vocabulary whilst out of Japan. However, they never really get you further than a basic understanding because at no time are you taught sentence conjunctions or how to express running thoughts. These very important points are covered by courses such as Living Language Japanese (basic-intermediate and advanced) but probably put off the beginner who wants or needs instant results. Further, there are mistakes in the application of some grammar points which may become a burden if you decide to continue your studies to a higher level. Treat this course as a good way to get started, but then progress to something like the Living Language courses which provide a better understanding of the language - but don't be surprised when you find some point of grammar you spent so much time mastering in the 'In-your-car' series turns out to be over-simplified or just plain awkward in real speech and needs to be unlearned. Do know this, any attempt you make to learn some Japanese will be greatly appreciated by the Japanese. If your goal is just to learn a few key phrases before going to Japan then this course is no worse than any other 'quick-course' on the market.

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