Unit 1

Grammar notes

Introducing yourself

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Saying what something is

X は Y です

Date _____

By the end of this part, you can:

- ☐ Say what you do: your job, or what you study
- ☐ Say what someone else does (〜 は 〜 です)
- ☐ Say where you work, and what country you are from

A conversation you can have in Japanese

Tanaka	I am Tanaka. I am an engineer.
You	Nice to meet you. I am an office worker.
Tanaka	Ms. Suzuki is a lawyer.
You	I see. I am Japanese.

GRAMMAR 1

Saying what something is

A Japanese sentence names the topic first and closes with です. は marks the topic — the thing the sentence is about — and です makes it polite. Nothing changes for I, you or she: the same です ends them all.

1 See how it works

PATTERN

A	(topic) は wa	B	(polite) です desu

A is B.

I わたし watashi	(topic) は wa	office worker かいしゃいん kaishain	(polite) です desu

I am an office worker.

Mr. Tanaka たなかさん tanakasan	は wa	engineer エンジニア enjinia	です desu

Mr. Tanaka is an engineer.

Ms. Suzuki すずきさん suzukisan	は wa	lawyer べんごし bengoshi	です desu

Ms. Suzuki is a lawyer.

2 Build the piece **noun** → わたし は **noun** です

Do each one the same way as the example. Write your answer on the line.

e.g.	かいしゃいん kaishain office worker	→	わたし は かいしゃいん です。 watashi wa kaishain desu I am an office worker.
1.	いしゃ isha doctor	→	_____ I am a doctor.
2.	エンジニア enjinia engineer	→	_____ I am an engineer.
3.	こうむいん koumuin civil servant	→	_____ I am a civil servant.
4.	にほんじん nihonjin Japanese	→	_____ I am Japanese.

3 Say it in Japanese

1. Mr. Tanaka is a teacher.

2. I am a student.

SUMMARY — this part at a glance

Grammar 1 Saying what something is

A は B です

わたし は かいしゃいん です
watashi wa kaishain desu

I am an office worker.

Drills

1. わたし _____ がくせい です。
watashi gakusei desu

2. たなかさん は せんせい _____ 。
tanakasan wa sensei

3. ニナさん _____ りゅうがくせい です。
ninasan ryuugakusei desu

1. I am a student.

2. Mr. Tanaka is a teacher.

3. Nina is an international student.

Asking questions

～ですか／なん ですか

Date _____

By the end of this part, you can:

- ☐ Turn any sentence into a question (～ ですか)
- ☐ Ask what something is (なん ですか)
- ☐ Ask someone their name and what they do

A conversation you can have in Japanese

You	Is Mr. Tanaka an office worker?
Friend	No. He is an engineer.
You	What is your job?
Friend	I am a teacher. What is your name?

GRAMMAR 1

Asking questions

To ask, add か at the end. Nothing else moves — the word order of the statement stays as it is.

1 See how it works

PATTERN

～ですか
desu ka

Is it ~? / What is ~?

Mr. Tanaka	(topic)	office worker	(polite)
たなかさん	は	かいしゃいん	です
tanakasan	wa	kaishain	desu

Mr. Tanaka is an office worker.

Mr. Tanaka	(topic)	office worker	(question)
たなかさん	は	かいしゃいん	ですか
tanakasan	wa	kaishain	desu ka

Is Mr. Tanaka an office worker?

2 Build the piece です → ですか

Do each one the same way as the example. Write your answer on the line.

e.g.
たなかさん は かいしゃいん です。 → たなかさん は かいしゃいん ですか？
tanakasan wa kaishain desu → tanakasan wa kaishain desu ka
Mr. Tanaka is an office worker. → Is Mr. Tanaka an office worker?

1.
すずきさん は せんせい です。 → _____
suzukisan wa sensei desu → _____
Ms. Suzuki is a teacher. → Is Ms. Suzuki a teacher?

2.
たなかさん は にほんじん です。 → _____
tanakasan wa nihonjin desu → _____
Mr. Tanaka is Japanese. → Is Mr. Tanaka Japanese?

3.
すずきさん は いしゃ です。 → _____
suzukisan wa isha desu → _____
Ms. Suzuki is a doctor. → Is Ms. Suzuki a doctor?

4.
たなかさん は がくせい です。 → _____
tanakasan wa gakusei desu → _____
Mr. Tanaka is a student. → Is Mr. Tanaka a student?

3 Say it in Japanese

1. Is Mr. Tanaka an engineer?

2. Is Ms. Suzuki a teacher?

GRAMMAR 2

Asking what

なん means “what”. Put なん in the place of the word you want to know, and end with ですか.

1 See how it works

PATTERN

noun	(topic) は wa	what なん nan	(question) ですか desu ka

What is ~?

job	(topic)	what	(question)
しごと	は	なん	ですか
shigoto	wa	nan	desu ka

What is your job?

job	(topic)	office worker	(polite)
しごと	は	かいしゃいん	です
shigoto	wa	kaishain	desu

I'm an office worker.

name	(topic)	what	(question)
なまえ	は	なん	ですか
namae	wa	nan	desu ka

What is your name?

name	(topic)	Tanaka	(polite)
なまえ	は	たなか	です
namae	wa	tanaka	desu

I'm Tanaka.

2 Build the piece the word you ask about → なん

Do each one the same way as the example. Write your answer on the line.

e.g.
しごと は かいしゃいん です。 → しごと は なん ですか？
shigoto wa kaishain desu — shigoto wa nan desu ka
My job: office worker. — What is your job?

1.
しごと は いしゃ です。 → _____
shigoto wa isha desu
My job: doctor. — What is your job?

2.
なまえ は すずき です。 → _____
namae wa suzuki desu
My name: Suzuki. — What is your name?

3.
しごと は べんごし です。 → _____
shigoto wa bengoshi desu
My job: lawyer. — What is your job?

4.
なまえ は たなか です。 → _____
namae wa tanaka desu
My name: Tanaka. — What is your name?

3 Say it in Japanese

1. What is your job?

2. What is your name?

SUMMARY — this part at a glance	
Grammar 1	Asking questions ～ですか たなかさん は かいしゃいん ですか tanakasan wa kaishain desu ka Is Mr. Tanaka an office worker?
Grammar 2	Asking what noun は なん ですか しごと は なん ですか shigoto wa nan desu ka What is your job?

Drills

1. たなかさん は かいしゃいん _____ 。
   tanakasan wa kaishain

2. しごと は _____ ですか？
   shigoto wa desu ka

3. なまえ は _____ ですか？
   namae wa desu ka

1. Is Mr. Tanaka an office worker?

2. What do you do?

3. What is your name?