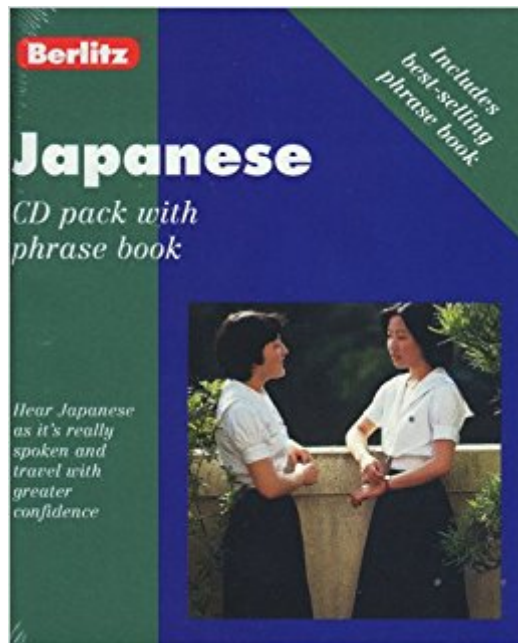




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Berlitz Japanese: With Book (Japanese Edition)



Synopsis

From ordering sushi to asking for directions to a Zen temple, learn basic Japanese words and phrases easily and quickly. This popular series helps ensure a more enjoyable, successful, and rewarding trip. Practice pronunciation and listening comprehension before you leave, then take the book along for an optimal travel experience.

Book Information

Series: Berlitz CD Pack

Audio CD: 224 pages

Publisher: Berlitz Guides; New edition edition (March 1999)

Language: Japanese

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Average Customer Review: 2.6 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

In January 2003, the renowned Berlitz Publishing became part of the Langenscheidt Group. The Langenscheidt Publishing Group, the premier group of map and travel companies, offers over 4,000 North American and international street maps, road maps, atlases, language-learning, bilingual dictionaries, and travel-related products covering countries, cities, and languages in every continent.

OK, I admit it. Though marketed for children, I was getting these flash cards for myself, hoping to make it more fun to learn a few words of Japanese and to recognize some hiragana. They weren't much help for me, but might be a brief introduction/reinforcement for YOUNG children. I'm deciding whether or not to return them. I might keep them and use them with my K-5 elementary students next year when I introduce Japan and the Japanese culture after my trip to Japan in October. There are 50 cards. One side of the cards has the English word in black on a white background. The font chosen is child-friendly. The other side has a colored drawing of the word with the name in hiragana & Romanji (alphabet). Ten of the cards are the numbers 1-10. (More on that later.) Eight are colors.

Six are basically English words with a different pronunciation (Japanese English). Though "ribingu" is probably pretty close to "living room;" making it seven English words. The rest are eleven animals, three family words, three body parts, two rooms (both "Japanese English"), six foods (including some "Japanese English."), seven other nouns (star, sun tree, etc.) Because of overlaps, this won't add up to exactly 50 (for those of you checking). / ^ _ ^ \ When I first went through the cards, I looked at the color drawings checking the words I already knew. I saw apple, grapes, tomato, banana, and then a pineapple. I thought, "Hmmm. I didn't know the word for pineapple was "ichi." Then I saw that two apples was "ni." Ohhhhhh. The drawing with the pineapple is supposed to be "one" and the one with two apples is "two." I have a degree in Early Childhood education. I would recommend putting the numerals "1, 2, 3, etc." instead of the drawings of fruits and vegetables; or having consistent shapes for each. In this day of "Sesame Street," even very young children recognize the numerals. It might even be interesting to include the actual kanji ("Chinese" characters) --especially for the numbers. For children, which, to be honest, it's aimed towards, I might give the cards a higher score. I don't think many adults will find it useful. Next fall, if I find students really take to them, I'll add more to this review and say which ages used them.

While the phrasebook itself is rather useful and well-organised (although while I was living in Japan I found Lonely Planet immensely more suitable), the phrases they use on CD are generally useless. Rather than creating a phrasebook customised for each country, Berlitz decided to make a generic audio-supplement for each language it publishes a phrasebook for, with the same phrases whether it's French, Portuguese or Japanese (they even re-used all English recording from other language CDs). As a result, you will spend a large amount of time learning how to resolve various hotel and restaurant problems (highly unlikely in Japan), or how to say "keep the change" to a taxi driver (insulting and embarrassing him in a process), but none -- on how to check in a ryokan, or what to say while visiting a hot spring. I would definitely recommend the phrasebook by itself, but give this particular CD version a pass

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