



UNIT **3**

GETTING AROUND

Japan boasts one of the most convenient transportation systems in the world. All major cities from Fukuoka in southern Japan to Tokyo in the east and Hachinohe in the north are connected by bullet train. Other train systems connect towns and outlying suburbs of cities. In large metropolitan areas such as Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka, there are also extensive subway systems. To an astounding degree of accuracy, these modes of transportation depart and arrive as scheduled.

UNIT 3 GRAMMAR

Motion Verbs

noun **wa** place **ni ikimasu**

ex. **Gurei-san wa ashita Kyōto ni ikimasu.** "Mr. Grey will go to Kyoto tomorrow."

Verbs

Japanese sentences end with a verb (or some other element followed by **desu**, which behaves like a verb). The endings of verbs show the tense and whether the verb is affirmative or negative.

Tenses of Japanese verbs can be divided roughly into two categories:

1. The present form. The present, or **-masu** form—so called because verbs in this tense end in **-masu**—encompasses both the simple present (used for expressing habitual action) and future tenses.

ex. **Gurei-san wa mainichi kaisha ni ikimasu.**

"Mr. Grey goes to the office (*lit.*, 'company') every day."

(Watashi wa) ashita kaerimasu. "(I) return/am returning/will return tomorrow."

2. The past form. The past, or **-mashita** form, on the other hand, includes not only the simple past tense but also the present perfect.

ex. **(Watashi wa) senshū Kyōto ni ikimashita.** "Last week (I) went to Kyoto."

Gurei-san wa mō uchi ni kaerimashita. "Mr. Grey has already gone home."

The chart below summarizes the tenses of Japanese verbs and shows the endings—affirmative and negative—that correspond to each.

PRESENT FORM		PAST FORM	
<i>aff.</i>	<i>neg.</i>	<i>aff.</i>	<i>neg.</i>
-masu	-masen	-mashita	-masendeshita

The particle **ni**

The role of the preposition "to" in English is played by the particle **ni** in Japanese. **Ni** is placed after a noun that denotes a place. It indicates the direction of movement with verbs such as **ikimasu** ("go"), **kimasu** ("come"), and **kaerimasu** ("return").

ex. **Tōkyō ni ikimasu.** "I am going to Tokyo." (*lit.*, "'Tokyo-ward' I am going.")

In this pattern, the particle **e** can also be used in place of **ni**.

noun **wa** place **ni ikimasu ka**
Hai, (noun wa place ni) ikimasu
lie, (noun wa place ni) ikimasen

ex. **Gurei-san wa ashita Kyōto ni ikimasu ka.** "Mr. Grey, will you go to Kyoto tomorrow?"

Hai, ikimasu. "Yes, (I) will go."

lie, ikimasen. "No, (I) will not go."

Questions that contain verbs

To ask a question like "will you go?" that contains a verb, simply add **ka** to the verb. Answers to such questions can be brief, as in the examples above.