

日本語

JAPANESE FOR SOCIAL LIFE

Flirting & Asking Out

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Compliments, the playful build-up, asking for the date, and escalating with warmth and consent. How attraction is actually **spoken** in Japanese — directly enough to land, softly enough to be welcome.

LESSON 2 OF 6

01 Compliments that work ほめことば

Japanese flirting is built on **specific, light, sincere** compliments — not heavy "you're so beautiful" declarations, which can feel intense or insincere early on. Aim at **style, vibe, smile, taste** rather than body.

| JAPANESE | SOUNDS LIKE | ENGLISH | STRENGTH |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 笑顔が素敵だね | <i>egao ga suteki da ne</i> | Your smile is lovely. | ★ safe & sweet |
| 笑顔 <i>egao</i> smile が <i>ga</i> (subject)素敵 <i>suteki</i> lovely だ <i>da</i> is ね <i>ne</i> isn't it | | | |
| センスいいね | <i>sensu ii ne</i> | You've got great taste/style. | ★ safe |
| センス <i>sensu</i> taste/style いい <i>ii</i> good ね <i>ne</i> isn't it | | | |
| 話してて楽しい | <i>hanashitete tanoshii</i> | You're fun to talk to. | ★ connection |
| 話してて <i>hanashitete</i> talking 楽しい <i>tanoshii</i> is fun | | | |
| 一緒にいて落ち着く | <i>issho ni ite ochitsuku</i> | I feel relaxed around you. | ★★ warmer |
| 一緒に <i>issho ni</i> together いて <i>ite</i> being 落ち着く <i>ochitsuku</i> feel calm | | | |
| かわいいね | <i>kawaii ne</i> | You're cute. | ★★ flirty |
| かわいい <i>kawaii</i> cute ね <i>ne</i> isn't it | | | |
| 綺麗だね | <i>kirei da ne</i> | You're beautiful/elegant. | ★★★ stronger, use sincerely |
| 綺麗 <i>kirei</i> beautiful だ <i>da</i> is ね <i>ne</i> isn't it | | | |
| タイプかも | <i>taipu kamo</i> | You might be my type. | ★★★ playful confession-lite |
| タイプ <i>taipu</i> (my) type かも <i>kamo</i> maybe | | | |

CULTURAL NOTE — KAWAII VS KIREI

かわいい (**kawaii**, cute) is the everyday, friendly compliment; 綺麗 (**kirei**, beautiful/refined) is heavier and lands as more serious. 美人 (**bijin**, "a beauty") is flattering but formal. Read her reaction: a delighted laugh = green, a polite "ありがとう" + topic change = ease off.

02 Playful build-up かけひき

Teasing lightly (いじる, *ijiru*) and showing you're enjoying her create the spark. These keep it fun and signal interest without pressure.

| JAPANESE | SOUNDS | ENGLISH |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| タメ口でいい? | <i>tameguchi de ii?</i> | Can we talk casually? (drops formality — a flirty step closer) |
| タメ口 <i>tameguchi</i> casual speech で <i>de</i> with いい <i>ii</i> okay? | | |
| なんか話しやすいね | <i>nanka hanashiyasui ne</i> | You're somehow really easy to talk to. |
| なんか <i>nanka</i> somehow 話しやすい <i>hanashiyasui</i> easy to talk to ね <i>ne</i> isn't it | | |
| 面白い人だね | <i>omoshiroi hito da ne</i> | You're a fun/interesting person. |
| 面白い <i>omoshiroi</i> interesting 人 <i>hito</i> person だ <i>da</i> is ね <i>ne</i> isn't it | | |
| え、可愛い反応(笑) | <i>e, kawaii hannō (wara)</i> | Ha, cute reaction! (gentle tease) |
| え <i>e</i> oh/ha 可愛い <i>kawaii</i> cute 反応 <i>hannō</i> reaction (笑) (<i>wara</i>) (lol) | | |
| もしかして照れてる? | <i>moshikashite tereteru?</i> | Wait — are you blushing? |
| もしかして <i>moshikashite</i> could it be 照れてる <i>tereteru</i> blushing | | |
| 一緒にいると時間早いね | <i>issho ni iru to jikan hayai ne</i> | Time flies when I'm with you. |
| 一緒に <i>issho ni</i> together いると <i>iru to</i> when (with you) 時間 <i>jikan</i> time 早い <i>hayai</i> is fast ね <i>ne</i> isn't it | | |
| モテるでしょ? | <i>moteru desho?</i> | You must be popular, right? (playful) |
| モテる <i>moteru</i> be popular でしょ <i>desho</i> right? | | |

THE () AND "NE"

Ending lines with ~ね (*ne*, "right?/isn't it?") invites agreement and feels warm. In text, (笑) or **w** = "lol" and keeps teasing light. Tone matters more than words: smile, relaxed eye contact, and let pauses breathe.

03 Asking her out デートにさそう

The magic verb is ~ない? (~*nai*?) — "won't you...?" — a soft, friendly invitation. Anchor it to something **specific** (food, a place) so it's easy to say yes to.

| JAPANESE | SOUNDS LIKE | ENGLISH |
|---|---|---|
| 今度ご飯行かない? 今度 <i>kondo</i> sometime ご飯 <i>gohan</i> meal 行かない <i>ikanai</i> won't (you) go? | <i>kondo gohan ikanai?</i> | Wanna grab a meal sometime? |
| よかったら飲みに行かない? よかったら <i>yokattara</i> if you'd like 飲み <i>nomi ni</i> for drinks 行かない <i>ikanai</i> won't (you) go? | <i>yokattara nomi ni ikanai?</i> | If you're up for it, wanna go for drinks? |
| 美味しいお店知ってるんだ、行こうよ 美味しい <i>oishii</i> delicious お店 <i>omise</i> place/shop 知ってる <i>shitteru</i> (I) know 行こう <i>ikō</i> let's go よ <i>yo</i> (emphasis) | <i>oishii omise shitteru n da, ikō yo</i> | I know a great spot — let's go. |
| 来週、空いてる日ある? 来週 <i>raishū</i> next week 空いてる <i>aiteru</i> free 日 <i>hi</i> day ある <i>aru</i> have (any)? | <i>raishū, aiteru hi aru?</i> | Got any free days next week? |
| 二人で会いたいな 二人で <i>futari de</i> just us two 会いたい <i>aitai</i> want to meet な <i>na</i> (softener) | <i>futari de aitai na</i> | I'd like to meet up, just the two of us. |
| デートしてくれる? デート <i>dēto</i> date して <i>shite</i> do くれる <i>kureru</i> will (you) for me? | <i>dēto shite kureru?</i> | Will you go on a date with me? |

Confessing you like her — kokuhaku こくはく

| JAPANESE | SOUNDS | ENGLISH |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 好きです、付き合ってください 好き <i>suki</i> like です <i>desu</i> please 付き合 <i>tsukiatte</i> go out ください <i>kudasai</i> with me | <i>suki desu, tsukiatte kudasai</i> | I like you — please go out with me. (the classic confession) |

JAPANESE

SOUNDS

ENGLISH

好き *suki* like (you) です *desu* (polite) 付き合って *tsukiatte* go out (with me) ください *kudasai* please

あなたのこと、気になってる

anata no koto, ki ni natteru

I've been thinking about you / into you.

あなた *anata* you の *no* (possessive) こと *koto* (about you) 気になってる *ki ni natteru* into (you)

もっと知りたい

motto shiritai

I want to get to know you more.

もっと *motto* more 知りたい *shiritai* want to know

CULTURAL NOTE — KOKUHAKU & "DATING" ≠ WESTERN DEFAULT

In Japan, relationships often begin with an explicit 告白 (**kokuhaku**) — a clear "I like you, will you go out with me?" Before that you're not officially dating even after several outings. As a foreigner you're not expected to play it perfectly, but knowing this explains why things can feel "undefined": say the words and it becomes real. 付き合う (**tsukiau**) = "to be a couple."

04 Escalating — warmth & consent きより・を・ちぢめる

Moving closer physically should always be **checked, not assumed**. In Japanese, asking permission is normal and attractive — it reads as considerate, not weak. These phrases let you escalate while making her feel safe.

| JAPANESE | SOUNDS LIKE | ENGLISH |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| 手、繋いでもいい？ | <i>te, tsunaide mo ii?</i> | Can I hold your hand? |
| 手 <i>te</i> hand 繋いでも <i>tsunaide mo</i> even if (I) hold いい <i>ii</i> okay? | | |
| もう少し一緒にいたいな | <i>mō sukoshi issho ni itai na</i> | I want to stay with you a little longer. |
| もう少し <i>mō sukoshi</i> a little more 一緒に <i>issho ni</i> together いたい <i>itai</i> want to be な <i>na</i> (softener) | | |
| 送っていてもいい？ | <i>okutte itte mo ii?</i> | Can I walk/see you home? |
| 送っていても <i>okutte itte mo</i> even if (I) see (you) off いい <i>ii</i> okay? | | |
| うち、来る？/ もう一軒行く？ | <i>uchi, kuru? / mō ikken iku?</i> | Wanna come over? / Go to one more place? |
| うち <i>uchi</i> my place 来る <i>kuru</i> come? もう一軒 <i>mō ikken</i> one more spot 行く <i>iku</i> go? | | |
| キスしてもいい？ | <i>kisu shite mo ii?</i> | Can I kiss you? |
| キス <i>kisu</i> kiss しても <i>shite mo</i> even if (I) do いい <i>ii</i> okay? | | |
| 嫌じゃない？大丈夫？ | <i>iya ja nai? daijōbu?</i> | Is this okay? You sure? |
| 嫌 <i>iya</i> unpleasant じゃない <i>ja nai</i> isn't it? (not?) 大丈夫 <i>daijōbu</i> you okay? | | |

Reading the answer — green & red サイン

| YOU HEAR... | SOUNDS | IT MEANS |
|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| いいよ / うん | <i>ii yo / un</i> | GREEN — yes, go ahead. |
| もうちょっとだけ | <i>mō chotto dake</i> | GREEN-ish — "a little longer," she's enjoying it. |

| YOU HEAR... | SOUNDS | IT MEANS |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|
| うーん… / どうしようかな | <i>ūn... / dō shiyō kana</i> | YELLOW — hesitation. Slow down, no pressure. |
| ちょっと… / 今日は… | <i>chotto... / kyō wa...</i> | RED — a soft "no." Chotto = no. Stop immediately. |
| 帰らなきゃ / 終電が | <i>kaeranakya / shūden ga</i> | RED / exit — "I have to go / last train." Respect it warmly. |

CONSENT — READ THIS TWICE

Japanese declines are deliberately **indirect**. 「ちょっと…」 (**chotto...**), a pause, breaking eye contact, "maybe next time," or steering back to small talk are all clear **nos** — there won't be a blunt rejection. A real yes is relaxed and active, never silence or going along to be polite. If she's tipsy, the only right move is to make sure she gets home safe. **"Yes" must be enthusiastic, sober enough to mean it, and freely given — anything less means stop.**

THE CLASSY CLOSE (WHEN IT'S MUTUAL)

If the night is clearly going well for **both** of you: 「もう少し二人で飲み直さない？」 "*Mō sukoshi futari de nomi-naoshinai?*" — "Shall we go have another drink, just us two?" It's an inviting, deniable next-step that lets her choose comfortably. Let her lead the pace from there.