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If you're getting ready for the JLPT, you might be asking yourself: "How long do I need to study?" Let's keep it real. Preparing for the JLPT doesn't have to be complicated, but you need a plan. Whether you're aiming for N1, N2, or N3, here's what you should know about the time it takes to pass each level. Estimated Study Hours by JLPT Level Keep in mind that these study ho can vary. Your pre-knowledge of Japanese, how often you study, and even your learning style will all impact the time it takes. Some might reach their goals faster with daily, focused practice, while others may need more time if their study sessions are less consistent. Either way, understanding these estimates will help you plan your study journey effectively. JLPT Level Study Hours Required Unofficial CEFR Equivalent Abilities Description Kanji Requirement Approximate Pass Rate N5 300-600 hours A1 At N5, you have a solid grasp of basic Japanese. You can comfortably engage in simple conversations, understand greetings, and follow basic instructions. It's a foundational step for future progress. ~100 Kanji ~50% N4 600-1000 hours A2 With N4, you can manage day-to-day conversations and read/write familiar expressions in Japanese. Your ability to navigate everyday situations is much stronger, marking clear progress from N5. ~300 Kanji ~35% N3 1000-1700 hours B1 N3 signifies your ability to handle more complex interactions. You can comfortably read and understand structured materials like news articles and participate in conversations on familiar topics. A significant leap towards fluency. ~600 Kanji ~40% N2 1700-2500 hours B2 Reaching N2 demonstrates competence in understanding a wide range of topics, including news, business, and professional contexts. Your proficiency allows you to communicate confidently in most real-world situations. ~1000 Kanji ~40% N1 2500-4500+ hours C1 At N1, you've achieved near-native fluency. You can grasp highly complex materials, including academic and literary texts, and engage in discussions on nuanced, abstract topics. This is the highest level of mastery for professional or academic use. ~2000 Kanji ~30% JLPT N5: Estimated Study Time JLPT N5 will take approximately 300-600 hours of study. It's the beginner level, so if you're just starting, this is where you begin. The focus is on basic Japanese, including kanji, hiragana, katakana, and simple sentences. JLPT N4: Estimated Study Time JLPT N4 will take approximately 600-1,000 hours of study. At this level, you'll have a better grasp of everyday conversations and more kanji knowledge. It's all about building a solid foundation of intermediate Japanese grammar. JLPT N3: Estimated Study Time JLPT N3 will take approximately 1,000-1,700 hours of study. It's the true intermediate level, where you can start diving into more natural conversations. Get comfortable with longer, more complex sentences and nuanced grammar points. JLPT N2: Estimated Study Time JLPT N2 will take approximately 1,700-2,200 hours of study. At this stage, you can handle advanced-level conversations, read newspapers, and understand academic texts. This is where you really get into deeper Japanese language comprehension, so don't skip on time. JLPT N1: Estimated Study Time JLPT N1 will take approximately 2,200-3,000 hours of study. It's the final boss of the JLPT. This is for fluency—academic discussions, business, and high-level interactions. If you're aiming for this, remember: it's a marathon, not a sprint. JLPT Study Methods Your approach to JLPT study can drastically affect how quickly you improve. Here are three main methods to consider: Living in Japan: The ultimate immersive experience. You're surrounded by the language every day, which fast-tracks your learning through constant exposure to native speakers, signs, and media. JOI's Online Classes: JOI offers structured JLPT preparation lessons with certified teachers to help you focus on specific areas. It's perfect for those who want to study efficiently before the test period without leaving home. Self-study: Ideal for independent learners who want flexibility. With apps, textbooks, and online resources, you can craft your own schedule. But be careful—without guidance, it's easy to miss important areas. Pick the method that suits your lifestyle, but remember: structure and consistency always win. Conclusion Keep in mind that these study hours can vary. Your pre-knowledge of Japanese, how often you study, and even your learning style will all impact the time it takes. Some might reach their goals faster with daily, focused practice, while others may need more time if their study sessions are less consistent. No matter which level of the JLPT you're going for, the key is putting in the hours. Follow the study tips, stay consistent, and you'll build the foundation you need for success. With the right study plan, hitting your goal is just a matter of time. how long to learn japanese? How long does it take you to reach N1, N2, N3, N4, N5 level? JLPT is the most popular exam for foreigners who are learning Japanese. New Japanese N levels – how many levels in Japanese language? According to Japan Foundation, Japanese N levels have 5 levels : N1, N2, N3, N4 and N5. The easiest level is N5 and the most difficult level is N1. N4 and N5 measure the level of understanding of basic Japanese mainly learned in class. N1and N2 measure the level of understanding of Japanese used in a broad range of scenes in actual everyday life. N3 is a bridging level between N1/N2 and N4/N5. In the past, when the old proficiency system named "kyu" was in use, The Japan International Cooperation Agency announced the amount of time that a beginner has to spend in studying to pass a particular level : 4kyu ~ 150 hours – 3kyu ~ 300 hours – 2kyu ~ 600 hours – 1kyu ~ 900 hours When that system was no longer used, they established an equivalent one : 4kyu -> N5 – 3kyu -> N4 Between 3kyu and 2kyu is N3 2kyu -> N2 – 1kyu -> N1 Reference : compare old jlpt and new jlpt. In terms of content, the new JLPT tends to be more close to actual everyday life in comparison with the old JLPT So how long to learn Japanese to reach N1, N2, N3, N4, N5 level? According to the comparison above, we can see the similarity in terms of time of studying that you are supposed to pass a JLPT level : 4kyu ~ N5 ~ 150 hours 3kyu ~ N4 ~300 hours N3 stays between 3kyu and 4kyu -> perhaps it takes us about 450 hours ~ 500 thours ;). 2kyu ~ N2 ~600 hours 1kyu ~ N1 ~900 hours See the following table How long does it take to learn n5 Japanese? If you spend 5 hours at class and 10 hours self study per week, or 60 hours per month. You are required to study in N5 ~ 2 months and a half. How long does it take to complete N4 level? If you spend 5 hours at class and 10 hours self study per week, or 60 hours per month. You are required to study in 5 months to complete N4 level How long to reach N3 Japanese? If you spend 5 hours at class and 10 hours self study per week, or 60 hours per month. You are required to study in 7 months to Reach N3 Japanese How long does it take to get to n2 japanese If you spend 5 hours at class and 10 hours self study per week, or 60 hours per month. You are required to study in 10 months to Reach N2 Japanese How long does it take to get n1 Japanese? If you spend 5 hours at class and 10 hours self study per week, or 60 hours per month. You are required to study in 15 months to get N1 Japanese It's the same with other rows. That's what they have said. It seems to be very suspicious and might only be possible with ones who really study with 100% energy. In fact, many Vietnamese must do it in much longer time, even twice outweight . Especially at N2, N1 level. Reference : Road to Japanese proficiency How many hour a day are you studying? – If you study less than 1 hour a day. It's Ok if you have already passed N1 or N2. But if you are under N3, it's a big problem. It's difficult for you to get improved. You should clearly identify your goal so that you can have more motivation to try ;). (See more: Set goal to learn Japanese). – From 1 – 2 hours. You must have much concerned about Japanese language. However, if your purpose is to use Japanese in work and daily life, you need to pay more attention to it. Or it will take you much more time to reach the higher levels. Try to increase it to 2 – 3 hours a day. Let's find an appropriate japanese study method that may help you to be more interested in studying – From 2 – 8 hours a day. You're really focusing on Japanese. Studying Japanese has become a part of your daily life. You should keep this regular routine so that you can progess quickly 😊 – More than 8 hours, even 10 hours a day. Many people with high determination can do this, especially when the examination is close. Let's use some interesting ways in your study to increase the study efficiency, and avoid stress as well 😀 Above is the post How long does it take you to reach N5, N4, N3, N2, N1 levels? You may like : Methods of studying Japanese. re : học tiếng Nhật online Stay with us on : Facebook - Twitter - Pinterest - Reddit If you're getting ready for the JLPT, you might be asking yourself: "How long do I need to study?" Let's keep it real. Preparing for the JLPT doesn't have to be complicated, but you need a plan. Whether you're aiming for N1, N2, or N3, here's what you should know about the time it takes to pass each level. Estimated Study Hours by JLPT Level Keep in mind that these study ho can vary. Your pre-knowledge of Japanese, how often you study, and even your learning style will all impact the time it takes. Some might reach their goals faster with daily, focused practice, while others may need more time if their study sessions are less consistent. 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If you're aiming for this, remember: it's a marathon, not a sprint. JLPT Study Methods Your approach to JLPT study can drastically affect how quickly you improve. Here are three main methods to consider: Living in Japan: The ultimate immersive experience. You're surrounded by the language every day, which fast-tracks your learning through constant exposure to native speakers, signs, and media. JOI's Online Classes: JOI offers structured JLPT preparation lessons with certified teachers to help you focus on specific areas. It's perfect for those who want to study efficiently before the test period without leaving home. Self-study: Ideal for independent learners who want flexibility. With apps, textbooks, and online resources, you can craft your own schedule. But be careful—without guidance, it's easy to miss important areas. Pick the method that suits your lifestyle, but remember: structure and consistency always win. Conclusion Keep in mind that these study hours can vary. Your pre-knowledge of Japanese, how often you study, and even your learning style will all impact the time it takes. Some might reach their goals faster with daily, focused practice, while others may need more time if their study sessions are less consistent. No matter which level of the JLPT you're going for, the key is putting in the hours. Follow the study tips, stay consistent, and you'll build the foundation you need for success. With the right study plan, hitting your goal is just a matter of time. If you're a student of Japanese language and culture, then there's a high chance that you've heard of JLPT. It's that big Japanese-language test that measures your ability to listen, speak, and effectively communicate thoughts and ideas in the language. The JLPT N1 is the hardest level of the test, and passing it is no simple task. The level of dedication one must express in order to prepare may seem overbearing to some. But it's not impossible by any stretch. How many hours of study do you need in order to prepare for JLPT N1? The answer to this question depends on the individual and their past experience with kanji. Students with prior understanding of kanji (speakers of Korean or Chinese) typically need 1700-2600 hours of study. Students with no prior kanji knowledge will need a heftier 3000-4800 hours of study. Everyone with an interest in JLPT comes from different backgrounds with varying levels of knowledge in Japanese. Whether you're a beginner who is only now learning the word "kanji" or a seasoned student with JLPT N2 certification, there is a place for you to start towards the goal of passing JLPT N1. Whatever category you find yourself in, the following paragraphs will give you an idea of how many hours you'll spend studying, and what those hours will be filled with. JLPT comes in five levels of difficulty. From easiest to hardest, the levels are N5, N4, N3, N2, and N1. N4 and N5 measure a student's understanding of basic Japanese that is mainly taught in a classroom. N1 and N2 measure understanding of Japanese that is used in a wide array of everyday encounters. N3 acts as the bridge between the easy levels and the hard levels. Every level, while structured similarly, requires its own level of understanding, and a certain amount of study hours to prepare for. Is there an official listing of hours needed o study for JLPT N1? Currently, that answer is no. Before 2008, Japan Educational Exchanges and Services did, in fact, have a published study hour guide that came with every JLPT application. Here is a list that came with an old test book from 2007: JLPT Level 1 (N1): over 900 hours of studyJLPT Level 2 (N2): over 600 hours of studyJLPT Level 3 (N3): over 300 hours of studyJLPT Level 4 (N4): over 150 hours of study This list has since then disappeared. Though no official reason has been stated as to why the study hours are no longer listed, there are a few particularly good assumptions that we can make. It is generally assumed that the above list referred to classroom hours, and not independent study. A few factors to consider when estimating the required study time can vary between each individual. These factors include, but are not limited to: Individual learning styles: Each and every person is unique and retains information differently. Individuals who take JLPT N1 have ranged from children to seniors. There's no restriction as to who can take the test, and "readiness" is subjective from case to case.Prior knowledge: You do not need to have taken JLPT N5-N2 prior to taking JLPT N1. If you've never taken JLPT before, then there is nothing to stop you from going straight to JLPT N1. Some people begin their studies at a beginner level and start with JLPT N5. Others have prior knowledge and begin their studies at the JLPT N2 skill level, requiring fewer hours of study to reach the N1 level.Understanding of Kanji: One cannot hope to pass JLPT N1 without a suburb understanding of kanji. Your knowledge of kanji is going to depend based on what part of the world you grew up in. Beginner students from China or Korea will have a broader knowledge of kanji than that of a beginning American student. You'll need to factor this into your studies, and it has a direct effect on your required amount of study hours. The Japanese Language Education Center is a service that lists numerous Japanese language schools in Japan. They have their own list of recommended study hours for each level of JLPT. As with the previous list, this one has no explanation as to how these numbers came about, but it's generally trusted to represent accurate figures. The needed hours of study for each level re as follows: JLPT Level 4 (N4): about 250 to 400 hours of recommended studyJLPT Level 3 (N3): about 500 to 750 hours of recommended studyJLPT Level 2 (N2): about 1400 to 2000 hours of recommended studyJLPT Level 1 (N1): about 3100 to 4500 hours of recommended study Something to keep in mind about the above list is that it describes the average study times for students who have no prior knowledge of kanji. For Asian students, or students who have studied Chinese in the past, these study times will be significantly less. The above lists, and others that you can find around the web, do not detail how many of the stated hours are to be spent in the classroom, and how many of them are homework or self-study hours. Some people prefer to take classes, while many choose to self-teach using online resources. No matter which method you choose or what your preferred learning style is, though, you're bound to find that your final study hour count for JLPT N1 will stretch across several years. This, of course, depends on how many hours per day you commit to studying. JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test) is exactly what the title suggests. It's a test that examines and certifies the proficiency of Japanese in non-native speakers. Placing importance on the knowledge of Japanese-language vocabulary and grammar, the test evaluates the tester's ability in actual communication. Splitting your time and committing specific hours of study to certain topics covered on the test is a good way to approach study. JLPT N1 measures an individual's ability to comprehend Japanese that is used in an assortment of circumstances. There are two main components to the test: reading and listening. An individual's linguistic competence is measured through vocabulary and grammar by testing language comprehension and the successful execution of that knowledge. Here is a summary of competence individuals must display for JLPT N1: Reading: Successful individuals with JLPT N1 certification can read complex and/or abstract writings with logical complexity that covers a variety of topics, such as newspaper editorials and critiques. They can understand both the structure and content of these materials. They can also read items written with profound content on a variety of topics while following their narratives, as well as understanding the intent of the writers comprehensively.Listening: Successful individuals with JLPT N1 certificationcan comprehend orally presented materials, including lectures, news reports, and coherent conversations, all spoken at natural speed in a wide variety of settings. They can follow the ideas and comprehend their contents comprehensively. They also understand nuanced details within each presented material, such as the relationships between everyone involved, the essential points, and all logical structures. We've looked at the general number of hours you'll spend studying for JLPT N1, but what exactly do you need to study, and how many hours should you spend on each subject? As with everything, the answer to this depends entirely on each individual, but the topics covered in JLPT N1 are grammar, vocabulary, kanji, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension. The following list describes what students planning to take JLPT N1 will need to know: 2136 Kanji Characters: By the time an individual has reached JLPT N1 level, they'll know all 2136 joyo kanji characters. It can take native Japanese individuals their entire high school career to reach this level, while most non-native learners never get this far, despite years of study. But committed individuals can reach this level in 90 days with proper discipline.10,000 Vocabulary Terms: Those who attain JLPT N1 certification are fluent in Japanese, can participate effectively in any conversation. They need to have 10,000 Japanese vocabulary words committed to knowledge. This means much more than general day-to-day conversation. With 10,000 words, an individual understands words used in specialized or administrative documents.400 Grammar Rules: This is usually the most difficult element to overcome when learning Japanese. Native English speakers already have a challenging time with our own grammar rules, but it's an entirely different story with another, non-romantic based language. With Japanese, the ruleset is entirely different from English, and an individual will need to have over 400 grammar rules committed to memory if they're going after JLPT N1. Those figures may seem frightening at first glance, but you can organize your hours of study in a way that effectively targets each area covered in JLPT N1. We'd like to spend the rest of this article sharing resources that have been effective study tools for people who have attained JLPT N1 certification. Let's face it, if you're reading this, then no matter where you are in the study process, you most likely have more than 1000 hours to go before passing JLPT N1 even begins to feel attainable. Before we begin, we'd like to state that this entire article should serve only as a guideline. There is no sure way to track an exact count for the required hours of study because every individual learns differently. We will provide general examples that you can frame your personal learning off of, and upon receiving your JLPT N1 certification at the end of the line, your total study hours logged will vary greatly between the others who took the test at the same time as you. In extreme cases, certain individuals have committed to learning kanji in just 90 days! We don't expect you to follow suit, but let's take a look at some of the math involved. 2136 kanji dispersed across 90 days means that you're learning 24 new kanji every day! This isn't just simple memorization. You need to commit the kanji to your own knowledge in a way that you won't forget as you go on learning new kanji every single day. The amount of time you spend each day will vary between every individual. It might be slow starting out, but let's use an example and say it takes you three hours every day to learn 24 kanji. At the end of the 90 days, you'll have spent 270 hours learning! Keep in mind that this figure only reflects the time you spent initially learning the kanji. This is only the beginning. You need to retain this information and be able to use a vast combination of it at a moment's notice in order to pass JLPT N1. Your 270 hours spent learning all 2136 kanji characters might be suitable for JLPT N5, but if you're gunning for JLPT N1, then it's only the first stepping-stone. As with all things in learning, this takes practice, practice, and even more practice! Here are some excellent resources to fill the time spent learning kanji: Kanji in Context Complete Set: This set is designed for the advanced learner in mind. JLPT N1 is not a test for beginners, and this collection aims to educate those beyond the basics. It covers all 2136 kanji and contains an on-kun index, a form index, a stroke index, and even a vocabulary index. With two volumes, it'll be easy to organize your learning on a day-by-day basis. Once you get the hang of your routine, you should be able to pinpoint the number of hours you will take to learn all material in the book.Anki: Think of Anki as your digital set of smart flashcards. You can download it as an app for whatever device you're reading this very article on. It uses "spaced repetition" to help you commit kanji to retainable knowledge. It will automatically schedule re-exposures to particular cards based on how difficult they are for you and won't let you forget kanji you've already learned. Setting an allotted amount of time per on studying day will make your total study hours seem more manageable. This is another completely subjective variable. You can find articles that boast hacks that will enable you to learn 1000+ Japanese words per week. But even in these extreme cases, you still need to know katakana and hiragana, which are entirely different matters to cover for another article. The fact is, even if you learn and retain all 10,000 vocabulary words present in JLPT N1 in under 100 hours, you still need to be able to organize them all using proper grammar. JLPT N1 expects you to effectively communicate advanced ideas in conversation spoken at a normal pace, after all. The JLPT N1 testing process only lasts 170 minutes. You won't have time to think back on your studies. The hours you spend studying must be represented through retainable knowledge available in an instant. The following books are good for JLPT N1 prep, and can serve as a guide for mapping out an estimated number for hours you'll spend studying: 3000 Essential Vocabulary for the JLPT N1: Don't be fooled by the title. This book covers more than 3000 terms. Each word covered will present its part of speech, an English and Chinese translation, and a Japanese example sentence; this makes it easy to chart and predict progress, helping you understand how many hours it will take to learn all the terms.Nihongo Power Drill N1 Vocabulary: This book makes it very easy to estimate the total amount of hours you'll spend studying. It contains 30 lessons that can be completed in 10 minutes each. It's designed with the same style as JLPT, so you can familiarize yourself with the testing format while learning the material. Remember: there is no certain number of hours needed to spend studying for JLPT N1. Every posted guide is conflicting, and it's all dependent upon the individual's prior knowledge, and commitment to the craft. JLPT N1 is one of the hardest Japanese-language tests in the world, and it would be wise to anticipate thousands of hours spent studying. Whether you're a beginner looking at an estimated 4500+ of study, or a student with prior knowledge anticipating 900 hours of study, your mission is JLPT N1. Once you find your recommended study tools, it's completely up to you how you want to disperse those study hours. Japanese is considered to be one of the hardest languages to learn, but once you set up your plan, the only thing left for you to do is to start spending those study hours! Sources: //jlptstories.com/is-the-jlpt-worth-it/ //www.aatj.org/jlpt-us //blog.gaijinpot.com/taking-jlpt-overseas/ //jlptsensei.com/how-to-pass-jlpt-n1-study-guide/ //jlptbootcamp.com/2014/02/jlpt-study-guide-month-1/ //www.koipun.com/blog/how-i-learned-japanese-bryan-from-kuro-pixel //www.fluentin3months.com/2k-kanji/ Knowing how to best prepare for JLPT N1 is not obvious. This is because the jump from N2 to N1 is huge and can easily feel overwhelming if you don't have a proper study plan. It's not impossible, though, as long as you put in the hard work! In this article, I will share my own experiences and tips & tricks for passing the JLPT N1. About the JLPT JLPT stands for "Japanese Language Proficiency Test" and is a standardized Japanese language test held twice a year. The test consists of multiple-choice questions which cover reading comprehension, listening comprehension, grammar, and kanji. The JLPT ranges from N5 – N1 (N1 being the hardest). Furthermore, the difficulty curve is exponential, so the jump from N4 to N3 is roughly twice as hard as the one from N5 to N4. This means that going from N2 to N1 requires about as much studies as to go from N5 to N2. According to the JLPT official website the description of N5 – N1 is as follows: N5 – Able to understand basic Japanese to a certain degree. N4 – Able to understand basic Japanese. N3 – Able to understand Japanese used in everyday situations to a certain degree. N2 – In addition to understanding Japanese used in everyday situations, be able to understand Japanese used in a wider range of situations to some extent. N1 – Able to understand Japanese used in a wide range of situations. Why is the JLPT important? Japanese society highly values ganbar-ism (effort-ism) and not only is this mirrored in the educational system and the (in)famous national university entrance exams, but also in the importance of standardized tests such as the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) and the JLPT. Having merits and diplomas to prove your abilities is common practice and the JLPT is widely recognized in Japan to be proof of your Japanese proficiency. Therefore passing the JLPT N1 is often recommended to work at a company or enter university. Although N2 is the minimum requirement for most universities/workplaces, having passed N1 will make your resume more attractive. It will also give you a confidence boost when you have to produce academic papers or written reports. My journey to passing the JLPT N1 My motivations for passing the JLPT N1 and learning Japanese in general were many. I wanted to better connect with Japanese people. I wanted to have the choice to study at university/work in Japan. I wanted to be able to enjoy Japanese literature and play games in Japanese. When I first started studying for the JLPT, I was staying in Yokohama and studying at Yokohama Design College. At the time, I had studied Japanese for about 4 months and was recommended by our homeroom teacher to challenge myself to try and pass N3. And so, I and a few other classmates started studying after school, buying textbooks such as "日本語 総まとめN3" (Nihongo Sō-matome N3) and "Try! 日本語能力N3" (Try! Nihongo Nōryoku shiken N3) as well as crunching N3 mock exams provided by the school. We were also very lucky to have a teacher who, twice a week outside her own work time, voluntarily held extra classes just so that we would pass the N3 (Shoutouts to Sakuma sensei). However, despite all the efforts, I still didn't pass N3. I had overestimated my ability and underestimated the difficulty of the test so I decided that I would increase my efforts and pass N2 at the next earliest opportunity, which was six months later. What I did differently this time was that I started immersing myself in the Japanese language and performing my hobbies (watching movies, playing games) in Japanese rather than English. I also made it a custom to always look up unfamiliar words and export them into Anki (A flashcard learning app). Then I used the same textbooks as mentioned above, but for N2, and studied for a couple of hours every day. And, with some guidance from my teacher, I managed to pass N2! After passing N2 I graduated from Yokohama Design College and returned back to Sweden. But for personal reasons I came back to Japan six months later. The easiest way to get a visa was to start studying at a Japanese language school again and so I entered the Intercultural Institute of Japan located in Akihabara. During my one year at the Intercultural Institute of Japan I made it my goal to pass N1. According to my experience, the difference between N1 and N2 is that the texts are harder, and the questions are more open (for example, "what is the author's intent with the text"). During the listening comprehension you also have to remember details and take notes while listening. More than anything though, the difficult part is that there are just so many new words and kanji you must remember. You must learn all 2136 常用漢字 (jōyō kanji, the most commonly used kanji in Japanese) compared to the roughly 1000 kanji required for N2. In total it took me two-and-a-half years to pass N1, and one-and-a-half years to get from N2 to N1. As you may imagine, it is hard to know where to begin studying. Therefore, I'm going to share my top three tips of what worked for me when I was preparing for N1. My top 3 tips to studying for N1 Read, read, read! If you are not into books, try reading newspapers, or playing games with a lot of text such as JRPGs (Japanese Role-Playing Games) or VNs (Virtual Novels). Reading is the best way to increase vocabulary and get familiar with grammatical patterns and new kanji. If you read enough, you will also develop an ability to tell if a sentence "sounds weird". And this gut-feeling will help you pass N1. Do a lot of N1 mock exams When you feel like you are beginning to have a chance of passing JLPT N1, next I would recommend that you get familiar with the structure of the test. By doing a lot of mock exams, not only do you see what holes in your knowledge you need to fill, but you also learn what kind of curveballs will be thrown at you. Just remember to be honest with yourself and mark the questions that you are "guessing" at, so that you can review those questions too, even if you got them correct. Make it a good habit to study kanji To memorize over a 1000 new kanji and related vocabulary is no small feat. It is important to find a good structure for your studying. For this purpose, I recommend getting a kanji textbook, for example 留学生のための漢字の教科書　上級１０００ (Ryūgakusei no tame no kanji no kyōkasho jōkyū 1000) and for each kanji, methodically write lists with Japanese words and their counterpart in your language. Writing the words by hand is very important as it makes you pay more attention, making it stick better. I also recommend starting each study session with first reviewing previously studied kanji. Repetition is key for making the new kanji and vocabulary enter the long-term memory. No matter how you put it, passing the JLPT N1 requires diligent effort. However, passing N1 will not only open a lot of doors if you are planning to study at university or build a career in Japan, it will also help you understand more complex topics and help you connect on a deeper level with Japanese people. Do you have any tips on how you studied for N1? Feel free to share your thoughts in the comments below! For more tips on how to study Japanese, follow our blog to learn more! d-hermit: For example, I know that my weakest point is reading (I am very slow) and my strongest point is listening. Therefore I don't practice listening specifically. I know this isn't a direct response to the OP, but I thought it could still be beneficial advice for anyone reading, if you don't mind the advice, that is: It's great that you know your weakest point and strongest point. I think that it's important for any language learner to be able to accurately assess and maintain awareness of their language strengths and weaknesses. In order to improve on the weakest point of reading , I suggest using your strongest point, listening, to help you. For example, if you can, practice reading and comprehending text while listening to it being read aloud (CD, mp3, etc). To reinforce what you learn, you could try adding yourself reading aloud, first with the CD/recording until the speed, pronunciation, rhythm etc. start to become easy, and then transitioning to reading aloud on your own without a CD/recording. In order to do this effectively, it would take several listen-throughs and read-throughs of the same text to gain proficiency before moving on to the next. Also something else to keep in mind: the more advanced the text, the faster the recorded audio speed. By using your strength to improve your weakness, you'll avoid diminishing/losing that strength, which I think is just as important for language learning. It's like playing sports or weight training; if you're able to bench press 100 pounds easily but decide to stop doing so for weeks or months to focus on leg muscle workouts instead, by the time you go back to bench pressing, 100 pounds will be extremely difficult if those muscle groups haven't been maintained. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. IntroductionPassing the JLPT N2 or JLPT N1 is a major milestone for serious Japanese learners—and it can open doors to academic study, professional work, or permanent residence in Japan. But how long does it really take to get there?Whether you're self-studying or planning to study Japanese in Japan, this guide breaks down everything you need to know about timeframes, study hours, and learning strategies for the top JLPT levels. Quick Summary: How Long Does It Take to Pass JLPT N2 or N1?JLPT N2: Requires around 1,700–2,200 hours of studyJLPT N1: Most learners need 2,200–3,000+ hours of studyImmersive environments and full-time study can reduce the time dramaticallyMandarin speakers or kanji users may progress fasterA structured program with clear goals leads to more consistent results 1. Understanding JLPT N2 and N1: What They Really MeanThe Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) has five levels, from N5 (basic) to N1 (most advanced). For a breakdown of each level, see the official JLPT level summary. N2High-level comprehension for daily life and workplace JapaneseN1Mastery of academic and professional-level Japanese, including complex readings and abstract expressionsBoth levels evaluate your skills in vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening. However, the JLPT does NOT include speaking or writing tasks—even at the N1 level. 2. How Many Hours Does It Really Take?Advanced learners aiming for workplace fluencyNear-native fluency for academic and professional use*These estimates vary depending on your native language, study habits, and exposure to Japanese in daily life. For a broader comparison of study hours by language background and JLPT level, please see this JLPT overview on Wikipedia.JLPT N2 vs N1 difficultyN1 is significantly more challenging than N2. It includes abstract grammar, complex academic texts, and faster reading comprehension—making it the toughest level in the Japanese language proficiency test. 3. Key Factors That Affect Your Timeline Language BackgroundMandarin speakers often need 30% fewer hours due to kanji familiarity.Total beginners: May require more time, especially for N1 Study MethodSelf-study: Flexible but slower without structureJapanese language school: Offers structured curriculum and feedbackImmersion: Speeds up vocabulary, listening, and speaking fluency Estimated Timelines for Beginners Starting from ScratchThese study durations assume no prior Japanese knowledge. Experienced learners may progress more quickly, especially if familiar with kanji. 4. Best Ways to Prepare for JLPT N2 & N1Structured Study OptionsIf you're aiming for JLPT N2 or N1, enrolling in an advanced Japanese course in Japan can provide the structure and support needed to succeed. Need help planning your JLPT study path?We'll help you explore the right schools and options! 5. Best Online JLPT Resources to Start From AnywhereWhether you're just beginning or supplementing classroom learning, these online JLPT resources are perfect for building vocabulary, grammar, listening skills, and kanji knowledge. HelloTalkA language exchange app that lets you text and voice chat with native Japanese speakers TandemAnother chat app that matches you with Japanese language partners around the world 6. Proven Tips to Pass FasterThese tips are based on proven techniques from JLPT passers and help you use your study time efficiently. Learn grammar in full sentence contextUnderstand how grammar works naturally in real sentences, not just isolated rules. Practice listening daily, even passivelyImmerse yourself in the sound of the language using YouTube, podcasts, or background audio. Take regular mock tests to track progressSimulate real test conditions to find weak spots and build confidence. Start learning kanji early—and make it a daily habitMaster the 2,000+ essential characters through consistent, bite-sized practice. Many of these tips are especially useful for learners preparing Japanese for professional or academic purposes, where comprehension and fluency are essential. 7. Why Studying in Japan Helps Immersion accelerates learningBeing surrounded by Japanese daily helps reinforce vocabulary, listening skills, and natural sentence patterns Structured programs keep you on trackJapanese language schools provide a clear curriculum, regular assessments, and supportive teachers and classmates Part-time work deepens real-world experienceA student visa allows up to 28 hours/week of work—great for funding your stay and practicing Japanese in real-life scenarios Cultural exposure builds real fluencyBeyond the classroom, everyday interactions—from ordering food to joining events—sharpen your communication and cultural understanding FAQs Yes, especially if you study consistently or attend full-time classes in Japan. With around 4–6 hours per day, reaching N2 in 12–18 months is realistic. Not for all jobs. JLPT N2 is often enough for service, tourism, or support roles. JLPT N1 is preferred for academic, corporate, or government-related positions. Most learners need 2,200–3,000+ hours, especially if they don't have a kanji background. Daily study routines and immersion can reduce that timeline. No, but being in Japan can significantly speed up your learning. Daily exposure, classroom structure, and speaking opportunities all help with faster progress. Yes — N1 is much harder. It requires a deeper understanding of academic texts, fast reading speed, and more abstract grammar. The jump from N2 to N1 is the biggest in the JLPT system. Conclusion: JLPT N2 and N1 Are Reachable — With the Right PlanWhether you're aiming for JLPT N2 to qualify for a job or N1 to enter university in Japan, it's a long-term goal that's absolutely achievable.Start small, choose the study tools that work for your learning style, and build a consistent routine. With the right mindset and resources, you're already on your way.Ready to get serious about JLPT N2 or N1? Book a FREE consultation with XP Japan — we'll help you create a bespoke path to success in Japan! The Japanese Language Proficiency Test is the benchmark for your knowledge of Japanese. In this post, we will show you some interesting comparisons to the number of JLPT study hours it will take you to pass each exam level. Study Hours Needed for N5: For students with kanji knowledge (ex: Chinese students), it takes 350 hours. It's close to the hours you would spend in preparing for a driver's license in Japan. For other students who don't have prior kanji knowledge. It takes 462 hours. That is about the same as if you were to take a course to obtain a pastry diploma in Le Cordon Bleu – which is around 453 hours. For students with kanji knowledge, it takes 550 hours. If you are a non-native English speaker, that is about the same as studying to improve your TOEIC score from 500 to 700. For other students, it's 787 hours. With this time, you can become a Train driver in Japan. For students with kanji knowledge, it takes 900 hours. Almost the same as a Spanish Food Le Cordon Bleu diploma – which clocks in at 879 hours. For other students, it's 1325 hours. With this amount of time – you can become an architect – as that course takes 1500 hours. For students with kanji knowledge, 1475 hours of JLPT study is required. A restricted privileges ATP certificate allows a pilot to serve as a co-pilot until he or she obtains 1,500 hours. – So you can become the co-pilot of an aircraft. For other students, it's 2200 hours. A USCPA (Certified Public Accountant) takes 2000 hours to obtain. Have fun crunching numbers! It takes 2150 hours of JLPT study for students with kanji knowledge to pass. You can almost travel from the south of Yamaguchi in Honshu to the north of Aomori on foot. For other students, it's 3900 hours. Traveling around the world by cruise would take 3888 hours. – "The Japanese Language Proficiency Test: JLPT" "Japanese Guide: How to Apply for the JLPT Online!" "How I Passed the JLPT N2 – Student Testimonial / JLPT Exam Guide" "Study Tips to Pass JLPT N3" "JLPT N3 Writing Workbook" – Check out our JLPT Course Check out our Online JLPT Prep Course Start taking Japanese lessons and pass JLPT! Last updated: November 20, 2024The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) is a standardized test of the Japanese language, and N1 is the highest level of the test. Passing the JLPT N1 is a major achievement, but it's also notoriously difficult: the pass rate hovers around 30%.So how long does it take to pass the N1? This guide breaks down study hours, strategies, and essential tips to help you prepare effectively.We'll cover:Created in 1984, the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, or the 日本語能力試験 (Nihongo Nōryoku Shiken), is the most widely recognized certification of Japanese language ability.It is administered twice yearly (July/December)It is a pen-and-paper testIt has 5 levels, ranging from N5 (lowest) to N1 (highest)It is broken into three sections: vocab/grammar, reading comprehension, and listening comprehensionGenerally speaking, Japanese companies expect that foreign job applicants will have passed the JLPT N2 or the JLPT N1.Required knowledge for the JLPT N1According to the JLPT website, passing the N1 indicates that you are able to "understand Japanese used in a wide variety of circumstances." Importantly, the word "understand" is used here because the JLPT does not test one's ability to speak or write Japanese.More concretely speaking, in 2012 the JLPT foundation did a survey of people who barely passed each JLPT level, requesting them to self-assess their Japanese.According to the survey, of people who passed the JLPT N1:Listening ability: 75%+ said they could understand everyday conversations50%+ said they could follow TV shows and work meetings25%+ said they could understand lectures