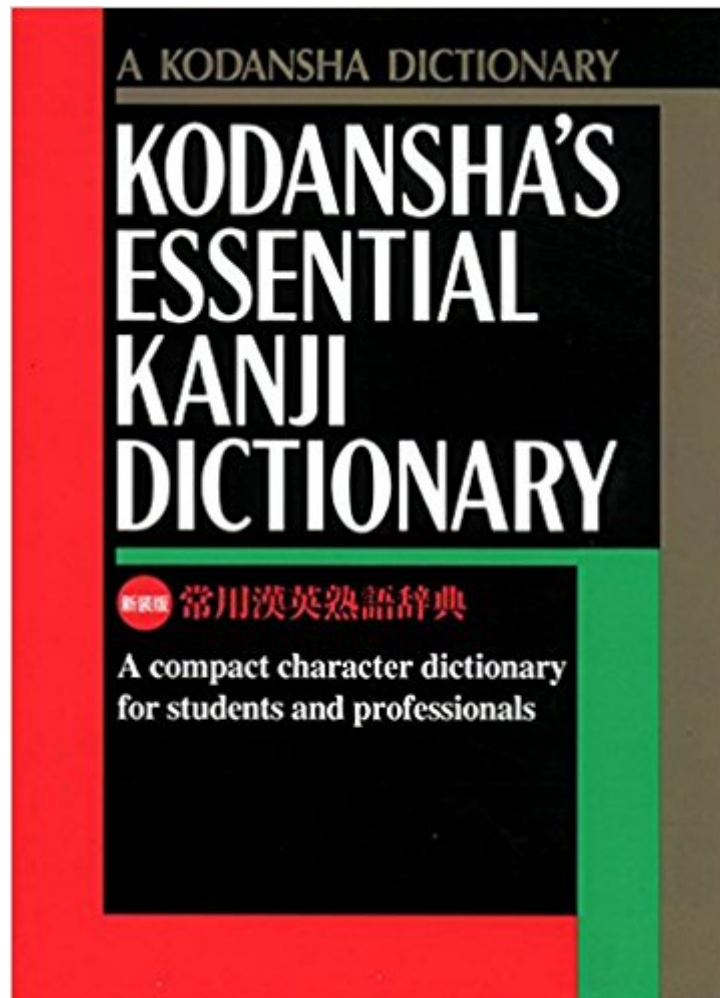




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Kodansha's Essential Kanji Dictionary (Kodansha Dictionaries)



Synopsis

Whether full-time students, business people, or casual readers, all have felt the need for a compact, up-to-date, practical kanji dictionary. Something that would fit into a shoulder bag or briefcase, could be taken to class, or would sit unobtrusively on a desktop. Kodansha's Essential Kanji Dictionary is precisely that dictionary, designed specifically to meet the needs of the modern man and woman. It includes all of the 1,945 Joyo Kanji, the core kanji recommended by the Japanese Ministry of Education for use in Japanese newspapers and magazines. Knowing these kanji, the student can recognize virtually every Chinese character appearing in the daily press. And that is not all. This dictionary also features some 18,000 kanji compounds, both those with Chinese readings (on-yomi) and those with Japanese readings (kun-yomi). These compounds have been carefully selected for practicality, usefulness, and timeliness. The living language has received exclusive priority, including such words as "favoritism," and "statute of limitations." For those interested in securities, stocks and bonds, and the diverse terminology of the business world, related terms and jargon are clearly marked for easy reference. Simply open the book and look for the Yen sign. There you will find "current price," "aggregate market value," "issue at market price," and a great deal more. For those who want to write kanji, the stroke order of each and every character has been duly noted. But more important, the Essential Kanji Dictionary does its utmost to help the reader locate the needed character. Aside from the traditional radical chart on the back endpaper, there are three invaluable indices as well. The first is by the reading of the kanji, either Japanese (kun) or Chinese (on). The second is by radical, but not by traditional radical alone. Also included are variants and near-misses, directing the reader precisely to the right page. The third is by stroke number-if all else fails, count the strokes and track the character down. With a copy of Kodansha's Essential Kanji Dictionary close at hand-with its definitions, stroke order, Chinese compounds, Japanese compounds, business terminology, and three helpful indices - the life of the typical student of Japanese should take a decided turn for the better.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Why do you need a kanji dictionary? What is your particular situation?1) You are in Japan and you need to decipher the sounds and meanings of signs around you, but aren't really interested in the written language, since all you need is conversational abilities. Then Kodansha's Kanji Lerner's Dictionary (not this one) will be fine for you, since it writes Japanese words in romaji, that is, you don't need to know how to read hiragana or katakana. Also, get a romanized dictionary (for deciphering what other people are saying).2) You are studying Japanese to read manga, or text from the Internet, but not to write. First of all, learn the kana. All manga onomatopoeias and a high percent of all Japanese script is in kana. Then you might consider either a free electronic dictionary, like Jim Breen's database together with KanjiBrowse, or this one along with Kodansha's furigana Japanese-English dictionary. Anyway, if you really want to become proficient at recognizing/searching kanji, buy Heisig's Remembering the Kanji 1. It can be the most rewarding and entertaining learning experience of your life. Once you know the meaning and correct stroke order of all the general-use kanji (will take you just a couple of months if you're motivated, and one month if you have all day), you can use Microsoft Japanese IME (can be easily installed under XP) facilities to input kanji to an electronic dictionary by means of hand-drawing. This is far swifter than searching by radical or stroke count in a paper dictionary. And with the Japanese IME you can also do these kind of searches. Also, an electronic dictionary is by far more complete than a paper one.3) You want to read/write anything in Japanese and you really want to master the kanji.

The preface part of the book tells you what all the symbols used in the book mean, and how to read the definitions (e.g., this one [%] is for business terms). It also explains KUN and ON readings (that helps me every time), Jukugo compounds, statistical hints (not a cut and dry formula, because one doesn't exist) about when a kanji is being used for its ON/KUN reading. Furthermore, the terms Gojuon-jun, Joyo kanji, Okurigana, and Ateji are defined. Lastly, it gives a light treatment of radicals,

phonetic and non-phonetic compounds, and a kanji learning strategy. It's not a very long preface, though. It is, however, concise, and prepares you for learning Kanji, and becoming literate - not just for using the book. After reading the preface to this book I knew without doubt that I wanted to use this one. The fat part of the book is straight forward. Occasionally I need to read up on a symbol or convention of the book. However, it's extremely delightful to use. The dictionary is divided into 14 sections. Section 1 has all the kanji with radicals of 1 stroke, section 2 has all the kanji with radicals of 2 strokes,... and section 14 has kanji whose radicals have a stroke count of 14. Within each radical set in each section the kanji are ordered by increasing stroke count. So section 3 starts off with a radical with a stroke count of 3, then all the kanji that use that radical are listed under it. The stroke count for the first Kanji can be as low as 3 (or stroke count of the radical) and go as high as 23 (I haven't seen one yet, but it says so in the preface - which I just referred to find out - see how easy it is to use?), then the next radical is introduced (stroke count of 3) and it begins again.

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