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Welcome to the Michel Thomas Method

Congratulations on purchasing the truly remarkable way to learn a language. With the Michel Thomas Method there's no reading, no writing and no homework. Just sit back, absorb, and soon you'll be speaking another language with confidence.

The Michel Thomas Method works by breaking a language down into its component parts and enabling you to reconstruct the language yourself – to form your own sentences and to say what you want, when you want. By learning the language in small steps, you can build it up yourself to produce ever more complicated sentences.

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To get started, simply insert CD I and press 'play'!

About Michel Thomas

Michel Thomas (1914–2005) was a gifted linguist who mastered more than ten languages in his lifetime and became famous for teaching much of Hollywood's 'A' list how to speak a foreign language. Film stars such as Woody Allen, Emma Thompson and Barbra Streisand paid thousands of dollars each for face-to-face lessons.

Michel, a Polish Jew, developed his method after discovering the untapped potential of the human mind during his traumatic wartime experiences. The only way he survived this period of his life, which included being captured by the Gestapo, was by concentrating and placing his mind beyond the physical. Fascinated by this experience, he was determined that after the war he would devote himself to exploring further the power of the human mind, and so dedicated his life to education.

In 1947, he moved to Los Angeles and set up the Michel Thomas Language Centers, from where he taught languages for over fifty years in New York, Beverly Hills and London.

Michel Thomas died at his home in New York City on Saturday 8th January 2005. He was 90 years old.



Perfect Japanese index

Japanese is written in several scripts: *Kanji* (an ideographic system, using characters of Chinese origin), *Hiragana* and *Katakana* (syllabaries, in which a single character represents the sound of a syllable). *Rōmaji* (the Japanese language in the Romanised Latin alphabet) is used by foreign students of Japanese who have yet to master the Japanese scripts and by Japanese native speakers when using computer and other keyboards. In this track listing we use the *Rōmaji* script.

CDI Track 1

Use of *desu*: *hoteru desu* 'it is a hotel'; *okane desu* 'it is money'. No marker is needed immediately before *desu* or other forms of *desu*.

Use of *no* and *wa* markers: *kore wa watashi no okane desu* 'this [marker wa] I [marker no] money it is' = 'this is my money': the marker *wa* is used like a highlighter pen to flag up an item, and the marker *no* is used to connect two items, like the English 'apostrophe + s' or 'of'.

CDI Track 2

ja arimasen 'isn't; it isn't' (negative form of *desu* 'is'); *okane ja arimasen* 'it isn't money'. As *ja arimasen* is a form of *desu*, no marker is needed immediately before it.

CDI Track 3

koko desu 'it is here'; *koko ja arimasen* 'it isn't here'; *resutoran wa soko desu* 'restaurant [wa] there is' = 'the restaurant is there'; *resutoran wa soko ja arimasen* 'the restaurant isn't there'.

CDI Track 4

ja arimasen deshita 'wasn't; it wasn't'; *wain ja arimasen deshita* 'it wasn't wine'.

CDI Track 5

suki desu 'like/s; is /are likeable': *suki ja arimasen* 'don't /doesn't like; isn't /aren't likeable'. The marker *ga* is used with *suki*: *sushi ga suki desu* 'sushi [marker ga] likeable is' = 'I like sushi'. In negative sentences, it often sounds more natural to use the marker *wa* instead of *ga*: *sandoicchi wa suki ja arimasen* 'sandwiches [marker wa] likeable aren't' = 'I don't like sandwiches'.

CDI Track 6

-masen deshita ka 'didn't you?'; *dōshite densha de ikimasen deshita ka* 'why train [marker de] go didn't?' = 'why didn't you go by train?'

CDI Track 7

terebi wa / ga suki ja arimasen deshita kara ... 'I didn't like TV therefore ...' or '...because I didn't like TV'.

CDI Track 8

tokui desu 'my strong point is; I am good at': *gorufu ga tokui desu* 'golf [marker *ga*] my strong point is' = 'I am good at golf'. To specify who is good at something, use the name of the person or a pronoun ('I', 'he' etc.) followed by the highlighter marker *wa*. When a negative sentence has the highlighter *wa* for the person who is good at something, the marker *ga* is used to mark the item that we are good at, rather than *wa*: *watashi wa gorufu ga tokui ja arimasen deshita* 'I wasn't good at golf'.

CDI Track 9

kirei 'clean, beautiful'; *kantan* 'easy'; *shinsetsu* 'kind'; *benri* 'convenient'.

CD I Track 10

densha wa benri ja arimasen kara takushī de ikimashōka 'because the train isn't convenient, shall we go by taxi?'; *kanojo wa shinsetsu desu ga suki ja arimasen* 'she [marker *wa*, highlighting 'she'] kind is but likeable isn't' = 'she is kind but I don't like her'. Use of markers *de* and *ni*: the marker *de* is used to specify the place where something happens: *resutoran de tabemasu* 'I eat at the restaurant'. The marker *ni* is used with the verbs *imasu* and *arimasu* 'is existing; is, there is' to indicate where something exists: *densha ni kare ga imasu* 'he is (existing) at train' = 'he is on the train'. *ni* is also used with verbs of motion to mark a destination: *tōkyō ni kimasu* 'I come to Tokyo'.

CD I Track 11

kakimasu 'I etc. write / will write'.

CD I Track 12

-takunai desu 'don't want to': *tabetakunai desu* 'I don't want to eat'.

(o)hana 'flower'.

The marker *to* 'and' means 'with' in sentences such as *kare to furansu no eiga o mitakunai desu* 'he [marker *to*] and France [marker *no*] film [marker *o*] don't want to watch' = 'I don't want to watch a French film with him'.

The Japanese don't say 'you' as often as do English-speakers: *anata* 'you' is more often used as a term of endearment.

CD I Track 13

rōmaji 'Roman alphabet'; *hiragana* 'hiragana alphabet'; *katakana* 'katakana alphabet'; *kanji* (Chinese character); *(T)mēru* 'e-mail'.

CD 1 Track 14

Use of the *-nagara* ending meaning 'while': *minagara tabemasu* 'while I watch, I eat'.
Only the final verb is put into the past tense: *minagara kakimashita* 'watch while wrote'
= 'I watched while I wrote.'

CD 2 Track 1

sono *aida* 'while, during, during that time': *kare wa gorufu o shimasu. sono aida watashi wa shigoto o shimasu* 'he [marker *wa*] golf [marker *o*] play, during that time I [marker *wa*] work [marker *o*] do' = 'He plays golf. During that time, I work.'

CD 2 Track 2

In the *-te* form of verbs, *-masu* is replaced with *-te*: *mimasu* 'I watch' → *-te* form *mite*; *hanashimasu* 'I speak' → *hanashite*; *tabemasu* 'I eat' → *tabete*: *tabete, mimasu* 'I eat and I watch'. The final verb is in the *-masu* form.
kaimasu 'I buy' → *katte*; *ikimasu* 'I go' → *itte*; *nomimasu* 'I drink' → *nonde*; *yomimasu* 'I read' → *yonde*; *kakimasu* 'I write' → *kaite*.
itte kimasu 'I go and come' = 'I am going now (but I will return)' (said on departure from home, like 'goodbye!').

CD 2 Track 3

watashi wa mite, nomimasu 'I watch and I (also) drink'. When two verbs are linked with the *-te/-de* form, the implication is that the actions are done in sequence.

CD 2 Track 4

When a sentence with the verb in the *-te/-de* form is put in the past tense, the *-masu* verb changes to *-mashita*: *itte kaimashita* 'I went and I bought'; *nihon ni itte fujisan o mimashita* 'I went to Japan and saw Mount Fuji'.
The *-te/-de* form also indicates 'and then' to show a sequence of actions: *watashi wa osushi o tabete, kōhī o nonde, repōto o kakimasu* 'I eat sushi, drink coffee and then I write the report.'

CD 2 Track 5

chizu 'map'; *pen* 'pen'.

Verbs in the *-te/-de* form can be used with *kudasai* to express a request: *nonde kudasai* 'please drink'; *mite kudasai* 'please look'; *depōto de ohana o katte kudasai* 'department store [marker *de*] flowers [marker *o*] buy please' = 'Please buy flowers at the department store.'

CD 2 Track 6

When *kara* is used after a verb in the *-te/-de* form, the meaning is that of one action immediately followed by another: *shigoto ni itte kara repōto o kakimashita* 'work [marker *ni*] go after report [marker *o*] I wrote' = 'After I went to work, I (immediately) wrote a report'. But *kara* after *-masu*, *-mashita*, *-masen* and *-masen deshita* ending verbs means 'because, therefore': *terebi o mimashita kara, hon o yomimasen deshita* 'Because I watched TV, I didn't read a book.'

CD 2 Track 7

The *-mono* ending turns some verbs into nouns: *tabemono* 'thing to eat' = 'food'; *nomimono* 'thing to drink' = 'drink(s)'; *kaimono* 'thing to buy' = 'shopping': *kaimono o shimasu* 'I do shopping'; *kaimono ni ikimasu* 'I go to shopping' = 'I go shopping'; *kaimono ni itte, tabemono to nomimono o kaimashita* 'I went shopping and bought food and drinks.'

kimasu 'wear': *kimono o kimasu* 'I wear a kimono'; *kanojo wa t-shatsu o kimasu* 'She wears a T-shirt.'

CD 2 Track 8

You can ask someone to do two actions by adding *kudasai* 'please' to the final verb: *itte kite kudasai* 'Please go and come (return).'

CD 2 Track 9

kaimono ni itte kōhī o nomimashōka 'Shall we go shopping and then drink (have) a coffee?' *sushi o tabete gorufu o shimashō* 'Let's eat sushi and play golf.' *osake o nonde kara, soko ni ikimashō* 'After we drink sake, let's go there' = 'After we've drunk sake, let's go there.'

CD 2 Track 10

When a *-te/-de* form is used with *imasu*, the meaning is that of being right now in the process of doing something, rather like the '-ing' form of the verb in English: *tabete imasu* 'I am eating'; *mite imasu* 'I am watching'; *nonde imasu* 'I am drinking'.

CD 2 Track 11

hairimasu 'I enter, I will enter'; *demasu* 'I leave, I will leave': *hoteru ni hairimasu* 'hotel [marker *ni*] enter' = 'I enter the hotel'; *uchi o demasu* 'house [marker *o*] I leave' = 'I leave the house'; *dete kudasai* 'please leave'. The *-te* ending of *hairimasu* is *haitte*: *haitte kudasai* 'please enter': *uchi ni haitte terebi o mimasu* 'I enter the house and watch TV.'

CD 3 Track 1

When a *-te/-de* form is used with *imashita* the sense is that of 'was -ing': *tabete imashita* 'I was eating'; *nonde imashita* 'I was drinking.'

CD 3 Track 2

Using the *-te/-de* form + *imasen* gives the sense of 'isn't -ing': 'I am not reading (at the moment)'; *ima* 'now': *ima kanojo wa repōto o kaite imasu ga kare wa shigoto o shite imasen* 'She is writing a report now but he is not working.'

Using the *-te/-de* form + *imasen deshita* gives the sense of 'wasn't -ing': *nonde imasen deshita* 'I wasn't drinking'; *suki ja arimasen kara nanimo tabete imasen* 'I am not eating anything because I don't like it.'

CD 3 Track 3

Using the *-te/-de* form + *mimasu* gives the sense of 'try and' or 'try to': *sushi o tabete mimasu* 'I will try and eat sushi.'

CD 3 Track 4

nihongo de denwa o shite mimashita 'I tried to make a phone call in Japanese'; *shite mimashō* 'let's try to do'; *shite mimashō ka* 'shall we try and do?'; *tabete mimasen ka* 'won't you try and eat?'

CD 3 Track 5

tenisu o shite mite kudasai 'please try and play tennis'; *ashita kore o katte mitai desu* 'I want to try and buy this tomorrow.'

CD 3 Track 6

Using the *-te/-de* form + *mo* gives the sense of 'even if, even though': *shitemo* 'even if I do'; *tabetemo* 'even if I eat'; *nondemo* 'even though I drink'.

When *-mo* is attached to the question words *doko* and *nani*, it means 'nowhere' or 'nothing': *dokonimo ikimasen* 'I don't go anywhere'; *nanimo tabemasen deshita* 'I didn't eat anything.' The verb will be in the negative.

CD 3 Track 7

tabete mimasu 'I will try and eat'; *tabete mite kudasai* 'please try and eat'; *tabete mitemo* 'even if I try to eat'.

CD 3 Track 8

When we use the *-te/-de* form + *mo* with *nani o* ('what + marker o'), we express the meaning of 'no matter what / whatever': *nani o tabetemo oishii desu* 'No matter what I eat, it is delicious.'

CD 3 Track 9

Similarly, the *-te/-de* form + *mo* with *doko ni* gives the idea of 'no matter where, wherever': *doko ni ittemo* 'no matter where / wherever I go'; *doko ni ittemo mainichi shigoto ni denwa o shimasu* 'Wherever I go, I phone (to) work every day.'

CD 3 Track 10

dare 'who'; *dare to* 'with who(m)'; *dare to hanashimasu ka* 'who(m) do you speak with?'; *dare ni* 'to who(m)'; *dare ni denwa o shimasu ka* 'who(m) do you phone (to)?' Again, use of the *-te/-de* form + *mo* with *dare to* gives the idea of 'who(m)ever, no matter who(m)': *dare ni hanashitemo nihongo de hanashite mimasu* 'Who(m)ever I speak to, I try to speak in Japanese.'

CD 3 Track 11

ii desu 'it is good, OK, fine'; *kōhī wa?* (with voice rising) 'How about coffee?' – *ii desu* 'I am fine as I am / No, thank you.'

CD 3 Track 12

Using the *-te/-de* form + *mo* + *ii desu* expresses the idea 'even if you do X, it is OK' so 'you may do X, it is OK for you to do X, you are allowed to do X': *itemo ii desu* 'even if you go, it is OK' = 'you may go, you are allowed to go'; *konban tomodachi no uchi ni ittemo ii desu* 'You may go to your friend's house tonight.'

CD 4 Track 1

In order to ask permission, add *ka* to the *-te/-de* form + *mo* + *ii desu* construction: *kore o tabetemo ii desu ka* 'If I eat this, is it OK?' = 'Is it OK if I eat this? / Please may I eat this?' *hai, ii desu* 'Yes, you may / can'; *ie, ikemasen* 'No, you may not.'

CD 4 Track 2

Summary of the use of the *-te/-de* form.

CD 4 Track 3

If you replace the *-te/-de* ending of the *-te/-de* form by *-ta/-da* you obtain the 'casual' ('plain') past tense form of the verb: *tabete* → *tabeta*, *nonde* → *nonda*, *shite* → *shita*, etc. This casual *-ta/-da* form, when used on its own, has the same meaning, though not social level, as the polite *-mashita* ending of the verb: *tabemashita* and *tabeta* both mean 'I ate'.

To express the sense of 'when X, Y', e.g. 'When I went to Japan, I saw Mount Fuji', the *-ta/-da* form is combined with *toki* 'when': *repōto o kaita toki, nihongo de kakimashita* 'When I wrote the report, I wrote it in Japanese'; *kamera o katta toki, nihon ni imashita* 'When I bought the camera, I was in Japan.'

**CD 4 Track 4**

koto 'thing, fact'. The *-ta/-da* form can be used with *koto ga arimasu* to convey the sense of having done something in the near past or to have had that experience: *tōkyō ni itta koto ga arimasu* 'Tokyo [marker *ni*] I went a fact exists' = 'I have been to Tokyo.'

CD 4 Track 5

hanami 'cherry blossom viewing'; *sake o nomi nagara, hanami o shita koto ga arimasu* 'While drinking sake, I have done / have had the experience of cherry blossom viewing'; *tōkyō de hanami o shita koto ga / wa arimasen* 'Tokyo [marker *de*] cherry blossom viewing I haven't done' = 'I haven't done cherry blossom viewing in Tokyo'; *nihon ni itta koto ga arimasu ka* 'Have you (ever) gone to Japan?' – *hai, arimasu* 'Yes, that exists' = 'Yes, I have.'

CD 4 Track 6

hō ga ii desu 'it is good to' is combined with the *-ta/-da* ending to convey 'it is better to, you should': *resutoran ni takushī de itta hō ga ii desu* 'You should go to the restaurant by taxi.'

kusuri 'medicine': *mainichi kusuri o nonda hō ga ii desu* 'You should drink (take) medicine every day'; *ringo* 'apple'

CD 4 Track 7

ashita jikan ga arimasu kara, tenisu o shita hō ga ii desu 'You have time tomorrow, therefore you should play tennis.'

CD 4 Track 8

When the *-ta/-da* form is combined with *ra*, the meaning is 'if': *nondara* 'if I drink'; *tabetara* 'if he eats'; *nihon ni ittara, fujisan o mitai desu* 'Japan I went if Mount Fuji [o] I want to see' = 'If I go to Japan, I want to see Mount Fuji'; *nihon ni ittara, fujisan o mite mimasu* 'If I go to Japan, I will try and see Mount Fuji'; *nihon ni ittara, fujisan o mite mitai desu* 'if I go to Japan, I want to try and see Mount Fuji.'

CD 4 Track 9

nihon ni ittara, ohashi de tabete mimasu 'If I go to Japan, I will try and eat with chopsticks'; *nihon ni ittara, ohashi de tabete mitai desu* 'If I go to Japan, I want to try and eat with chopsticks'; *nihon ni ittara, ohashi de tabetakunai desu* 'if I go to Japan, I don't want to eat with chopsticks'; *nihon ni ittara, rōmaji de kakitakunai desu* 'if I go to Japan, I don't want to write in Rōmaji.'

nihon ni ittara, nihongo o hanashita hō ga ii desu 'If you go to Japan, you should speak Japanese'; *nihon ni ittara, nihongo o hanashite mita hō ga ii desu* 'If you go to Japan, you should try and speak Japanese.'



CD 4 Track 10

If you use the *-tai-da* form with *ri*, and then follow with *shimasu / shimashita*, the sense is that of 'I do / did such things as...' This expression is used to give a sample of things you do and is not in any particular order: *eiga o mitari, kaimono o shitari shimasu* 'I do such things as watching a film and doing shopping'; *konsāto ni ittari, kaimono o shitari shimashita* 'I did such things as going to a concert and doing shopping.'



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