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Using Japanese on the Amiga

Kento looks at how users can use Japanese on the Amiga.
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If an Amiga user wanted to use the Japanese language there was once only one choice. You could run a Macintosh emulator with Apple's Japanese system software Kanji Talk or use the Japanese Language Kit to add a Japanese front end to programs requiring it and leaving the menus etc. in English. While this is still a great way to get Japanese on your Amiga, especially with the shareware Mac emulator [ShapeShifter](#), there are a growing range of programs available for the Amiga.

It seems rather strange that a computer with no allowances for the Japanese language has any following at all in Japan, but it does. Actually it seemed much easier to walk into a shop full of Amiga products in Tokyo than anywhere in North America. Amiga shops are not as numerous as other computer platforms but there is a strong presence in Japan. This is due to the users. They themselves claim that they must be crazy to support a computer that can't even speak their language. They see past that problem and embrace the Amiga for the great things that it can do. They are also the ones you should thank for putting in the time and effort to produce Japanese software for the Amiga.

After searching around the net for Japanese Amiga programs I concluded that they are quite hard to find and decided to whip up a quick guide to where they can be found. This guide will attempt to outline some available programs that will let you input, print and display Japanese on your Amiga, browse the World Wide Web in Japanese and send Japanese e-mail. There are likely other FAQs and programs that I haven't discovered out there and if so please [e-mail me](#) so they can be added to this page. Also, if your Japanese ability isn't good enough to read some Japanese AmigaGuide and "read me" installation and configuration files you might want to consider another option. I can get through them with some effort but I'm definitely not a translator. Please use the Aminet site located closest to you. I haven't provided direct links but have listed the appropriate file directories.

JMore

The first thing you will need is the ability to display a Japanese text file. JMore is a simple program that does just that. It is

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spotlight



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available on the Aminet in the *text/show* directory as *jmore03.lzh* and the installation instructions are available in English in the Non-latin text FAQ . You also need a set of Japanese fonts available on the Aminet in the *text/font* directory as *amknj16.lzh*. Once this is installed and configured you can then read the instruction text files that come with the programs below.

JKFF

jkff074.lha

This is a front end processor for Japanese that opens a small window and is used in conjunction with an ASCII text editor. As you type phonetically, your keystrokes are displayed as hiragana, katakana, romanji or kanji depending on the mode in the small window. When you press return the Japanese is translated into one of the 3 text formats that are analogous to ASCII in the world of Japanese computing namely JIS, SJIS (shift JIS) and EUC. In your text editor it will look like garbage but if you display the file with *jmore* you'll get the Japanese back again.



JKFF works well with IBrowse to give you Japanese web browsing capability. My thanks to Michael Wilkins for his help with this.

1. Install JKFF and put the included font Topaz 16 in your fonts directory. Run FixFonts.
2. Load up IBrowse (v1.02) and from the Preferences/General /Fonts menu change *all* the fonts to Topaz 16. Save this configuration as something like JapaneseIBrowse.prefs. A few fonts can be changed back to the original but it is a trial and error process (which I haven't done yet.)
3. Add a page with Japanese text to your hotlist such as www.threeweb.ad.jp/~syscon or www.mech.nagoya-u.ac.jp/ipi/nomu/skz at the bottom of this page.
4. Reboot and run JKFF074
5. In the project menu of JKFF set IN to SJIS and OUT to SJIS, EUC, JIS. You may have to fool around with these depending on the page you are accessing. Alternatively you can set the appropriate tooltypes in JKFF's icon.
6. Connect to the Internet, run IBrowse and connect to a site with Japanese text. You should see the regular garbage that is displayed when you come across a Japanese website. Now load JapaneseIBrowse.prefs and reload the webpage. Wow! Japanese text. Now your only problem is studying enough to actually read it!

JKFF should work with any program that allows you to change the font. Michael Wilkins reports success with CygnusEd. I'll test a few other programs and put the results here.

BFonts

BFont.lha can be found in the *text/font* directory on Aminet. It is a collection of Japanese fonts and a front end processor called NIS (Nihongo Input System).

JiWaPro

NEW JiwaPro.lha can be found in the *text/edit* directory on Aminet. It is a Japanese text processor that handles hiragana, katakana and a limited amount of kanji. This is a new improved version.

JALI

NEW *comm/tcp* directory on Aminet. It is a Japanese interface for AmiIRC.

Japanese

NEW Japanese.lha is available in the *text/misc* directory on Aminet. It will add the ability to display Japanese text to any program.

JaWaTeX

JaWaTeX3.11.lha

I'm not very familiar with PasTex etc. but this is a program that will give it Japanese ability. You need at least PasTex1.3.

AMojaik

amojaik2.4.lha

This is a program that adds Japanese capability to your browser. It uses ARExx scripts to invoke it from the browser and works with Amosaic, IBrowse and AWeb but NOT Voyager. It also needs the *RegExLib.lha* library in *util/libs* on Aminet.

Jamilla

jamillab1.lha

This is a beta version of a japanese e-mail client. An MUI version is in the works.

Japanese Locale Extension

jla.lha can be found in the *misc/misc* directory on Aminet. Put this in your *System:locale* directory.

JISToJI

JISToJi.lha can be found in the *text/show* directory on Aminet. It identifies text written in Old-JIS, New-JIS, Shift-JIS or EUC-JIS and displays them on screen or prints them on a printer. The installation instructions are in English.

Ami Kanji

AmiKanji_beta.lha It's big at about 4.7M!

It includes: *AmiJDic* an Amiga port of XJDic, a Japanese-English dictionary, fonts, utilities and libraries. It seems a bit on the technical side for me as I don't know any C. It is needed for *Kezaco* below.

Kezaco

NEW kezaco_1_55.lha can be found in the *text/edit* directory on Aminet. It is a text processor that handles kanji, hiragana and katakana. Kanji lookup is a little slow but it generally works quite well. This program also can't print. Needs *Ami Kanji* above. New updated version.

Other

Shodouka This is a server that will take a Japanese web page and display it as a picture regardless of lack of Japanese fonts, system software etc. on your computer. Very busy and always seems to be out of service but it is the easiest way to browse the web in Japanese. Although easy it is definitely not quick!



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