てくれる・てもらう

くれる

もらう

One Favour, Two Viewpoints

Keep the helper, beneficiary, and subject in the right places

For learners who know the te-form and basic giving and receiving verbs. Follow the same helpful event from the helper's side and the beneficiary's side. Core examples keep the speaker as beneficiary. Detailed honorific systems and complex third-person empathy are outside this workbook.

Late beginner / approximately N4

32 practice tasks | Explained answers | English guidance

LEARN. PRACTICE. UNDERSTAND.

Your route through this book

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Before you begin

Late beginner / approximately N4. Levels are approximate teaching guidance, not an official JLPT syllabus or a proficiency guarantee.

Read, try, compare, retry

Read one lesson, study the Japanese examples and English meanings, then complete the matching practice. Write short answers on the lines and longer responses in a notebook. Check the reason as well as the answer. Return to the lesson when you cannot explain your choice.

How to use the answers

Open tasks have model answers, not the only possible wording. Accept natural alternatives that preserve the requested meaning and viewpoint. For each task, check both the answer and your reason. The final practice set is a self-check: try it without notes, then review the categories you missed.

Reading and use

This PDF is designed for zoomed reading and printing. Japanese examples use normal spelling; vocabulary notes support key words. No recorded audio or personal feedback is included. You may keep and use your downloaded files for personal study without a time limit. Printing for your own study is allowed. Sharing, redistribution, and resale are not permitted. © 2026 Junichiro Japanese.

01 Draw the event before the sentence

Identify the person acting and the person helped.

Two roles, one action

Before choosing a form, write two labels: helper and beneficiary. A friend repairs my bicycle. The friend performs the repair; I benefit. Changing the sentence viewpoint does not change who held the tools.

Two starting points

With てくれる, the helper is the subject. With てもらう, the beneficiary is the subject and the helper is commonly marked with に. In our core examples the beneficiary is the speaker. English translations may use the same sentence because English does not always mark this contrast.

友達が自転車を直してくれました。

My friend repaired my bicycle for me.

私は友達に自転車を直してもらいました。

My friend repaired my bicycle for me.

友達が私の自転車を直しました。

My friend repaired my bicycle.

DECISION / Change the viewpoint, not the event.

WORDS / 友達（ともだち） friend; 自転車（じてんしゃ） bicycle; 直す（なおす） repair

AT A GLANCE

SAME HELPING EVENT / B = ME

A helps B (the speaker).

HELPER AS SUBJECT

Aが私に教えてくれる。

RECEIVER AS SUBJECT

私はAに教えてもらう。

02 Follow the helper with てくれる

Make the helper the subject while keeping benefit toward the speaker.

A helpful action toward my side

In 友達が説明してくれた, the friend explains and the speaker presents that explanation as helpful. くれる does not mean an object must physically move. Teaching, waiting, and checking can all help someone.

Do not add a mechanical 私に

The underlying verb still determines how participants are expressed. 教える can take 私に. 手伝う takes 私を or an activity as its object. Waiting for me is 私を待つ. You do not need a visible 私 phrase when the beneficiary is clear.

係の人が使い方を教えてくれました。

The attendant explained how to use it to me.

友達が駅で待ってくれました。

My friend waited at the station for me.

姉が引っ越しを手伝ってくれました。

My older sister helped me move.

DECISION / Check the base verb before adding a person particle.

WORDS / 係（かかり）の人 attendant; 使い方（つかいかた） how to use; 教える（おしえる） teach; 待つ（まつ） wait; 引っ越し（ひっこし） moving home; 手伝う（てつだう） help

Name the roles

Review: 1. Answer the prompt and give a short reason.

Q001 In 友達が私の自転車を直してくれました, who repairs it and who benefits?

Q002 In 私は姉に荷物を運んでもらいました, who carries the luggage?

Q003 Choose the matching event for 私は友達に写真を撮ってもらいました: A I photographed my friend; B my friend took a photo for me.

Q004 A friend repaired your bicycle. Begin with 友達が and use 直す + てくれる, polite past.

Answers Q001-Q008

Q001 The friend repairs it; I benefit.

The helper is the subject of てくれる.

Q002 My older sister.

私は is the beneficiary; 姉に identifies the helper.

Q003 B.

The friend performs 撮る; I receive the helpful action.

Q004 友達が自転車を直してくれました。

The friend is the helper and subject. 私の自転車 makes the ownership explicit if needed.

Q005 係の人が使い方を教えてくれました。

The attendant teaches; the helpful action is toward the speaker.

Q006 友達が私を待ってくれました。

待つ takes the person waited for with を. Do not mechanically add 私に.

Q007 姉が引っ越しを手伝ってくれました。

The sister is the helper; 引っ越し is the helped activity.

Q008 The beneficiary can be understood, and 待つ does not require 私に for “wait for me.”

The construction conveys benefit while the base verb controls explicit participant marking.

This answer excerpt includes Q005-Q008; those tasks are not shown in this sample.

Keep the distinction

てくれる: helper is subject; helpful action is presented toward the speaker's side.

てもらう: beneficiary is subject; helper is commonly marked に.

Preserve the same action, object, time, and participants when switching viewpoint.

A request is not required for every てもらう; requested help can use てくれる.

Let the base verb determine 私に, 私を, or another participant expression.

Use context for omitted people; do not invent a hidden actor or beneficiary.

Make it yours

Choose three tasks you found difficult. Change the people, objects or setting, then write a new example that follows the same distinction. Revisit it the next day and explain the choice without looking at the answer.