This is a digital version of a textbook that was first published in 1992. Although it is now out-of-date in terms of its vocabulary and the conservative context of its dialogues, its pedagogical approach has been and continues to be appreciated by a number of those who wish to learn Japanese. It is an intensive, grammar-based one-year introductory course, and those who finish it should have a firm grasp of how the language works and enough knowledge of the writing system to tackle everyday written material with no more than a dictionary. Particular attention is paid to matters of Japanese of grammar which foreign learners often find difficult, so Book I can also serve as a reference grammar.

There are two caveats. First, this course was written not just for private study but to be taught by a native-language speaker; no audio aids were ever produced. Second, it does not rely on romanization but plunges the student directly into a mixture of the kana syllabary and characters. Hiragana should certainly be learned before approaching Lesson 1. Help with the meaning, reading, and stroke order of the characters is now readily available via a number of useful apps. Book II contains exercises to accompany the fifty-two lessons in Book I, word lists for each lesson, and a comprehensive vocabulary for the whole course.