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JAPANESE NINJAS

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Through this Award, we acknowledge and applaud the organization's excellence in Japanese language training, owing to its commitment to providing quality instruction and helping learners develop language proficiency and cross-cultural communication skills.

Mandvi Singh

MANDVI SINGH
Managing Editor

JAPANESE NINJAS:

Turning Japanese Proficiency into Practical Pathways for Indian Learners

Atishaya Jain
Founder

Japanese language training in India is moving beyond being a niche academic pursuit. Growing commercial, educational and workforce ties between India and Japan are making language proficiency increasingly relevant to students and professionals seeking opportunities in Japanese companies and in Japan itself. The India–Japan Human Resource Exchange and Cooperation Action Plan, announced during the India–Japan Annual Summit in August 2025, identifies the promotion of Japanese language education in India as a priority, alongside a target of facilitating the movement of more than 50,000 skilled personnel and potential talent from India to Japan over five years.

Yet, the real challenge is not merely learning enough Japanese to pass an examination. Learners need the confidence to listen, respond and operate in real situations. Japanese Ninjas has positioned itself around this gap, combining JLPT and NAT preparation with communication-led training designed to turn language knowledge into practical capability.

The platform traces its beginnings to around 2016–17 and has since trained more than 5,000 learners, delivered training across approximately 10–15 universities, established offline operations in Delhi, Chandigarh and Pune, and expanded its programs to international students.

At the centre of this journey is its founder, Atishaya Jain, whose relationship with Japanese began unusually early. Encouraged by his father, he started learning the language in third standard, subsequently cleared JLPT levels, spent two years in Japan and later pursued B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering at Chitkara University. He began teaching Japanese while still at university, turning a childhood skill into a professional pursuit and eventually a specialized training platform.

Building Learning Around the Learner's Destination

There is no single reason why people learn Japanese today. For some Japanese Ninjas students, the objective is employment or higher education in Japan. Others want to work with Japanese organizations in India, travel confidently, understand Japanese culture and anime, or simply add another language to their professional profile.

"We first try to understand what the learner wants to achieve with Japanese. The goal could be a career in Japan, higher education, working with a Japanese company or simply becoming confident in the language. Once that destination is clear, we can make the learning journey much more relevant", says Atishaya Jain, Founder of Japanese Ninjas.

Examination preparation remains an important component, particularly for learners targeting JLPT and NAT qualifications. However, the larger objective is functional command over Japanese across speaking, listening, reading and writing. This distinction is particularly relevant in the employment context, where certification alone may not translate into workplace readiness.

Making Japanese Easier to Think, Speak and Understand

Japanese Ninjas' methodology is grounded in simplification. Instead of treating Japanese as inherently difficult, trainers identify where a learner is struggling and work backwards to understand the reason. One distinctive element is the use of familiar languages as a bridge. For many learners from North India, concepts can be explained through Hindi, allowing them to connect unfamiliar Japanese structures with a language in which they naturally think. English-to-Japanese instruction is also available for learners who are more comfortable with English, including students from southern India and international markets.

"The language becomes easier when students can connect a new concept with something they already understand. Our focus is on removing that initial hesitation and gradually helping them think and respond in Japanese rather than translating every sentence in their head," explains Atishaya Jain.

> Having trained more than 5,000 learners and worked across multiple universities, Japanese Ninjas is now looking at accessibility as its next growth frontier

The classroom experience combines structured learning with conversations, group discussions, listening exercises, weekly assignments, tests and mock examinations. Students also receive round-the-clock support during their learning journey. Together, these interventions are intended to reinforce concepts beyond the classroom and give learners regular opportunities to apply what they have studied.

The philosophy behind these interventions is straightforward: fluency begins when learners gradually stop constructing every Japanese sentence through conscious translation. Japanese Ninjas therefore uses repeated communication practice to help learners respond more naturally, improve recall and build confidence in everyday conversations.

Taking Practical Training Beyond the Physical Classroom

Technology has allowed this model to move beyond the geographical limits of offline centres. Japanese Ninjas uses online platforms alongside its own CRM and automation tools to manage learning, assessments and student engagement.

Tests and assignments can be conducted digitally, while regular posts and blogs provide additional opportunities for independent practice. More significantly, online learning enables the platform to connect students with native Japanese speakers and guest lecturers in Japan, bringing direct linguistic and cultural exposure into the learning environment.

For Japanese Ninjas, however, digital convenience does not replace human guidance. The platform sees tools such as language applications, YouTube and AI platforms as useful aids for practice, but believes learners still require structured mentoring to develop pronunciation, Kanji understanding, listening ability and conversational fluency. Technology, in this model, strengthens the learning process without replacing the interaction and feedback that language acquisition requires.

Expanding the India–Japan Language Bridge

Having trained more than 5,000 learners and worked across multiple universities, Japanese Ninjas is now looking at accessibility as its next growth frontier. The platform is also exploring collaborations that can create stronger academic and professional pathways for learners interested in pursuing opportunities connected with Japan.

Going forward, Japanese Ninjas intends to make Japanese education more affordable and accessible across India, irrespective of a learner's location, economic background, age or professional stage. Its target audience consequently stretches from school and university students to working professionals and lifelong learners, alongside students outside India.

"Our larger vision is to make Japanese learning accessible to anyone who genuinely wants to learn, regardless of where they live or what stage of life they are in. Language should open opportunities, not become another barrier to accessing them", concludes Atishaya Jain.