

『Japanese culture felt through its language』
言葉で感じる日本文化

We're now coming to the end of the fiscal year, a time full of changes: people graduating and entering schools, changing jobs and moving house. For this month's Living in Miyazaki, I'd like to discuss some commonly used Japanese phrases, the reasons they are used, and the particular associations they have.



1. Otsukaresama desu: Appreciating someone's hard work/Greeting
Originally an expression of appreciation for a person's efforts after finishing work or an activity, it has become a common workplace greeting that can be used at any time, in combination with a light bow. As for why Japanese people use these words as a greeting, it might be that they reflect the idea of wa, the spirit of social harmony that is deeply revered in Japanese culture.

2. Yoroshiku onegaishimasu: A versatile phrase that can be used in a variety of contexts
In principle it's what you say when making a request, but it is also used at the start of an interaction, an activity, or a relationship. It's a highly convenient expression for allowing conversations and relationships to progress smoothly, and has a softening or downplaying effect. When you next have the chance to introduce yourself at a workplace or a new home, be sure to use it.

3. Osewa ni narimasu: An expression of gratitude and humility
This is a phrase expressing gratitude in advance for the support and cooperation one hopes to receive going forward. You might use it when meeting new neighbours after moving, or at a new workplace, for example. The words mean something like "I will be relying on you, thank you in advance", elegantly combining sentiments of humility and gratitude.



Understanding what language means and why it is used is a great way to understand the culture it comes from. I expect you will be hearing these phrases a lot in the coming weeks and months, so try to pay attention to the ways they are used, and feel the Japanese cultural influence behind them!

●Portal site for learning Japanese in Miyazaki: "Hinata Nihongo Navi"
<https://hinatanihongo.mif.or.jp/english/>

※The original Japanese version of this article will be uploaded onto the website of the Miyazaki International Foundation soon.

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Also, if you ever have any questions or concerns about daily life in Miyazaki, please feel free to get in touch with the Miyazaki Support Center for Foreign Residents:

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