

Answer to Question # 19: Answers 1, 2 & 3 are correct.

You can give someone PERMISSION to do something by using the **ても TEMO** or **でも DEMO** form. To do this, combine the **て te** or **で de** form of a verb with with **も mo** and add either **いい ii** = good, **よい yoi** = good, **だいじょうぶ daijoubu** = OK, **よろしい yoroshii** = good, **かまいません kamaimasen** = it doesn't matter, or **かまわない kamawanai** = it doesn't matter.

For example, **飲んでもいいです nonde mo ii desu** = it's OK to drink. **入ってもよろしいです haitte mo yoroshii desu** = it's fine to enter. **食べてもかまいません tabete mo kamaimasen** = it doesn't matter if you eat.

In the same way, you can give someone PERMISSION NOT to do something by combining the NEGATIVE **て te** or **で de** form of a verb with **ても temo**, followed by **いい ii**, **よい yoi**, **だいじょうぶ daijoubu**, **よろしい yoroshii**, **かまいません kamaimasen**, or **かまわない kamawanai**. To form the negative **て te** or **で de** form of a verb, start with the plain speech negative form of the verb, remove the final **i** and add **くて kute**.

For example, to form the negative **て te** form of **行く iku** = go, start with **行かない ikanai** = will not go, remove the final **i** and add **くて kute**. The result is **行かなくて ikanakute**. If you add **もいい temo ii**, you get **行かなくてもいい ikanakutemo ii** = you don't have to go.

Therefore, ANSWER # 1 IS CORRECT. (The **です desu** at the end is optional. Also, in casual speech, **も mo** can be omitted. For example, **行かなくていいです ikanakute ii desu** is also correct.)

You may recall that, in the Answer to Question 13 <https://www.japaneseaudiolessons.com/japanese-grammar-quiz/answer-to-question-13b/>, we discussed THREE CONDITIONAL FORMS, meaning three ways to say if in Japanese. They are the **ば BA**, **たら TARA**, and **と TO** forms. These forms are used in Answers 4, 5 and 6.

Before getting to those forms, there is a FOURTH CONDITIONAL FORM, **なら NARA**, that can be used to mean if. **なら nara** is often translated as "in case." It is used after a noun, an adjective or a plain speech verb. **なら nara** functions much like the topic marker **は wa** but implies a greater emphasis.

Answer # 2 uses なら nara after a plain speech verb. Since なら nara means “if,” one might think that 行かないならいいです ikanai nara ii desu would mean “if you don’t go, it’s good” or “in case you don’t go, it’s OK.”

However, my Japanese consultants tell me that, in colloquial speech, 行かない ikanai is roughly equivalent to 行きたくない ikitakunai = don’t want to go. With this in mind, 行かないならいいです ikanai nara ii desu really means in case you don’t want to go, it’s OK.

Therefore, although ANSWER # 2 is basically CORRECT, it doesn’t express the exact meaning we’re looking for.

You may recall that, in the Answer to Question 10 <https://www.japaneseaudiolessons.com/answer-to-question-10/>, we discussed five idiomatic meanings of こと koto. One of them was ことはない koto wa nai or ことはありません koto wa arimasen. When this phrase is used after a plain speech non-past verb, it means “it isn’t necessary.”

Answer # 3 is an example of the correct use of ことはありません koto wa arimasen. Therefore, ANSWER # 3 IS ALSO CORRECT.

Now let’s take a moment to discuss the ば ba form. To make the conditional form of an i adjective, using the ば ba form, remove the final i and add ければ kereba. For example, おいしい oishii is an i adjective meaning delicious. When you want to say if it’s delicious, first remove the final i from おいしい oishii. Now add ければ kereba, and you get おいしければ oishikereba = if it’s delicious. Then you can say something like おいしければ食べます oishikereba tabemasu = if it’s delicious, I will eat it.

Since ない nai, meaning doesn’t exist, is inflected like an i adjective, it can also be used with ければ kereba. When you want to say if it doesn’t exist, remove the final i from ない nai and add ければ kereba. The result is なければ nakereba = if it doesn’t exist.

With this in mind, the 4th answer, 行かなければいいです ikanakereba ii desu appears to be saying “if you don’t go, it’s OK” or “you don’t have to go.” However, my consultants point out that the word いい ii sometimes means OK, meaning that it can be used to give PERMISSION, but sometimes it means good or better, meaning that it can be used to make a RECOMMENDATION.

To my consultants, the 4th answer appears to be a recommendation, as in “I wish you wouldn’t go.” This would be clearer if we changed the word です desu to のに noni = if only. Then the 4th answer would read 行かなければいいのに ikanakereba ii noni = if you don’t go, it’s good, if only, or I wish you wouldn’t go.

Therefore, ANSWER # 4 IS INCORRECT.

Answer # 5 uses the たら tara form to say if, and at first glance it seems to be correct. However, to my consultants, it appears to be a recommendation and actually means if you hadn’t gone, it would have been good. Again this would be clearer if we substituted のに noni for です desu. The result is 行かなかったらいいのに ikanakattara ii noni = if you hadn’t gone, good, if only or I wish you hadn’t gone.

Therefore, ANSWER # 5 IS INCORRECT.

Finally, Answer # 6 uses と to say if, and it also looks correct on its face. Unfortunately, my consultants tell me that this answer too, like Answer 4, seems to be a recommendation, meaning I wish you wouldn’t go. Again, this becomes more clear if we substitute のに noni for です desu. The resulting sentence, 行かないといいのに ikanai to ii noni means if you don’t go, good, if only or I wish you wouldn’t go.

Therefore, ANSWER # 6 IS ALSO INCORRECT.

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Question # 19: You don’t have to

You want to say, “You don’t have to go.” Which of the following 6 Japanese sentences is correct?

1. 行かなくてもいいです ikanakutemo ii desu.
2. 行かないならいいです ikanai nara ii desu.
3. 行くことはありません iku koto wa arimasen.
4. 行かなければいいです ikanakereba ii desu.
5. 行かなかったらいいです ikanakattara ii desu.

6. 行かないといいです ikanai to ii desu.