

Answer to Question # 9: Answer 2 is correct.

Answer: As a rule, います (imasu) = “exists” is used with ANIMATE objects, including people, animals and insects. By contrast, あります (arimasu) = “exists” is used with INANIMATE objects, including plants. For example, 犬がいます (inu ga imasu) = “a dog exists.” 車があります (kuruma ga arimasu) = “a car exists.”

Always use the particle に (ni) with います (imasu) or あります (arimasu), when you want to say that AN OBJECT, like a person or a house, exists AT or IN a particular place. For example, referring to an animate object, you could say 外に犬がいます (soto ni inu ga imasu) = “at outside, a dog exists.” For an inanimate object, you could say 外に車があります (soto ni kuruma ga arimasu) = “at outside, a car exists.”

With this information in mind, you might think that the correct answer to this question would be # 1. However, 会議 (kaigi) = “meeting” is not an object. It is an EVENT or OCCURRENCE. In Japanese, the location of an event is marked with で (de). Therefore, ANSWER # 2 IS CORRECT.

The use of で (de) with EVENTS may make more sense if you recall that the particle で (de) is always used with “active” verbs like 走る (hashiru) = “run,” to indicate the place where the verb takes place. For example, 外で走ります (soto de hashirimasu) = “I will run outside.”

In Japanese, there are a number of “inactive” verbs that can be used with either に (ni) or で (de), depending on the intended meaning. To understand why people sometimes use に (ni) and sometimes use で (de) with these verbs, it may be helpful to think of に (ni) as meaning “at” and で (de) as meaning “in.”

For example, you can say 家で寝てください (ie de nete kudasai) = “please sleep in the house.” You can also say ここに寝てください (koko ni nete kudasai) = “please sleep at here,” referring to this exact place.

Other “inactive” verbs that can be used with either に (ni) or で (de), depending on what you mean, include できる (dekiru) = “be able to” or “be finished,” 捨てる (suteru) = “throw away,” 落ちる (ochiru) = “fall,” 止まる (tomaru) = “stop, intransitive,” 止める (tomeru) = “stop, transitive,” 座る (suwaru) = “sit” and 立つ (tatsu) = “stand.”

Finally, it appears that 残る (nokoru) = “stay behind” can only be used with に (ni). For example, 会社に残ります (kaisha ni nokorimasu) = “she will stay behind at the company.”

.....

Question # 9: "Ni vs. De Before Verbs"

You want to say "There's a meeting in this room."

Which of the following 2 Japanese sentences is correct?

1. この部屋に会議があります (kono heya ni kaigi ga arimasu)
2. この部屋で会議があります (kono heya de kaigi ga arimasu)