**1. Press Enter/Return instead of the space bar.**
When you type Japanese, it will tentatively appear in hiragana, even if it's supposed to be in katakana or kanji. If you're satisfied with that hiragana word, press Enter (or Return on a Mac) to enter that hiragana word in your text.

**2. No spaces between words.**
When Japanese write Japanese, they don't put spaces between words, so you don't either. If you think, "I need a space before the next word just like I do in English," and you hit the space bar, you won't get a space. Instead, the word you just typed will appear in kanji or katakana. If you anyway want a space after a word, first hit Enter/Return to enter the word you just typed, *then* hit the space bar.

**3. Restrict kanji to the ones you know.**
This trick with the space bar might have you going "Cool, I can type in kanji!" Not so fast there. If you don't know for a fact what the kanji for a word is, or if it even has a kanji, and you press the space bar, you may get a word that means something other than what you mean. For example, if the word is supposed to be written in hiragana (e.g., particles are always written in hiragana), but you press the space bar, you'll force your computer to come up with some kanji that's pronounced the way you typed, even if that's not a kanji word. So, for example, let's say you want the verb "kiku" (listen). You type "kiku" and you get きく in hiragana. If you don't know the kanji for this word, just press Enter/Return and you'll be safe. If you're like "No, I want to impress everyone with my brilliance so I'll write it in kanji" and you press the space bar, you'll have to choose between 聞く and 菊 and about 7 other options, all with different meanings, but all pronounced "kiku". It's the first one that means "listen"—the second one means "chrysanthemum"—but if you don't know that, you may end up typing something that means "I chrysanthemum music every day." If, however, you go to the bother of looking up a word in a dictionary (e.g., [jisho.org](http://jisho.org" \t "_blank) is a good online dictionary) so you know what the kanji should be, and you commit yourself to memorizing that kanji, well then go ahead and use it, but otherwise, stick to hiragana.

**4. How to type katakana.**
If the word is in katakana, press the space bar and it will appear in katakana. If you're typing a foreign name (e.g., yours) that the computer doesn't recognize is supposed to be in katakana, type the name, then in Windows, press the F7 key; on a Mac, Control k; or in Ajax IME, F9.

**5. How to type long vowels.**
The Yookoso textbook romanizes long vowels by repeating the vowel (e.g., sensee, hikooki), even though in hiragana the long "e" sound is usually written with an い and the long "o" sound is usually written with an う (e.g., せんせい、ひこうき). So when you type most words with a long "e" or "o", you enter them on your keyboard with an "i" and an "u" (e.g., sensei, hikouki). But also remember the exceptions (e.g., おおきい、とおい、おねえさん、ええと). The long katakana vowel, by the way, is just a hyphen (e.g., "koohii" is "ko-hi-" and the space bar: コーヒー).

**6. How to type small hiragana and katakana.**
Ordinarily, to type the small っ、ゃ、ゅ and ょ、you just type out the word that has them and the small kana will appear automatically (e.g., to get ちょっと, you type "chotto"). If, however, you want a small kana out of context, type an "x" in front of it and it will come out small (e.g., to get　ゃ, you type "xya"). This is especially useful when typing katakana, which has combinations that don't exist in hiragana. For example, the name "Tim" is pronounced "timu" in Japanese, but if you type it that way, it will appear as ちむ because "ti" is another way to spell "chi". If you try to convert it to katakana, it will still come out "chimu": チム. The "ti" sound in katakana is written with a テ and a small ィ, so to get ティム, you type "teximu" with the "xi" being the ィ.

**7. Remember the particles that are spelled differently than they're pronounced.**
Japanese teachers are constantly drilling this into students' heads, but...

The particle "wa" is written は, not わ, so type "ha", not "wa".
The particle "e" is written へ, not え, so type "he", not "e".
The particle "o" is written を, not お, so type "wo", not "o".

**8. How to type ん.**
When you type the letter "n," the computer waits to see if the next letter is a vowel, in which case, it appears as な、に、ぬ、ね、or の. If you want to type "three yen" in Japanese, and you enter "sanen", you'll get さねｎ instead of さんえん because the computer thought the letter "e" went with the first "n" to make ね. In order to get ん to appear, you have to type the letter "n" twice. So to get さんえん, you have to type "sannenn". The most common mistake by people who don't know about this is the word "konnichiwa". First of all, the "wa" in "konnichiwa" is the particle "wa", so that part is "ha". But if you type "konnichiha", you'll get こんいちは instead of こんにちは because the computer thinks "nn" is ん and since the next letter is "i", it gives you い. After you get ん, you have to type "ni", not "i". So to get こんにちは, you have to type "n" three times, "ko**nnn**ichiha", twice to get ん and once as the beginning of に.

O.K., now you can type Japanese smartly. どうぞ、日本語でタイプしてください。