Some Manga Basics

• Manga is the Japanese word for comics-literally translated it means “whimsical pictures”

• In it’s modern form, Manga dates from shortly after WWII.

• In Japan, Manga is read by people of all ages and covers a wide range of topics.
More Manga Info.

• Like graphic novels, Manga uses text and pictures to present information

• Traditionally, Manga is read from back-to-front, with panels and dialog balloons read right-to-left

• When produced for the U.S. market, some Manga is “flipped” so that it can be read front-to-back and left-to-right.
Parts of a Manga Book

Manga consists of:

cover  and  inside pages
A Manga Page

Pages consist of a variety of elements

- **Panels** - squares or rectangles that contain a single scene
- **Gutters** - space between panels
- **Dialog Balloons** - contain communication between/among characters
- **Thought Balloons** - contain a character’s thoughts
- **Captions** - contain information about a scene or character
- **Sound Effects** - visual sound clues i.e., Wonk! Pow!
How to read a Manga Page

Universe Reading the Wrong Way! This is the End of a B-Page Manga. Japanese Writing Reads from Right to Left. So Pages and Panels are Reversed in What Appears Like Reverse Order to Western Readers.

Stop

Just flip to page 89 and start reading "backwards" toward this page! You’ll soon see the End of It!

You’re reading the wrong way!

Often, if you start at what looks like the front of the Manga, you will see a message like this. It says: "You’re reading the wrong way!"

You should then flip to what looks like the back of the Manga and begin there.
Panel Order

Just as you read traditional Manga pages “reversed,” in a back-to-front sequence, the panels on each page are similarly “reversed” and read in a right-to-left sequence.
Dialog Balloons

Dialog balloons are read right-to-left as well.
• Some Americanized Manga has been “flipped” so that it reads front-to-back and left-to-right

• Some newer Manga is written by Western writers and is created with a front-to-back, left-to-right orientation

• If you are unsure of which way to read your Manga, try a couple of pages and see if the storyline is making any sense!
Further Reading

For more information about Manga, take a look at these resources:

• *Shonen Jump* – a monthly magazine put out by Viz Communications

• *Understanding Manga and Anime* by Robin Brenner

• *Making Comics: Storytelling Secrets of Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels* by Scott McCloud
• Librarian’s Guide to Anime & Manga

• Tokyopop

• Viz Communications