

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

How to Write in Japanese: Hiragana and Katakana #14 The Katakana T Column

14

Hi everyone! Welcome to BASIC JAPANESE WRITING. The fastest, easiest, and most fun way to master the Japanese alphabet!

You've learned these 15 katakana characters from the previous lessons.

In this lesson, you'll learn the five katakana characters under the T column.

タダチヂツヅッテデトド

The first katakana character for this lesson is タ. タ.

Think of it as a person holding a *TA*BLET.

Just like their hiragana counterparts, all of the katakana in this column can be altered by a dakuten as well.

タ with a "dakuten" is ダ. タ; ダ. タ; ダ.

Katakana タ is written in 3 strokes.

The first stroke is a short curved diagonal just like the first strokes of ク and ケ.

The second stroke is just like that of katakana ク as well. It starts out as a horizontal line coming from where the first stroke starts then it turns sharply into a curve going downwards to the left.

The third stroke is a short diagonal that ends up touching the curve of the second stroke.

Ok, let's see it again.

Ok, next up is the katakana character チ. チ.

Try to imagine katakana チ as a *CHI*CKEN.

Now, let's add a dakuten to チ. Remember it's not pronounced "DI."

Actually, チ with a dakuten is pronounced as チ. チ; チ. チ; チ. Just like its hiragana counterpart, チ is very rarely used.

Just like し is the only S-H sound in Japanese, ち is the only one with the "ch" sound in

Japanese and the only syllables available originally are ちゃ, ち, ちゅ, and ちょ.

So making the チェ digraph allows Japanese people to say loan words like "chair" (チェア) or "archery" (アーチェリー.)

Katakana チ is written in 3 strokes.

The first stroke is a shallow curve that goes from the top right down to the left.

The second stroke is a long horizontal stroke. It's longer than the first stroke on both sides.

The third stroke starts from the middle of the first stroke, cuts through the second stroke, and curves down to the left.

Ok, let's see it again.

The third katakana for this lesson is ツ. ツ.

ツ looks like a *TSU*NA fish's head.

Does katakana ツ remind you of katakana シ? They look VERY similar, don't they? Here's a sure way to figure out which one is which. Just remember the strokes of their hiragana counterparts.

Hiragana し starts from the top and curves up at the end. The two short lines of katakana シ aligns with this part and both characters end going up.

Hiragana つ on the other hand starts from the left and curves down at the end. The two short lines of katakana ツ align with this part and both characters end going down instead.

Ok, let's add a "dakuten" to ツ as well.

It's pronounced as ツ. Listen carefully. ツ; ツ. ツ; ツ.

小さいツ is also available for katakana as well. It serves the same function of prolonging the consonant after it.

When found at the end of the word, the 小さいツ acts like a glottal stop for words spelled using katakana.

Katakana ツ is written in 3 strokes.

It's written just like a big wave. Flick your pen at the end of this stroke.

The first and second strokes are two parallel short slanted strokes on the top.

The third stroke starts to the right of the first two strokes and curves downwards.

Just like the Katakana シ, to maintain the balance, try to have the same spacing between where the three strokes start.

Ok, let's see it again.

Next is the katakana character テ. テ.

Katakana テ looks like a *TE*LEPHONE pole bent at an angle.

Let's modify テ with a dakuten.

It is now pronounced as デ. テ; デ. テ; デ.

Since チ has the C-H sound, the T column doesn't have a native "TI" syllable sound. So for loan words with this sound, the ティ digraph is created.

And since チ with a dakuten is pronounced チ, a loan word with a "DI" syllable on the other hand can be written using the ディ digraph.

Katakana テ is written in 3 strokes.

The first two strokes are 2 parallel horizontal lines which both go from left to right. The second stroke is longer.

The third stroke starts from the middle of the second stroke and is a short diagonal line curving to the left.

Ok, let's see it again.

Our final character for this lesson is the katakana ト. ト.

ト looks like a view of a *TO*TEM pole.

What does ト sounds like with a dakuten?

ト with a dakuten is pronounced ド, remember? ト; ド. ト; ド.

Just as there is no native "TI" syllable in Japanese, there isn't a native "TU" syllable as well. In order to say foreign names or loan words with the "TU" syllable, the トウ digraph is used.

By adding a "dakuten" to the トウ digraph, you could also spell out words with the "DU" syllable.

Katakana ト is written in 2 strokes.

The first stroke is a long vertical stroke. It is a bit to the left.

The second stroke is a short diagonal line coming from the first stroke. It starts a bit higher than the center.

Ok, let's see it again.

Let's see all the characters again. タ, ダ, チ, チ, ツ, ツ, 小さいツ (ツ), テ, デ, ト, ド and the new digraphs チェ, ティ, ディ, トウ, and ドウ.

Quiz time!

Now, let's review what you've learned. I'll show you a character or group of characters and give you time to say them. Ready?

ティ

ド

め

る.

Which is the katakana ツ? (pause 3 sec) It's this one! Remember the stroke of their hiragana counterparts and you'll easily distinguish between these two.

チ.

オ.

タイ. タイ means "Thailand."

チーズ. It's "cheese!"

デート. This means "a romantic date."

ドイツ. ドイツ is "Germany."

スイッチ. It means "switch."

サッカー. This means "soccer" or "football." GOOOAL!

アウトドア. アウトドア refers to "outdoor activities."

ジェットコースター. This is how we call "roller coasters."

Great job! Confused about how to properly spell loanwords in katakana? Searching in an online dictionary is the best way to go. More and more foreign words are being incorporated into Japanese and many even have more than one accepted spelling.

Ok, let's wrap up this lesson by recapping what you've learned.

In this lesson, you learned タ and ダ, チ and チ, ツ, ヅ and 小さいツ, テ and デ, ト and ド and the digraphs チェ, ティ, ディ, トウ and ドウ.

よくできました！ You've now mastered 66 Japanese characters.

Do you know what ニコニコ means? I'm sure you'll be happy to find out in our next lesson when we discuss the N column in katakana.

Before you go, practice writing the following words on your own!

[pause]

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See you in the next lesson! またね !