

LESSON NOTES

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

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VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English	Class
タイ	タイ	Tai	Thailand	proper noun
チーズ	チーズ	chīzu	cheese	
デート	デート	dēto	date	noun
ドイツ	ドイツ	Doitsu	Germany	proper noun
ジェットコースター	ジェットコースター	jettokōsutā	roller coaster	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

ジョンはタイ料理は好きではありません。 <i>Jon wa tai ryōri wa suki de wa arimasen.</i> John doesn't like Thai food.	このチーズはあまり美味しくない。 <i>Kono chīzu wa amari oishiku nai.</i> This cheese is not very good.
ジェットコースターが大好きです。 <i>Jetto kōsutā ga daisuki desu.</i> I love roller coasters.	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Mastering the Katakana T Column

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

1. タ (*ta*), ダ (*da*)
2. チ (*chi*), ジ (*ji*)
3. ツ (*tsu*), ヅ (*zu*), ヅ (*chiisai tsu*)

4. テ (te), デ (de)

5. ト (to), ド (do)

タ (ta)

Just like their *hiragana* counterparts, all of the *katakana* in this column can be altered by a dakuten as well. *Ta* with a dakuten is pronounced as *da*, タ.

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.

チ (chi)

Chi with a *dakuten* is pronounced as *ji*, チ. Just like its *hiragana* counterpart, チ is very rarely used.

Just like シ is the only S-H sound in Japanese, チ 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 チエ 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.

ツ (tsu)

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 シ 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 ツ 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 i

instead.

Tsu with a *dakuten* is pronounced as *zu*, 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.

テ (te)

Te with a *dakuten* is now pronounced as *de*, テ.

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 テイ 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 テイ 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.

ト (to)

To with a *dakuten* is pronounced *do*, ト.

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.