

LESSON NOTES

Basic Japanese S1 #14

Basic Japanese #14: General Counters

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GRAMMAR

The focus of this lesson is General Counter *tsu* (つ)

In Japanese, you use special counters when you count objects. The counter used depends on the shape or characteristic of the object. The general counter is *tsu* (つ), as in *hitotsu* (ひとつ), *futatsu* (ふたつ), *mittsu* (みっつ).

General Counter

This set of general counters can be used when there is no specific counter or when you don't know the counter. The set only goes up to 10. They do not follow any kind of pattern and must be memorized.

一つ	hitotsu	one item
二つ	futatsu	two items
三つ	mittsu	three items
四つ	yottsu	four items
五つ	itsutsu	five items
六つ	muttsu	six items
七つ	nanatsu	seven items
八つ	yattsu	eight items
九つ	kokonotsu	nine items
十	tō	ten items

Hiroko's Hint

Here is a secret song to memorize this general counting system.

一つ	hitotsu	ひい	hii
二つ	futatsu	ふう	fū
三つ	mittsu	みい	mii
四つ	yottsu	よう	yō
五つ	itsutsu	いつ	itsu
六つ	muttsu	むう	mū
七つ	nanatsu	なな	nana
八つ	yattsu	やあ	yā
九つ	kokonotsu	ここの	kokono
十	tō	とお	tō