

Tsundere

Tsundere (ツンデレ, pronounced [tsɯndere]) is a Japanese term for a character development process that depicts a character with a personality who is initially polarized warm/soft, cold, temperamental, hotheaded (and sometimes even hostile) before gradually showing a warmer, friendlier side over time.

The word is derived from the terms *tsun tsun* (ツンツン) ('to turn away in disgust or anger') and *dere dere* (デレデレ) ('to become affectionate').^[1] Originally found in Japanese bishōjo games,^[2] the word is now part of the otaku moe phenomenon,^[3] reaching into other media such as maid cafés,^[3] anime, manga, novels, and even mass media. The term was made popular in the visual novel *Kimi ga Nozomu Eien*.^[1]



A typical example of a tsundere character

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Terminology

Manga author Ken Akamatsu lists *tsundere* as one of the special cases in his definition of *moe*: "The person feeling it must be stronger: The object of 'moe' is weak and dependent (like a child) on the person, or is in a situation where she cannot oppose (like a maid)... (*Tsundere only: There will be times where the stronger and weaker role is reversed)."^[4] The concept has received increasing attention in Japan, with a maid cafe named Nagomi in Akihabara started having *tsundere* events in 2006^{[5][note 1]} and *tsundere*-themed products released (like Tomy Co.'s portable television set),^[note 2] and the concept increasingly reflected in recent anime, from an extended discussion of the meaning of the concept and its origin on the Internet in *Lucky Star*'s Lucky Channel segment classifying the characters according to *tsundere*-ness. Another accepted definition of *tsundere* is a girl or a guy who has a combative attitude toward others but is also kind on the inside. They usually play out as having an attitude toward the main character, either a male or a female, and often criticizing them in one way or another, until they eventually warm up to them or fall in love with them as the series progresses, though they usually find it very hard to admit it or outright deny it in some cases.

Comiket organizer Koichi Ichikawa has described Lum Invader of *Urusei Yatsura* as being both the source of *moe* and the first *tsundere*,^[6] figurine sculptor Bome has also cited Lum as an inspiration for his designs.^[7] Manga critic Jason Thompson named Madoka Ayukawa of the 1980s series *Kimagure Orange Road* as the root of the tsundere archetype.^[8] Other anime and manga featuring *tsundere* include *Love Hina*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*,^[9] and *Bakemonogatari*,^[10] among many others. Some voice actors have garnered a reputation

for voicing *tsundere* characters such as Rie Kugimiya who voices Louise in *The Familiar of Zero* and Nagi in *Hayate the Combat Butler*.^{[11][12]} In *Excel Saga* volume 15, author Rikdo Koshi defines *tsundere* as "hard on the outside, soft on the inside" and associates it with character Misaki Matsuya.^[2]

Tsundere as a concept is not strictly limited to women, and is not strictly limited to manga or anime. The character Germany from the series *Hetalia: Axis Powers* is portrayed as being *tsundere*, and is paired with a "lovable loser", Italy Veneziano.^[3] *Tsundere* role-play has become a common theme in maid cafés.^[3]

See also

- Queen bee (sociology)
- Shrew (stock character)
- Ambivalence
- Glossary of anime and manga

Notes

1. "In Tokyo's Akihabara district there is reportedly a *tsundere* cafe, and the word *tsunderera*, better rendered in English as *Tsunderella* due to being highly evocative of Cinderella, was nominated for a prize in the 2006 fashionable word awards, indicating that 'tsundere' culture may become more prominent in the future." February 2, 2007, "Toymaker introduces portable TV with harsh audio guidance that gradually gets kinder" in the *Mainichi Times*.
2. "Toy manufacturer Tomy Co. has come up with the world's first *tsundere* portable television set, which gives audio guidance with a harsh voice that gradually becomes kinder as the user gets used to the set... *Tsundere* is a word for a type of feminine personality that is initially uptight and cold, and then kind and loving. It is well known among Japan's otaku community, and ranks in popularity with the word *moe*, which signifies an enthusiasm or fetish for something, especially in connection with anime." February 2, 2007, *Mainichi*

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2. Koshi, Rikdo (December 2006). *Excel Saga, Volume 15*. Viz Media. p. 2, translator's notes (Carl Gustav Horn). ISBN 978-1421508467. "This is an attempt to translate the concept of *tsundere* (this illustration and the "tsundere?" slogan appeared on the back of the slipcover on the original Japanese Vol. 15...); a character description sometimes used in dating-sim games. Note that it has been demonstrated previously in *Excel Saga* that Matsuya has to be virtually be on the brink of death in order to display softness."
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5. "【ファンキー通信】タメ口、暴言の接客もなんのその！ ツンデレカフェ登場！？” (<http://news.livedoor.com/article/detail/1792314/>) (in Japanese). March 22, 2006. Retrieved November 4, 2016.

6. Galbraith, Patrick W. (2009). *The Otaku Encyclopedia: An Insider's Guide to the Subculture of Cool Japan*. Kodansha International. p. 44. ISBN 978-4-7700-3101-3. "Lum-chan is the source of moe, the queen. She's the first tsundere character."
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8. Thompson, Jason (September 11, 2014). "House of 1000 Manga – Kimagure Orange Road" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140912070537/http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/house-of-1000-manga/2014-09-11/kimagure-orange-road/.78669>). *Anime News Network*. Archived from the original (<http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/house-of-1000-manga/2014-09-11/kimagure-orange-road/.78669>) on 2014-09-12. Retrieved September 15, 2015. "For historical value, yes: this is the root from which all modern shonen rom-coms grew. (Including the tsundere archetype, which Madoka basically embodies.)"
9. Eisenbeis, Richard (2013-08-20). "How to Identify Popular Japanese Character Types" (<https://kotaku.com/how-to-identify-popular-japanese-character-types-1169085239>). *Kotaku.com*. Retrieved 2013-10-20.
10. Isin, Nisio (November 1, 2006). "Hitagi Crab". *Bakemonogatari* (in Japanese). 1. Kodansha. ISBN 978-4-06-283602-9. "They call my character 'tsundere', don't they?"
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Further reading

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