Japanese particles

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Japanese particles, *joshi* (助詞) or *teniwoha* (てにをは), are suffixes or short words in Japanese grammar that immediately follow the modified noun, verb, adjective, or sentence. Their grammatical range can indicate various meanings and functions, such as speaker affect and assertiveness.

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Orthography and diction

Japanese particles are written in hiragana in modern Japanese, though some of them also have kanji forms (弖 or 天 for *te* て; 爾 for *ni* に; 乎 or 遠 for *o* を; and 波 for *wa* は). Particles follow the same rules of phonetic transcription as all Japanese words, with the exception of は (written *ha*, pronounced *wa*), へ (written *he*, pronounced *e*) and を (written using a hiragana character with no other use in modern Japanese, originally assigned as *wo*, now usually pronounced *o*, though some speakers render it as *wo*). These exceptions are a relic of historical kana usage.

Types of particles

There are eight types of particles, depending on what function they serve.

- Case markers (格助詞 *kaku-joshi*)

が、の、を、に、へ、と、で、から、より

- Parallel markers (並立助詞 *heiritsu-joshi*)

か、の、や、に、と、やら、なり、だの

- Sentence ending particles (終助詞 *shū-joshi*)

か、の、や、な、わ、とも、かしら

- Interjectory particles (間投助詞 *kantō-joshi*)

さ、よ、ね

- Adverbial particles (副助詞 *fuku-joshi*)

ばかり、まで、だけ、ほど、くらい、など、なり、やら

- Binding particles (係助詞 *kakari-joshi*)

は、も、こそ、でも、しか、さえ、だに

- Conjunctive particles (接続助詞 *setsuzoku-joshi*)

や、が、て、のに、ので、から、ところが、けれども

- Phrasal particles (準体助詞 *juntai-joshi*)

の、から

Note that some particles appear in two types. For example, "kara" is a *case marker* where it describes where something is from or what happens after something; when it describes a cause it is a *conjunctive particle*.

List of particles

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Meaning and usage

Preceding syntactic element	Example sentence	Translation
bakari ばかり (許り)	Translates to: "just, only, full of" Colloquially: ばっかり *bakkari*, ばっか *bakka*	
Noun	*Tōkyō wa **hito bakari** da.* 東京は**人ばかり**だ。	Tokyo is **just full of people**.
Verbs (*ta* form)	***Tabeta bakari** da.* **食べたばかり**だ。	I **just ate**.
Verb (*te* form)	*Kare wa **tabete bakari** iru* 彼は**食べてばかり**いる。	He's **always eating**.
bakari ka ばかりか (許りか)	Translates to: "not only". Accompanied by さえ *sae* ("but also") indicates something unusual or unexpected. Etymology: *bakari* + *ka*	
Nouns	***Sofu bakari ka**, sōsofu sae ikite iru.* **祖父ばかりか**、曾祖父さえ生きている。	**Not only** is my **grandfather** living, but so is my great-grandfather.
bakashi ばかし (許し)	*bakashi* is another form of *bakari*.	
dake だけ (丈)	Translates to: "only"; limit. *Dake* functions as a noun. Kanji form 丈 is less commonly used.	
Nouns	***rōmaji dake** no jisho*	a **rōmaji-only** dictionary

	ローマ字だけの辞書	
Verbs (volitional)	***Netai dake*** *nereba ii.* **寝たいだけ**寝ればいい。	You can sleep **as much as you want [to sleep]**.
da no だの	Translates to: "and, things like". Etymology: *da* (copula) + *no*. This particle is used far less frequently than *to ka*. Often has negative connotations.	
Nouns, adjectives, verbs	***Nattō da no***, ***shīfūdo da no***, ***wasabi da no***—*nihonshoku ga nigate da.* **納豆だの、シーフードだの、わさびだの**—日本食が苦手だ。	**Natto**, **seafood**, **wasabi**—Japanese food isn't my thing.
darake だらけ	Translates to: "covered with". Often has negative connotations.	
Nouns	*Watashi no fuku wa* ***doro darake!*** 私の服は**泥だらけ**！	My clothes are **covered with mud**.
de で	Etymology: Originally an alteration of *ni te*, later treated as a conjugation of the copula *da*. de can be used as "at" or "by means of". When serving as the continuative TE form of a subordinate clause, de substitutes for da/desu, carries the meaning "is, and so...", and takes on the tense of the final verb of the sentence.	
Nouns: instrument	***Jitensha de*** *ikimashō.* **自転車で**行きましょう。	Let's go **by bicycle**.
Nouns: location	***Koko de*** *yasumitai.* **ここで**休みたい。	I want to rest **here**.
Nouns: language	***Nihongo de*** *tegami wo kaita.* **日本語で**手紙を書いた。	I wrote the letter **in** Japanese.
TE form of copula: "is, and so..."	*kimi ga* ***suki de*** *yokatta* 君 が **好き で** よかった。	Pal, you **are** loved (**and so**) I am glad. / I am glad **that** I **love** you, pal.
de mo でも	Translates to: "even; or; but, however; also in" Etymology: *de* + *mo*	
Nouns, particles: "even"	***Uchū kara de mo*** *Banri-no-Chōjō ga mieru.* **宇宙からでも**万里の長城が見える。	**Even from space** you can see the Great Wall of China.
Noun: "or something"	***Ocha de mo***, *ikaga?*	Would you like **tea or something**?

	お茶**でも**、いかが？	
Noun: "also in"	***Nihon de mo*** *eigo o benkyō suru* 日本**でも**英語を勉強する。	**In Japan also**, we study English.
Beginning of phrase: "but, however, even so"	***De mo****, watashi wa sō omowanai* **でも**、私はそう思わない。	**But** I don't think so.
dokoro ka どころか (所か)	Translates to: "anything but, far from" Etymology: *dokoro* (*tokoro*: place) + *ka*	
Nouns	*Kare wa* ***keisatsukan dokoro ka****, hanzaisha da.* 彼は**警察官どころか**、犯罪者だ。	He's **anything but a policeman**; he's a criminal.
e へ	Translates to: "to, in"; direction *E* is written with へ rather than え, reflecting old kana usage.	
Nouns: direction	***Nihon e*** *yōkoso!* 日本**へ**ようこそ！	Welcome **to Japan**!
ga が	Functions as: identifier (identifies something unspecified), conjunction ("but") *Ga* (が or ヶ): Historical possessive used to connect nouns, most often seen in place names as ヶ	
Nouns: identifier (answers a silent or asked question)	***Neko ga*** *esa o tabeta.* 猫**が**餌を食べた。	**The cat** ate the catfood. *[Answers: "What ate the catfood?"]*
	Inu ga *suki.* 犬**が**好き。	I like **dogs**. *[Answers: What do you like?]*
Noun: noun connector	***wa ga*** *kuni* 我**が**国	**my/our [collective]** country
	Fujimi ga *Oka* 富士見**が**丘	**Fuji View** Hill
	Seki ga *hara* 関**が**原	**Gateway** Plains (site of the Battle of Sekigahara)
Phrases: conjunction	*Inu wa suki da* ***ga****, neko wa kirai da.* 犬は好きだ**が**、猫は嫌いだ。	I like dogs **but** I hate cats.

hodo ほど (程)	Translates to: "as much as"; upper limit	
Nouns	***Kare hodo*** *nihongo ga umakunai.* 彼ほど日本語がうまくない。	My Japanese isn't **as good as his.**
Adjectives*	***Hayai hodo*** *ii.* 早いほどいい。	**The sooner**, the better.
Verb	*Aitsu o* ***koroshitai hodo*** *kirai da* あいつを殺したいほど嫌いだ。	I hate him **enough (to want) to kill him.**
ka か	Functions as: question denominator, alternative item conjunction, quotation expressing doubt; "whether", especially when used with *dō ka* ("or not").	
Nouns, verbs: listing alternatives	***Kore ka, sore ka,*** *dotchika erande yo.* これか、それか、どっちか選んでよ。	**This or that**, choose one of them.
Noun, verbs: "whether (or not)"	***Iku ka [dō ka]*** *wakaranai.* 行くか（どうか）分からない。	I don't know **[whether or not / if] he'll go**.
Phrases: question	*Wakaru* ***ka****?* 分かるか？	Do you understand**? (informal)**
Phrase: quotation expressing doubt	***Iku ka*** *to omoimasu ga...* 行くかと思いますが。。。	I think **he'll go (but I'm not sure)...**
kai かい	*kai* is a gentler and masculine variant of the question marker *ka*.	
ka na かな	Translates to: "I wonder" (Note: "Ka na" implies having mostly made up one's mind. Drawing out the "na" [ka naa] implies less certainty.) Etymology: *ka* + *na*	
Phrases	*Kare wa ayashii hito* ***ka na****.* 彼は怪しい人かな。	**I wonder** if he's a suspicious person.
kara から	Translates to: "from, after, because" *Kara* may be followed by *no* to link two nouns.	
Nouns: "from,	***Tōkyō kara*** *kaetta.* 東京から帰った。	He returned **from Tokyo**.

out of"	***zutto mae kara*** *no hanashi* **ずっと前から**の話	a conversation **from way back**
Verb (te form): "after"	***Owatte kara****, kite kudasai.* **終わってから**、来てください。	Please come by **after finishing (after you've finished)**.
Adjectives, Verbs: "because"	*Niku o* ***tabenai kara****, raamen wa dame da* 肉を**食べないから**、ラーメンはだめだ。	**Because he doesn't eat** meat, ramen is bad (a bad idea).
ka shira かしら	*Ka shira* is like *ka na*, but is used more by women. See also Gender differences in spoken Japanese. Etymology: *ka* + *shira*, the irrealis form (i.e. negative form minus the *-nai*) of *shiru* "to know"	
Phrases	*Kare wa ayashii hito* ***ka shira****.* 彼は怪しい人**かしら**。	**I wonder** if he's a suspicious person.
kedo けど	Translates to: "although, but" Etymology: *kedo* is a shortened version of formal *keredomo*. It also appears semi-abbreviated and semi-formally as *keredo* or *kedomo*.	
Adjectives, verbs	*Kanojo wa* ***hen da kedo*** *kirei da.* 彼女は**変だけど**きれいだ。	She is **strange but** pretty
kiri きり (切り)	Translates to: "just, only" *Kiri* is more rarely used than *dake*, functions as a noun and may be followed by *no*.	
Nouns	***futari kiri*** *no o-mise* **二人きり**のお店	a shop with **just two people** [who work there]
koro/goro ごろ (頃)	Translates to: "around, about, approximately" *Koro* functions as a noun and may be followed by *no*.	
Nouns	***San-ji goro*** *ni aimashō.* **三時ごろ**に会いましょう。	Let's meet **around 3 o'clock**.
koso こそ	Functions as: Emphasis marker. There is no direct translation, but roughly analogous to "precisely" or "exactly", as in examples below.	
	Kyō koso*, yaru zo!* **今日こそ**、やるぞ！	**Today**, I'm going to do it!
	Kimi ga suki da kara koso *kore*	

Phrases	*dake ganbatte iru n da yo*. **君が好きだからこそ**これだけがんばっているんだよ。	**It's precisely because I like you** that I'm working this hard.
	***Kochira koso**, yoroshiku onegai shimasu*. **こちらこそ**、よろしくお願いします。	Nice to meet you, **too**. (Emphasizes **this side** or **me too**)
kurai/gurai **くらい・ぐらい (位)**	Translates to: "about, approximately" *Kurai* functions as a noun and may be followed by *no*.	
Nouns	***Juppun kurai** kakaru* **十分くらい**かかる。	It takes **about 10 minutes**.
made **まで (迄)**	Translates to: "up to, until, as far as" Indicates a time or place as a limit.	
Nouns (specifically places or times)	*Kono densha wa, **Shimonoseki made** ikimasu*. この電車は、**下関まで**行きます。	This train goes **as far as Shimonoseki**.
Verb	***Kaeru made** matte iru*. **帰るまで**待っている。	I'll wait **until you come home**.
made ni **までに (迄に)**	Translates to: "by (a certain time)" Etymology: *made* + *ni*	
Nouns, verbs	***Ku-ji made ni** kaeru*. **九時までに**帰る。	I'll come back **by nine o'clock**.
me **め (目)**	*me* (目 only): ordinal particle *me* (め only): "Damn..."; abusive/pejorative	
Classifier nouns: ordinal	*Amerika wa **nikai me** desu*. アメリカは**二回目**です。	This is my **second time** to America.
Noun: abusive "damn..."	***Orokamono me!*** **愚か者め！**	[You] **damn** fool!
mo **も**	Translates to: "also" *Mo* always replaces *wa* and *ga*, but may follow other particles.	
Nouns, phrases	***Watashi ni mo** kureta*. **私にも**くれた。	She gave some **to me, too**.

mono/mon **もの・もん**	Verb + mono (物) : creates a noun from the verb (only applies to certain verbs) もの/もん at the end of a sentence: casual feminine sentence ender like の; もん is very feminine and a bit cheeky.	
With verbs	*Nomi**mono*** *飲み**物***	**Drink**
	*Tabe**mono*** *食べ**物***	**Food**
	*Iki**mono*** *生き**物***	**Living thing**
At the end of a sentence	"Doushite konakatta no?" "Jugyō ga attanda mono." 「どうしてこなかったの？」 「授業があったんだ**もの**。」	"Why didn't you come?" "I had class."
	"Doushite konakatta no?" "Jugyō ga attanda mon." 「どうしてこなかったの？」 「授業があったんだ**もん**。」	"Why didn't you come?" "I had class, ***hah***."
mono de **もので**	Similar meaning as ので.	
mono ka/mon-ka **ものか/もんか**	Put at the end of sentences, use in strongly decline. (More gently : もの/もんですか)	
At the end of sentences	Makeru-**monka**! 負ける**もんか**!	I will not surrender!
	Dare ga anna tokoro-ni nido to iku-**mondesuka**! 誰があんなところに二度と行く**もんですか**!	Who dares to go to the place like that at the second time!
mono nara **ものなら (物なら)**	if (I/we/etc.) could	
mono o **ものを**	Used in phrases to show deplore feelings about not doing something they should do.	
Phrases	"Sukida" to hito koto itte kure-sae shi-tara kekkon deki-ta **mono o**... "好きだ"と一言言ってくれさ	If you had said "I like you", we would have gotten married...

	えしたら、結婚できた**もの** **を**...	
na and naa **な(and なる)・なあ・なぁ**	*Na* (な only): used with a class of adjectives which behave grammatically like nouns (see na-adjectives). A more archaic form of this *na* is *naru* (なる), which is used in the same way. If *na* follows a dictionary form verb, it is a negative command ("Don't... "). However, if used with a verb stem, it implies the opposite: "Do...". It is also used to modify general nouns before other particles which cannot directly follow nouns (e.g. *no de*). Etymology: The *na* used with nouns (including na-adjectives) is a form of the copula. *Na* or *naa* at the end of a sentence is a variant of *ne*, implying more reflection.	
Verb	Suru-**na** する**な**	**Don't** do (something).
	Tabe-**na** 食べ**な**	**Do** eat / **Please** eat.
Na-adjectives	***hen na*** *hito* **変な**人	a **strange** person
Phrases	*Hen da* ***na****!* 変だ**な**！	**How** strange!
nado **など (等)**	Translates to: "for example, things like, such as, etc., and so on" Functions as a noun and may be followed by *no*.	
Nouns	*Nattō ya* ***kabuki nado*** *wa Nihon dake ni aru.* 納豆や**歌舞伎など**は日本だけにある。	**Things like** natto and kabuki are only in Japan.
nanka/nante **なんか・なんて (何か・何て)**	Functions to: emphasize disgust, contempt, or otherwise negative feelings of the speaker. *Nante* is slightly more formal than *nanka*.	
Nouns	***Jogen nanka*** *iranai.* **助言なんか**いらない。	I don't need any **(damn) advice**.
Verb[1]	***Oyogu nante*** *dekinai.* **泳ぐなんて**できない。	I can't **swim**.
Adjectives[2]	***Ōkiku nanka*** *nai kedo, kirei da.* **大きくなんか**ないけど、きれいだ。	It's not **big [or anything]**, but it's clean**.**
nara **なら**	Translates to: "if"; conditional Hypothetical (仮定形) or conditional form of the copula *da*. Related to the more formal *naraba*.	

Nouns, adjectives, verbs, phrases	***Atsui nara**, eakon o tsukete* 暑いなら、エアコンを付けて。	**If you're hot**, turn on the air conditioner.
ne ね	Translates to: "eh"; interjection, tag question Similar to English "hey", "eh?", French "non?" and Spanish "no?" Asks or shows agreement and reflection at phrase-end, also used before sentences to catch listener's attention (informal).	
Phrases	***Kimi wa kashikoi yo ne.*** 君は賢いよね。	**You're pretty smart, aren't you.**
	Kakkō ii desu ne. 格好いいですね。	**That's pretty neat, eh?**
	***Ne**, ima nanji?* ね、いま何時？	**Hey**, what time is it?
ni に	Translates to: "to, in, at, by"; indirect object, direction; following a na-adjective, it creates an adverb	
Noun: location	***Gakkō ni** iru.* 学校にいる。	I'm **at/in school**.
Noun: direction	***Gakkō ni** iku.* 学校にいく。	I'm going **to school**.
Noun: indirect object	***Ore ni** kaese.* 俺に返せ。	Give it back **to me**.
Noun: passive agent	***Ka ni** sasareta.* 蚊にされた。	I was bitten **by a mosquito**.
Noun, verbs (stem only): purpose, intent	*Eiga o **mi ni** iku.* 映画を見に行く。	I'm going **to see** a movie.
Adjective: forms adverb	*teinei, **teinei ni*** 丁寧、 丁寧に	polite, **politely**
ni te にて	Formal version of *de*, functions in exactly the same way. Etymology: Case particle *ni* + conjunctive particle *te* (c.f. *te* form of Japanese verbs)	
ni wa には	Translates to: "for; in, to; in order to"; Etymology: *ni* + *wa* (always written は) The *wa* part is the topic particle. Serves as emphasis for a negative ending.	
	*Shichimi wa, **watashi ni wa***	

Nouns: "for"	*kara-sugiru*. 七味は、**私には**辛すぎる。	Shichimi is too spicy **for me**. (i.e., "*you* might like it, but *I'm* not touching it.")
Noun: "in, to"	***Kyōto ni wa*** *hana ga aru*. **京都には**花がある。	There are flowers **in Kyōto**. (Lit.: **As for in Kyōto**, there are flowers.)
Verb: "in order to"	*Mizu o* ***mitsukeru ni wa*** みずを**みつけるには**	**In order to find** water
no **の**	Functions as: possession indicator, noun link, topic marker (subordinate clauses), nominalization When nominalizing whole phrases, the *no* may function either as emphasis or as a question, depending on tone of voice. Similar to English, a falling tone denotes a statement, and a rising tone a question. Its use to mark statements tends to be more typical of feminine speech. See also Gender differences in spoken Japanese.	
Nouns: possession ex. a	***sensei no*** *kuruma* 先生**の**車	**the teacher's** car
Noun: possession ex. b	***watashi no*** *konpyuuta* 私**の**コンピューター	**My** computer
Noun: possession ex. c	***anata no*** *shukudai* あなた**の**宿題	**your** homework
Noun: linking	***kuruma no*** *Toyota* 車**の**トヨタ	Toyota the car [company]
Noun: subject marker in subordinate clauses (see also: *ga*)	***Kare no*** *tsukutta kēki wa oishikatta*. 彼**の**作ったケーキはおいしかった。	The cake that **he** made was tasty.
i-adjectives: nominalization	***Yasui no*** *wa, kore*. 安い**の**は、これ。	This is **the cheap[er] one**.
Verb: nominalization	***Taberu no*** *ga daisuki*. 食べる**の**が大好き。	I love **eating**.
Phrases: nominalization	*Mō,* ***tabeta no****?* もう、食べた**の**？	Have you eaten yet**?**
	Kuruma ***na no****?* 車な**の**？	Is it a car**?**
	Kare ni mō ageta no *yo!* 彼にもうあげた**の**よ！	**I already gave it to him!**

no de **ので**	Translates to: "because" Etymology: *no* + *de* Colloquially, *no de* is often shortened to *n de*.	
Phrases[3]	*Tesuto ga* ***aru no de****, ikenai.* テストが**あるので**、行けない。	**Because I have** a test, I can't go.
	Gakkō na no de*, kin'en da.* **学校なので**、禁煙だ。	**Because this is a school** it's no smoking.
nomi **のみ**	Translates to: "only, just" *Nomi* is more formal and far less common than *dake*. Unlike *dake*, its only meaning is that of small quantity or singleness of frequency.	
Nouns	*Tō-ten de wa,* ***Nihon en nomi*** *go-riyō itadakemasu.* 当店では、**日本円のみ**ご利用頂けます。	This store accepts **Japanese Yen only**.
no ni **のに**	Translates to: "despite, although, even though; would have; in order to" Etymology: *no* + *ni* Nouns and na-adjectives must be followed by *na* before using this particle. *No ni* has a stronger meaning than *kedo* when used to mean "although", and conveys regret when used to mean "would have".	
Adjectives, verbs: "although"	***Benkyō shiteiru no ni****, eigo ga hanasenai.* **勉強しているのに**、英語が話せない。	**Although I am studying**, I can't speak English.
Adjectives (conditional), verbs (conditional): "would have"	*Kaette kitara,* ***yokatta no ni****.* 帰ってきたら、**よかったのに**。	It **would have been nice** if you had come home.
Verb (plain form): "in order to"	***Hikkosu no ni*** *torakku ga hitsuyō da.* **引っ越すのに**トラックが必要だ。	**(In order) to move**, you need a truck.
o **を**	Functions as: direct object Translates to: "through, from, past (motion verbs only)" This is unrelated to the honorific prefix *o*, written お or 御.	
Nouns: direct object	*Neko ga* ***esa o*** *tabeta.* 猫が**餌を**食べた。	The cat ate **the food**.
Noun: through, etc. (motion)	***Sora o*** *tobu* **空を**飛ぶ	fly **through the sky**

sa/saa さ・さあ・さぁ	Functions as: Masculine sentence/phrase final particle, indicating explanation of obvious facts. It is softer than *yo*. *Saa*: Feminine sentence/phrase final particle, used like *ne*, but often more frequently as extremely colloquial filler.	
Phrases: masculine *sa*	*Kanojo ga inai kara, dansu niwa ikanai **sa**.* 彼女がいないから、ダンスには行かない**さ**。	I don't have a girlfriend, so I'm not going to the dance.
Phrases: *saa*	*Kinō **saa**, gakkō de **saa**, sensei ni **saa**, chūi sarete **saa**, chō mukatsuita.* 昨日**さあ**、学校で**さあ**、先生に**さあ**、注意されて**さあ**、超むかついた。	**Like**, yesterday, in, **like**, school, I, **like**, got fussed at by, **like**, some teacher, and it totally made me sick.
sae さえ	*Sae*: "even" Note the meaning overlaps with *mo*. *Sae* implies (usually) positive emphasis that the evident extent of something is greater than initially expected. Can be followed by *mo* for additional emphasis. Contrast this with *sura*.	
Nouns	***Kanji sae** kakeru.* 漢字**さえ**書ける。	He can **even** write **kanji**.
de sae でさえ	Translates to: "even" Etymology: *de* + *sae* *De sae* replaces *wa* and *ga*, like *de mo* above.	
Nouns	*Sonna koto wa **saru de sae** dekiru.* そんなことは**猿でさえ**できる。	**Even a monkey** can do that.
sae...ba/ra さえ…ば・ら	Function: *sae* followed by a verb in the conditional means "if only".	
Nouns	**Kore sae nomeba**, futsukayoi ga naoru yo. *これさえ飲めば、二日酔いが直るよ。*	If you **would just drink this**, your hangover would get better.
shi し	Translates to: "and what's more" (conjunction)	
Adjectives,	***Kirei da shi**, **hiroi shi**, ii ne, kono apaato!*	It's clean, it's spacious; this apartment is nice, isn't it!

verbs	きれいだし、広いし、いいね、このアパート。	
shika しか	Translates to: "only, just" *Shika* must be followed by a negative verb. *Shika* may be compounded as *dakeshika*, *kirishika*, and *nomishika* (plus the negative verb) to stress an extremely limited quantity or frequency.	
Nouns	***Ichi en dama shika*** *nai*. 一円玉しかない。	I have **just a one-yen coin**.
Verb	*Yūbin-kyoku ni* ***iku shika*** *nai*. 郵便局に行くしかない。	The **only thing** [to do] is to go to the post office.
sura すら	Translates to: "even" Note the meaning overlaps with *mo*. *Sura* implies (usually) negative emphasis that the evident extent of something is less than initially expected. Contrast this with *sae*.	
Nouns	***Kanji sura*** *kakenai*. 漢字すら書けない。	He can't **even** write **kanji**.
to と	Translates to: "and" (conjunction); "with" or "as with" (preposition); "if"; quotation.	
Nouns: conjunction	***sore to*** *kore* それとこれ	**that and** this
Nouns: conjunction	***sore to*** *kore to* それ と これ と	**that or** this
Verbs: transition/state change	*taiyōkei dasshutsu* ***e to*** *chikazuite itta* 太陽系 脱出 へ と 近づいて 行った。	They were getting close **to the point of** leaving the Solar System.
Noun: preposition	***Boku to*** *ikitai?* 僕と行きたい？	Do you want to go **with me**?
Verb, adjectives: "if"	***Benkyō suru to*** *wakaru*. 勉強すると分かる。	**If you study**, you'll understand.
Any phrase: quotation	***Umi made! to*** *sakenda*. 「海まで！」と叫んだ。	"To the sea!" he cried.
to ka とか	Functions as: A listing particle used like *nado*. Often used with the question word *nani* (what) in the form *nantoka* ("something or other"). Etymology: *to* + *ka*	
	Kani to ka, hotate to ka, *zenbu tabeta yo*.	

Nouns	**蟹とか、帆立とか、**全部食べたよ。	We had **crab, scallops, [other stuff,]** we ate them all.
to mo **とも (共)**	*Tomo* (共): "both, all of the" *To mo* (no kanji): "even if, even though; at the ...-est; whether; [emphasis]" If following a noun and used with a negative verb, meaning changes to "none". Etymology: *to* + *mo*	
Counted nouns	*Watashi wa, aitsura ga **futari tomo** kirai da.* 私は、あいつらが、**二人とも**嫌いだ。	I hate the **both of** those guys.
	*Zannen nagara, sono kuruma wa **san dai tomo** irimasen.* 残念ながら、その車は**三台とも**要りません。	Unfortunately, we need **none of** those **three** cars.
Volitional verbs	*Dō **shiyō to mo** amari susumanai.* どう**しようとも**あまり進まない。	**No matter** how **we try [to do something]**, we don't make much progress.
Adverbial (continuative) form of i-adjectives	***Sukunaku to mo** go-jū mairu aruite kita.* **少なくとも**五十マイル歩いてきた。	We walked **at least** fifty miles [to get here].
	***Osoku to mo** itte miyō yo.* **遅くとも**いってみようよ。	**Even if it's late**, let's go and check it out.
Verb (paired with same verb in negative)	***Kau to mo kawanai to mo** hakkiri shite imasen.* **買うとも買わないとも**はっきりしていません。	It isn't clear **whether they're going to buy or not.**
Verb, adjectives This use is similar to the English expression, "as if [something] wouldn't [phrase]."	***Waratte ii to mo.*** **笑っていいとも。**[4]	**It's okay to laugh.**
	Ikimasen to mo. **行きませんとも。**	**As if I would go.**

tte って	Written as って in hiragana, this is another form of *to*. It is a shortened version of *itte* (言って), the present progressive form of the verb *iu* (言う), "to say"; it functions as a type of verbal quotation mark. It is sometimes used for a direct quote, sometimes for an indirect quote, and sometimes simply to emphasize a word or concept. *tte* is casual, and (because it can be a direct quote) the politeness level of the quoted material does not necessarily reflect on the speaker. If you wish to be assuredly formal, use *to iimasu* instead of *tte*.	
Any phrase	*Sugu kimasu tte* すぐ来ますって。	Could be, "He said he'll come soon" (more politely) or, "He said, 'I'll come soon.'" (less so).
	Arabiago tte, muzukashikunai? アラビア語って難しくない？	"Arabic, huh, isn't that difficult?" (emphasizing a word or concept thoughtfully)
tteba ってば	Functions as:'strong emphasis marker, especially when the speaker has grown impatient. Etymology: *te* + *ba*	
Any phrase: quotation	***kōhī datteba !*** **コーヒーだってば！**	*I said "coffee"!*
wa は	は*wa* is a topic marker. It is written with the hiragana は *ha*, rather than the hiragana わ, *wa*. Not to be confused with the particle が.	
wa わ	わ *wa* is used at the end of the sentence to establish an emotional connection. It is used by both gender when it is pronounced with a falling intonation especially in dialects of Kansai, Nagoya and elsewhere, but with a rising intonation, it is generally used by females. This also conveys a certain deference to the speaker's wishes and emotions.	
ya や	*Ya* is used to make incomplete lists of things (usually nouns). To make an exhaustive list, the particle *to* is used instead.	
	Watashi no suki na tabemono wa okashi ya pan ya mikan nado desu 私の好きな食べ物はお菓子やパンやミカンなどです。	"I like snacks, bread and tangerines."
yara やら	Denotes either uncertainty or listing.	
yo	*Yo* comes at the end of the sentence, and is used to make assertions. Compare *zo* and *ze* below.	

よ	*Yo* is also sometimes used after nouns, and functions as a vocative marker. This is especially used in older speech, poetry, and songs.	
	Kaeru yo! 帰るよ！	"I'm going home!"
	Saraba, tomo yo さらば友よ。	"Farewell, oh friend!"
yori より	*Yori* can mean "from", and is also used to make comparisons. *Yori* is usually written より in hiragana.	
	Kono densha-wa, Kashiwa-yori saki wa kaku eki-ni tomarimasu この電車は柏より先は各駅に止まります。	"This train will stop at every station after Kashiwa".
	Dare-yori-mo kanemochi-ni naritai 誰よりも金持ちになりたい。	"I want to become richer than anyone (else)".
ze ぜ	*ze* indicates assertion. Used mostly by men, it is never considered polite. Compare *yo* and *zo*.	
zo ぞ	*zo* indicates assertion. Used mainly by men, it is considered somewhat less forceful and more positive than *ze*. Compare *yo* and *ze* above.	
zutsu ずつ	*Zutsu* denotes an equal or gradual distribution of quantity like "at a time" in "one at a time", "by" in "one by one", or "each" in "one each". It usually follows counted nouns, and is written with hiragana as ずつ.	
Noun: counted	*Chokorēto-o ni-ko-zutsu tabemashita* チョコレートを二個ずつ食べました。	Either "I ate two pieces of chocolate on each (countable) times." or "Each one ate (=shared) two pieces of chocolate (from larger amount)."

Contrast

は *wa* and が *ga*

Main article: Japanese Grammar: Topic, theme, and subject: は wa and が ga

に *ni* and で *de*

Ni and *de* can both be used to show **location**, corresponding to the prepositions "in" or "at" in English. Their uses are mutually exclusive.

Ni, when used to show location, is used only with stative verbs such as *iru*, "to be, exist;" *aru*, "to be, exist, have;" and *sumu*, "to live, inhabit."

> 日本に住んでいる。 (*Nihon-ni sunde iru.* "*I live in Japan*.")
> *Gakkō-ni iru*. "I am in school."

De is used with action verbs to convey the place of action, as opposed to location of being.

> 学校で寝る。 (*Gakkō-de neru.* "*I sleep in/at school*.")
> **Gakkō-ni neru*. *"I sleep to school," is not usually used.

に *ni* and へ *e*

Ni and *e* can both indicate **direction of motion**, meaning "to" or "at" in English. In this sense, *e* is perhaps closer to English "towards" in terms of use (see example below). As long as *ni* is used directionally, it is possible to substitute *e* in its place. *Ni* used in other senses cannot be replaced by *e*:

> 学校に行く。 (*Gakkō ni iku.* "*I'm going to school*"), where 学校 *gakkō*, "school," is the destination of 行く *iku*, "go."
> *Gakkō e iku*. "I'm going to school," where *gakkō*, "school," is the destination of *iku*, "go."

> 学校にいる。 (*Gakkō ni iru.* "*I'm at school*"), where 学校 *gakkō*, "school," is the location of いる *iru*, "be;" not a destination.
> **Gakkō e iru*. *"I'm to school," is not a possible construction since "be" is not a verb of motion.

> 友達に会う。 (*Tomodachi ni au* "*I'll meet my friends*") where 友達 *tomodachi*, "friends," is the indirect object of 会う *au*, "meet;" not a destination.
> **Tomodachi e au* *"I'll meet to my friends," which is impossible because "meet" is not a verb of motion.

> 本を買いに行った。 (*Hon o kai ni itta* "*I went to buy a book*"), where 買いに *kai ni*, "to buy," shows purpose or intent, and is a verbal adverb; not destination.
> **Hon o kai e itta* *"I went towards buying a book," is not possible because *kai*, "buying," cannot be a destination.

Indicating direction, using *e* instead of *ni* is preferred when *ni* is used non-directionally in proximity:

> 友達に会いに京都へ行った。 (*Tomodachi ni ai ni Kyōto e itta.* "*I went to Kyoto to meet my friends*.")

が *ga* and を *o*

In some cases, *ga* and *o* are interchangeable. For example, with the *tai* form, meaning "want to", it is possible to say either of the following:

> ご飯が食べたい。 (*Gohan ga tabetai.* "*I want to eat rice*.")
> ご飯を食べたい。 (*Gohan wo tabetai.* "*I want to eat rice*.")

Similarly, 好き *suki*, a *na adjective* meaning "liked", can take either *ga* or *o*:

> 君が好きだ。 (*Kimi ga suki da* "*I like you*")
> 君を好きでよかった (*Kimi o suki de yokatta* "*I'm glad I like you*") (words from a popular song)

に *ni* and と *to*

Ni and *to* are sometimes interchangeable in forms like になる *ni naru* and となる *to naru*. The *ni naru* form suggests a natural change, whereas *to naru* suggests change to a final stage.

や *ya* and と *to*

Ya is used for incomplete lists, whereas *to* is used for complete ones.

Differences from English prepositions

Many Japanese particles fill the role of prepositions in English, but they are unlike prepositions in many ways. Japanese does not have equivalents of prepositions like "on", and often uses particles along with verbs and nouns to modify another word where English might use prepositions. For example, *ue* is a noun meaning "top/up"; and *ni tsuite* is a fixed verbal expression meaning "concerning", and when used as postpositions:

> *Tēburu-**no** **-ue-ni** aru.*
> Table-OF top/up-AT exists.
> "It's **on** the table."

> *Ano hito-wa, gitaa-**ni** **tsuite** nandemo wakaru.*
> That person-TOPIC guitar-TO concerning anything knows.
> "That person knows everything **about** guitars."

Post-positional idioms

Noun-derived

Preceding syntactic element	Example sentence	Translation
jō		

上	Translates to: "from the standpoint of"	
Nouns	**Rekishi jō** wa, tadashii to omoimasu. **歴史上**は、正しいと思います。	**From a historical point of view**, I think you're right.
chū 中	Translates to: "in progress, in the midst of, now doing"	
Nouns	Tadaima, **denwa chū** desu. ただいま**電話中**です。	He's **on the phone** right now.
jū 中	Translates to: "throughout, all across"; often followed by *de*	
Nouns: time	**Ichi nichi jū** shigoto shimasu. **一日中**仕事します。	I'll work **all day long**.
Nouns: place	**Amerika jū** de hayatte iru. **アメリカ中**で流行っている。	It's getting popular **all over America**.
kata/gata かた・がた (方)	Functions as: Plural marker for some pronouns, most polite among plural markers such as *ra* and *tachi*.	
Personal pronouns: plural marker	**Anata gata** no okage de, yoi seiseki o ageraremashita. **あなた方**のおかげで、よい成績を上げられました。	Thanks to **you (folks)**, we have achieved success.
Person nouns: plural marker	**Sensei gata** ni tasukete moraimashita. **先生方**に助けてもらいました。	**The teachers** helped me.
ra ら (等)	Functions as: Plural marker for some pronouns, least polite among plural markers such as *kata/gata* and *tachi*.	
Personal pronouns: plural marker	**Boku ra** wa ikanai. **僕ら**は行かない。	**We** won't go.
Place pronouns: approximate area	**Koko ra** hen ga itai. **ここら**辺が痛い。	It hurts **around here [hereabouts]**.
tachi たち (達)	Functions as: Plural/group marker for nouns and some pronouns referring to people; neutral politeness.	
Animate nouns: plural marker	**Sensei tachi** ga kita. **先生達**が来た。	The **teachers** came.
Pronouns: plural marker	**Watashi tachi** wa raishū kaeru. **私達**は来週帰る。	**We** will return next week.
Personal/family names:	Saiaku no ko wa, **Okada tachi** da.	The worst kids are **Okada and the**

group marker	最悪の子は、**岡田達**だ。	**others in that group**.

Verb-derived

Preceding syntactic element	Example sentence	Translation
zoi **沿い**	Translates to: "along"; followed by *ni*.	
Nouns	**Tōri zoi** ni aruku. 通り沿いに歩く。	Walk **along the street**.

See also

- Adposition
- Chinese particles
- Okinawan particles
- Korean particles
- Postpositions in Hindi/Urdu
- Japanese counter words
- Japanese grammar: particles
- Japanese verb conjugations and adjective declensions
- Sentence-final particle

Notes

1. ^ *Nanka*/*nante* is usually followed by a verb which conveys some kind of undervalue, lacking, or dislike, often in the negative.
2. ^ Can immediately follow i-adjectives, using the adjective's *ku* form if followed by the negative, or if the adjective is followed by *no*. Na-adjectives require the copula *da* or *no* before *nante* or *nanka*.
3. ^ Phrases ending in a noun or na-adjective require the *na* form of the copula before the nominalizing *no*.
4. ^ Title of a Japanese TV programme hosted by Tamori.

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