

NOUN

ONIGOKKO

O-NI-GO-K-KO

おに
鬼ごっこ
tag (game)



This is played just like tag. In Japanese games, the person designated "it" is called the "oni" (which means a devil or demon).

Ashi ga hayai ko wa onigokko de tsukamarinikui.
足が早い子は鬼ごっこで捕まりにくい。
Kids who run fast are hard to catch when playing tag.

INANIMATE

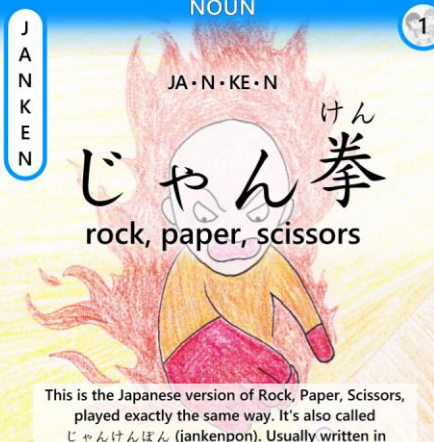
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NOUN

JANKEN

JA-N-KE-N

けん
じゃん拳
rock, paper, scissors



This is the Japanese version of Rock, Paper, Scissors, played exactly the same way. It's also called じゃんけんぽん (jankenpon). Usually written in hiragana only.

Saisho wa guu, janken pon! Aiko desho!
最初はグー、じゃんけんぽん! あいこでしょ!
Rock, paper scissors! I bet it's a tie!

INANIMATE


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ICHIDAN VERB

KATAZUKERU

KA-TA-ZU-KE-RU

かたづ
片付ける
tidy up/put away



This word is used when straightening things up or putting things away. Does anyone else think that 片 (kata) looks like a person carrying stuff? It totally does.

Dezaato ga tabetai ko wa saki ni omocho o katazuketete!
デザートが食べたい子は先におもちやを片づけて!
If you kids want dessert, clean up your toys first!

を TRANSITIVE PREDICATE 述

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GODAN VERB

YARU

YA-RU

や
遣る
do



This verb acts like SURU (another word for "do"), or AGERU (a word for "give") but is less polite. It is only used for speaking to or about people of lower social standing than yourself. It can also mean "do (an activity)" such as a game, with no social status implications. It cannot be used to create verbs from nouns the way SURU can.

Anata no tomo ni yare!
あなたの友にやれ!
Give (some) to your friend!

を TRANSITIVE PREDICATE 述

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GODAN VERB

MATSU

MA-TSU

ま
待つ
wait



If you think about when you were a kid, you were probably told to wait a lot. "Wait a second," "wait in the corner," "wait over there." You'll also hear ちょっと待って (chotto matte) a lot, so it's a great word to know.

Junban o matte!
順番を待って!
Wait your turn!

を TRANSITIVE PREDICATE 述

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GODAN VERB

TETSUDAU

TE-TSU-DA-U

てっだ
手伝う
help out



This is the most frequent word in Japanese for "help" when in a context of physically assisting with something.

Okatazuke o tetsudatte kure.
お片付けを手伝ってくれ。
Please help clean up.

を TRANSITIVE PREDICATE 述

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GODAN VERB 1

A · SO · BU
あそぶ
遊ぶ
play



Can also mean "to hang out with" or "have a good time together". Some frequently used constructions are 遊びに行く (asobi ni iku) and 遊びに来る (asobi ni kuru), which mean going/coming somewhere play. Mark any activity being played with the means marker DE.

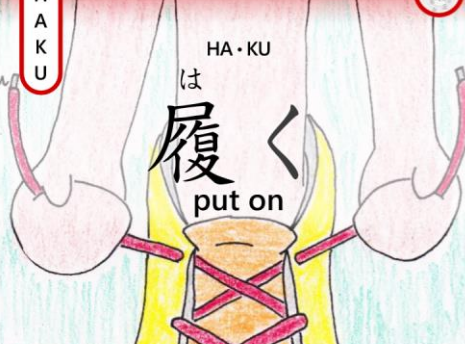
Kyou tomodachi ga uchi ni asobi ni kuru yotei nan da.
今日友達が家に遊びに来る予定なんだ。
My friend's going to come over today.

(を) INTRANSITIVE PREDICATE (述)

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GODAN VERB 1

H A K U
はく
履く
put on



This verb means to put on or wear, but only when talking about things you wear below the waist such as pants or shoes.


Kukku o hake.
クックを履け。
Put on your shoes.

(を) TRANSITIVE PREDICATE (述)

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GODAN VERB 1

H A U
はう
這う
crawl



This means crawling or creeping. When kids say this, you'll usually hear はいはい (haihai) followed by する (suru).

Akachan wa haihai dekiru you ni naru to, jinsei ga motto tanoshiku naru.
赤ちゃんははいはいできるようにになると、人生がもっと楽しくなる。
Babies enjoy life more when they start crawling.

(を) INTRANSITIVE PREDICATE (述)

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GODAN VERB 1

S U B E R U
すべ
滑る
slide



This verb means to slide, but it can also mean to slip (in the metaphorical sense), such as slipping up on your exams (failing them) or slipping in status.

Ano takai suberidai o suberu no ga sugoi kowai!
あの高い滑り台を滑るのがすごい怖い!
Going down that tall slide is so scary!

(を) INTRANSITIVE PREDICATE (述)

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IRREGULAR VERB 1

S U R U
する
do



する (suru) means "to do" but is usually combined with nouns to make a new verb. An example of this is the noun 抱っこ (dakko), which means carrying a baby or pet in your arms. This can become 抱っこする (dakko suru) becoming a verb.

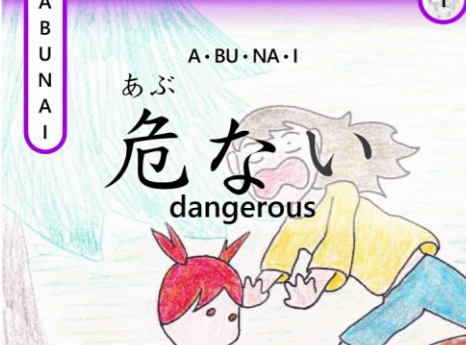
Okaasan, dakko shite!
お母さん、抱っこして!
Mommy, hold me!

(を) TRANSITIVE PREDICATE (述)

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ADJECTIVE 1

A B U N A I
あぶない
危ない
dangerous



Due to the curious nature of kids, they are bound to get in trouble a lot. If they start to do something considered unsafe, just tell them, "危ない!"

Sawaranai! Kuma ga abunai!
触らない!クマが危ない!
Don't touch (it)! Bears are dangerous!

PREDICATE (述)

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ADJECTIVE 1

CHI-T-CHA-I

ちっちゃい
small



This comes from 小さい (chiisai) the normal word for "small." In baby talk, some words with an "s" sound often are replaced with "ch."

Akachan no otete, chitchai ne!
赤ちゃんのおてて、ちっちゃいね!
Baby's hands are so small!


PREDICATE 述

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ADJECTIVE 1

BA-T-CHI-I

ばっちい
yucky



This is often used in simplified phrases with parents talking to their kids. Saying "No, don't play with that! It's dirty!" might be as simple as "Dame yo! Batchii batchii!" in Japanese.

Batchii yo! Sawaranai!
ばっちいよ! 触らない!
No touch! That's dirty!


PREDICATE 述

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ADJECTIVE 1

YO-I

よい
good



This adjective means good, like a good person, object, or outcome. If it isn't conjugated, you may pronounce it either "yoi" or "ii," but when it conjugates, it always does so from "yoi" (e.g. "yokatta").

Okaasan ga inai aida ii ko ni shitete ne!
お母さんがいない間いい子にしててね!
Be a good kid while Mommy's gone, okay?

PREDICATE 述

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ADJECTIVE 1

TA-NO-SHI-I

たの
楽しい
fun



This is used to describe things that are enjoyable or fun, such as playing on swings or having a snowball fight.

Buranko ni asobi ga tanoshii!
ブランコに遊びが楽しい!
It's fun to play on the swing!

PREDICATE 述

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ADJECTIVAL NOUN 1

MI-TA-I

みたい
-like



This card comes directly after a noun and turns the noun into an adjectival noun meaning "noun-like." For example, 犬みたい (inu mitai) would be dog-like.

Ninja mitai na otoko no ko ga kieta.
忍者みたいな男の子が消えた。
The ninja-like boy vanished.

PREDICATE 述

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ADJECTIVAL NOUN 1

ME-N-DO-U

めんど
面倒
care/attention



This means care or attention, and is often combined with the verb 見る (miru) to mean caring for someone or looking after someone. Whatever you are looking after is attached to 面倒 with the particle の, such as 子供の面倒 (kodomo no mendou), looking after the child.

Dare ga akachan no mendou o mite kureru no?
誰が赤ちゃんの面倒を見てくれるの?
Who's going to watch the baby for you?

PREDICATE 述

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COPULA

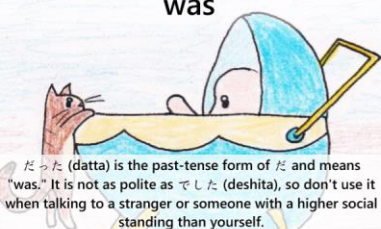
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D
A
T
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A

DA・T・TA

だった

was



だった (datta) is the past-tense form of だ and means "was." It is not as polite as でした (deshta), so don't use it when talking to a stranger or someone with a higher social standing than yourself.

Boku no bebiikaa datta.
僕のベビーカーだった。
(It) was my stroller.

述

PREDICATE

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COPULA


1

D
A

DA

だ

is/am



This is a copula. Use it to assign attributes, definitions, or identities to a noun just like is/am/are in English. だ isn't polite and is often used by children who have yet to learn the proper politeness levels.

Ben wa ehon ga suki da.
ベンは絵本が好きだ。
Ben likes picture books.

述

PREDICATE

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PARTICLE

1

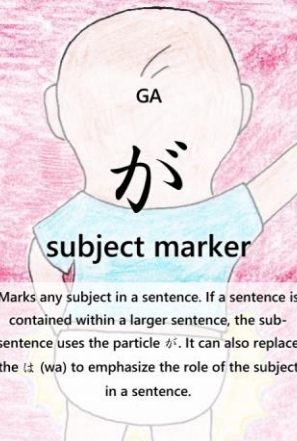
G
A

NOUN (subject)

GA

が

subject marker



Marks any subject in a sentence. If a sentence is contained within a larger sentence, the sub-sentence uses the particle が. It can also replace the は (wa) to emphasize the role of the subject in a sentence.

Akanbou wa atarashii omutsu ga irisu da.
赤ん坊は新しいおむつがいらそうだ。
It seems like the baby needs a new diaper.

述

PREDICATE

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PARTICLE

2

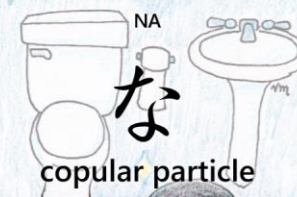
N
A

ADJECTIVAL NOUN (descriptor)

NA

な

copular particle



This particle turns most adjectival nouns into adjectives. (Some use the particle の instead; it'll say so on the card). Place the adjectival noun to the left of this card and the noun you want to modify on the right. That's all.

Suteki na toire o mite.
素敵なトイレを見て。
Look at this nice toilet.

述

PREDICATE

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PARTICLE

1

N
O

NOUN (owner)

NO

の

possessive marker



Marks the noun after it as belonging to the noun before it. It is the 's part of "Jack's toys" or the OF in "king of the playground."

Anata no kutsu desu ka?
あなたのくつですか？
Are (these) your shoes?

述

PREDICATE

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PARTICLE

1


D
E

NOUN (location)

DE

で

location marker



This particle marks the location of an event, which we express as "at" or "in" in English, such as "I led the meeting at work" or "I aced my test in math class."

Kouen de bobu ni atta no?
こうえんでボブに会ったの？
Did (you) meet with Bob at the park?


述

PREDICATE

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o PARTICLE 1

NOUN (direct object)



を
direct object marker


Marks a direct object in a sentence. A direct object is a thing that is having an action done to it, the "victim" of the verb. **を** can ONLY be used in sentences that have a transitive verb.

Kinou kankeri o yatta.
昨日缶蹴りをやった。
Yesterday (we) played Kick the Can.

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TO PARTICLE 1

QUOTE



と
quote marker

This particle marks the clause before it as a quotation. It is often followed by **する (suru)**, meaning "make the sound" marked by **と**. For example, **ブーブーとする (buubuu to suru)** means "make the sound of a car."

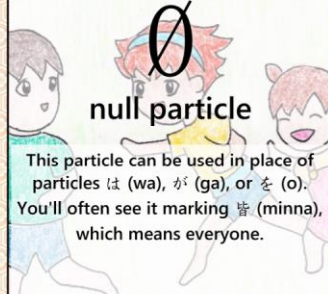
Kuruma wa buubuu to suru.
車は「ブーブー」とする。
Cars go "buu buu".

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- PARTICLE 1

NOUN (subject/direct object)

(none)



0
null particle

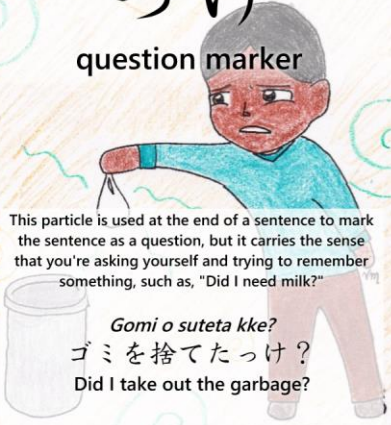
This particle can be used in place of particles **は (wa)**, **が (ga)**, or **を (o)**. You'll often see it marking **皆 (minna)**, which means everyone.

Minna kakekko ga atta.
皆かけっこがあった。
Everyone had a footrace.

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K K E END PARTICLE 2

K · KE



っけ
question marker


This particle is used at the end of a sentence to mark the sentence as a question, but it carries the sense that you're asking yourself and trying to remember something, such as, "Did I need milk?"

Gomi o suteta kke?
ゴミを捨てたっけ?
Did I take out the garbage?

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K O NOUN 1

KO



子
child

This generally means child or young thing. Important words to know that use it are **男の子 (otoko no ko)**, which is boy, and **女の子 (onna no ko)**, which is girl.

Otoko no ko wa geemu de asonde iru.
男の子はゲームで遊んでいる。
The boys are playing video games.

ANIMATE

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C H O U D A I NOUN 1

CHO · U · DA · I



頂戴
please

"Choudai" is a noun that means reception, but is most often used to ask for something. Placing it after a noun turns it into a special juvenile verb that means "please give me (the noun)."

Omise no hito ni "kore choudai" tte itte oide.
お店の人に「これ頂戴」って言っておいで。
Tell the cashier, "This please."

INANIMATE

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NOUN 1

N
E
N
N
E

NE · N · NE

ねんね
sleeping

This is a cute-sounding word that comes from 寝る (neru), the normal word for "lie down." When combined with する (suru), it becomes "to sleep."

Kinou no yoru takusan nenne shita kara sukikiri shita ne!
昨日の夜たくさんねんねしたからすっきりしたね!

You're all refreshed since you slept so much last night, huh?

INANIMATE

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NOUN 1

P
O
N
P
O
N

PO · N · PO · N

ポンポン
tummy

"Ponpon" is the sound made by patting a tummy. The juvenile use of this word is as a noun meaning "tummy." Place the quote marker TO after it to use it as an onomatopoeia.

Ponpon itai yo!
ポンポン痛いよ!
My tummy hurts!

INANIMATE

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NOUN 1

W
A
N
W
A
N

WA · N · WA · N

ワンワン
doggy

"Wanwan" is the sound of a dog barking. As a juvenile noun it means "doggy." Place the quote marker TO after it to use it as an onomatopoeia.

Ano hito wa wanwan to osanpo shiteru yo!
あの人はワンワンとお散歩してるよ!
There's a guy walking his doggy!

ANIMATE

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NOUN 1

O
I
D
E

O · I · DE

い
お出で
come here

This is a noun that means both "going" and "coming," but you may use it as a non-conjugatable command verb meaning "come here" in affectionate speech to children. Usually written in hiragana.

Junbi shite hoshii kara hayaku kaette oide.
準備してほしいから早く帰っておいで!
I need you to get ready, so come home early!

INANIMATE

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NOUN 1

O
N
B
U

O · N · BU

お
負んぶ
piggyback ride

"Onbu" by itself is the noun, but if you attach する (suru) it becomes a verb meaning "carry on (one's) back."

Onbu shitai ka?
おんぶしたいか?
Do you want a piggyback ride?

INANIMATE

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NOUN 2

K
O
M
O
R
I
U
T
A

KO · MO · RI · U · TA

こもりうた
子守歌
lullaby

The kanji characters that make up this word literally mean "child protecting song." Isn't that awesome?

Kodomotachi ga kanojo no komoriuta ni hikarete, sugu neta.
子供たちが彼女の子守歌に惹かれて、すぐ寝た。
The children were entranced by her lullaby and fell fast asleep.

INANIMATE

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