



Mr. Pole

tsumaranai mono (boring gift) ?



Pera Pera Penguin's

5-minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama

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I have been receiving a lot of gifts of cans of beer, towels and seaweed from Japanese acquaintances recently. It's too early for Christmas, and too late for my birthday. In the hope of finding out what it was all about, I called up one of the senders and thanked him, but he only said "tsumaranai mono desu ga." Surely he did not mean to say that he had sent me "a

■■■ You are correct. It's an expression of humility to say "tsumaranai mono desu ga" when offering a gift, no matter how expensive the item. The phrase has been used so often it does not mean much any more. Japanese companies pay bonuses in early summer and toward the end of the year, and people purchase and send gifts from department stores around these times. These gifts are called **ochūgen**—midyear gift—and **osēbo**—year-end gift. The gifts are sent to people to whom one feels indebted or to clients, and are intended to express gratitude and appreciation. Department stores cash in on the two seasons by setting up special gift areas. Each season, the media report the sales figures as an indicator of the current state of the economy. Last year, the average Japanese sent a gift worth ¥4,200 to each of four recipients.

Summer gift 御中元 **ochūgen** (from middle of June to middle of July)

Winter gift 御歳暮 **osēbo** (from middle of November to end of December)

Typical seasonal gift items have long been beer, cooking oil and seaweed (**nori**), and people did not bother much about the recipient's needs. But department stores now offer a variety of items so customers can select something the recipients would actually enjoy.

When you receive a gift, remember to thank the sender the next time you talk to the person, no matter how late it seems. It is also a good idea to send thank-you cards. When you say thank you, it is not particularly necessary to mention what the gift was. All you have to say is:

Thank you for (the gift) the other day.
先日は有難うございました。
senjitsu wa arigatō-gozaimashita

[宅急便] **takkyūbin** is the courier service that delivers items anywhere in Japan within two days. You may find a slip left in your mailbox or at your door to let you know a delivery person called in your absence. Just call the number on it, and you will be able to receive it within the day.

Grammar notes [receiver] receives something from [giver].....



Use: **ni** or **kara**, if receiving from person / **kara**, if receiving from an organization.

Polite forms of "receive" vary as follows:

giver	when receiving a gift	when receiving a document, fax, letter, etc.
superior or customer	いただきます itadakimasu	お受け取り致します ouketori-itashimasu
friend, family, one's equal or junior	もらいます moraimasu	受け取ります uketorimasu

Before a meal, say, "itadakimasu" to show your appreciation to nature, to God and to the person who cooked the meal or is treating you to it.

Answers ① 受け取りました **uketorimashita** ② から **kara** ③ いただきました **itadakimashita** ④ もらいます **moraimasu** ⑤ いただきました **itadakimashita**

Mr. Pole calls a courier service about the delivery notice left on the door:

Mr. Pole: I received a delivery slip.

不在票を ① received。
fuzai-hyō o

Clerk: Your name and customer number please.

お名前、お客様番号をどうぞ。
onamae, okyaku-sama bangō o dōzo

Next day, he shows his secretary the gift he has received:

Mr. Pole: I received so much (of gift) from a business associate.

こんなに 取引先 ② from ③ received (polite form)。
konnani torihiki-saki
this much business associate

What kind of things do you usually receive (for **ochūgen**)?

普通 ④ いろんな物を receive か。
futsū donna-mono o ka
usually what kind of things

Secretary: Let's see. Generally, it's beer or **nori** or things like that.

そうですね...一般的に...ビールとか...海苔...ですね。
sō desu ne...ippan-teki ni... toka...nori...desu ne
Let's see. generally see "teki" see below

Mr. Pole calls up the sender to thank him.

Mr. Pole: I received (the gift) yesterday. Thank you very much.

昨日 ⑤ receive。有難うございました。
kinō arigatō-gozaimashita
yesterday

Sender: Oh, no, please don't mention it.

いいえ とんでもないです。
ie, tondemonai desu
modest form of "Don't mention it."

To break uncomfortable silences while you are searching for words, use **toka** as a filler as follows:

⑥ toka... (toka)... ⑦

Friend: What kind of food do you like?

Mr. Pole: Let's see...I like fish...meat...and so on.

えーっと...魚とか...肉とか...です。
etto...sakana toka...niku toka...desu



的

teki

-ic; -li; -al; -like; -ish; -ly

e.g., general(ly) ...

一般的

ippan-teki

的 な + noun
teki na

e.g.,

It is a generally-held opinion.
一般的な意見です。
ippan-teki na iken desu
opinion

的 に + sentence
teki ni

e.g.,

It is in general use.
一般的に普及をしています。
ippan-teki ni fukyū o shite-imasu
spread

的 です。
teki desu

e.g.,

It is general.
一般的です。
ippan-teki desu

- 主観的 **shūkan-teki** subjective(ly)
- 客観的 **kyakkan-teki** objective(ly)
- 合理的 **gōri-teki** rational(ly)
- 効果的 **kōka-teki** effective(ly)
- 全体的 **zentai-teki** whole(~)ly
- 否定的 **hitē-teki** negative(ly)
- 肯定的 **kōtē-teki** affirmative(ly)
- 平均的 **hēkin-teki** (on) average
- 専門的 **senmon-teki** specialized (professionally)
- 伝統的 **dentō-teki** traditional(ly)
- 論理的 **ronri-teki** logical(ly)
- 社会的 **shakai-teki** social(ly)
- 精神的 **sēshin-teki** spiritual(ly) /mental(ly)
- 封建的 **hōken-teki** conservative(ly) /feudalistic(ally)
- 協力的 **kyōryoku-teki** cooperative(ly)
- 画一的 **kakuitsu-teki** stereotypical(ly)