



Design: Masako Ban

# Help tasukete? tetsudatte?

Last night, there was an earthquake (**jishin**). It was really scary, so I called a friend to say “**tetsudatte**” (Help). But he said “**nani o?**” (What with?)! Why did he say such a cruel thing? A few minutes after the earthquake, there was a news flash on television that said where I live was **shindo** 3. What does that mean?

Mr. Pole

## earthquake 地震 jishin

“**shindo**” is the seismic intensity (level of the earthquake). After the quake, television and radio announce “**shingenchi**” (the seismic center), and how big it was in the scale called “**shindo**.”

- **shindo-ichi** / 震度1... slight earthquake (**bishin**) felt by people who are static
- **shindo-ni** / 震度2... light earthquake (**kēshin**) felt by many people; doors shake slightly
- **shindo-san** / 震度3... minor earthquake (**jakushin**) a clattering sound is heard; hanging objects move
- **shindo-yon** / 震度4... medium earthquake (**chūshin**) felt by people while walking; cups and glasses fall from shelves
- **shindo-go** / 震度5... violent earthquake (**kyōshin**) walls crack; gravestones fall
- **shindo-roku** / 震度6... disastrous earthquake (**resshin**) landslides; houses collapse
- **shindo-nana** / 震度7... severe earthquake (**gekishin**) cracks in the ground, fault

防災の日 (**bōsai no hi**) .... Disaster Prevention Day

On Sept. 1, 1923, a severe earthquake occurred in the **Kantō** region (**Kantō daishinsai** = Great Kanto Earthquake), causing approximately 90,000 deaths. Since then, Sept. 1 has been Disaster Prevention Day. If you go to stores around this time, you will find special sections for disaster prevention goods (e.g., dried biscuits, emergency provisions, drinking water, flashlights, first-aid kits). Many households in Japan keep these items handy, so you should make sure you have them too, just in case.

緊急電話 (**kinkyū denwa**)....Emergency Telephone (All public pay phones have a red button for you to push to make a free call to 110 and 119.)

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Average number of dispatched vehicles                         | ill ... <b>byōki</b>             |
| ... 6.6 ambulances a minute; one fire engine a minute         | accident ... <b>jiko</b>         |
| • Ambulance .....救急車 ( <b>kyūkyūsha</b> ) Phone: <b>119</b>   | fire .... <b>kaji</b>            |
| • Fire Department ..消防署 ( <b>shōbōsho</b> ) Phone: <b>119</b> | thief ... <b>dorobō</b>          |
| • Police .....警察 ( <b>kēsatsu</b> ) Phone: <b>110</b>         | lost items ... <b>wasuremono</b> |

## Usage note

**Help** • in case of any danger or emergency 助けて **tasukete**  
 • when you need a hand with something 手伝って **tetsudatte**

- e.g., A) "Help" when your cooking pan catches fire  
 B) "Help" when your job keeps you up all night  
 C) "Help" when you are molested on a crowded train  
 D) "Help" when you have an urgent errand to take care of

Answers  
 A) **tasukete** B) **tetsudatte** C) **tasukete** D) **tetsudatte**

## Pera Pera Penguin's 5 minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama Vol. 9

■■■ Japan suffers many earthquakes. Back in January 1995, “**Hanshin daishinsai**” (the Great Hanshin Earthquake) caused 6,430 deaths and some victims are still suffering the aftereffects. If you notice an earthquake, make sure to put out all fires and gas flames, then open your windows and/or doors. This will secure an escape route in case the house or apartment block itself starts leaning.

### Emotional expressions

..... finally / at last / after all [ ] + sentence

There are three ways to say “finally” in Japanese. All of them imply the images of “effort,” “difficulty” and “trouble.”

● やっと **yatto** ..... longing; waiting

e.g., Finally, it's done.  
 when one has been looking forward to the event

やっと できました。  
**yatto dekimashita**

● とうとう **tōtō** ..... with emotion (happy, upset, etc); often used in negative form

e.g., After all (finally), I wasn't able to do it.  
 when one feels upset about not being able to do it

とうとう できませんでした。  
**tōtō dekimasendeshita**

● ついに **tsuini** ..... Stressing the result at the moment of finding it out (used when one was not sure what the result would be)

e.g., At last, I did it.  
 when one was unsure if it would be completed

ついに できました。  
**tsuini dekimashita**

At the scene of a fire in Mr. Pole's neighborhood

Victim: ① Help!

Mr. Pole: The fire engine still has not come ... it's taking a long time.

消防車..... 遅いですね。  
**shōbōsha** .... **osoi** **desu ne**  
 fire engine late isn't it?

Oh, it finally arrived.  
 あっ ② finally 来ました。  
**a** **kimashita**  
 Oh came

20 minutes after fire fighting started  
 Mr. Pole: Finally, the fire has been put out.

③ finally 火が きましたね。  
**hi ga kiemashita ne**  
 (longing) fire “ga” ... emphasis on fire

Fireman: After all, the fire has been put out.

④ finally 火が 消えた。  
**hi ga kiemashita ne**  
 (feeling relieved after all the efforts)

TV Reporter: At last, the fire was put out. (in live broadcast)

⑤ finally 火が きました。  
**hi ga kiemashita**  
 (stressing that the fire was “finally” put out)



- Answers  
 ① 助けて **tasukete**  
 ② やっと **yatto**  
 ③ やっと **yatto**  
 ④ とうとう **tōtō**  
 ⑤ ついに **tsuini**

## 緊急 emergency kinkyū

- 急がば回れ **isoga ba maware**  
 More haste, less speed. (When in a hurry, you make a detour.)
- 備えあれば憂いなし **sonae areba urei nashi**  
 Be prepared. (If prepared, there is no anxiety.)
- 油断大敵 **yudan taiteki**  
 Never let down your guard. (Feeling secure is a great enemy.)

Mr. Pole: I'm used to it, so there is nothing to worry about.

慣れていまして心配ないです。  
**narete-imasu node shimpai naidesu**  
 used to so don't worry

Friend: Do not let down your guard. ですよ。  
**desu yo**

Mr. Pole fails to do as advised.

Friend: See, just as I expected.  
 ほら やっぱり!  
**hora yappari**  
 took I thought so

Mr. Pole: It's much faster to go this way (short cut).

こっちのほうがずっと近道ですよ。  
**kocchi no hō ga zutto chikamichi desu yo**  
 this way more shortest way; short cut

Friend: No, even if it's a roundabout way, it's safer to take the way we know better.

いいえ、遠回りでも確実性の高いほうが安全です。  
**ie, tōmawari demo kakujitsusē no takai hō ga anzen desu**  
 no round about way even reliable safer

When in a hurry, make a detour ですよ。  
**desu yo**

Mr. Pole: You are always perfectly prepared.

さすがいつも準備は完璧ですね。  
**sasuga itsumo jumbi wa kampeki desu ne**  
 always preparation perfection

Friend: If prepared, there is no anxiety. ですよ。  
**desu yo**

- Answers  
 ① 『油断大敵』 **yudan-taiteki** ② 『急がば回れ』 **isogaba maware** ③ 『備えあれば憂いなし』 **sonae areba urei nashi**

With cooperation from Akiko E. Yasukawa