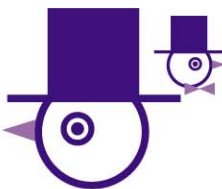




Design: Masako Ban



Pera Pera Penguin's

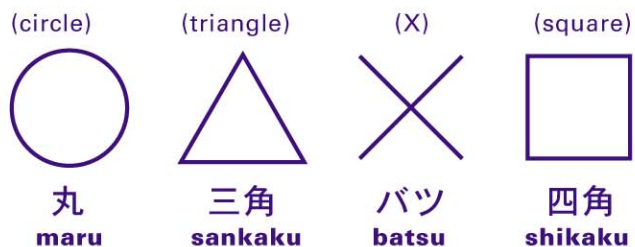
5-minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama

Vol. **43**

One of my friends went to see his son's soccer match last Sunday, and I asked him, "**soccer no shiai dō datta?**" (How was the game?) during today's lunch break. He said, "**maru de dame datta yo** (It was "**maru de**" terrible). **maru ichi-nen soccer shite-inakatta kara, honto ni maru de natte-nakatta yo**" (He did not play a soccer for "**maru**" one year, so his play was really "**maru de**" no good), and he looked very disappointed. I didn't understand what "**maru de**" terrible," "**maru**" one year" and "**maru de**" no good" meant, so I wasn't sure what he was saying. But I guessed that his son's team lost the game because he looked so forlorn. Ms. Hirayama, what does "**maru**" mean?

■■■ "**maru ga 'maru de' wakarana-katta no desu ne.**" (I guess you "totally" [**maru de**] didn't understand what "totally" [**maru**] meant, did you?) In Japanese, ○ is called "**maru**" (a circle), △ is "**sankaku**" (triangle), × is "**batsu**" (×) and □ is called "**shikaku**" (square). "**maru de dame**" means "totally terrible," "**maru ichi-nen**" means "a whole year," and "**maru de natte-nakatta**" means "it was no good at all." Many Japanese schools give "○×" style (true/false) tests, and the issue has been raised as to whether those tests lead to a loss of critical thinking ability. Also, in some cases, ○ is used to express "it was good" and "fine," while × indicates "it was bad" and "not good." Let's say you had a date with a girl, and your friend asked you how the date went. If you had a good time with her, say "**maru.**" If not, then say "**batsu.**" Your friend will understand you right away, so don't be afraid to say it. But don't forget that these are informal expressions!

There are many idioms that commonly use "○" in daily life, but there are few phrases using "△," "×," or "□."



- 1) a love triangle 三角関係 **sankaku kankei**
- 2) an X × 印 **batsu jirushi**
- 3) being divorced once バツイチ **batsu ichi**
- 4) a serious-minded person 四角四面な人 **shikaku shimen na hito**
- 5) a circle ○ 印 **maru jirushi**
- 6) confidential ○ + 秘 → 秘 (secret) **hi maru-hi**

- 7) to swallow something whole 丸のみ **maru-nomi** (agree, drink)
- 8) to bite into something round, like an apple 丸かじり **maru-kajiri** (bite)
- 9) to take all the profits 丸儲け **maru-mōke** (profit, gain)
- 10) to win someone over to one's side 丸め込む **marumekomu**
- 11) to settle (a matter) amicably 丸くおさまる **maruku osamaru**
- 12) being round, to make oneself amicable 丸くなる **marukunaru**
- 13) round face 丸顔 **maru-gao** (face)
- 14) completely, wholly 丸々 **maru-maru**
- 15) everything is visible or exposed 丸見え **maru-mie** (can see)
- 16) to be burned all over 丸焼け **maru-yake** (burn)
- 17) a whole period e.g., a whole day 丸一日 **maru ichi-nichi** (one day)
- 18) the whole thing 丸ごと **maru-goto**
- 19) it seems as if (though) 丸で___のよう **maru de ___ no yo** (like)
- 20) to come to nothing 丸でダメ **maru de dame** (done for)
- 21) completely different 丸で(丸っきり)違う **maru de (marukkiri) chigau** (differ)
- 22) no good at all 丸でなっていない **maru de nattenai** (Thumbs down!)



Try out this quiz, using the correct "maru" expression.

- A) If you boil a whole cabbage, it becomes very delicious.
キャベツを **cabbage o** a whole thing **boil suru to oishi desu yo** ポイルする と 美味しいですよ。
- B) Mr. Pole behaves as if he is Japanese.
ポールさんは **Pole-san wa** as if one is **Nihon-jin no yō desu** 日本人のようです。
- C) My neighbor can see into my room from his veranda, so I put blinds on the windows.
隣のベランダから部屋が **tonari no veranda kara heya ga** to be completely exposed to view **nanode mekakushi o tsuketa** 隣のベランダから部屋が なので目隠しをつけた。
- D) My neighbor's house was destroyed by fire last night.
夕べの火事で隣の家が **yūbe no kaji de tonari no ie ga** to be destroyed by fire **desu** です。
- E) The personalities of brother and sister are completely different.
兄妹の性格は **kyōdai no seikaku wa** being completely different
- F) I had a stomachache, so I didn't eat anything all day.
お腹を壊して **onaka o kowashite** a whole day **nanimo tabete-inai desu** 何も食べていません。
- G) Oh, good... at last everything was settled amicably!
ふっ やっとすべてが **fu~ yatto subete ga** to settle down completely
- H) I heard that Miss Nishimura's new boyfriend has been divorced once.
西村さんの新しい彼は **Nishimura-san no atarashii kare wa** being divorced once **datte** だって。
- I) It seems like Miss Nakata is in a love triangle.
中田さんどうも **Nakata-san dōmo** a love triangle **mitai ne** みたいね...

| | | | | |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Answers | | | | |
| A)18) | B)19) | C)15) | D)16) | E)21) |
| F)17) | G)11) | H)3) | I)1) | |

With cooperation from Yasuhiro Koga