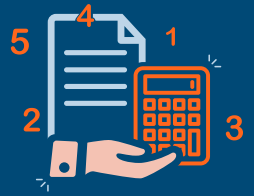


Math in Japanese

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Decimal numbers

Firstly, notice that we say 点 (てん) to read aloud the decimal point. The kanji 点 literally means 'point,' used even when speaking about an abstract, "I'd like to make a point..." kind of point.

さんてんご

3.5

ひゃくきゅうじゅうてんに

190.2

+

Additions

Although the + sign is used, the verb 足す (たす, to add, to top up) is used when describing sums of addition.

七足す三は十です。

ななたすさんはじゅうです。

$7 + 3 = 10$

百と二百を足すと三百になる。

ひゃくとにひゃくをたすとさんびやくになる。

Add 100 to 200 and it becomes 300.

In addition to the native Japanese word, an imported word has made its way into the everyday vocabulary, in the form of the word 'プラス', which of course means plus.

セプラスーは八です。

ななプラスいちのはちです。

$7 + 1 = 8$

-

Subtractions

The opposite of プラス is マイナス. It's used exactly as you'd expect:

百マイナス四十は六十です。

100 minus 40 is 60.

七千マイナス三百はなんなんですか？

What's 7,000 minus 300?

Of course, there is a native Japanese verb that we can use too.

-4 から -7 を引くと, +3

If you take -7 from -4, you end up with +3.

(notice the use of から here to denote 'from')

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✖ Multiplication

We use the verb 掛ける (かける) to say 'multiply'.

七十掛ける三は二百十八です。
ななじゅうかけるさんにはひゃくじゅうはちです。
 $70 \times 3 = 280$

(note the use of the に particle here to show direction)

÷ Division

We use the verb 割る (わる) when speaking about mathematical divisions. It follows every pattern of the examples that we have looked at above.

十割る五は二です。
ななじゅうかけるさんにはひゃくじゅうはちです。

タンジェントってサインでコサインを割る?
Is the tangent cosine divided by sine?

$\frac{2}{3}$ Fractions

Fractions are conveyed by using the kanji 分 (ぶん), meaning 'part'. You need to conceptualise fractions in a different way when thinking in Japanese, as we use the possessive particle の to indicate that of the whole (the denominator), there is a part about which we are speaking (numerator).

So, it's not one third (one part of a whole which is a third of the value), it's third's one (one part of three parts).

三分の一
さんぶんのいち
 $\frac{1}{3}$

五分の二
ごぶんのに
 $\frac{2}{5}$

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