シ・ツ・ソ・ン



Four Katakana, Clear Differences

Recognize the shape, follow the stroke, write from memory

A focused reading and handwriting drill for four easily confused katakana. You should have seen the basic katakana chart before. Work through large models, trace and copy, cover the model, then use the characters in words. Written sound cues are used; this PDF does not test listening and includes no audio.

Starter / basic katakana familiarity

24 practice tasks | Explained answers | English guidance

LEARN. PRACTICE. UNDERSTAND.

Your route through this book

A focused reading and handwriting drill for four easily confused katakana. You should have seen the basic katakana chart before. Work through large models, trace and copy, cover the model, then use the characters in words. Written sound cues are used; this PDF does not test listening and includes no audio.

Before you begin

Starter / basic katakana familiarity. Levels are approximate teaching guidance, not an official JLPT syllabus or a proficiency guarantee.

Read, try, compare, retry

Keep a pencil and spare paper nearby. First compare the four characters. Follow the numbered stroke diagrams with your finger, trace the pale models, then copy into empty squares. Cover the models for recall tasks. Judge whether your characters remain distinct, not whether you can duplicate a typeface exactly. Recheck later without the model.

How to use the answers

Open tasks have model answers, not the only possible wording. Accept natural alternatives that preserve the requested meaning and viewpoint. For each task, check both the answer and your reason. The final practice set is a self-check: try it without notes, then review the categories you missed.

Reading and use

This PDF is designed for zoomed reading and printing. Japanese examples use normal spelling; vocabulary notes support key words. No recorded audio or personal feedback is included. You may keep and use your downloaded files for personal study without a time limit. Printing for your own study is allowed. Sharing, redistribution, and resale are not permitted. © 2026 Junichiro Japanese.

01 Two families, four characters

Use both the short marks and the long stroke.

Two short marks or one?

シ and ツ each have three strokes: two short marks and one long stroke. ソ and ン each have two strokes: one short mark and one long stroke. Count the short marks first, then compare their arrangement and the direction used to write the long stroke.

Two directions to practise

シ and ン finish with a rising stroke from the lower left toward the upper right. ツ and ソ finish with a falling stroke from the upper right toward the lower left. In print, you see the finished shape, not an animated arrow; use the whole shape rather than looking for a printed arrowhead.

シ / ツ

shi / tsu

ソ / ン

so / n

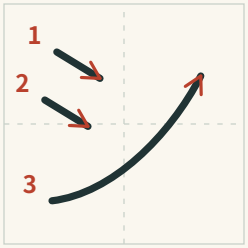
DECISION / Stroke direction is a writing aid; reading also needs attention to the whole shape.

WORDS / stroke = one movement before lifting the pencil; shi = シ; tsu = ツ; so = ソ; n = ン

Trace, copy, then recall

Follow the numbered starts and arrows. Trace the pale models. Copy into the next squares. Then cover the models and write from memory in the final squares. These are direction diagrams, not exact typeface outlines.

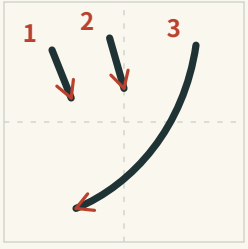
シ / shi



シ TRACE | シ TRACE | COPY | COPY | RECALL | RECALL

Check the long-stroke direction and short-stroke positions before repeating.

ツ / tsu



ツ TRACE | ツ TRACE | COPY | COPY | RECALL | RECALL

Check the long-stroke direction and short-stroke positions before repeating.

Write slowly first. If someone cannot identify the character, compare its direction and placement with the model rather than just writing it faster.

Read the isolated characters

Review: 1. Answer the prompt and give a short reason.

Q001 Write the romanized reading of シ.

Q002 Write the romanized reading of ツ.

Q003 Write the romanized reading of ソ.

Q004 Write the romanized reading of ン.

Answers Q001-Q008

Q001 shi

シ has two short marks down the left and a rising long stroke.

Q002 tsu

ツ has two short marks across the upper area and a falling long stroke.

Q003 so

ソ has one short mark and the downward-sweeping long stroke.

Q004 n

ン has one short mark and the upward-sweeping long stroke.

Q005 シ

For writing シ, the last stroke starts low on the left and rises right.

Q006 ソ

For writing ソ, the long stroke starts toward the upper right and falls left.

Q007 Three each.

Two short strokes plus one long stroke; lift between strokes.

Q008 Two each.

One short stroke plus one long stroke; both have the same stroke count.

This answer excerpt includes Q005-Q008; those tasks are not shown in this sample.

Keep the distinction

シ: three strokes; two short starts down the left; final stroke rises from lower left.

ツ: three strokes; two short starts across the top; final stroke falls from upper right.

ソ: two strokes; long stroke falls from upper right.

ン: two strokes; long stroke rises from lower left.

Check stroke count and overall arrangement together; do not impose one exact font angle.

Cover models for retrieval. Written sound cues are not recorded listening exercises.

Make it yours

Choose the pair you still confuse. Copy each character slowly once, cover the model, and write it again from a romanized cue. Ask another reader to identify your handwriting without seeing the cue. Repeat the check tomorrow.