

ni<sup>1</sup> に prt.

a particle that indicates a point of time at which s.t. takes place

at; in; on  
【REL. *de*<sup>1</sup>】

## ◆ Key Sentence

Topic (subject)		Noun (time)			
私 <i>Watashi</i>	は <i>wa</i>	毎朝 <i>maiasa</i>	六時半 <i>rokujihan</i>	に <i>ni</i>	起きる / 起きます。 <i>okiru / okimasu.</i>
(I get up at six thirty every morning.)					

## Examples

- (a) 私は四月一日に生まれました。  
*Watashi wa shigatsu tsuitachi ni umaremashita.*  
(I was born on April 1st.)
- (b) 今朝は五時半にうちを出ました。  
*Kesa wa gojihan ni uchi o demashita.*  
(This morning I left home at five thirty.)
- (c) 来年の夏(に)外国旅行をするつもりです。  
*Rainen no natsu (ni) gaikokuryokō o suru tsumori desu.*  
(I intend to make a trip abroad next summer.)
- (d) 子供が学校に行っている間に手紙を書いた。  
*Kodomo ga gakkō ni itte iru aida ni tegami o kaita.*  
(I wrote a letter while my children were away at school.)
- (e) 田中は大学にいる時(に)今の奥さんと出会った。  
*Tanaka wa daigaku ni iru toki (ni) ima no okusan to deatta.*  
(Tanaka met his present wife when he was in college.)

## Notes

- There are a number of time expressions that cannot take *ni*; the typical ones are *asa* 'morning', *ashita* 'tomorrow', *kinō* 'yesterday', *kyō* 'today', *ototoi* 'the day before yesterday', *rainen* 'next year', *saikin* 'lately', etc. Generally speaking, if a time expression can be specified uniquely in terms of digits, the adverb can take *ni*; otherwise, it cannot. *Getsuyōbi* 'Monday' is the 'first' day of the week, so it can take *ni*. So can

*kurisumasu* 'Christmas', because it is December 25. But *kyō* 'today' cannot take *ni*, because 'today' cannot be uniquely specified by date.

2. *Ni* is optional with certain time nouns, such as *natsu* 'summer' (as in Ex. (c)) and *toki* 'time' (as in Ex. (e)). The version with *ni* stresses the point of time more than the version without *ni* does.
3. The time noun *aida* also takes *ni* if the event in the main clause does not continue for the entire duration of the event in the *aida* clause, as seen in Ex. (d). If the event in the main clause covers the same duration as the event in the *aida* clause, *ni* cannot be used. (⇒ *aida (ni)*)

- (1) 子供が学校に行っている間手紙を書いていた。  
*Kodomo ga gakkō ni itte iru aida tegami o kaite ita.*  
 (I was writing letters while my children were away at school.)

4. When a specific time expression takes *goro* 'about' as in (2), *ni* may drop.

- (2) 今朝五時半頃(に)起きました。  
*Kesa gojihan goro (ni) okimashita.*  
 (I got up at about five thirty.)

5. *Ni* as a particle for a point of time can be used freely with various time expressions, as long as it occurs with a time expression that can be uniquely specified in terms of digits. (⇒ Note 1)

- (3) a. 一時五分に  
*ichiji gofun ni*  
 (at 1:05)
- b. 三月四日に  
*sangatsu yokka ni*  
 (on March 4)
- c. 月曜日に  
*getsuyōbi ni*  
 (on Monday)
- d. 千九百八十四年に  
*sen-kyūhyaku-hachijūyo(n)nen ni*  
 (in 1984)
- e. 二十一世紀に  
*nijūisseiki ni*  
 (in the 21st century)

6. *Ni* is optional with the names of the four seasons. Thus,

- (4) 春(に)結婚します。  
*Haru (ni) kekkonshimasu.*  
 (I'm getting married in the Spring.)

*ni*<sup>2</sup> に prt.

an indirect object marker

to; for

◆ Key Sentence

Topic (subject)	Indirect Object	Direct Object	
私 <i>Watashi</i>	は <i>wa</i>	母 <i>haha</i>	に <i>ni</i>
		手紙 <i>tegami</i>	を <i>o</i>
			よく書く / 書きます。 <i>yoku kaku / kakimasu.</i>
(I often write letters to my mother.)			

Examples

- (a) 父は僕に時計をくれた。  
*Chichi wa boku ni tokei o kureta.*  
 (My father gave me a watch.)
- (b) 加藤先生はアメリカ人の学生に日本文学を教えている。  
*Katō-sensei wa amerikajin no gakusei ni nihonbungaku o oshiete iru.*  
 (Prof. Kato is teaching Japanese literature to American students.)
- (c) 私は妹にお金を少しやりました。  
*Watashi wa imōto ni o-kane o sukoshi yarimashita.*  
 (I gave a little money to my younger sister.)
- (d) 今井さんに電話しましたがいませんでした。  
*Imai-san ni denwashimashita ga imasendeshita.*  
 (I called Mr. Imai, but he wasn't there.)
- (e) 大川先生は学生に色々な辞書を見せた。  
*Ōkawa-sensei wa gakusei ni iroirona jisho o miseta.*  
 (Prof. Okawa showed various dictionaries to his students.)