

HINODE INTRODUCTORY TAIKO GLOSSARY: 49 USEFUL TERMS TO KNOW¹

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Counting

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ichi eechi'	ni nee	san sahn	shi shee	go go	roku rDoaku'	shichi sheechi'	hachi hahchi'	kyu kyoo	ju joo

Kuchishoga

- **Don, Kon** – Hits on the drum head (*kawa*). Syllables written *Do* are typically played with the right hand. Syllables written *Ko* are played with the left hand. *Doko*, *dogo*, or *doro* indicate two hits of equal length, played one after the other R-L. *Donko* indicates two R-L hits of unequal length, the first hit longer than the second. *Dokon* indicates two R-L hits of unequal length, the first hit shorter than the second.
- **Ka** – Hit on the rim of the drum shell (*fuchi*). *Kara* indicates two hits of equal length, played one after the other R-L.
- **Su** – A rest, or measured moment of not-playing, within a piece.
- **Tsu** – Quietest possible hit on the drum head. *Tsuku* indicates two hits of equal length, played one after the other R-L.

Concepts

- **Genki** (*geh-n-kee*, “healthy, robust, energetic”) – Recreational wing of Hinode Taiko Inc., established in 1999.
- **Hinode** (*hee-no-dey*, “rising sun”) – Emblem of Winnipeg’s first taiko group, established in 1982.
- **Ji, ji-uchi** (*jee, jee-oo’chee*, “time strike”) – A recurring base beat or basic rhythm.
- **Kakegoe** (*kah-keh-go-eh*, “shout, yell”) – A rhythmic shout used to show encouragement or mark time. In taiko, this is often an integral part of the song. May be a call-and-response with several parts, or a single part called out in unison.
- **Kata** (*kah-tah*, “shape, form”) – Body alignment and position when striking the drum; formalized technique, pattern of movement, or movement sequence.
- **Kiai** (*kee-aee*, “scream, yell, fighting spirit”) – A loud, sharp vocalization emanating from the body’s centre, used to summon energy or encourage others. Usually brief, e.g., *Yo! So-re! Su-ri-ya!*
- **Kuchishoga** (*koo-chi’sho-gah*, “mouth writing”), or **kuchishoka** (*koo-chi’sho-kah*, “mouth singing”) – A system of vocalizing taiko sounds and patterns so they can be memorized accurately.
- **Kumi-daiko** (*koo-mee-daee-ko*, “group taiko”) – Refers to playing drums in groups or sets, or to performing groups centered around playing taiko. *Kumi-daiko* is a relatively new (i.e., post-WW II) performing art.

¹ Pronunciation: Unlike English, Japanese words are generally spoken with even stress on most syllables. The letter R is pronounced more like a cross between D and L, with a tongue tap behind the teeth; it is never pronounced “rrr” as in Canadian English.

- **Looping** – Means repeatedly playing a line or section of a piece, usually with no gap between repetitions, for practice purposes.
- **Oroshi** (*oh-rDoh-shee*, “wind blowing down from mountains”) – A series of drum strikes that builds up in tempo to maximum volume and speed, then decreases; often done in a group with sound passing from drum to drum until all are joined in a fast roll.
- **Rei** (*rDey*, “salute, bow”) – A bow, showing respect to others.
- **Renshu** (*rDeh-n-shoo*, “practice, exercise”) – General term for taiko drills and exercises. *Renshu* is also the name of a training piece composed by the founder of North American taiko, Seiichi Tanaka of San Francisco Taiko Dojo.
- **Sticking** – The essential characteristics of a drum strike: which hand does the strike, which part of the drum is struck, and its duration (in the context of the piece).
- **Tearing** – A problem that develops when one or more players in a group plays some element of a piece at a different tempo from other players, so it becomes disjointed.
- **Tempo** – The fundamental speed or pulse of a piece of music.

Objects

- **Atarigane** (*ah-tah-rDee-gah-neh*) – Hand-held brass gong, played by striking the inside with a beater. Also called a **chan-chiki**.
- **Bachi** (*bah-chee*) – generic term for a drumstick.
- **Beta** (*beh-tah*, “upright or face-up” towards the sky) – A *beta-dai* is a stand for holding a drum (e.g., *chudaiko*, *odaiko*, some *okedo*) a few inches off the ground in an upright or vertical position, i.e., with its face roughly parallel to the ground.
- **Chappa** (*chah-ppah*) – Hand cymbals; come in various sizes. Also referred to as **jangara**, **tebiragane** or **tebyoushi**
- **Chu, chudaiko** (*choo*, *choo-dae-ko*, “medium-drum”) – Mid-sized *nagado-daiko*; most often used for playing main parts and solos on songs. The heads of these drums are stretched over the body and nailed down, so they cannot be tuned.
- **Fuchi** (*fu-chee*, “edge, rim”) – The rim or edge of the drum where the drum-skin meets the wood body.
- **Hira, hira-daiko** (*hee-rDah*, *hee-rDah-dae-ko*, “flat-drum”) – A type of *byo-daiko* (tacked drum) with a head diameter greater than its body length; has the deep bass tone, but not the resonance or sustain of a *chudaiko* or *odaiko*.
- **Jozuke, jyozuke** (*jyoh-z’keh*, “place facing up”) – A *chudaiko* played on a slant stand (*naname-dai*); a terminated by the pioneer group Oedo Sukeroku Daiko and used by those playing their style. Some North American taiko groups refer to their mid-sized drums as “josuke” (jo-s’kay).
- **Kawa** (*kah-wah*, “skin”) – the head of a drum.
- **Miya, miyadaiko** (*meeya*, *meeya-dae-ko*, “shrine drum”) – Originally, a large, tacked-head drum (*byo-daiko*), often highly decorated, used in shrine ceremonies; now, nearly synonymous with *nagado-daiko*.
- **Naname** (*nah-nah-meh*, “diagonal”) – A *naname-dai* is a stand for holding a drum with its head at an angle of roughly 45 degrees from horizontal.

- **Odaiko** (*oh-dae-ko*, “big drum” or “great drum”) – Technically, the largest drum in any ensemble is called the *odaiko*.
- **Okedo, okedo-daiko** (*oh-keh-doh, oh-keh-doh-dae-ko*, “barrel body”, “barrel body-drum”) – Drum made of softwood staves with straight sides. The heads are constructed in the *shime-daiko* style by stretching skins over metal rings, which are then laced tight to each other with rope. A **katsugi** (*kah-ts’-gee*) **okedo** is a smaller, lightweight okedo worn on a shoulder sling, which can be played on one or both heads.
- **Shime, shime-daiko** (*shee-meh, shee-meh-dae-ko*, “tightened drum”, from verb *shimeru* = to close or tie tightly) – Drums whose heads are stretched and stitched over large metal rings, then pulled tight by rope (or metal bolts), rather than held on by tacks; all drums with roped heads are part of the *shime-daiko* family.
- **Taiko / -daiko** (*taee-ko, -daee-ko*, “drum”) – In Japan, the general term for any drum. Outside of Japan, *taiko* refers specifically to traditional Japanese drums, but within Japan, *wa-daiko* is the term used for this. *Taiko* can be divided into two large families: *byo-daiko*, which have heads held on by tacks, and *shime-daiko*, which have heads held on by rope (or bolts).

Sayings

- **Arigato gozaimashita** (*ah-rDee-gah-toh go-zaee-mah-sh’tah*) – “Thank you very much”, a formal expression of thanks commonly used to end a workshop or practice session.
- **Ganbatte!** (*gahn-baht-teh*) – “Persist”, “Go for it!” or “Don’t give up!”, said as encouragement to continue the struggle, or persevere through hardship.
- **Otsukare sama deshita** (*oh-tsu-kah-reh sah-mah deh-sh’tah*) – “Thanks for your fatigue/effort”; a phrase used to acknowledge someone’s work on your behalf, or to indicate appreciation for the effort expended in helping you or working with you. Often said as a group at the end of a practice, class or workshop.
- **So-re!** (*so-rDeh*) – “There! Now! Look!”, a common *kiai* or *kakegōe*.
- **Yoroshiku onegai shimasu** (*yo-ro-shi’koo oh-neh-gaee shee-mass’*) – “Please be good to me”; basically, an expression of goodwill said at the start of an endeavor (e.g., a workshop or practice session). The connotation is one of asking permission to participate in training or to be a part of the group. A taiko group will often start their practices this way, accompanied by a bow to show respect for each other and the activity they are about to commence together.