

〜ものだ

should / used to / general truth

Romaji: **mono da**

〜ものだ is one shape doing three quite different jobs, and the verb form in front of it decides which. With a dictionary-form verb it states a general truth or a social expectation — 約束は守るものだ (“you should keep your promises”). With a past-form verb it turns nostalgic — 子供のころ、よくここで遊んだものだ (“we used to play here”). And after a descriptive phrase it becomes an exclamation — 時間が経つのは早いものだ (“how quickly time passes”).

構文 CONSTRUCTION

Dictionary form + ものだ — a general truth or rule of life

約束は守るものだ。 — You should keep your promises.

Plain past + ものだ — nostalgia

昔はよく映画を見に行ったものだ。 — We used to go to the cinema a lot.

〜ものではない — “one shouldn’t”

人の悪口を言うものではない。 — You shouldn’t speak ill of people.

After a description — an exclamation

月日が経つのは早いものだ。 — How quickly the months go by.

例文 EXAMPLES

① やくそく まも
約束は守るものだ。

You should keep your promises.

② こども かわ あそ
子供のころ、よくこの川で遊んだものだ。

When I was a child, we used to play in this river a lot.

③ ひと わるぐち い
人の悪口を言うものではありません。

You shouldn’t speak ill of other people.

注意点 NUANCES

- ▶ The “should” of ものだ is a social norm, not an instruction. 挨拶はするものだ means “that is what people do”, which is why it sounds like advice from an older relative rather than an order.
- ▶ The nostalgic use needs the past form and usually よく: 昔はよく〜たものだ. Drop よく and the sentence drifts back toward the general-truth reading.
- ▶ 〜ものではない is the sharpest of the three and is how Japanese tells someone off gently: そんなことを言うものではありません.
- ▶ Do not confuse it with 〜ものだから (an excuse) or ももの (although). Same もの, completely different patterns.

やってみよう YOUR TURN

Write one rule of life with dictionary form + ものだ, one nostalgic memory with 〜たものだ, and one gentle telling-off with 〜ものではない. Three sentences, one ending, three meanings.