

～てから

after doing

Romaji: **te kara**

～てから means “after doing” — it orders two actions and insists the second one waits until the first is finished. 手を洗ってから食べます is “I’ll eat after washing my hands.” Attach から to the て-form of the first verb; only the final verb in the sentence carries tense. It has a second job too: with a stretch of time it means “since”, as in 日本に来てから三年になります (“it’s been three years since I came to Japan”).

構文 CONSTRUCTION

Verb (て-form) + から

宿題をしてから、遊びます。 — I’ll play after I’ve done my homework.

Only the LAST verb carries tense

晩ご飯を食べてから、映画を見ました。 — After eating dinner, I watched a film.

～てから + elapsed time = “since”

結婚してから十年経ちました。 — Ten years have passed since we got married.

例文 EXAMPLES

① て あら はん た
手を洗ってから、ご飯を食べましょう。

Let’s eat after we wash our hands.

② しごと お でんわ
仕事が終わってから、電話します。

I’ll call you after work finishes.

③ にほん き さんねん
日本に来てから、三年になります。

It’s been three years since I came to Japan.

注意点 NUANCES

- ▶ ～てから insists on the order; a plain て-form only lists. 顔を洗って、朝ご飯を食べます simply reports two actions, while 顔を洗ってから朝ご飯を食べます says the washing has to come first.
- ▶ Tense lives on the final verb alone. ×食べましたてから does not exist — the て-form stays untensed and the sentence ends ～ました.
- ▶ One ～てから per sentence is plenty. Chain three and the sentence reads like assembly instructions; use plain て-forms for the ordinary steps and save ～てから for the boundary that matters.
- ▶ The から here is the “from” particle, not the “because” one — you are marking the point in time the next action starts from.

やってみよう YOUR TURN

Describe your morning in three steps, using one ～てから for the step that genuinely has to come first. Then say how long it has been since you started studying Japanese, using ～てから with a length of time.