

～てたまらない

unbearably / can't stand it

Romaji: **te tamaranai**

～てたまらない means “unbearably” — the feeling is more than you can put up with. 暑くてたまらない is “It’s unbearably hot.” Attach it to the て-form of an い-adjective, or to a noun or な-adjective with で. Its home is physical sensation and immediate desire: heat, cold, thirst, sleepiness, pain, and ～たくてたまらない for wanting something badly. たまらない literally means “I can’t bear it”, which is exactly the register — spoken, emphatic, a little dramatic.

構文 CONSTRUCTION

い-adjective (て-form) + たまらない

喉が渴いてたまらない。 — I’m unbearably thirsty.

な-adjective / noun + でたまらない

不安でたまりませんでした。 — I was sick with worry.

Strong desire: ～たくてたまらない

国の料理が食べたくてたまらない。 — I’m dying for some food from home.

Polite: ～てたまりません

眠くてたまりません。 — I can hardly keep my eyes open.

例文 EXAMPLES

① きょう あつ 今日暑くてたまらない。

It’s unbearably hot today.

② ねむ 眠くてたまりません。

I can hardly keep my eyes open.

③ くに りょうり た 国の料理が食べたくてたまらない。

I’m dying for some food from home.

注意点 NUANCES

- ▶ The register is spoken and physical — complaining about the weather, not writing an essay. In formal writing ～てならない or 極めて～ does the same job.
- ▶ Positive feelings are perfectly fine: 嬉しくてたまらない, 楽しくてたまらない. “Unbearable” is about intensity, not unpleasantness.
- ▶ たまらない has drifted into a compliment in food and hobby writing: この香りがたまらない (“this aroma is irresistible”).
- ▶ For worries and thoughts that surface by themselves, ～てならない fits better. たまらない wants something you can feel in your body.

やってみよう YOUR TURN

Complain about the weather, about your energy level, and about one thing you are craving right now — three sentences, each with ～てたまらない or ～たくてたまらない.