

と

and / with / quotation

Romaji: **to**

と is a small particle with three everyday jobs. It joins nouns into a complete list (“A and B”), it marks the person you do something together with (“with”), and it closes a quotation or a thought — 「行く」と言った (“said he would go”), 面白いと思う (“I think it’s interesting”). A fourth と, the conditional (dictionary form + と, “whenever A, B”), is a separate pattern that happens to use the same character. What decides which と you are looking at is always what sits on either side of it.

構文 CONSTRUCTION

Noun + と + Noun — an exhaustive list

パンと卵を買いました。 — I bought bread and eggs.

Noun + と — the person you do it with

友だちと映画を見ました。 — I saw a film with a friend.

Quotation: 「…」と + 言う / 聞く / 書く

彼は「明日来る」と言いました。 — He said, “I’ll come tomorrow.”

Plain form + と思う — reporting a thought

この本は面白いと思います。 — I think this book is interesting.

例文 EXAMPLES

① コーヒーとケーキを注文^{ちゅうもん}しました。

I ordered coffee and cake.

② 土曜日^{どようび}に友だち^{とも}と出かけ^でます。

I’m going out with a friend on Saturday.

③ 母^{はは}は「早く^{はや}帰り^{かえ}なさい」と言^いいました。

My mother said, “Come home early.”

注意点 NUANCES

- と lists exhaustively: パンと卵 means bread and eggs and nothing else. や leaves the list open — “bread, eggs, that sort of thing”.
- Before 思う the clause is ALWAYS plain, even in polite speech: 面白いと思います, never ×面白いですと思います. The politeness belongs to the outer verb.
- A direct quote keeps whatever register the speaker used, because the quoted clause is sealed off: both 「行きます」と言った and 「行く」と言った are fine.
- と for “with” needs a companion. Doing something alone is 一人で, never ×一人と.

やってみよう YOUR TURN

Write three short sentences about today: what you bought (と for the list), who you were with (と for company), and what you thought of it (～と思います). One particle, three jobs.