

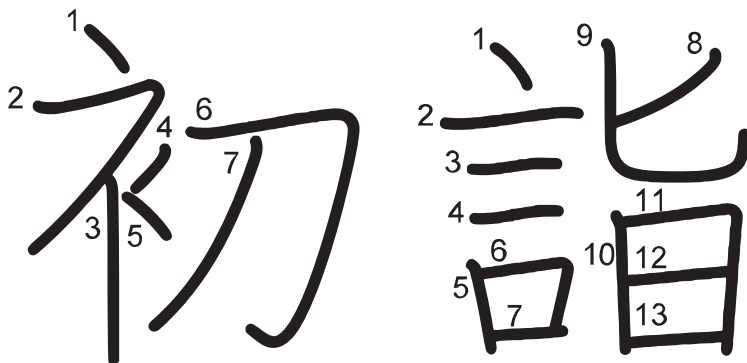


# TEACHING TUESDAY

## KANJI: HATSUMODE

JANUARY 2, 2018

One of the major Japanese traditions of the new year is the hatsumode (初詣) or first shrine visit of the year. Typically taking place on the first, second, or third day of the year, it's meant to bring a fresh start to the year. The kanji for hatsumode is made up of two kanji: one for "first" and a Chinese kanji that has been adapted to mean "visiting a shrine or temple." The kanji 初 is a depiction showing that the first step in making a garment 衤 is to cut the cloth with scissors 刀. Meanwhile, 詣 is a combination of 旨 sweet/rich and 言 words, and originally meant to "reach" one's objective via flattering words, but eventually was simplified to just mean "to reach," or to "arrive at", as well as "to visit a shrine or temple". Together with 初, it becomes "the first shrine or temple visit" of the year.



**Reading:** はつもうで  
hah-tsoo-moh-oo-day

**Meaning:** First shrine or temple visit of the year