

The magic of Japan's 100-yen stores

Vocabulary Match

inventions ● incredibly ● electronics ● stationery ● treasure ● survey ●

● office supplies ● prize ● extremely ● creations ● gadgets ● poll

Article

In Japan, everyone knows the word *hyakkin*. It is short for *hyakuen kin'itsu*, which means "everything costs 100 yen" (about \$0.63). These stores are incredibly popular. According to a recent survey of 11,000 people, most people visit them every month!

While men often buy tools or electronics, women usually look for kitchen items and stationery. People love these shops because they are cheap, but also because they sell unique inventions. You can find "banana cases" or special tools to make perfect sushi at home.

However, be careful! Some items now cost 500 yen (\$3.17), and sometimes supermarkets are actually cheaper. Still, for most shoppers, the wide selection makes every visit a fun treasure hunt.

Quiz

1. What does *hyakkin* mean in English?
2. How often do most people visit these stores?
3. What do men usually buy at these stores?
4. What is one reason people love these shops?

Conversation

- A: I love going to the 100 yen store!
B: Me too! I always find something cool there.
A: Last time, I bought a banana case.
B: A banana case? That's interesting!
A: Yeah, and it works perfectly.
B: I need to get one for my bananas too!

Discussion

1. Do you go to discount stores? Which ones?
2. What do you usually buy at discount stores?
3. Which items can you buy cheaper at a supermarket?
4. Is it better to buy one expensive item that lasts a long time, or many cheap items that break quickly?
5. What would you buy with 100 yen?