

CHILDREN'S DAY AT SHOFUSO

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HINA DOLLS

Girl's Day in Japan is also known as Hinamatsuri or Doll's Day. The traditional date for this celebration is March 3rd and during this time you're likely to see large, tiered displays of ornate dolls.

These Hina dolls represent very specific roles in the imperial court of the Heian period (794-1185 CE). While size and configurations vary, the following lesson will break down the various characters and items found in a typical Hina doll display.

LESSON 6



SHOFUSO
JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER

HINA DOLL TIERS

From top to bottom:

- **Emperor** holding a ritual baton and **Empress** holding a fan.
- Three **court ladies**, each holding sake equipment. Accessories placed between the ladies are takatsuki, stands with round table-tops for seasonal sweets.
- Five male **musicians** each holding a musical instrument except the singer, who holds a fan.
- Two **ministers** (one young, one old) may be displayed on the fourth tier.

Hina doll sets come in all shapes and sizes, from miniature versions to massive installations with hundreds, or even a thousand dolls!



HINA DOLL TIERS

- Three helpers or **samurai** as the protectors of the Emperor and Empress.
- **Items used within the palatial residence:** tansu or chest of drawers, nagamochi or long chest for kimono storage, a smaller chest of drawers with a mirror on top, and other items including utensils for the tea ceremony.
- **Items used when away from the palatial residence:** including a set of nested lacquered food boxes and an ox-drawn carriage (favored by Heian nobility).

