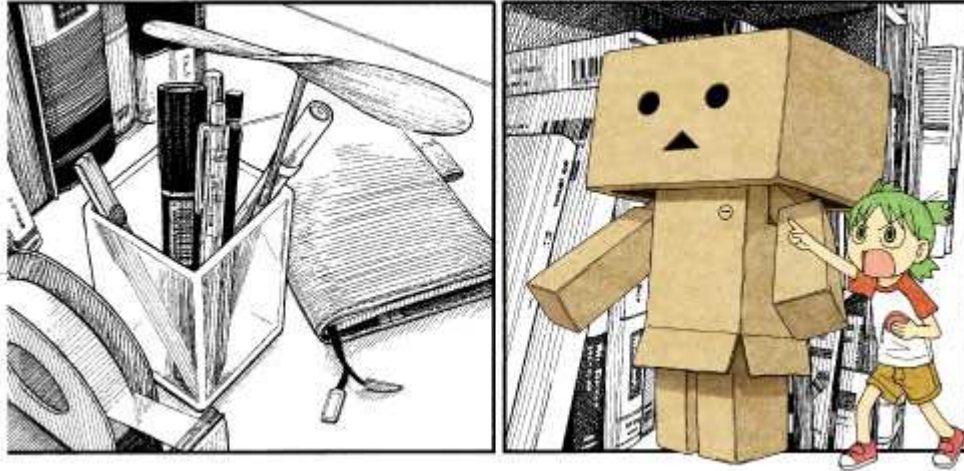


A Hobonichi Day Planner appears in the manga!?  
Enter Kiyohiko Azuma, author of the incredibly  
popular manga 'Yotsuba&!'.  
2011.12.20

スペシャルインタビュー



Good Hobonichi to you. Hariu here. Allow me to introduce you to manga artist Kiyohiko Azuma. This is a revised version of what appears in the ["Official Hobonichi Day Planner 2012 Guidebook"](#) with some adjustments made.

#### Kiyohiko Azuma's Profile

Born in Hyogo prefecture in 1968. Manga artist. His manga 'Azumanga Daioh', published in 1999, was a huge hit.

His ongoing series 'Yotsuba&!' won the manga division award for excellence at the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs 2006 Media Arts Festival.

As of this writing, this series has a total of 10 volumes in print that have sold a record 8 million copies, not just in Japan, but translated into 13 different languages worldwide.

It's a notebook for my manga ideas that's full of dates and opens flat.

I never thought it would get so much attention.

‘Yotsuba&!’ is a manga that introduces us to “Daddy”, and an energetic young girl named Yotsuba, and shows us the ordinary pleasures of their daily lives.

Serialized in the Ascii Media Works publication “Monthly Comic Dengeki Daioh”, this comic is up to its 10<sup>th</sup> volume, and has sold a record 8 million copies. The author of this series is Kiyohiko Azuma.

Shortly after volume 10 of ‘Yotsuba&!’ went on sale, Hobonichi received a flood of mail. They all said “There’s a Hobonichi Day Planner in volume 10 of ‘Yotsuba&!’” If you want to see for yourself, just look at that panel with the butterfly stopper, dual bookmark notebook in it. “Could it be that Mr. Azuma uses our notebooks?” I thought. I contacted Mr. Azuma via his editorial department and found out that was indeed the case.

\* \* \* \* \*

Alright, let’s stop here for a moment!

Wouldn’t you like to read the chapter in volume 10 in which the Hobonichi Notebook appears, called “Yotsuba & Playing”?

For those of you who would, that entire chapter has been made available through the kindness of Mr. Azuma and Ascii Media Works.

But first, for those of you who are completely unfamiliar with ‘Yotsuba&!’, allow me to introduce you to the characters who appear in “Yotsuba & Playing”.



**Yotsuba**

The main character of this story.

A 5 year old girl. She may actually be a foreigner.



**Daddy**

The man Yotsuba lives with.

The reasons for that have not been made clear.

He has the occupation of translator, so he's always at home.



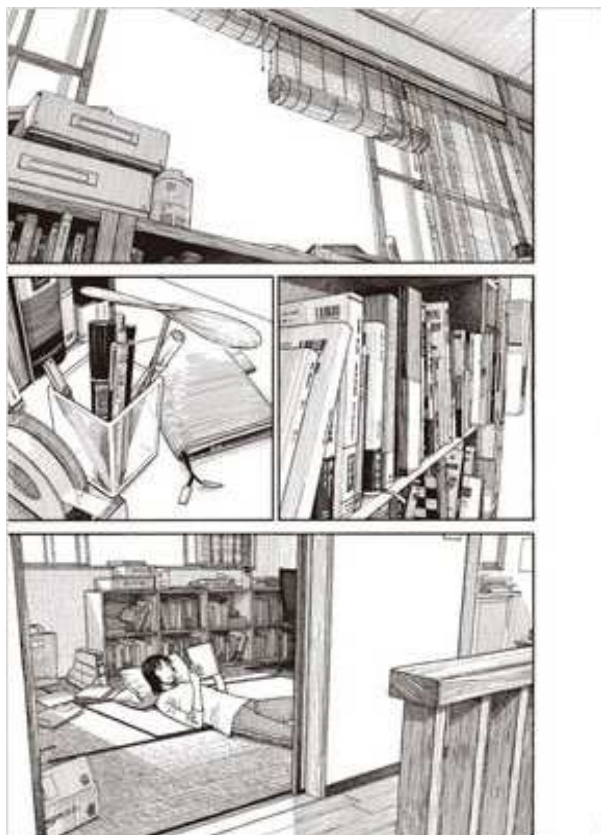
**Ena (Ena Ayase)**

The youngest daughter of the Ayase family  
living next door to Yotsuba and Daddy  
(an elementary school student).

There are many more characters who appear in 'Yotsuba&!', but these are the only three who appear in "Yotsuba & Playing".

As long as you're familiar with these three, you'll be okay.

Now, let's continue!



※Click to start reading chapter 63. Click ‘next’ to go to the next page.

So, how did a Hobonichi Day Planner come to appear in the world of ‘Yotsuba&!’? Let’s continue our discussion with Mr. Azuma to address that.

\* \* \* \* \*

“I told one of my assistants, ‘Daddy uses one of these, so draw it in the scene,’ and then handed him the Hobonichi Day Planner I use. I never thought it would get so much attention (laugh).”

I understand that other things you use, similar to the Hobonichi Day Planner, also appear in ‘Yotsuba&!’. What was it that drew you to Hobonichi Day Planners out of all the other day planners available?

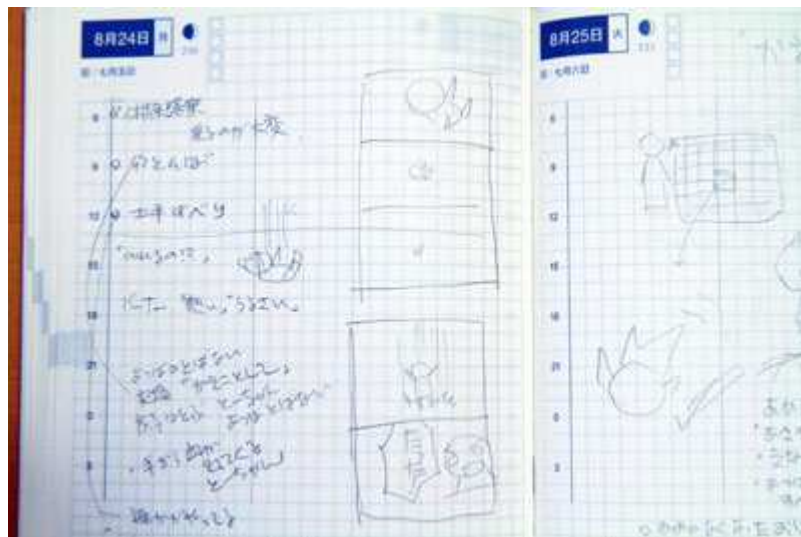


“Once I realized I needed a day planner, having a calendar that began the week on Sunday was one of my selection criteria. Then Satomi, whom I work with, (Hideki Satomi, Director of Yotuba Sutazio) found Hobonichi Day Planners online. The deciding factor was that they could open completely flat. Having a flat surface to draw on makes drawing so much easier.”



While flipping through his day planners from 2009 and 2010, Mr. Azuma jokes, “I don’t exactly keep them pristine, so I don’t like to show them off that much.” They’re full of scribbles. What is this?

“This is basically a notebook for my ideas for the manga. As I come up with ideas, I’ll write them in on the respective day. That’s more or less how I use them. I’m certain I’d forget right away if I didn’t write them down.”



It seems that Mr. Azuma had been using these day planners as idea notebooks.

“It was so handy having them open flat, so at first I just used them as regular notebooks. Then I switched to a loose-leaf since I thought being able to swap out the pages would make it easier to find things. But that idea actually backfired, and it became unmanageable. I decided I needed something a little simpler, so I settled on a day planner.”



And now you're transitioning to using a Hobonichi Day Planner in conjunction with an iPad.

“I’m at a point where I still haven’t decided which is the best way to go, but I’m really into this fully integrated memo app right now. Being able to fit everything onto a single page, no matter how many ideas I come up with can be both a blessing and a curse. I will say that it’s inconvenient not being able to easily sketch in drawings.”

Hehehe, so you’re saying that the Hobonichi Day Planner is superior to the iPad in that regard?

By the way, what was your reason for selecting the one with the green cover?

“It’s for Yotsuba, so naturally I chose the green one.”

Ohh, of course! That makes perfect sense.

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And that’s how we came to bring you how Mr. Azuma uses his day planner. When I think that a Hobonichi Day Planner helped give birth to the lovely, charming story of Yotsuba and her friends, it makes me happy. The actual drawings Mr. Azuma created for ‘Yotsuba&!’ are

included in the Official Guidebook. Please try to take a look at that as well.

Now, there is still another ‘Yotsuba&!’ related feature to come.

Tomorrow I’ll be bringing you something that wasn’t featured in the **Official Guidebook** due to space limitations. Be on the lookout for it!