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Chinese

Absolute Beginner



Unabridged Edition

innovative LANGUAGE

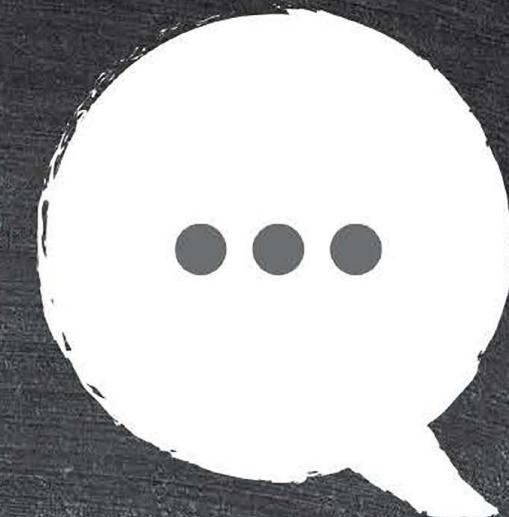
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LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #1

Meeting - What's Your Name in Chinese?

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

1

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你好。
2. B: 你好，你叫什么名字？
3. A: 我叫张林。
4. B: 我叫王小芳。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你好。
2. B: 你好，你叫什麼名字？
3. A: 我叫張林。
4. B: 我叫王小芳。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐhǎo.
2. B: Nǐhǎo, nǐ jiào shénme míngzì?
3. A: Wǒ jiào Zhāng Lín.
4. B: Wǒ jiào Wáng Xiǎofāng.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Hello.
2. B: Hello, what's your name?
3. A: I'm Zhang Lin.
4. B: I'm Wang Xiaofang.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English
你好	你好	nǐhǎo	hello
你	你	nǐ	you
叫	叫	jiào	to call
什么	甚麼	shénme	what
名字	名字	míngzì	name
我	我	wǒ	I, me

SAMPLE SENTENCES

你好，我叫王国易。 Nǐhǎo, wǒ jiào Wáng Guóyì. Hello, I'm Wang Guoyi.	是你吗？ Shì nǐ ma? Is it you?
我叫子安。 Wǒ jiào Zǐ ān. My name is Zi an.	你叫什么名字？ Nǐ jiào shénme míngzì? What is your name?

<p>今年，我妹妹又出了一张专辑，叫《月光》。</p> <p>Jīnnián, wǒ mèimèi yòu chū le yìzhāng zhuānjí, jiào Yuèguāng.</p> <p>My sister put out another album this year called "Moonlight."</p>	<p>你说什么？</p> <p>Nǐ shuō shénme?</p> <p>What did you say?</p>
<p>我忘记他的名字。</p> <p>Wǒ wàngjì tāde míngzì.</p> <p>I forget his name.</p>	<p>我的朋友很帅。</p> <p>Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài.</p> <p>My friend is really handsome.</p>

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

你好 (nǐhǎo) / 您好 (nínhǎo) - "Hello" in Chinese is made up of two words: 你 (nǐ), meaning "you" and 好 (hǎo), meaning "good." On very formal meetings, you can replace the 你 (nǐ) with the formal term for "you," which is 您 (nín). 叫 (jiào) is literally the verb for "to call." So, as in the case of our dialogue, when you are saying, "My name is _____," in Chinese, actually you are saying "I'm called _____."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Pronouns in Chinese

我叫张林。

"I'm Zhang Lin."

Here is a listing of pronouns in Chinese:

Chinese	"English"
<p>我</p> <p>(wǒ)</p>	<p>"I, me"</p>
<p>我们</p> <p>(wǒmen)</p>	<p>"we, us"</p>

你 (nǐ)	"you" - <i>informal</i>
你们 (nǐmen)	"you" - <i>plural</i>
您 (nín)	"you" - <i>formal</i>
他 (tā)	"he, him"
他们 (tāmen)	"they, them"
她 (tā)	"she, her"
她们 (tāmen)	"they, them"
它 (tā)	"it"

What Is Your Name?

In Chinese, as we heard in this lesson's dialogue, one way of asking a person their name is:

你叫什么名字?

Nǐ jiào shénme míngzì?

"What is your name" (literally: "You called what name?")

The question word "what" in Chinese is 什么 (*shénme*).

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Names

Chinese names are given surname first, and then given name. Generally, Chinese names are made up of two or three characters total (including the surname, which is generally just a single character). We see a couple examples of names in this lesson's dialogue.

For Example:

1. 张林

Zhāng Lín

(surname here is 张, given name is 林)

2. 王小芳

Wáng Xiǎofāng

(surname here is 王, given name is 小芳)

Chinese names are full of meaning and not all characters are suitable for a name. It is best to not attempt to choose one's own name in Chinese. Enlist the help of a Chinese friend so you don't end up with a name that will cause some raised eyebrows and snickers.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #2

Meeting in China - Where are You From?

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- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

2

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. 你是哪国人?
2. 我是美国人。你呢?
3. 我是中国人。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 你是哪國人?
2. 我是美國人。你呢?
3. 我是中國人。

PINYIN

1. Nǐ shì nǎ guó rén?
2. Wǒ shì Měiguórén. Nǐ ne?
3. Wǒ shì Zhōngguórén.

ENGLISH

1. Which country are you from?
2. I am American. And you?

CONT'D OVER

3. I am Chinese.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
美国人	美國人	Měiguórén	American person	
人	人	rén	person	noun
是	是	shì	to be	verb
中国人	中國人	Zhōngguórén	Chinese person	
国	國	guó	country, state	noun
你呢	你呢	nǐ ne	how about you	phrase
哪	哪	nǎ / něi	which	question pronoun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

她是美国人。 Tā shì Měiguórén. She is American.	中国人很多。 Zhōngguó rén hěnduō. There are many Chinese people.
他是我哥哥。 Tā shì wǒ gēge. He is my older brother.	他们都是中国人。 Tāmen dōu shì Zhōngguórén. They are all Chinese people.
这是什么国家? Zhè shì shénme guójiā? What country is this?	我叫张飞，你呢? Wǒ jiào Zhāng Fēi, nǐ ne? I am called Zhang Fei, how about you?

我应该用哪把钥匙? Wǒ yīnggāi yòng nǎ bǎ yào shi?	你是哪国人? Nǐ shì nǎ guó rén ?
Which key should I use?	Which country are you from?

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Expressing Ethnicity

你是哪国人?
"Which country are you from?"

In Chinese, ethnicity/nationality expresses itself by simply adding the word 人 (rén) onto the end of the name of the country you are from.

For Example:

1. 美国, *Měiguó* ("America")
2. 美国人, *Měiguórén* ("American person")
3. 中国, *Zhōngguó* ("China")
4. 中国人, *Zhōngguórén* ("Chinese person")

Likewise, to express what city, state, or province you are from, you can use the same phrasing.

For Example:

1. 我是北京人。
Wǒ shì Běijīngrén.
"I'm from Beijing."

Forming a Follow-Up Question

We use 呢 (ne) to form a follow-up question. Meaning, we use it to ask the same question as

the one we previously asked, but about another subject or object. So, as is the case in our dialogue:

我是美国人。你呢?
Wǒ shì Měiguórén. Nǐ ne?
"I am American. And you?"

Basic Word Order

We see a very basic sentence structure that Chinese often uses, as in the sentence:

我是美国人。
Wǒ shì Měiguórén.
"I am American."

The word order here is subject + verb + object.

哪 (*nǎ/něi*) "Which"

To ask a person which country he/she is from, we use the question word 哪 (*nǎ*). Simply put, the "which" in front of the word for "country + person," which gives you, "Which country are you from?"

For Example:

你是哪国人?
Nǐ shì nǎ guó rén?

Which is literally, "You are which country person?"

Please note that we sometimes pronounce the character for "which" (哪) as [*něi*]. Both pronunciations are correct, it's just a matter of personal preference as to which one the speaker uses. The meaning is the same.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Are People in China Staring at You?

People in China are, in general, very curious about foreigners, so expect to get many stares

and lots of practice using this lesson!

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #3

Meeting - China Conversation

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

3

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你喜欢中国吗?
2. B: 喜欢。
3. A: 你喜欢中国菜吗?
4. B: 也喜欢。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你喜歡中國嗎?
2. B: 喜歡。
3. A: 你喜歡中國菜嗎?
4. B: 也喜歡。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ xǐhuān Zhōngguó ma?
2. B: Xǐhuān.
3. A: Nǐ xǐhuān Zhōngguó cài ma?
4. B: Yě xǐhuān.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Do you like China?
2. B: Yes, I like it.
3. A: Do you like Chinese food?
4. B: Yes, I like it too.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
喜欢	喜歡	xǐhuān	to like	verb
中国菜	中國菜	Zhōngguócài	Chinese food	noun
吗	嗎	ma	question marker	particle
也	也	yě	also, too	adverb
中国	中國	Zhōngguó	China	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我喜欢中国菜。 Wǒ xǐhuān Zhōngguócài. I like Chinese food.	中国菜很好吃。 Zhōngguó cài hěn hǎochī. Chinese food is delicious.
你是加拿大人吗? Nǐ shì Jiānádàrén ma? Are you Canadian?	咖啡也好。 Kāfēi yě hǎo. Coffee is good too.
他也是澳大利亚人。 Tā yě shì Àodàlìyà rén. He is also Australian.	你去过中国吗? Nǐ qù guò Zhōngguó ma? Have you been to China before?

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

You can make a lot of words out of the word for China, in Chinese. You just add other terms onto the end to make Chinese things.

For Example:

1. 中国 - *Zhōngguó*
"China"
2. 中国菜 - *Zhōngguó cài*
"Chinese food"
3. 中国人 - *Zhōngguórén*
"Chinese person"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Forming a Yes/No Question

你喜欢中国菜吗?
"Do you like Chinese food?"

When we add 吗 (*ma*) onto the end of a statement, it turns the statement into a yes-no question.

For Example:

1. 你是中国人吗?
Nǐ shì Zhōngguórén ma?
"Are you Chinese?"

Answering a Yes/No Question

To answer in the affirmative, one simply repeats the main verb in the sentence.

For Example:

A: 你喜欢中国吗?
A: *Nǐ xǐhuān Zhōngguó ma?*
A: "Do you like China?"

B: 喜欢。

B: *Xǐhuān*.

B: "I like it."

Forming the Negative - 不 (bù)

不 (bù) is an adverb we use to make verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs negative. When 不 (bù) negates an adjective or adverb, it comes right before that word in the sentence. However, when it modifies a verb, 不 (bù) comes before the whole phrase, including prepositions and auxiliary verbs.

So, in this lesson's dialogue, if we were to "not like" China or Chinese food, we would say:

B: 不喜欢。

B: *Bù xǐhuān*.

B: "I don't like it."

也 (yě)

B: 也喜欢。

B: *Yě xǐhuān*.

B: "I like it too."

The adverb 也 (yě) means "too" or "also." In Chinese, it comes after the subject (if any), and before the verb. The 也 (yě) cannot come before the subject or at the end of the sentence.

For Example:

北京也很好。

Běijīng yě hěn hǎo.

"Beijing is nice too."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Gaining Favor in China

Chinese people love their food, and love to hear that foreigners like it too. So if you would like

to curry favor with your newfound friends in China, praise the food. You are sure to get a lot of dinner invites this way, too!

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #4

Meeting - Studying Chinese

CONTENTS

- Dialogue - Chinese
 - Simplified
 - English
 - Pinyin
 - Traditional
- Vocabulary
- Sample sentences
- Vocabulary phrase usage
- Grammar
- Cultural insight

4

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 你是学生吗？
2. B : 对。我学中文。你呢？
3. A : 我是老师。
4. B : 你可以教我中文！

ENGLISH

1. A : Are you a student?
2. B : Yes, I study Chinese. How about you?
3. A : I am a teacher.
4. B : You can teach me Chinese!

PINYIN

1. A : Nǐ shì xuéshēng ma?
2. B : Dui. Wǒ xué Zhōngwén. Nǐ ne?
3. A : Wǒ shì lǎoshī.
4. B : Nǐ kěyǐ jiāo wǒ Zhōngwén!

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 你是學生嗎？
2. B : 對。我學中文。你呢？
3. A : 我是老師。
4. B : 你可以教我中文！

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
学生	學生	xuéshēng	student	noun
对	對	duì	correct	adjective
学	學	xué	to study	verb
中文	中文	Zhōngwén	Chinese (language)	noun
老师	老師	lǎoshī	teacher	noun
可以	可以	kěyǐ	can	verb
教	教	jiāo	to teach	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

她是大学学生。	对，我是美国人。
<i>Tā shì dàxué xuéshēng.</i>	<i>Duì, wǒ shì Měiguórén.</i>
She is a university student.	Yes, I am American.
你在学什么？	我不学中文。
<i>Nǐ zài xué shénme?</i>	<i>Wǒ bù xué Zhōngwén.</i>
What are you studying?	I don't study Chinese.
张老师很忙。	你可以叫我丽丽。
<i>Zhāng lǎoshī hěn máng.</i>	<i>Nǐ kěyǐ jiào wǒ Lìli.</i>
Teacher Zhang is very busy.	You can call me Lili.
我教中文。	
<i>Wǒ jiāo Zhōngwén.</i>	
I teach Chinese.	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

对 (duì) "correct." There is no set way to say "yes" in Chinese. However, 对 (duì) often expresses an affirmative response.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is Speaking About One's Profession

我是老师。

"I am a teacher."

我是老师。

Wǒ shì lǎoshī.

"I am a teacher."

To tell someone what your profession is, you use this basic sentence structure. Simply put together, subject + verb + object. Just like English, we use the verb "to be" here.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Importance of Chinese Teachers

In the Chinese culture, Chinese revere their teachers. The classroom atmosphere is one of respect, and students take studying very seriously. The classroom is solemn and more formal than in the West, and strict order is enforced.

If you go to study Chinese in China, there are many opportunities to have free practice. Many Chinese students learning English will be more than happy to participate in a language exchange with you, wherein you let them practice their English on you, and you too take a turn practicing Chinese with them. It's a budget-friendly alternative to hiring a tutor!

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #5

Meeting - Time for Class

CONTENTS

Dialogue - Chinese

 Simplified

 English

 Pinyin

 Traditional

Vocabulary

Sample sentences

Grammar

5

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 几点了？
2. B : 九点。
3. A : 哦，我要去上课了。
4. B : 再见。

ENGLISH

1. A : What time is it?
2. B : Nine o'clock.
3. A : Oh, I have to go to class.
4. B : See you.

PINYIN

1. A : Jǐ diǎn le?
2. B : Jiǔ diǎn.
3. A : O, wǒ yào qù shàngkè le.
4. B : Zàijiàn.

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 幾點了？
2. B : 九點。
3. A : 哟，我要去上課了。
4. B : 再見。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
几点了	幾點了	jǐdiǎn le	what time is it	phrase
点	點	diǎn	o'clock	adverb
九	九	jiǔ	nine	numeral
哦	哦	ò	oh	conjunction
要	要	yào	to be going to, have to	verb
去	去	qù	to go	verb
上课	上課	shàngkè	to attend class	verb
再见	再見	zàijiàn	goodbye	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

现在几点了？ <i>Xiànzài jǐ diǎn le?</i> What time is it now?	你的朋友7点来的。 <i>Nǐ de péngyǒu qī diǎn lái de.</i> Your friends came at 7 o'clock.
下午4点。 <i>Xiàwǔ sì diǎn.</i> Four o'clock in the afternoon.	他爸爸一九八九年来自美国。 <i>Tā bàba yī jiǔ bā jiǔ nián lái Měiguó.</i> His dad came to America in 1989.
哦，没有洗手间！ <i>O, méiyǒu xǐshǒujiān.</i> Oh, there is no washroom!	明天我们要去杭州。 <i>Míngtiān wǒmen yào qù Hángzhōu.</i> Tomorrow, we are going to Hangzhou.
下周末谁去海边？ <i>xià zhōumò shéi qù hǎibiān ?</i> Who is going to the beach next weekend?	我去了动物医院。 <i>Wǒ qù le dòngwù yīyuàn.</i> I went to the animal hospital.
我去公园。 <i>Wǒ qù gōngyuán.</i> I'm going to the park.	你几点要上课？ <i>Nǐ jǐ diǎn yào shàngkè?</i> What time do you have to go to class?
再见，我会想你。 <i>Zàijiàn, wǒ huì xiǎng nǐ.</i> Goodbye, I'll miss you.	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Asking and Telling the Time.

几点了？

"What time is it?"

To ask the time, you can use the phrase in this lesson's dialogue:

几点了？

Jǐ diǎn le?

"What time is it?"

Here is some basic time-telling:

1. 九点。

Jiǔ diǎn

"Nine o'clock"

OR

2. 九点钟

Jiǔ diǎn zhōng

"Nine o'clock"

Either option is acceptable.

要..."To Have to Do Something"

哦，我要去上课了。

O, wǒ yào qù shàngkè le.

"Oh, I have to go to class."

The 要 (*Yào*), as used in this sentence pattern, is an auxiliary verb we use to talk about what one will do or what one is obliged to do in the future.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #6

Eating - What Do You Want to Eat?

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- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

6

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我饿了。
2. B: 你想吃什么？
3. A: 我想吃面条。
4. B: 好。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我餓了。
2. B: 你想吃什麼？
3. A: 我想吃麵條。
4. B: 好。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒ è le.
2. B: Nǐ xiǎng chī shénme?
3. A: Wǒ xiǎng chī miàntiáo.
4. B: Hǎo.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: I'm hungry.
2. B: What do you want to eat?
3. A: I want to eat noodles.
4. B: Okay.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
饿	餓	è	hungry	adjective
想	想	xiǎng	would like, to want,love to	verb, phrase
吃	吃	chī	to eat	verb
什么	什麼	shénme	what	pronoun
面条	麵條	miàntiáo	noodle	noun
好	好	hǎo	good	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>我不饿。 Wǒ bù è</p> <p>I'm not hungry.</p>	<p>我很想去但是太贵了。 wǒ hěn xiǎng qù dànshì tài guì le .</p> <p>I would love to go but it is too expensive.</p>
<p>我想去看看。 Wǒ xiǎng qù kànkan.</p> <p>I want to have a look.</p>	<p>我想吃薯片。 hǎochī .</p> <p>"Wǒ xiǎng chī shǔpiàn . hǎochī ."</p> <p>I want to eat potato chips. Delicious.</p>

她每天都吃很多蔬菜。 tā měi tiān dōu chī hěn duō shūcài . She eats a lot of vegetables every day.	要吃什么? Yào chī shénme? What do you want to eat?
你说什么? Nǐ shuō shénme? What did you say?	这家餐厅面条很有名. Zhè jiā cāntīng miàntiáo hěn yōumíng. The noodles at this restaurant are very famous.
我感觉很好。 wǒ gǎnjué hěn hǎo . I feel good.	他真的是个很好的人。善良又大方。 tā zhēnde shì gè hěn hǎo de rén . shànliáng yòu dàfāng . He is a really good person, kind and generous.
加州很好。 Jiāzhōu hěn hǎo. California is very nice.	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

好 (*hǎo*) "good"

This is a very versatile word in Chinese. In the context of this lesson, we use it to acknowledge; much like "okay" or "all right."

我饿了。 (*Wǒ è le.*) "I'm hungry."

This is a set phrase. Throw it out there, and there is sure to be someone offering to treat you to something delicious to eat!

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is, "Would Like, to Desire, to Want" - 想 (*xiǎng*)

你想吃什么?

"What do you want to eat?"

The verb 想 (*xiǎng*) has a few different meanings and usages. In this dialogue, a modal verb indicates the desire to do something.

我想吃面条。

Wǒ xiǎng chī miàntiáo.

"I want to eat noodles."

When used in this context, 想 (*xiǎng*) must be followed by a verb, a clause, or a sentence.

Using the Question Word 'What' - 什么 (*shénme*)

你想吃什么？

Nǐ xiǎng chī shénme?

"What do you want to eat?"

When using the question word "what" in a sentence, the word order is different than English. The "what" comes at the end, not at the beginning, as if it would in English. In Chinese, the order is like this: "You would like to eat what?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Quickest Way to a Chinese Friend's Heart...

The Chinese love their food, and love to share a meal with friends. In China, if someone invites you to a meal, it generally means that they are treating. The quickest way to a Chinese friend's heart is to compliment the food. The Chinese are passionate about their cuisine and love to introduce the famous foods of their region to a foreign friend.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #7

Eating - Get Me to a Restaurant!

CONTENTS

- Dialogue - Chinese
- Simplified
- English
- Pinyin
- Traditional
- Vocabulary
- Sample sentences
- Vocabulary phrase usage
- Grammar
- Cultural insight

7

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 不好意思，这儿有饭馆儿吗？
2. B : 在那儿。
3. A : 谢谢你。
4. B : 不客气。

ENGLISH

1. A : Excuse me, is there a restaurant around here?
2. B : Over there.
3. A : Thank you.
4. B : You're welcome.

PINYIN

1. A : Bùhǎoyìsi, zhèr yǒu fànguǎnr ma?
2. B : Zài nàr.
3. A : Xièxie nǐ.
4. B : Bù kèqì

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 不好意思，這兒有飯館兒嗎？
2. B : 在那兒。
3. A : 謝謝你。
4. B : 不客氣。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
不好意思	不好意思	bùhǎo yìsi	excuse me	phrase, expression
这儿	這兒	zhèr	here	
有	有	yǒu	to have	verb
饭馆儿	飯館兒	fànguǎnr	restaurant	noun
在	在	zài	at	
那儿	那兒	nàr	there	
谢谢你	謝謝你	Xièxie nǐ	thank you	phrase
不客气	不客氣	Bù kèqi	you're welcome	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

不好意思， 你见过我的狗吗？ <i>Bùhǎoyìsi, nǐ jiànguò wǒ de gǒu ma ?</i> Excuse me, have you seen my dog?	不好意思， 请再说一遍， 好吗？ <i>Bùhǎoyìsi, qǐng zài shuō yī biàn, hǎo ma?</i> Excuse me, please say that again, okay?
我在这儿。 <i>Wǒ zài zhèr.</i> I'm here.	我没有钱。 <i>Wǒ méiyǒu qián .</i> I have no money.
有电话吗？ <i>yǒu diànhuà ma ?</i> Do you have a phone?	他们院子里有太多垃圾了。 <i>tāmen yuànzi lǐ yǒu tài duō lājī le .</i> They have too much garbage in their garden.
这儿有图书馆吗？ <i>Zhèr yǒu túshūguǎn ma?</i> Is there a library around here?	这家饭馆儿很有名。 <i>Zhè jiā fànguǎnr hěn yǒumíng.</i> This restaurant is really famous.
他在后面。 <i>Tā zài hòumiàn.</i> He is in the back.	洗手间在那儿。 <i>Xǐshǒujiān zài nàr.</i> The washroom is there.
谢谢你的礼物。 <i>Xièxie nǐ de lǐwù.</i> Thank you for your gift.	不客气。 <i>Bù kèqi</i> You're welcome.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Being polite in Chinese:

不好意思 (*Bùhǎoyì*) is a word that one can use to apologize or to excuse oneself. It is a good word to use to open a conversation when making an inquiry with a stranger.

謝謝你 (*Xièxie nǐ*) means "thank you." You can also just say 謝謝 (*Xièxie*) for short.

Restaurants:

There are a few ways to refer to a restaurant in Chinese. Our dialogue uses 饭馆儿 (*fànguǎnr*), but at times you will hear other terms such as 饭店 (*fàndiàn*) or 餐厅 (*cāntīng*).

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 有 (*yǒu*) "to express existence"

这儿有饭馆儿吗？

"Is there a restaurant around here?"

有 (*yǒu*) is a verb that we can use to indicate existence (like "there is" or "there are" in English). Typically, a phrase indicating time or place will precede *yǒu*, as in our lesson dialogue:

这儿有饭馆儿吗？

Zhèr yǒu fànguǎnr ma?

"Is there a restaurant here?"

The pattern is:

(time / place) + *yǒu* + (noun)

在 (*zài*) "at, in"

在 (*zài*) is a preposition we use to identify the location where an action takes place. In most cases, it precedes the verb phrase but follows after both the subject and time phrases. The location follows directly after the preposition 在 (*zài*).

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Never Far from a Place to Eat in China!

In China, you are never far from a restaurant. From large, posh restaurants to side of the road stalls, delicious food is always around the corner. It's always good to ask a local's opinion. Of course...they know where the good food is at!

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #8

Eating - Ordering Noodles

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

8

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你点什么?
2. B: 我们想吃面条。
3. A: 你们都吃面条吗?
4. B: 对。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你點什麼?
2. B: 我們想吃面條。
3. A: 你們都吃面條嗎?
4. B: 對。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ diǎn shénme?
2. B: Wǒmen xiǎng chī miàntiáo.
3. A: Nǐmen dōu chī miàntiáo ma?
4. B: Duì.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: What do you want to order?
2. B: We want to eat noodles.
3. A: You both are having noodles?
4. B: Yes.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
什么	什麼	shénme	what	pronoun
点	點	diǎn	to order (food)	verb
都	都	dōu	all, both	adverb,adjective
我们	我們	wǒmen	we, us	pronoun
你们	你們	nǐmen	you (plural)	
想	想	xiǎng	would like, to want,love to	verb, phrase
吃	吃	chī	to eat	verb
对	對	duì	correct	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

你说什么? Nǐ shuō shénme?	你帮我点吧。 Nǐ bāng wǒ diǎn ba.
What did you say?	You order for me.
两本书都在打折。 liǎng běn shū dōu zài dǎzhé.	我们都喜欢秋天。 Wǒ men dōu xǐhuān qiūtiān.
Both books are on sale.	We all like autumn.

我们都喜欢他。 Wǒmen dōu xǐhuān tā. We all like him.	我们都很好。 Wǒmen dōu hěn hǎo. We are all very good.
你们来过吗? Nǐmen lái guò ma? Have you been here before?	我很想去但是太贵了。 wǒ hěn xiǎng qù dànshì tài guì le . I would love to go but it is too expensive.
我想去看看。 Wǒ xiǎng qù kànkan. I want to have a look.	我想吃薯片。 好吃。 "Wǒ xiǎng chī shǔpiàn . hǎochī ." I want to eat potato chips. Delicious.
她每天都吃很多蔬菜。 tā měi tiān dōu chī hěn duō shūcài . She eats a lot of vegetables every day.	要吃什么? Yào chī shénme? What do you want to eat?
对，我是美国人。 Duì, wǒ shì Měiguórén. Yes, I am American.	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is "All, Both" - 都 (dōu)

**你们都吃面条吗?
"You both are having noodles?"**

都 (dōu) is an adverb we use to express the concept "all," or in the case of two things, "both," regarding the subject or the topic.

The sentence pattern is:

(subject) + dōu + (verb phrase)

Our lesson dialogue had an example of this kind of sentence:

你们都吃面条吗?

Nǐmen dōu chī miàntiáo ma?

"You both are eating noodles?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Getting Their Attention in China!

To get a waiter/waitress's attention in China, you may need to learn the phrase 服务员 (*fúwùyuán*), which means "waiter." Most times, to get service in a restaurant, you will have to use this phrase to call the waiter over to your table for service. Don't be shy!

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #9

Eating - Delicious!

CONTENTS

- Dialogue - Chinese
- Simplified
- English
- Pinyin
- Traditional
- Vocabulary
- Sample sentences
- Vocabulary phrase usage
- Grammar
- Cultural insight

9

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 好吃吗？
2. B : 嗯，很好吃。
3. A : 我吃饱了。
4. B : 我也吃饱了。

ENGLISH

1. A : Are they delicious?
2. B : Yes, very delicious.
3. A : I'm full.
4. B : I'm full too.

PINYIN

1. A : Hǎochī ma?
2. B : Èn, hěn hǎochī.
3. A : Wǒ chī bǎo le.
4. B : Wǒ yě chī bǎo le.

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 好吃嗎？
2. B : 嗯，很好吃。
3. A : 我吃飽了。
4. B : 我也吃飽了。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
好吃	好吃	hăochī	delicious	adjective
嗯	嗯	en	uh-huh, hmm, huh	interjectory particle
很	很	hĕn	very, very much	adverb
吃饱了	吃飽了	chī bǎo le	full (of food)	expression
也	也	yě	also, too	adverb
好	好	hăo	good	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

這個女的正在享受好吃的披薩。	這個披薩看起來很好吃。
<i>Zhège nǚ de zhèngzài xiǎngshòu hăochī de pīsà.</i> The woman is enjoying delicious pizza.	<i>Zhège pīsà kànqǐlái hĕn hăochī.</i> The pizza looks delicious.
好吃的披薩 <i>hăochī de pīsà</i> delicious pizza	這牛肉非常好吃。 <i>Zhè niúròu fēicháng hăochī.</i> This beef is very delicious.
巧克力蛋糕很好吃。 <i>Qiǎokèlì dàngāo hĕn hăochī.</i> Chocolate cake is pretty delicious.	这道菜很好吃！ <i>Zhè dào cài hĕn hăo chī.</i> This dish is very delicious!
嗯？迈克？你怎么在这儿？ <i>En? Mài kè? Nǐ zěnme zài zhèr?</i> Huh? Mike? Why are you here?	今天玩得很开心。 <i>Jīntiān wán de hĕn kāixīn.</i> Today was great fun.
吃饱了才能走。 <i>Chībǎo le cǎinéng zǒu.</i> You can't leave until you are full.	咖啡也好。 <i>Kāfēi yě hăo.</i> Coffee is good too.
他也是澳大利亚人。 <i>Tā yě shì Àodàliyà rén.</i> He is also Australian.	她是個好人。 <i>Tā shì ge hăorén.</i> She is a good person.
好吃的食物 <i>hăochī de shíwù</i> good food	對身體好 <i>duì shēntǐ hăo</i> good for one's body

蔬菜對你的身體好。	我感觉很好。
<i>Shūcài duì nǐ de shēntǐ hǎo.</i>	<i>wǒ gǎnjué hěn hǎo .</i>
Vegetables are good for you.	I feel good.
他真的是个很好的人。善良又大方。	加州很好。
<i>tā zhēnde shì gè hěn hǎo de rén . shànliáng yòu dàfāng .</i>	<i>Jiāzhōu hěn hǎo.</i>
He is a really good person, kind and generous.	California is very nice.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

吃饱了。 (*chī bǎo le*) "I'm full!" is an important phrase to learn in Chinese. Chinese people love to keep feeding you, and as long as you keep eating, plan to see your plate getting dished out with more food! 嗯 (*en*) is a great catch-all acknowledgment word. Depending on the tone of voice, it can mean anything from a simple acknowledgment, like we have here, similar to "uh-huh" in English, to a more questioning "huh?" Listen for the tone of voice and context, and it will be easy to get which 嗯 (*en*) it is.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 也 (*yě*).

我也吃饱了

"I'm full too."

我也吃饱了。

Wǒ yě chī bǎo le.

"I'm full too."

The adverb 也 (*yě*) means "too" or "also." In Chinese, it comes after the subject (if any), and before the verb. The 也 (*yě*) cannot come before the subject or at the end of the sentence.

Another Example:

北京也很好。

Běijīng yě hěn hǎo.

"Beijing is nice too."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Dishing it Out in China!

Chinese people love to feed their guests—it's an important way of showing hospitality in Chinese culture. As long as you keep eating, plan to see your plate getting dished out with more food! Using 吃饱了 (*chī bǎo le*) is a good way to stem the flow of food coming your way.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #10

Eating - Waiter, the Bill!

CONTENTS

- Dialogue - Chinese
- Simplified
- English
- Pinyin
- Traditional
- Vocabulary
- Sample sentences
- Vocabulary phrase usage
- Grammar
- Cultural insight

10

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 服务员, 买单 !
2. B : 您好, 十八元。
3. A : 哇, 真便宜 !
4. B : 十八块钱 !

ENGLISH

1. A : Waiter, the bill!
2. B : Hello. Eighteen RMB.
3. A : Wow, so cheap!
4. B : Eighteen RMB!

PINYIN

1. A : Fúwùyuán, mǎidān!
2. B : Nínghǎo, shíbā yuán.
3. A : Wa, zhēn piányì!
4. B : Shíbā kuài qián!

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 服務員, 買單 !
2. B : 您好, 十八元。
3. A : 哇, 真便宜 !
4. B : 十八塊錢 !

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
十八	十八	shíbā	eighteen	numeral
买单	買單	mǎidān	to bring the check (at a restaurant)	phrase
便宜	便宜	pián yì	inexpensive; cheap	adjective
块	塊	kuài	(measure word for money)	measure word
服务员	服務員	fúwùyuán	waiter	noun
元	元	yuán	main denomination of the RMB	
钱	錢	qián	money	noun
哇	哇	wa	wow	interjectory particle
真	真	zhēn	really	adverb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

十八年前 <i>shíbā nián qián</i> eighteen years ago	十八號 <i>shíbā hào</i> number eighteen
數字十八被寫在門上。 <i>Shùzì shíbā bì xiězài mén shàng.</i> The number eighteen is written on the door.	十八 <i>shíbā</i> 18
十八怎么样？ <i>Shíbā zěnmeyàng?</i> What about eighteen kuai?	服务员，买单！ <i>Fúwùyuán, mǎidān!</i> Waiter, the bill!
便宜一点儿，可以吗？ <i>Pián yì yìdiǎnr, kěyǐ ma?</i> Can (you) make it a little cheaper?	这条裙子一百块钱。 <i>Zhè tiáo qúnzi yì bǎi kuài qián.</i> This skirt is a hundred RMB.
服务员，买单！ <i>Fúwùyuán, mǎidān!</i> Waiter, the bill!	一共二十元。 <i>Yígòng èrshí yuán.</i> All together, it's twenty RMB.
花钱 <i>huā qián</i> spend money	那個男人在付錢。 <i>Nàge nánrén zài fù qián.</i> The man is paying money.

美鈔	付錢買東西
<i>Měichāo</i>	<i>fù qián mǎi dōngxi</i>
US paper money	pay money for goods
紙幣	錢用來支付物品或服務。
<i>zhǐbì</i>	<i>Qián yònglái zhīfù wùpǐn huò fúwù.</i>
paper money	Money is used as payment for goods and services.
裡面有錢的錢包	16块钱。
<i>lǐmian yǒu qián de qiánbāo</i>	<i>Shí liù kuài qián.</i>
wallet with money inside	Sixteen Renminbi.
哇，好多事情啊。	今天真热。
<i>Wa, hǎo duō shìqíng a.</i>	<i>Jīntiān zhēn rè.</i>
Wow, so many things!	It's really hot today.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

服务员 (*Fúwùyuán*) "Waiter"

This is the standard term of address for a waiter in a restaurant in China. In some areas, a waitress will be referred to as 小姐 (*xiǎojie*), which means "Miss." However, in some areas, this term has a negative connotation, so 服务员 (*Fúwùyuán*) may be the better term to stick to.

买单 (*mǎidān*) "the bill"

In China, generally the waiter will not bring the bill until you use this term to ask for it.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Money Words

十八块钱！

"Eighteen RMB!"

There are a few different ways to refer to the Chinese Renminbi in everyday speech.

1. 18元 (*yuán*) (more formal)

2. 18块钱 (*kuài qián*)

OR, for short:

3. 18块 (*kuài*)

真 + (adjective)

真便宜！ (*zhēn pián yì!*) "Really cheap!"

There are a few ways to intensify adjectives in Chinese. One way is using 真 + the adjective, as we saw in this lesson dialogue. You can also use:

1. 很便宜

hěn piányì

"very cheap"

2. 非常便宜

fēicháng piányì

"extremely cheap"

Measure Words

Measure words are a type of Chinese word we use to count or measure nouns. Most nouns in Chinese have one or more measure words associated with them. Similar nouns often use the same measure word. For example, *zhī* is the measure word for most animals: *niǎo* ("bird"), *gǒu* ("dog"), and *māo* ("cat") all use it.

English has some words, which are similar to Chinese measure words. For example, you can't say "a bread." Instead, you say "a slice of bread." The word "slice" functions the same way as Chinese measure words. You always use these words when you are enumerating an amount of something. We see an example of this in today's dialogue where it talks about an amount of money.

For Example:

18块钱 (18 kuài qián)

The measure word for "money" is 块 (*kuài*), as we see here. You can think of it as eighteen 'pieces' of money.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Restaurants

You may find the culture of a Chinese restaurant quite different from what you are used to in your home country. Chinese restaurants are generally very noisy and boisterous. The service is different as well. In most cases, you have to call out to the waiter for service. So learn 服务员 (*fúwùyuán*), and be ready to call it out over the din, or you may be waiting longer than you anticipate for the waiter to appear.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #11

Lights, Camera, Chinese Fame!

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

11

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你是外国人吗?
2. B: 对不起，我听不懂。
3. A: 哦，你是外国人!
4. B: 我听不懂。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你是外國人嗎?
2. B: 對不起，我聽不懂。
3. A: 哟，你是外國人!
4. B: 我聽不懂。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ shì wàiguórén ma?
2. B: Duìbùqǐ,wǒ tīngbùdǒng.
3. A: O, nǐ shì wàiguórén!
4. B: Wǒ tīngbùdǒng.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Are you a foreigner?
2. B: I'm sorry, I don't understand.
3. A: Oh, you are a foreigner!
4. B: I don't understand.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
外国人	外國人	wàiguórén	foreigner	noun
对不起	對不起	duìbùqǐ	I'm sorry	phrase
听不懂	聽不懂	tīng bù dǒng	to not understand	verb
哦	哦	ò	oh	conjunction
是	是	shì	to be	

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>外国人要学好汉语声调很困难。 Wàiguórén yào xuéhǎo hànyǔ shēngdiào hěn kùnnán.</p> <p>It is difficult for a foreigner to learn Chinese tones well.</p>	<p>对不起,我很忙。 Duìbùqǐ, wǒ hěn máng.</p> <p>Sorry, I'm very busy.</p>
<p>我听不懂, 请再说一遍, 好吗? Wǒ tīngbùdǒng, qǐng zài shuō yí biàn, hǎo ma?</p> <p>I cannot understand. Please say it again, OK?</p>	<p>你说的话我听不懂。 Nǐ shuō de huà wǒ tīngbùdǒng.</p> <p>I don't understand what you are saying.</p>

哦, 没有洗手间! O, méiyǒu xǐshǒujiān.	她老公是医生。 Tā lǎogōng shì yīshēng.
Oh, there is no washroom!	Her husband is a doctor.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

对不起 (*duibùqǐ*) is another word you can use to apologize or excuse yourself in Chinese. We generally use it interchangeably with 不好意思 (*bùhǎoyìsi*). 外国人, *wàiguórén* ("foreigner")—you are likely to hear this word a lot as you walk the streets of China. Sometimes you will even hear people call it out to you or others as you pass. The Chinese are very curious about foreigners, and the smaller the city, the more attention you will garner, so be prepared! We use 听不懂 (*tīngbùdǒng*) specifically when speaking of 'not understanding' something you heard.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 听不懂 ("I don't understand")

我听不懂。

Wǒ tīngbùdǒng.

"I don't understand"

听不懂, (*tīngbùdǒng*) "I don't understand"

Verb complements like the one here are special structures in Chinese that we use to indicate that it is or is not possible to reach a conclusion or result. To break it down, 听不懂 (*tīngbùdǒng*) literally means "hear not understand." You use this phrase in particular when you don't understand something that has been said.

On the flip side, if you do understand, you can use this phrase to let them know:

听得懂 (*tīngdedǒng*)

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Breaking the Stereotype Barrier

China's foreign population is growing at a rapid pace. Enticed by economic opportunities, cultural, and travel opportunities, we find people from all over the world within China's borders. While this population is growing, it is still minuscule compared to the size of the native Chinese population. Outside of large urban centers such as Shanghai, and Beijing, the opportunity of seeing a foreign face is scant. If you travel to smaller cities and villages, you will probably draw stares from the locals. Don't be offended. You now have tasted what it is like to be a movie star, drawing attention wherever you go. In many cases, you may be the first foreigner that a Chinese person has ever seen. If this is the case, take advantage of the opportunity, and practice out your Chinese. The person may be very bewildered since what they know about foreigners comes from mass media and second hand stories. Take the chance to break stereotypes.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #12

The Great Chinese Potty Dilemma

CONTENTS

- Dialogue - Chinese
- Simplified
- English
- Pinyin
- Traditional
- Vocabulary
- Sample sentences
- Vocabulary phrase usage
- Grammar
- Cultural insight

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DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 洗手间在哪儿？
2. B : 没有洗手间。
3. A : 没有洗手间？
4. B : 没有。

ENGLISH

1. A : Where is the bathroom?
2. B : We don't have a bathroom.
3. A : You don't have a bathroom?
4. B : No, we don't.

PINYIN

1. A : Xǐshǒujiān zài nǎr?
2. B : Méiyǒu xǐshǒujiān.
3. A : Méiyǒu xǐshǒujiān?
4. B : Méiyǒu.

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 洗手間在哪兒？
2. B : 沒有洗手間。
3. A : 沒有洗手間？
4. B : 沒有。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
洗手间	洗手間	xǐshǒujiān	bathroom	noun
在	在	zài	at	
哪儿	哪兒	nǎr	where	pronoun
没有	沒有	méiyǒu	to not have	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

洗手间在那儿。 <i>Xǐshǒujiān zài nǎr.</i> The washroom is there.	他在后面。 <i>Tā zài hòumiàn.</i> He is in the back.
你们去哪儿？ <i>Nǐmen qù nǎr?</i> Where are you going?	我没有见过他。 <i>Wǒ méiyǒu jiàn guò tā.</i> I haven't seen him before.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

洗手间 (*xǐshǒujiān*) "washroom/bathroom" literally means, "wash hands room." You can also use the term 厕所 (*cèsuǒ*) "toilet" to inquire after the facilities.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 没有 ("to not have") and 哪儿 ("where")

洗手间在哪儿？

Xǐshǒujiān zài nǎr?

"Where is the bathroom?"

没有洗手间。 (*Méiyǒu xǐshǒujiān*) "We don't have a bathroom."

没有 (*méiyǒu*), literally, "to not have." This is the negative form of the verb 有 (*yǒu*), which means "to have" when the subject is something that can have possession—people, things, places, etc.

The negation of the verb 有 (*yǒu*) is always 没有 (*méiyǒu*). It does not take 不 (*bù*) in its negative form like most other verbs.

哪儿 (nǎr) "Where"

洗手间在哪儿？ (*Xǐshǒujiān zài nǎr?*) "Where is the bathroom?"

Unlike English, when asking the location of something, the "where" comes at the end of the question in Chinese. The 在 (*zài*) is a preposition meaning "at" or "in."

There are two ways of saying "where" in Chinese, depending on the region the speaker is from. One is as in our dialogue: 哪儿 (*nǎr*). The other is 哪里 (*nǎlǐ*). They are interchangeable.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Bathroom Basics

Bathrooms in China have a reputation for being scary places, however in recent years, bigger cities like Beijing and Shanghai have done a lot to build and clean up public bathrooms. In many areas, you can find a clean public bathroom to use, for a small token fee. As a tip, you may want to carry toilet paper with you at all times, as many bathrooms are not equipped with toilet paper. With the rise of fast food restaurants and coffee chains in China, you also can try these sorts of places when you are in need of a bathroom.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #13

Essentials - Let Me Through!

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

13

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 对不起，让一下。
2. B: 嗯？
3. A: 请让一下。
4. B: 哦，对不起。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 對不起，讓一下。
2. B: 嗯？
3. A: 請讓一下。
4. B: 哟，對不起。

PINYIN

1. A: Duìbùqǐ, ràng yíxià.
2. B: En?
3. A: Qǐng ràng yíxià.
4. B: O, duìbùqǐ.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Excuse me, let me through.
2. B: Huh?
3. A: Please let me through.
4. B: Oh, sorry.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
对不起	對不起	duìbùqǐ	sorry, excuse me	expression
让一下	讓一下	ràng yíxià	let (me) through	phrase
嗯	嗯	en	uh-huh, hmm, huh	interjectory particle
请	請	qǐng	please	

SAMPLE SENTENCES

对不起, 请问长城饭店在哪儿? Duìbùqǐ, qǐng wèn Chángchéng Fàndiàn zài nǎr? Excuse me, can you tell me where the Great Wall Hotel is?	不好意思, 让一下。 Bùhǎoyìsi, ràng yíxià. Sorry, can you let me through?
嗯? 迈克? 你怎么在这儿? En? Mài kè? Nǐ zěnme zài zhèr? Huh? Mike? Why are you here?	哦, 不好意思, 请坐。 O, bùhǎoyìsi, qǐngzuò. Oh, sorry! Please sit.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

对不起 (*duìbùqǐ*) is another word you can use to apologize or excuse yourself in Chinese. We generally use it interchangeably with 不好意思 (*bùhăoyìsi*).

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Moderating Tone of Voice

请让一下。

"Please let me through."

让一下 (*ràng yíxià*)

Tacked onto the end of a verb, 一下 (*yíxià*) softens the tone of a statement. It is more polite. Some other commonly used expressions using 一下 (*yíxià*) are:

1. 看一下
kàn yíxià
"Have a look."
2. 听一下
tīng yíxià
"Have a listen."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Compactor

This dialogue will come in handy as you maneuver your way through the crowded buses, subways, and streets of China. Many times in China, you may find yourself waiting in a large jumble of people, instead of an orderly line. The rules of engagement change from politeness to every man for themselves. Even if there is one inch between you and the person in front of you, it is considered open space. This is especially true while waiting in line at ticket counters and train stations.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #14

Essentials - Can You Write That Down?

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 3 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 4 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 5 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

14

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我们想去北海公园，你知道在哪儿吗？
2. B: 知道。
3. A: 你可以写一下吗？
4. B: 当然。
5. A: 谢谢。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我們想去北海公園，你知道在哪兒嗎？
2. B: 知道。
3. A: 你可以寫一下嗎？
4. B: 當然。
5. A: 謝謝。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒmen xiǎng qù Běihǎi Gōngyuán, nǐ zhīdào zài nǎr ma?
2. B: Zhīdào.
3. A: Nǐ kěyǐ xiě yíxià ma?

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Dāngrán.

5. A: Xièxie.

ENGLISH

1. A: We want to go to Beihai Park; do you know where it is?

2. B: Yes.

3. A: Can you write it down?

4. B: Of course.

5. A: Thanks.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
北海公园	北海公園	Běihǎi Gōngyuán	Beihai Park	noun
想	想	xiǎng	would like, to want, love to	verb, phrase
当然	當然	dāngrán	of course, indeed	phrase
一下	一下	yíxià	for a while	measure word
写	寫	xiě	to write	verb
可以	可以	kěyǐ	can	verb
哪儿	哪兒	nǎr	where	pronoun
在	在	zài	at	

知道	知道	zhīdào	to know, know	verb
去	去	qù	to go	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我们周末去北海公园吧。 Wǒmen zhōumò qù Běihǎi gōngyuán ba.	How about we go to Beihai Park on the weekend?	我很想去但是太贵了。 wǒ hěn xiǎng qù dànshì tài guì le .	I would love to go but it is too expensive.
我想去看看。 Wǒ xiǎng qù kànkan.	I want to have a look.	我当然喜欢！ Wǒ dāngrán xǐhuān!	Of course I like it!
你等我一下。 Nǐ děng wǒ yíxià.	Wait for me a moment.	你写字很漂亮。 Nǐ xiězì hěn piàoliàng.	You write so beautifully.
你可以叫我丽丽。 Nǐ kěyǐ jiào wǒ Lìli.	You can call me Lili.	你们去哪儿? Nǐmen qù nǎr?	Where are you going?
他在后面。 Tā zài hòumiàn.	He is in the back.	你知道她的名字吗? Nǐ zhīdào tā de míngzì ma?	Do you know her name?
也许我们永远不会知道这个习惯是来源于哪里。 yěxǔ wǒmen yǒngyuǎn búhuì zhīdào zhège xíguàn shì láiyuán yú nǎlǐ .	We will probably never know the origins of this habit.	我知道问题的答案。 Wǒ zhīdào wèntí de dáàn .	I know the answer to the question.
你知道他是谁吗? Nǐ zhīdào tā shì shéi ma?	Do you know who he is?	我去宾馆。 Wǒ qù bīnguǎn.	I'm going to the hotel.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

北海公园 (*Běihǎi gōngyuán*) is a famous park northwest of the Forbidden City in Beijing.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Moderating Tone of Voice, 想 ("to desire"), and Answering Yes/No Questions

你可以写一下吗?

"Can you write it down?"

写一下 (*xiě yíxià*) "Write it down."

Tacked onto the end of a verb, 一下 (*yíxià*) softens the tone of a statement. It is more polite. Some other commonly used expressions using 一下 (*yíxià*) are:

1. 看一下
kàn yíxià
"Have a look."

2. 听一下
tīng yíxià
"Have a listen."

想, *xiǎng* ("Would like, to desire, to want")

The verb 想 (*xiǎng*) has a few different meanings and usages. In this dialogue, it is a modal verb that indicates the desire to do something.

For Example:

1. 我们想去北海公园...
Wǒmen xiǎng qù Běihǎi Gōngyuán...
"We want to go to Beihai Park..."

When used in this context, we must follow 想 (*xiǎng*) with a verb, a clause, or a sentence.

Answering a Yes/No Question

To answer in the affirmative, one simply repeats the main verb in the sentence.

For Example:

1. 你知道在哪儿吗?
Nǐ zhīdào zài nǎr ma?
"Do you know where it is?"

2. 知道。
Zhīdào.
"Yes."

To answer in the negative, one just adds the word '不' (*bù*) in front of the verb. 不 (*bù*) is the word we use in Chinese to express the negative.

Please note that we often drop the subject in Chinese. No need to say, "I know." You can simply say "know."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Chinese Written Word

At times, even Chinese people need to see things written down (sometimes on paper, or sometimes they will even trace a character out onto the palm of their hand) because a lot of Chinese words are homophones, meaning they are different characters, but have the same pronunciation. So sometimes, the best way to avoid confusion is to have something written down. It can ward off a lot of confusion!

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #15 Essentials - No, Thanks!

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 3 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

15

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 来，尝一尝。
2. B: 不要，谢谢。
3. A: 来吧。很好吃。
4. B: 我不要。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 來，嘗一嘗。
2. B: 不要，謝謝。
3. A: 來吧。很好吃。
4. B: 我不要。

PINYIN

1. A: Lái, chángyìcháng.
2. B: Bú yào, xièxie.
3. A: Lái ba. Hěn hǎochī.

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Wǒ bú yào.

ENGLISH

1. A: Come, have a taste.
2. B: I don't want any, thanks.
3. A: Come on. It's delicious.
4. B: I don't want it.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
来	來	lái	to come	verb
尝	嘗	cháng	to taste	verb
不	不	bù	(negative prefix)	adverb
要	要	yào	to want	verb
吧	吧	ba	(particle; denotes suggestion)	particle
很	很	hěn	very, very much	adverb
好吃	好吃	hăochī	delicious	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

他今天晚上来。 Tā jīntiān wǎnshàng lái. He is coming tonight.	尝尝这个。 Chángcháng zhègè. Have a taste of this.
我不认识他。 Wǒ bù rènshí tā. I don't know him.	他要一张纸。 Tā yào yì zhāng zhǐ. He wants a piece of paper.
好，我点吧。 Hǎo, wǒ diǎn ba. Okay, I'll order.	今天玩得很开心。 Jīntiān wán de hěn kāixīn. Today was great fun.
巧克力蛋糕很好吃。 Qiǎokèlì dàngāo hěn hǎochī. Chocolate cake is pretty delicious.	这道菜很好吃！ Zhè dào cài hěn hǎo chī. This dish is very delicious!

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Reduplication of Verbs

尝一尝

chángyìcháng

"Come have a taste!"

We use verb reduplication to deemphasize an action. It implies that the action is only done slightly or only for a short period of time.

We can say monosyllabic verbs twice in a row or have an unstressed *yi* (一) in between. For example, *kàn* ("to look") becomes *kàn kàn* or *kàn yí kàn* ("to have a look" or "to look a little bit"). Disyllabic verbs are repeated one after the other without — *yi*: *rèn shi* ("to get to know") becomes *rèn shi rèn shi* ("to get to know a little").

We can use verb reduplication in commands to make the request sound less harsh.

The structure is:

(verb) + (verb)

or

(monosyllabic verb) + *yi* + (monosyllabic verb)

Modal Particle 吧 (*ba*) - Making a Suggestion

吧 (*ba*) is a modal particle with two main functions. The first is to make suggestions.

For Example:

1. 进去吧

jìn qù ba

"Let's go inside."

2. 来吧

Lái ba.

"Come on."

We also use 吧 (*ba*) to seek agreement about one's conjectures. Ending a statement with 吧 (*ba*) is similar to using a tag question in English (e.g., "Wouldn't you agree?" / "Don't you think so?" / "Right?" etc.).

Normally, we cannot use 吧 (*ba*) at the end of questions.

Forming the Negative - 不 (*bù*)

不(*bù*) is an adverb we use to make verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs negative. When 不(*bù*) negates an adjective or adverb, it comes right before that word in the sentence. However, when it modifies a verb,

不(bù) comes before the whole phrase, including prepositions and auxiliary verbs.

Language Tip - The 不 (bù) Tone Change Rule

When the character 不(bù), which we pronounce in the fourth tone, precedes another character that is also fourth tone, the pronunciation of 不(bù) changes to second tone (bú). So, as we saw in this lesson's dialogue, 不要 (bù yào) when spoken, actually is pronounced as [bú yào].

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Market Inflation

In Chinese markets, the sellers can be quite persistent. At times, you may have to refuse numerous times and quite emphatically before they give up. It's just a different marketing style. Also, don't forget to bargain on the price. The price quoted to you can often be very overinflated as the seller is expecting that you will attempt to talk price before agreeing on a final purchase price.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #16

Getting Around: Finding the Subway in China

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

16

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 请问，地铁在哪儿？
2. B: 在前面。
3. A: 远吗？
4. B: 不远。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 請問，地鐵在哪儿？
2. B: 在前面。
3. A: 遠嗎？
4. B: 不遠。

PINYIN

1. A: Qǐngwèn, dìtiě zài nǎr?
2. B: Zài qiánmiàn.
3. A: Yuǎn ma?
4. B: Bù yuǎn.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Excuse me, where is the subway?
2. B: Up ahead.
3. A: Is it far?
4. B: Not far.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
请问	請問	qǐng wèn	may I ask	
地铁	地鐵	dìtiě	subway	noun
在	在	zài	at	
前面	前面	qiánmiàn	in front	prepositional phrase
远	遠	yuǎn	far	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

请问，你是不是王先生? Qǐngwèn nǐ shìbùshì Wáng Xiānshēng? May I ask, are you Mr. Wang?	请问您贵姓? Qǐngwèn nín guì xìng? May I ask your name?
坐地铁去，很方便。 Zuò dìtiě qù, hěn fāngbiàn. Taking the subway is really convenient.	他在后面。 Tā zài hòumiàn. He is in the back.
你在我的前面。 Nǐ zài wǒ de qiánmiàn. You're in front of me.	我看不见，太远了。 wǒ kànbiùjiàn , tài yuǎn le . I can't see it, it's too far away.

我家离这里很远。

Wǒ jiā lí zhèlǐ hěn yuǎn.

My house is very far from here.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Directional Phrases

在前面。

"Up ahead."

To tell someone the location of something, you can use the structure in this lesson's dialogue.

For Example:

1. 在前面

zài qiánmiàn

"up ahead" (literally, "at / in front")

Use the preposition 在 (*zài*), plus the location.

For Example:

1. 在左边

zài zuǒbiān

"on the left side"

2. 在右边

zài yòubiān

"on the right side"

哪儿, *nǎr* ("Where")

1. 地铁在哪儿?

Dìtiè zài nǎr?

"Where is the subway?"

Unlike English, when asking the location of something, the 'where' comes at the end of the question in Chinese. The 在 (zài) is a preposition meaning "at" or "in."

There are two ways of saying "where" in Chinese, depending on the region the speaker is from. One is as in our dialogue: 哪儿 (nǎr), the other is 哪里 (nǎlǐ). They are interchangeable.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Transport in Major Chinese Cities

Riding the subway is a convenient way to get around Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. More cities in China are drawing up plans to build metro lines. Cities such as Chengdu, and Zhengzhou are experiencing large amounts of infrastructure upgrades. In Beijing, 800,000 trips are made everyday on Line 5 alone. Line 5 which opened in 2007 was planned to have 800,000 passengers in 2032. Since more and more cars are hitting the roads in China's major cities, citizens are turning more to public transportation to beat the traffic jams. For only 2 RMB you can travel as far as you want on the Beijing subway system. In Shanghai and Guangzhou however the fee is based on how far you want to travel.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #17

Getting Around in China: Does This Bus Go to...?

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

17

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 到大望路吗?
2. B: 不到。七路车到。
3. A: 车票多少钱?
4. B: 两块钱。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 到大望路嗎?
2. B: 不到。七路車到。
3. A: 車票多少錢?
4. B: 兩塊錢。

PINYIN

1. A: Dào Dà Wàng Lù ma?
2. B: Bú dào. Qī lù chē dào.
3. A: Chēpiào duōshǎo qián?
4. B: Liǎng kuài qián.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Does this go to Da Wang Road?
2. B: No, it doesn't. Bus number seven goes there.
3. A: How much is the bus fare?
4. B: Two RMB.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
到	到	dào	to arrive	verb
两	兩	liǎng	two	numeral
钱	錢	qián	money	noun
多少	多少	duōshǎo	how much, how many	phrase
车票	車票	chēpiào	bus ticket	noun
车	車	chē	vehicle	noun
七	七	qī	seven	numeral
路	路	lù	road, way	noun
南京	南京	Nánjīng	Nanjing	proper noun
块	塊	kuài	(measure word for money)	measure word

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>从这边到那边要多久? Cóng zhèbiān dào nàbiān yào duōjiǔ?</p> <p>How long does it take to go from here to there?</p>	<p>两个苹果五块钱。 Liǎng gè píngguǒ wǔ kuài qián.</p> <p>Two apples are five yuan.</p>
--	---

16块钱。 Shí liù kuài qián. Sixteen Renminbi.	这个多少钱? Zhègè duōshǎo qián? How much is this?
车票多少钱? Chēpiào duō shǎo qián? How much is the bus fare?	你会开车吗? Nǐ huì kāichē ma? Do you know how to drive a car?
我们的公司有七个人。 Wǒmen de gōngsī yǒu qī gè rén. There are seven people in our company.	我每天都要花四个小时在上下班的路上。 wǒ měi tiān dōu yào huā sì ge xiǎoshí zài shàngxiàbān de lùshàng . I have to spend four hours on the way to and from work.
淮海路在哪儿? Huái hǎi lù zài nǎr? Where is Huai Hai Road?	南京是一个历史悠久的城市。 Nánjīng shì yīgè lìshǐ yōujiǔ de chéngshì. Nanjing is a city with a long history.
下一站是南京路。 Xià yí zhàn shì Nánjīng lù. Next stop is Nanjing Road.	这条裙子一百块钱。 Zhè tiáo qúnzi yì bǎi kuài qián. This skirt is a hundred RMB.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

The word for road in Chinese is 路 (*lù*). The word for street is 街 (*jiē*). The way to describe a bus route/number in Chinese is "bus number + 路车" (bus number + *lù chē*).

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Numbers

不到。七路车到。

"No, it doesn't. Bus number seven goes there."

Numbers one through ten:

Number	Chinese	Pinyin
1	一	<i>yī</i>
2	二	<i>èr</i>
3	三	<i>sān</i>
4	四	<i>sì</i>
5	五	<i>wǔ</i>
6	六	<i>liù</i>
7	七	<i>qī</i>
8	八	<i>bā</i>
9	九	<i>jiǔ</i>
10	十	<i>shí</i>

多少, (*duōshǎo*) "How much"

多少(*duōshǎo*) means "How much."

When inquiring about an amount of money, we use the phrase 多少钱? (*duōshǎo qián?*), literally, "How much money?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Bus Technology

In bigger cities, buses tend to be quite modern and even have payment systems with swipe cards or some other such technology to make bus taking simpler. However, even in Shanghai, some routes have older buses, and feature a ticket taker who will come around to

all the passengers and collect your money and give you a ticket; the fare depending on which stop you are getting off at. So memorize your stop—the more modern buses generally will have a screen with the *pinyin* and English name of the upcoming stop on it; or if that is not the case, hopefully your helpful ticket lady or a fellow passenger will assist you in knowing where to get off.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #18

Getting Around in China: How Do I Get Home?

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 5 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

18

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我怎么回家?
2. B: 你可以坐出租车。
3. A: 这儿有地铁站吗?
4. B: 地铁站有点儿远。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我怎麼回家?
2. B: 你可以坐出租車。
3. A: 這兒有地鐵站嗎?
4. B: 地鐵站有點兒遠。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒ zěnme huíjiā?
2. B: Nǐ kěyǐ zuò chūzūchē.
3. A: Zhèr yǒu dìtiě zhàn ma?
4. B: Dìtiě zhàn yǒu diǎnr yuǎn.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: How do I get home?
2. B: You can take a taxi.
3. A: Is there a subway station around here?
4. B: The subway station is a little far away.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
怎么	怎麼	zěnme	how	adverb
一点儿	一點兒	yìdiǎnr	a little	adjective/adverb
站	站	zhàn	station	noun
地铁	地鐵	dìtiě	subway	noun
有	有	yǒu	to have	verb
这儿	這兒	zhèr	here	pronoun
出租车	出租車	chūzūchē	taxi	noun
坐	坐	zuò	to sit	verb
可以	可以	kěyǐ	can	verb
回	回	huí	to return	verb
远	遠	yuǎn	far	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>告诉我怎么用遥控器。</p> <p>Gàosù wǒ zěnme yòng yáokòngqì.</p> <p>Tell me how to use the remote control.</p>	<p>怎么会这样?</p> <p>Zěnme huì zhèyàng?</p> <p>How can it be?</p>
---	---

他只会说一点儿。 Tā zhǐ huì shuō yìdiǎnr.	这一站是什么? Zhè yí zhàn shì shénme?
He can only speak a little.	What stop is this?
坐地铁去，很方便。 Zuò dìtiě qù, hěn fāngbiàn.	我没有钱。 Wǒ méiyǒu qián .
Taking the subway is really convenient.	I have no money.
他们院子里有太多垃圾了。 tāmen yuànzi lǐ yǒu tài duō lājī le .	这儿有图书馆吗? Zhèr yǒu túshūguǎn ma?
They have too much garbage in their garden.	Is there a library around here?
我住在这儿。 Wǒ zhù zài zhèr.	哪儿有出租车? Nǎr yǒu chūzūchē ?
I live here.	Where can I get a taxi?
我们坐出租车吧。 Wǒmen zuò chūzūchē ba.	你可以叫我丽丽。 Nǐ kěyǐ jiào wǒ Lili.
Let's take a taxi.	You can call me Lili.
地球太危险了，我要回火星了。 dìqiú tài wēi xiǎn le , Wǒ yào huíhuǒ xīng le .	我希望我儿子在我睡觉前能回家。 wǒ xīwàng wǒ érzi zài wǒ shuìjiào qián néng huíjiā .
The earth is too dangerous, I will return back to mars.	I'd like my son to return home before I go to bed.
他什么时候回来? Tā shénmeshíhòu huílái?	我看不见，太远了。 wǒ kànbiùjiàn , tài yuǎn le .
When does he come back?	I can't see it, it's too far away.
我家离这里很远。 Wǒ jiā lí zhèlǐ hěn yuǎn.	
My house is very far from here.	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

远 (yuǎn) - we learned the word for "far" in this dialogue; the word for "near" is **近 (jìn)**. **坐出出租车 (zuò chūzūchē)** means "take a taxi"; we also use the verb **坐 (zuò)** when speaking of taking a bus, train, etc. **坐公交车, 坐火车 (zuò gōngjiāochē, zuò huǒchē)**.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 怎么 (Zěnme) "How"

我怎么回家?

"How do I get home?"

怎么 (Zěnme) is a pronoun we use to ask how an action is done. It is equivalent to "how" or "how to" in English and is followed by a verb.

The sentence pattern we use for **怎么 (Zěnme)** is:

(subject) + *zěnme* + (verb phrase)

For Example:

1. 我怎么回家?

Wǒ zěnme huíjiā?

"How do I get home?"

有 (Yǒu) - To Express Existence

有 (Yǒu) is a verb that we can use to indicate existence (like "there is" or "there are" in English). Typically, a phrase indicating time or place will precede **有 (yǒu)**.

(time / place) + *yǒu* + (noun)

For Example:

1. 这儿有地铁站吗?

Zhèr yǒu dìtiě zhàn ma?

"Is there a subway station here?"

有 (Yǒu) - To Express Extent

有 (*Yǒu*) is a verb that we can also use to specify the degree or extent of some quality. 有 (*yǒu*) can combine with 一点儿 *diǎnr* before adjectives to mean "somewhat [adjective]" or "a little bit [adjective]."

(subject) + *yǒu* + (extent) + (adjective)

For Example:

1. 地铁站有点儿远。
Dìtiè zhàn yǒu diǎnr yuǎn.
"The subway station is a little far away."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

An Inexpensive Chinese Ride

Taxis are a relatively inexpensive way to get around in China in comparison with taxi fares in other major cities of the world.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #19

Getting Around China - I Want to Go Here!

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 3 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

19

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你想去哪儿?
2. B: 我想去学院路。
3. A: 什么路?
4. B: 看这儿。
5. A: 哦, 我知道了。学院路。好的。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你想去哪兒?
2. B: 我想去學院路。
3. A: 甚麼路?
4. B: 看這兒。
5. A: 哟, 我知道了。學院路。好的。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ xiǎng qù nǎr?
2. B: Wǒ xiǎng qù Xuéyuàn Lù.
3. A: Shénme lù?

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Kàn zhèr.

5. A: O, wǒ zhīdào le. Xuéyuàn Lù. Hǎo de.

ENGLISH

1. A: Where do you want to go?

2. B: I want to go to Xueyuan Road.

3. A: What road?

4. B: Look here.

5. A: Oh, I know. Xueyuan Road. Okay.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
去	去	qù	to go	verb
想	想	xiǎng	would like, to want, love to	verb, phrase
哪儿	哪兒	nǎr	where	pronoun
路	路	lù	road, way	noun
什么	甚麼	shénme	what	question pronoun
看	看	kàn	to look	verb
这儿	這兒	zhèr	here	pronoun
知道	知道	zhīdào	to know	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

下周末谁去海边? xià zhōumò shéi qù hǎibiān ?	我去了动物医院。 Wǒ qù le dòngwù yīyuàn.
Who is going to the beach next weekend?	I went to the animal hospital.
我去公园。 Wǒ qù gōngyuán.	我很想去但是太贵了。 wǒ hěn xiǎng qù dànshì tài guì le .
I'm going to the park.	I would love to go but it is too expensive.
我想去看看。 Wǒ xiǎng qù kànkàn.	你们去哪儿? Nǐmen qù nǎr?
I want to have a look.	Where are you going?
我每天都要花四个小时在上下班的路上。 wǒ měi tiān dōu yào huā sì ge xiǎoshí zài shàngxiàbān de lùshàng .	淮海路在哪儿? Huái hǎi lù zài nǎr? Where is Huai Hai Road?
I have to spend four hours on the way to and from work.	
你在说什么? Nǐ zài shuō shénme?	你说什么呢? Nǐ shuō shénme ne?
What are you talking about?	What did you say?
她不停地在看屏幕。 tā bùtǐng de zài kàn píngmù .	你看，这儿有一只鸟。 Nǐ kàn, zhèr yǒu yì zhī niǎo.
She couldn't stop looking at the screen.	Look. There is a bird here.
这儿有人吗? Zhèr yǒu rén ma?	我知道这件事。 Wǒ zhīdào zhè jiàn shì.
Is there anyone here?	I know about this.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

你想去哪儿? (*Nǐ xiǎng qù nǎr?*)

Sometimes for short, the taxi driver will simply say '去哪儿? '(*Qù nǎr?*)

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 想, *xiǎng* ("would like," "to desire," "to want")

我想去学院路。

"I want to go to Xueyuan Road."

The verb 想 (*xiǎng*) has a few different meanings and usages. In this dialogue, it is a modal verb that indicates the desire to do something.

For Example:

1. 我想吃面条。

Wǒ xiǎng chī miàntiáo.

"I want to eat noodles."

When used in this context, we must follow 想 (*xiǎng*) by a verb, a clause, or a sentence.

哪儿, *nǎr* ("where")

Unlike English, when asking the location of something, the "where" comes at the end of the question in Chinese.

For Example:

1. 你想去哪儿?

Nǐ xiǎng qù nǎr?

"Where do you want to go?"

There are two ways of saying "where" in Chinese, depending on the region the speaker is from. One is as in our dialogue: 哪儿 (*nǎr*); the other is 哪里 (*nǎlǐ*). They are interchangeable.

Using the Question Word 什么, (*shénme*) "what"

When forming a question with the word "what" in Chinese, generally the "what" comes at the end of the sentence, not at the beginning like it would in English. In Chinese, the order is like this: "You would like to eat what?"

For Example:

- 你想吃什么?
Nǐ xiǎng chī shénme?
"What do you want to eat?"

However, as in the case of this lesson's dialogue, 什么 (*Shén me*) can also come before a noun to mean "what (noun)."

For Example:

- 什么路?
Shénme lù?
"What road?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Taxi Preparation

If you are a new Chinese learner, having your destination written down on a piece of paper for the taxi drivers' reference can be of great help when taking taxis. In general, Chinese cities are immense in size and complexity, and a lot of streets have very similar sounding names. Therefore, your best bet is to come prepared. The taxi driver will likely thank you for it, and you will avoid confusion and getting the run around!

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #20

Getting Around - Asking Directions in China

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

20

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 去天安门怎么走?
2. B: 直走, 然后左转。
3. A: 好的, 直走, 然后左转。
4. B: 在你的右边。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 去天安門怎麼走?
2. B: 直走, 然後左轉。
3. A: 好的, 直走, 然後左轉。
4. B: 在你的右邊。

PINYIN

1. A: Qù Tiān'ānmén zěnme zǒu?
2. B: Zhí zǒu, ránhòu zuǒzhuǎn.
3. A: Hǎo de, zhí zǒu, ránhòu zuǒzhuǎn.
4. B: Zài nǐ de yòubiān.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: How do I get to Tiananmen Square?
2. B: Go straight, then turn left.
3. A: Okay, go straight, then turn left.
4. B: It will be on your right.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
天安门	天安門	Tiān'ānmén	Tian'anmen	noun
怎么	怎麼	zěnme	how	adverb
走	走	zǒu	walk	verb
直	直	zhí	straight	adverb/ adjective, adv
然后	然後	ránhòu	and then, next	
左	左	zuǒ	left	noun
转	轉	zhuǎn	to turn	verb
右	右	yòu	right	noun
右边	右邊	yòubiān	on the right	prepositional phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>天安门广场上很拥挤。</p> <p>Tiān'ānmén guǎngchǎng shàng hěn yōngjǐ.</p> <p>It is very crowded in Tian'anmen Square.</p>	<p>告诉我怎么用遥控器。</p> <p>Gàosù wǒ zěnme yòng yáokòngqì.</p> <p>Tell me how to use the remote control.</p>
--	---

怎么会这样? Zěnme huì zhèyàng?	我们走吧。 Wǒmen zǒu ba.
How can it be?	Let's go.
这条路一直走。 Zhè tiáo lù yìzhí zǒu.	往前走。 Wǎng qián zǒu.
Go straight down this road.	Go straight.
别提了，我又迟到了。 Bié tí le, wǒ yòu chídào le.	我家在左边。 Wǒ jiā zài zuǒbiān.
Don't mention it; I was late again.	My house is on the left.
这里要右转。 Zhèlǐ yào yòu zhuǎn.	靠右边停。 Kào yòubiān tíng.
Turn right here.	Stop on the right.
靠右边停。 Kào yòubiān tíng.	Stop on the right.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

(place) + 怎么走? (place + zěnme zǒu?)

This is a great phrase to memorize to ask directions anywhere. For "turn left" or "turn right," some speakers prefer to say 右拐 (yòuguǎi) and 左拐 (zuǒguǎi), respectively.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Possessive Pronouns and Direction Words

直走, 然后左转。

"Go straight, then turn left."

Mandarin doesn't have possessive pronouns. We convey the meaning of a possessive pronoun with 'pronoun' + 的 (de).

For Example:

1. 我的 (*wǒ de*)
2. 你的 (*nǐ de*)
3. 他的 (*tā de*)
4. 她的 (*tā de*)
5. 我们的 (*wǒmen de*)
6. 你们的 (*nǐmen de*)

Direction Words

To convey "on your 'X' side," you use the following pattern as heard in this lesson's dialogue.

For Example:

1. 在你的右边。
Zài nǐ de yòubiān.
"On your right side."
2. 在你的左边。
Zài nǐ de zuǒbiān.
"On your left side."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

A Famous Chinese Landmark

Tiananmen Square is one of the most recognizable landmarks in all of China. It sits at the center of Beijing, directly across from the Forbidden City. Tiananmen Square is the largest city square in the world measuring 440,000 sq. meters. Close to the center of the square is Mao Zedong's mausoleum, with The Monument to the People's Heroes located in front. Every sunrise, and sunset there is a flag raising, and lowering ceremony. Soldiers march out to the

flagpole, all the while attracting tourists gaze. Along the western side of the square is the Great Hall of the People, where national congresses take place, along with other dignitary events.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #21

Buying - This and That in China

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 3 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 4 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

21

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 这个多少钱?
2. B: 十五块钱。
3. A: 那个呢?
4. B: 十九块钱。
5. A: 好, 我买这个。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 這個多少錢?
2. B: 十五塊錢。
3. A: 那個呢?
4. B: 十九塊錢。
5. A: 好, 我買這個。

PINYIN

1. A: Zhègè duōshǎo qián?
2. B: Shíwǔ kuài qián.
3. A: Nàgè ne?

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Shíjiǔ kuài qián.

5. A: Hǎo, wǒ mǎi zhègè.

ENGLISH

1. A: How much is this one?

2. B: Fifteen RMB.

3. A: What about that one?

4. B: Nineteen RMB.

5. A: Okay, I'll buy this one.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
这	這	zhè	this	pronoun
呢	呢	ne	(follow-up question particle)	final particle
块	塊	kuài	(measure word for money)	measure word
十九	十九	shíjiǔ	nineteen (19)	numeral
十五	十五	shíwǔ	fifteen (15)	numeral
钱	錢	qián	money	noun
多少	多少	duōshǎo	how much, how many	phrase

个	個	gè	(measure word)	measure word
那	那	nà	that	pronoun
买	買	mǎi	to buy	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我的祖母给了我这个钱包。 Wǒ de zǔmǔ gěi le wǒ zhègè qiánbāo..	尝尝这个。 Chángcháng zhègè.
My grandmother gave me this wallet.	Have a taste of this.
你说什么呢? Nǐ shuō shénme ne?	我是美国人。你呢? Wǒ shì měiguórén. Nǐ ne?
What did you say?	I'm an American. And you?
这条裙子一百块钱。 Zhè tiáo qúnzi yì bǎi kuài qián.	这儿有十九本书。 zhèr yǒu shíjiǔ běn shū.
This skirt is a hundred RMB.	There are 19 books here.
十五块怎么样? Shíwǔ kuài zěnmeyàng?	16块钱。 Shí liù kuài qián.
What about fifteen kuai?	Sixteen Renminbi.
这个多少钱? Zhègè duōshǎo qián?	我有四个孩子。 Wǒ yǒu sì gè háizi.
How much is this?	I have four children.
那是什么? Nà shì shénme?	我要买那本书。 Wǒ yào mǎi nà běn shū.
What is that?	I want to buy that book.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is **这, (zhè/zhèi) "this" and 那, (nà/nèi) "that"**

这个多少钱?

"How much is this one?"

1. 这个多少钱?

Zhègè duōshǎo qián?

"How much is this one?"

2. 那个呢?

Nàgè ne?

"What about that one?"

这 (*zhè/zhèi*) and 那 (*nà/nèi*) are pronouns that function like the English words "this" and "that" respectively. In order to connect 这 (*zhè/zhèi*) and 那 (*nà/nèi*) to nouns, you need a measure word before the noun, as in the above examples from the dialogue (这个 / 那个 - *zhègè / nàgè*).

The structure is:

这 (*zhèi*) / 那 (*nèi*) + (measure word)

这 (*zhèi*) / 那 (*nèi*) + (numeral, if applicable) + (measure word)

Numbers 11 to 20

11 十一 (*shíyī*)

12 十二 (*shí'èr*)

13 十三 (*shísān*)

14 十四 (*shísì*)

15 十五 (*shíwǔ*)

16 十六 (*shíliù*)

17 十七 (*shíqī*)

18

十八 (*shíbā*)

19 十九 (*shíjiǔ*)

20 二十 (*èrshí*)

呢 (*ne*) - Forming a Follow-up Question

1. 这个多少钱?

Zhègè duōshǎo qián?)

"How much is this one?"

2. 那个呢?

Nàgè ne?

"What about that one?"

We use 呢 (*ne*) to form a follow-up question. Meaning, we use it to ask the same question as the one previously asked, but about another subject or object.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Money in China

The national currency of China is the 人民币 *rénmínbì* or Yuan. The People's Bank of China acts like the Federal Reserve of the United States, controlling the minting, and relative price of the Yuan.

As far as the currency itself is concerned, the notes range from 一角 *yì jiǎo* (one tenth of 1 RMB) to 100 人民币 notes. The Chinese language has an embedded feature to prevent forgeries. On Chinese notes, 壹佰 is written as 一百. If 一百 were used in bank statements, it would be much easier to change the amount by adding a stroke such as 二百, or 三百.

Chinese notes have one common feature between them all. They all feature the founder of the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong. Usually on the back of the note, there is a geographically, or culturally significant picture that represents diversity, and beauty in China.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #22

Buying - Get a Better Price in China!

CONTENTS

Dialogue - Chinese
Simplified
English
Pinyin
Traditional
Vocabulary
Sample sentences
Grammar
Cultural insight

22

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 二十块钱？太贵了！
2. B : 不贵。
3. A : 便宜一点儿吧。
4. B : 十块怎么样？
5. A : 好的。

ENGLISH

1. A : Twenty RMB? That's too expensive!
2. B : It's not expensive.
3. A : Could you make it a little cheaper?
4. B : How about ten RMB?
5. A : Okay.

PINYIN

1. A : Ershí kuài qián? Tàì guì le!
2. B : Bú guì.
3. A : Piányì yìdiǎnr ba.
4. B : Shí kuài zěnmeyàng?
5. A : Hǎo de.

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 二十塊錢？太貴了！
2. B : 不貴。
3. A : 便宜一點兒吧。
4. B : 十塊怎麼樣？
5. A : 好的。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
了	了	le	change of state particle	particle
吧	吧	ba	(particle; denotes suggestion)	particle
怎么样	怎麼樣	zěnmeyàng	how about it	question word
钱	錢	qián	money	noun
便宜	便宜	pián yì	inexpensive; cheap	adjective
二十	二十	èrshí	twenty (20)	numeral
太	太	tài	too	adverb
一点儿	一點兒	yìdiǎnr	a little	adjective/adverb
十	十	shí	ten (10)	numeral
不	不	bù	(negative prefix)	adverb
贵	貴	guì	expensive	adjective
块	塊	kuài	(measure word for money)	measure word

SAMPLE SENTENCES

他生病了。 <i>Tā shēngbìngle.</i> He got sick.	昨天下雨了。 <i>Zuótiān xiàyǔ le.</i> It rained yesterday.
好, 我点吧。 <i>Hǎo, wǒ diǎn ba.</i> Okay, I'll order.	今天天气怎么样 ? <i>Jīntiān tiānqì zěnmeyàng ?</i> How is the weather today?
花钱 <i>huā qián</i> spend money	那個男人在付錢。 <i>Nàge nánrén zài fù qián.</i> The man is paying money.
美钞 <i>Měichāo</i> US paper money	付錢買東西 <i>fù qián mǎi dōngxi</i> pay money for goods
紙幣 <i>zhǐbì</i> paper money	錢用來支付物品或服務。 <i>Qián yònglái zhīfù wùpǐn huò fúwù.</i> Money is used as payment for goods and services.

裡面有錢的錢包 <i>lǐmian yǒu qián de qiánbāo</i> wallet with money inside	16块钱。 <i>Shí liù kuài qián.</i> Sixteen Renminbi.
便宜一点儿，可以吗？ <i>Piányì yìdiǎnr, kěyǐ ma?</i> Can (you) make it a little cheaper?	那个二十块钱。 <i>Nàgè èrshí kuài qián.</i> That one is twenty kuai.
他这周末的家庭作业太多了。 <i>tā zhè zhōumò de jiātíngzuò yè tài duō le.</i> He has too much homework for this weekend.	夏天太热了。 <i>Xiàtiān tài rè le.</i> The summer is too hot.
他只会说一点儿。 <i>Tā zhǐ huì shuō yìdiǎnr.</i> He can only speak a little.	十块钱。 <i>Shí kuài qián.</i> Ten yuan.
我不认识他。 <i>Wǒ bù rěnshí tā.</i> I don't know him.	這個菜單上午餐很便宜，但是晚餐很貴。 <i>Zhège cài dān shàng wǔcān hěn piányi, dànshì wǎncān hěn guì.</i> The lunch menu here is cheap, but dinner is very expensive.
貴的公寓 <i>guì de gōngyù</i> expensive apartment	一個房子很貴。 <i>Yí gè fángzi hěn guì.</i> A house is expensive.
貴的房子 <i>guì de fángzi</i> expensive house	东京的甜瓜很贵。 <i>Dōngjīng de tiángruā hěn guì.</i> Melons in Tokyo are very expensive.
这条裙子一百块钱。 <i>Zhè tiáo qúnzi yì bǎi kuài qián.</i> This skirt is a hundred RMB.	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Adding Emphasis - 太。。。了 (*tài... le*)

太贵了！

Tài guì le!

"Too expensive!"

We use the pattern 太...了 to add emphasis. The adjective that is placed between the 太 (*tài*) and the 了 (*le*) is what is being emphasized. In the example from this lesson's dialogue, the person feels the price is "too expensive" or "so expensive," and therefore uses this expression. Other commonly used 太...了 expressions that you will hear a lot are:

1. 太好了

tài hǎo le

"great"

2. 太晚了

tài wǎn le

"too late"

(adjective) + 一点儿 (*yìdiǎnr*)

便宜一点儿

Piányì yìdiǎnr

"a little cheaper"

We use 一点儿 (*yìdiǎnr*), or just 点儿 or 点 to soften the tone or say "a little" or "a bit." The pattern is:

Adjective + 一点儿 (*yìdiǎnr*). Please note that sometimes we shorten 一点儿 (*yìdiǎnr*) to 点儿 (*diǎnr*) or even just 点 (*diǎn*).

Making a Suggestion - 吧 (*ba*)

便宜一点儿吧。

Piányì yìdiǎnr ba.

"Could you make it a little cheaper?"

吧 (*ba*) is a modal particle we use at the end of a sentence to turn a statement into a suggestion. It also softens the tone.

For Example:

1. 进去吧

jìngqù ba

"go in"

2. 走吧

zǒu ba

"let's go"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Hagglers

Rarely is the price on the price tag the price paid for an item in China. Haggling over prices is expected. Depending on the outlet, you can get anywhere from ten to ninety percent off the quoted price. So learn from the locals, and sharpen up your bargaining skills so you don't end up being ripped off.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #23

Buying - Finding a Phone Card in China

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

23

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我在哪儿可以买电话卡?
2. B: 在便利店。
3. A: 对不起，我听不懂。
4. B: 小商店。在那边。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我在那兒可以買電話卡?
2. B: 在便利店。
3. A: 對不起，我聽不懂。
4. B: 小商店。在那邊。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒ zài nǎr kěyǐ mǎi diànhuà kǎ?
2. B: Zài biànlì diàn.
3. A: Duìbùqǐ, wǒ tīng bù dǒng.
4. B: Xiǎo shāngdiàn. Zài nàbiān.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Where can I buy a telephone card?
2. B: At a convenience store.
3. A: Sorry, I don't understand.
4. B: A small shop. Over there.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
听不懂	聽不懂	tīng bù dǒng	to not understand	verb
对不起	對不起	duìbùqǐ	I'm sorry	phrase
商店	商店	shāngdiàn	shop; store	noun
那边	那邊	nàbiān	over there	adverb
小	小	xiǎo	little, small	adjective
可以	可以	kěyǐ	can	verb
便利店	便利店	biànlìdiàn	convenience store	noun
电话卡	電話卡	diànhuàkǎ	telephone card	noun
买	買	mǎi	to buy	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>我听不懂，请再说一遍，好吗？</p> <p>Wǒ tīngbùdǒng, qǐng zài shuō yí biàn, hǎo ma?</p> <p>I cannot understand. Please say it again, OK?</p>	<p>你说的话我听不懂。</p> <p>Nǐ shuō de huà wǒ tīngbùdǒng.</p> <p>I don't understand what you are saying.</p>
---	--

对不起,我很忙。 Duìbùqǐ, wǒ hěn máng.	他家附近有一间大商店。 Tā jiā fùjìn yǒu yì jiān dà shāngdiàn.
Sorry, I'm very busy.	There is a large store near his home.
图书馆在那边。 túshūguǎn zài nàbiān .	从这边到那边要多久? Cóng zhèbiān dào nàbiān yào duōjiǔ?
The library is over there.	How long does it take to go from here to there?
这儿有一个小卖部。 Zhèr yǒu yí gè xiǎomàiibù.	你可以叫我丽丽。 Nǐ kěyǐ jiào wǒ Lili.
There is a small shop here.	You can call me Lili.
去便利店买就好。 Qù biànlì diàn mǎi jiù hǎo.	你有电话卡吗? Nǐ yǒu diànhuà kǎ ma?
Just go to a convenience store to buy it.	Do you have a telephone card?
我要买那本书。 Wǒ yào mǎi nà běn shū.	
I want to buy that book.	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

电话卡 (*diànhuà kǎ*) can refer to any kind of phone card. If you want to be more specific, you can ask for an international long-distance calling card by using this term: **国际电话卡** (*guójì diànhuà kǎ*).

便利店 (*biànlì diàn*) refers to a convenience store. You will also sometimes hear a convenience store referred to as a **小卖部** (*xiǎomàiibù*).

We use **听不懂** (*tīng bù dǒng*) specifically when speaking of "not understanding" something you heard.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is **我在哪儿可以... (Wǒ zài nǎr kěyǐ...)** "Where can I..."

我在哪儿可以买电话卡?

Wǒ zài nǎr kěyǐ mǎi diànhuà kǎ?

"Where can I buy a telephone card?"

Notice the word order in the above sentence structure:

Subject + location + (whatever it is that you want to do/find)

So, for example, if you are dying for a coffee, you could use this sentence structure to find one:

1. 我在哪儿可以喝咖啡?

Wǒ zài nǎr kěyǐ hē kāfēi?

"Where can I have some coffee?"

Or, if you need to buy some English books, you could ask:

1. 我在哪儿可以买英文书?

Wǒ zài nǎr kěyǐ mǎi yīngwén shū?

"Where can I buy English books?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Convenience of Convenience Stores

Convenience stores in China are plentiful, and though often small in size, stock an enormous variety of goods. If there is something you need, try a convenience store. From packaged chicken feet for a snack, to umbrellas, to underwear, you have a good chance of finding what you need.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #24

Buying - By Train or by Plane in China?

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

24

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我要去北京。 我应该怎么去？
2. B: 你可以坐火车或者坐飞机。
3. A: 我怎么买火车票？
4. B: 你可以在火车站买。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我要去北京。 我應該怎麼去？
2. B: 你可以坐火車或者坐飛機。
3. A: 我怎麼買火車票？
4. B: 你可以在火車站買。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒ yào qù Běijīng. Wǒ yīnggāi zěnme qù?
2. B: Nǐ kěyǐ zuò huǒchē huòzhě zuò fēijī.
3. A: Wǒ zěnme mǎi huǒchē piào?
4. B: Nǐ kěyǐ zài huǒchē zhàn mǎi.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: I have to go to Beijing. How should I get there?
2. B: You can take a train or you can take a plane.
3. A: How do I buy a train ticket?
4. B: You can buy it at the train station.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
要	要	yào	to be going to, have to	verb
票	票	piào	ticket	noun
飞机	飛機	fēijī	airplane	noun
或者	或者	huòzhě	or	conjugation
火车	火車	huǒchē	train	noun
坐	坐	zuò	to sit	verb
可以	可以	kěyǐ	can	verb
怎么	怎麼	zěnme	how	adverb
应该	應該	yīnggāi	should	verb
北京	北京	Běijīng	Beijing	proper noun
去	去	qù	to go	verb
火车站	火車站	huǒchēzhàn	train station	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

明天我们要去杭州。 Míngtiān wǒmen yào qù Hángzhōu. Tomorrow, we are going to Hangzhou.	一张门票多少钱? Yì zhāng ménpiào duō shǎo qián? How much is one ticket?
一张票多少钱? Yì zhāng piào duō shǎo qián ? How much is one ticket?	飞机将在10分钟后起飞。 Fēiji 飞机 jiāng 将在 shí 10 fēnzhōng 分钟 hòu 后 qǐfēi.起飞。 The airplane will take off in ten minutes.
吃饭或者看电影都可以。 Chīfàn huòzhě kàn diànyǐng dōu kěyǐ. Eating or watching a movie, both are fine.	人们坐火车上下班。 Rénmen zuò huochē shàng xià bān. The people are commuting to work by train.
我们坐出租车吧。 Wǒmen zuò chūzūchē ba. Let's take a taxi.	你可以叫我丽丽。 Nǐ kěyǐ jiào wǒ Lìli. You can call me Lili.
告诉我怎么用遥控器。 Gàosù wǒ zěnme yòng yáokòngqì. Tell me how to use the remote control.	怎么会这样? Zěnme huì zhèyàng? How can it be?
我们明天应该休息。 Wǒmen míngtiān yīnggāi xiūxi. We should rest tomorrow.	我去北京大楼。 Wǒ qù Běijīng dàlóu. I'm going to the Beijing building.
下周末谁去海边? xià zhōumò shéi qù hǎibiān ? Who is going to the beach next weekend?	我去了动物医院。 Wǒ qù le dòngwù yīyuàn. I went to the animal hospital.
我去公园。 Wǒ qù gōngyuán. I'm going to the park.	明天我们在火车站见。 Míngtiān wǒmen zài huochēzhàn jiàn. Tomorrow we will meet at the train station.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Saying "I Have to Do [Something]" - 要 (Yào)

我要去北京.

Wǒ yào qù Běijīng.

"I have to go to Beijing."

Yào is an auxiliary verb that you can use to talk about what one will do, or what one is obliged to do, in the future. The pattern is:

(subject) + 要 (yào) + (verb)

或者, (*huòzhě*) "Or"

1. 你可以坐火车或者坐飞机。

(*Nǐ kěyǐ zuò huǒchē huòzhě zuò fēijī.*)

"You can take a train or you can take a plane."

或者 (*huòzhě*) is a conjunction we use to show two alternatives. It's similar to the English conjunction "or," but we use 或者 (*huòzhě*) to connect verb phrases, not noun phrases. Also, 或者 (*huòzhě*) is primarily used in statements (for "or" questions, see 还是 (*hái shì*) in our next lesson: Absolute Beginner Lesson 25).

CULTURAL INSIGHT

All Aboard!

Trains in China are a relatively comfortable way to travel. You can choose your level of luxury as well, anywhere from hard seats to soft sleepers. The train is quite a social environment and a great way to practice Chinese and interact with locals.

Domestic flights in China are relatively inexpensive and convenient. Tickets are easy to purchase, either online or with a local travel agent.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #25

Buying - Getting a Train Ticket in China

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 3 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 4 Sample Sentences
- 5 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 5 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

25

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我要一张到北京的票。
2. B: 今天的吗？
3. A: 对。
4. B: 你要上午11点的，下午3点的，还是晚上7点的？
5. A: 7点的。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我要一張到北京的票。
2. B: 今天的嗎？
3. A: 對。
4. B: 你要上午11點的，下午3點的，還是晚上7點的？
5. A: 7點的。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒ yào yì zhāng dào Běijīng de piào.
2. B: Jīntiān de ma?
3. A: Duì.

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Nǐ yào shàngwǔ shíyī diǎn de, xiàwǔ sān diǎn de, háishì wǎnshàng qī diǎn de?

5. A: Qī diǎn de.

ENGLISH

1. A: I want one ticket to Beijing.

2. B: For today?

3. A: Yes.

4. B: Do you want the one at eleven o'clock in the morning, three o'clock in the afternoon, or seven o'clock in the evening?

5. A: The seven o'clock one.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
要	要	yào	to want	verb
到	到	dào	to	preposition
还是	還是	háishì	or	conjunction
北京	北京	Běijīng	Beijing	proper noun
下午	下午	xiàwǔ	afternoon	time word, noun
的	的	de	possessive particle	particle
张	張	zhāng	measure word for flat objects	measure word

票	票	piào	ticket	noun
今天	今天	jīntiān	today	time word
上午	上午	shàngwǔ	late morning	noun
晚上	晚上	wǎnshàng	evening	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

他要一张纸。 Tā yào yì zhāng zhǐ. He wants a piece of paper.	从早上六点到八点。 Cóng zǎoshàng liù diǎn dào bā diǎn. From 6:00 to 8:00 in the morning.
你是美国人还是加拿大人? Nǐ shì Měiguó rén háishì Jiā'nádà rén? Are you American or Canadian?	我去北京大楼。 Wǒ qù Běijīng dàlóu. I'm going to the Beijing building.
我会在今天下午给你回电话。 wǒ huì zài jīntiān xiàwǔ gěi nǐ huí diànhuà. I'll call you back this afternoon.	我的猫喜欢在下午小憩一会儿。 Wǒ de māo xǐhuān zài xiàwǔ xiǎo qì yīhuìr. My cat likes to take a nap in the afternoon.
今天下午要下雪。 Jīntiān xiàwǔ yào xiàxuě. It's going to snow this afternoon.	各位乘客，下午好。 Gè wèi chéngkè xiàwǔ hǎo. All passengers, good afternoon.
什么馅儿的? Shénme xiànr de? What filling is it?	给我一张纸。 Gěi wǒ yì zhāng zhǐ. Give me a piece of paper.
一张门票多少钱? Yì zhāng ménpiào duō shǎo qián? How much is one ticket?	一张票多少钱? Yì zhāng piào duō shǎo qián? How much is one ticket?
今天特别热。 Jīntiān tèbié rè. It is especially hot today.	今天是星期四。 Jīntiān shì xīngqīsì. Today is Thursday.

<p>上午天氣很好，下午可能下雨。 Shàngwǔ tiānqì hěn hǎo, xiàwǔ kěnénghuà yǔ.</p> <p>In the morning, the weather will be good; in the afternoon, it might rain.</p>	<p>上午我很忙。 Shàngwǔ wǒ hěn máng.</p> <p>I'm busy in the late morning.</p>
<p>我们经常在夏日温暖的晚上打牌。 Wǒmen jīngcháng zài xiàrì wēnnuǎn de wǎnshàng dǎpái.</p> <p>We often play cards on a warm summer evening.</p>	<p>网球场晚上也开。 Wǎngqiúcháng wǎnshàng yě kāi.</p> <p>The tennis court is open in the evening, too.</p>
<p>我们今天晚上去看电影。 Wǒmen jīntiān wǎnshàng qù kān diànyǐng.</p> <p>Tonight we are going to see a movie.</p>	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

"Morning": There are two terms to say "it's morning." You can use either 上午 (*shàngwǔ*), as heard in this lesson's dialogue, or 早上 (*zǎoshàng*).

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is "To Want," "To Desire Something" - 要 (yào) + Noun
我要一张到北京的票。

Wǒ yào yì zhāng dào Běijīng de piào.
"I want one ticket to Beijing."

We use 要 (yào) in this context: 要 (yào) + noun, to express "to want" or "to desire" something.

The Particle 的 (de)

The particle 的 (de) is a subordinating particle. It is used to make the object which follows it subordinate to the object or idea which precedes it. This is why many people refer to it as a possessive particle. As we can see in this lesson though, the concept of subordination is much

more powerful than just signaling that one object belongs to someone or something. As you can see from these sample sentences, 的 is useful in describing the properties of objects in casual speech. Using it also allows us to omit the following noun, as long as the meaning is clear from context.

1. 今天的吗?

Jīntiān de ma?

"The one for today?"

2. 你要上午11点的,下午3点的,还是晚上7点的?

Nǐ yào shàngwǔ shíyī diǎn de, xiàwǔ sān diǎn de, hái shì wǎnshàng qī diǎn de?

"Do you want the 11:00 in the morning one, the 3:00 in the afternoon one, or the 7:00 in the evening one?"

Stating the Time with the Time of Day

1. 你要上午11点的,下午3点的,还是晚上7点的?

Nǐ yào shàngwǔ shíyī diǎn de, xiàwǔ sān diǎn de, hái shì wǎnshàng qī diǎn de?

"Do you want the one at 11:00 in the morning, 3:00 in the afternoon, or 7:00 in the evening?"

When stating the time of day along with the time in Chinese, the time of day comes before the time itself. This is the opposite of conventional word order in English.

1. 上午八点

shàngwǔ bā diǎn

"eight o'clock in the morning"

2. 晚上九点

wǎnshàng jiǔ diǎn

"nine o'clock in the evening"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Planes and Trains in China

The Chinese rail network is built around a backbone of core lines that connect first-tier cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen. Express trains travel these routes without stopping, while non-express trains stop briefly along the route to let passengers board and disembark at intermediary stations. If you are travelling between large cities we recommend avoiding the non-express trains as the stopovers can add hours to the length of a trip. This is one reason many short trips in smaller provinces often take as long or longer than long-hauls.

There are a few interesting consequences of this arrangement that most old China hands take into account when travelling. The first is that train schedules are biased towards the convenience of travellers in major cities. If you're travelling out of Beijing or Shanghai, you'll find most long-distance trains leaving in the late afternoon or evening and arriving in the early morning. In smaller cities, the time your train arrives will depend on your distance from a major transit hub. If you're travelling through the heartland you may find yourself getting on and off trains in the middle of the night. This can make travel in smaller towns quite unpredictable.

This dynamic also affects seat availability. Because local travel is served by trains stopping on longer routes, a few seats are generally reserved each day for sale in intermediary cities. This means that in times of short ticket availability it is still usually possible to board trains that are technically sold out. That said, one of the common forms of corruption in China is for these seats to be scalped privately. While you can usually find tickets in major cities, it is a good idea to buy a few days in advance if you are travelling to smaller towns and cities.



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