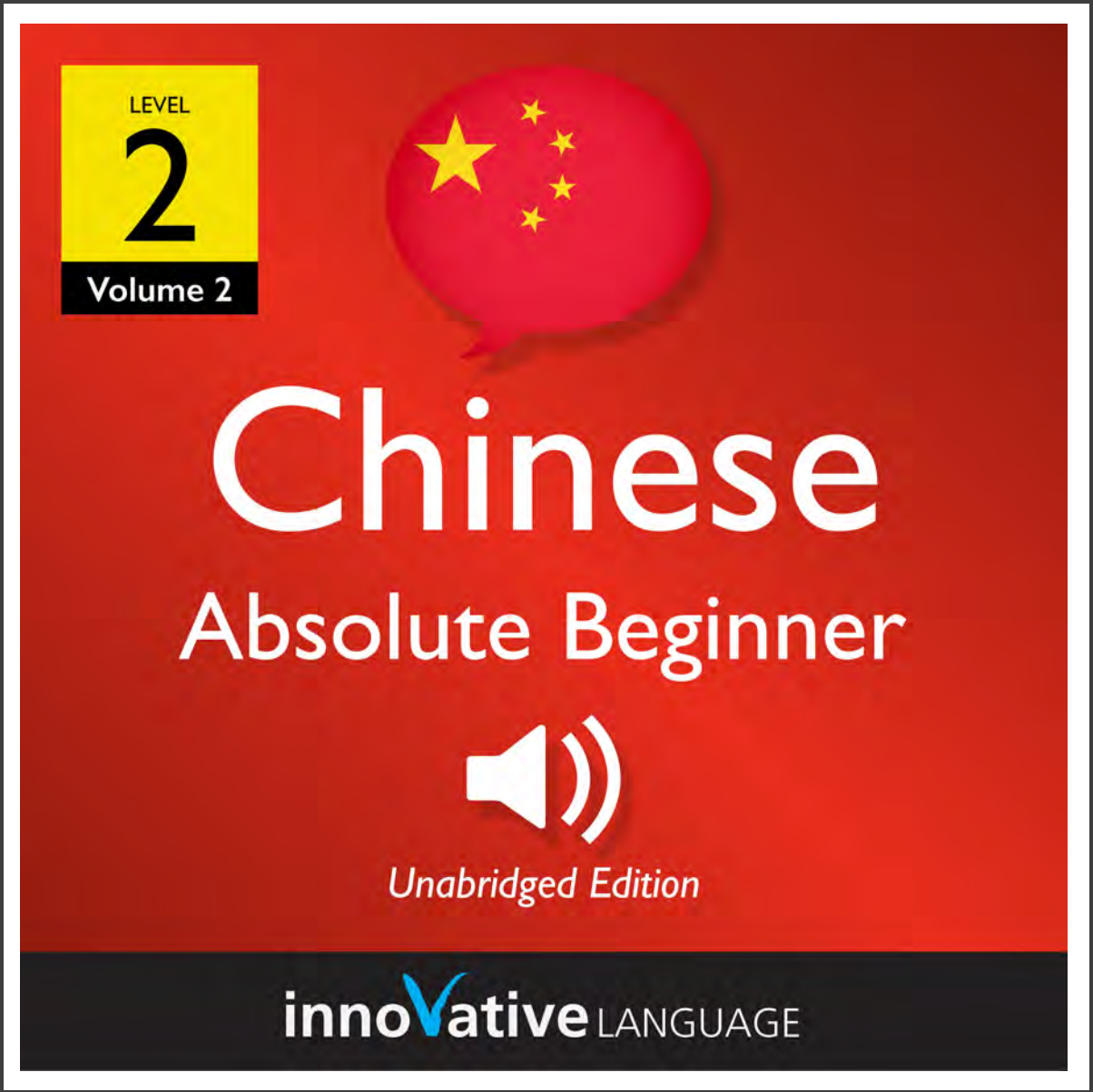
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LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #1 Top of the Morning to Ya!

CONTENTS

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

1

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 早啊。

2. B: 早，你去哪儿啊?

3. A: 我去上班。拜拜。

4. B: 再见。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 早啊。

2. B: 早，你去哪兒啊?

3. A: 我去上班。拜拜。

4. B: 再見。

PINYIN

1. A: Zǎo a.

2. B: Zǎo, nǐ qù nǎr a?

3. A: Wǒ qù shàngbān. Báibái.

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Zàijiàn.

ENGLISH

1. A: Morning.
2. B: Good morning, where are you going?
3. A: I'm going to work. Bye-bye.
4. B: Bye.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
早上	早上	zǎoshàng	early morning	noun
上午	上午	shàngwǔ	late morning	noun
中午	中午	zhōngwǔ	noon	noun
下午	下午	xiàwǔ	afternoon	noun
晚上	晚上	wǎnshàng	evening	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

早上好。 Zǎoshàng hǎo. Good morning!	上午天氣很好，下午可能下雨。 Shàngwǔ tiānqì hěn hǎo, xiàwǔ kěnéng xiàyǔ. In the morning, the weather will be good; in the afternoon, it might rain.
上午我很忙。 Shàngwǔ wǒ hěn máng. I'm busy in the late morning.	你中午吃什么？ Nǐ zhōngwǔ chī shénme? What are you eating at noon?
下午我不忙。 Xiàwǔ wǒ bù máng. I'm not busy in the late afternoon.	晚上好。 Wǎnshàng hǎo. Good evening.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 啊, *a* (Modal Particle)

早，你去哪儿啊?
Zǎo, nǐ qù nǎr a?
"Good morning, where are you going?"

啊 (*A*) is a modal particle that we use to soften the message of a sentence. When used at the end of questions and commands, it causes the utterance to sound less intrusive and forceful. *啊* is quite common in spoken Chinese. Using *啊* in your daily speech will signify you as sounding like a native speaker.

For Example:

1. 你好啊。
Nǐhǎo ā.
"Hello."

2. *晚上好啊。*
Wǎnshàng hǎo a.
"Good evening!"

3. 你去哪儿啊?
Nǐ qù nǎr ā?
"Where are you going?"

4. *有什么事儿啊?*
Yǒu shénme shìr ā?
"What's up?"

5. 对啊。
Duì a.
"Right!"

6. 好啊。
Hǎo a.
"Great!"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Early Bird Gets a Nap

Many Chinese are early risers, ready to take on the day head on. The large population of senior citizens in China can be found buying their daily produce early in the morning. Constant construction combined with honking cars ensures that sleeping in is not an option. Another reason that getting up early is a way of life in China is that there are no time zones or daylight savings time. That means that both Tibet and Shanghai share the same time year round. What this means to east coasters is that the sun rises ridiculously early—close to five o'clock AM in the summer months.

So knowing your morning salutations is vital as you wipe the sleep away from your eyes and groggily greet the guard standing post at your apartment entrance gate. But there is a bright side. Waking early means that there is time to take afternoon naps. Naps are actually an institution in China. Many schools and offices will give a longer lunch break to

accommodate the Chinese version of a *siesta.*

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #2 Not too Shabby

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2 Traditional Chinese
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3 Sample Sentences
4 Grammar
5 Cultural Insight

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 好久不见。

2. B: 是啊，你好吗？

3. A: 挺好的，你呢？

4. B: 还不错。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 好久不見。

2. B: 是啊，你好嗎？

3. A: 挺好的，你呢？

4. B: 還不錯。

PINYIN

1. A: Hǎojiǔbújiàn.

2. B: Shì a, nǐhǎo ma?

3. A: Tǐng hǎo de, nǐ ne?

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Hái búcuò.

ENGLISH

1. A: Long time no see.
2. B: I know, how are you?
3. A: Pretty good. And you?
4. B: Not bad.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
我很好	我很好	wǒ hěn hǎo	I'm good	phrase
还不错	還不錯	hái búcuò	Not too bad	phrase
挺好的	挺好的	tǐng hǎo de	pretty good	phrase
还行	還行	háixíng	Just okay	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我很好，谢谢。 Wǒ hěn hǎo, xièxie. I'm good, thank you.	还不错，你呢? Hái búcuò, nǐ ne? Not too bad, what about you?

挺好的，你怎么样? Tǐnghǎo de, nǐ zěnmeyàng? Pretty good, how are you doing?	还行，谢谢。 Hái xíng, xièxie. Just okay, thanks.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 不错, *búcuò* ("Not Bad/Good")

还不错。
Hái búcuò.
"Not bad."

不错 (*búcuò*) is an adjective that means "not bad" or "good." 不 means "not," and 错 means "wrong." When we put these two characters together, it means "not wrong" or "correct." Yes, one of the meanings of this word is "not wrong." For instance, 他的话不错. (*Tā dehuà búcuò*). Here it means "What he said is not wrong." We often use 不错 by itself, and you can use it to give your impression of an event or action. One thing to notice is that since both characters are fourth tones, 不 changes into a second tone.

For Example:

1. 还不错。
   Hái búcuò.
   "Not too bad."

2. *这个不错。*
   Zhègè búcuò.
   "This one isn't bad."

3. *他很不错。*
   Tā hěn búcuò.
   "He's pretty good."

4. *那个女孩挺不错的。*
Nà gè nǚhái tǐng búcuò de.
"That girl is not bad.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Common Smalltalk

Communities and living spaces in China can be very tight, resulting in a close relationship between you and your neighbors. To pass the time and to make things less awkward, small talk is commonplace. Usually the weather, pets, and children are obvious topics. There is a name in China that applies to elderly men and women who are retired and go door to door in their neighborhood to chat with other retirees. This group is called 串门 (*chuàn mén*). This literally translates to "visit many doors."

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #3
Your Dog Looks Kinda Sick

CONTENTS

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

#3

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 你的狗病了。
2. B : 不可能。
3. A : 真的，去医院吧。
4. B : 胡说。

ENGLISH

1. A : Your dog is sick.
2. B : Impossible.
3. A : Really. We should go to the hospital.
4. B : Nonsense.

PINYIN

1. A : Nǐ de gǒu bìng le.
2. B : Bù kěnéng.
3. A : Zhēnde, qù yīyuàn ba.
4. B : Húshuō.

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 你的狗病了。
2. B : 不可能。
3. A : 真的，去醫院吧。
4. B : 胡說。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
老	老	lǎo	old	adjective
脏	髒	zāng	dirty	adjective
病	病	bìng	sick	adjective
不可能	不可能	bù kěnéng	impossible	undefined
掉毛	掉毛	diàomáo	to shed	verb
吵	吵	chǎo	noisy	adjective
胡说	胡說	húshuō	talking nonsense	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我的狗很老。 *Wǒ de gǒu hěn lǎo.* My dog is really old.	這個城市的街道很髒。 *Zhège chéngshì de jiēdào hěn zāng.* The city streets are very dirty.
髒衣服 *zāng yīfu* dirty clothes	餐叉在髒盤子上。 *Cānchā zài zāngpánzi shàng.* The fork is on the dirty plate.
衣服脏了。 *Yīfu zāng le.* The clothes are dirty.	我昨天病了。 *Wǒ zuótiān bìng le.* I was sick yesterday.
不可能！ *Bù kě néng!* It is not possible!	他这个人，我们不可能从他那儿得到一星半点的消息。 *Tā zhège rén, wǒmen bù kěnéng cóng tā nà'er dédào yīxīngbàndiǎn de xiāoxī.* We can't get any information out of this guy.
你的狗掉毛吗？ *Nǐ de gǒu diàomáo ma?* Is your dog shedding?	别吵！ *Bié chǎo!* Don't be noisy!
不要胡说！ *Bùyào húshuō!* Stop talking nonsense!	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 不可能, *bù kěnéng* ("Impossible")
不可能。
Bù kěnéng.
"Impossible."

不可能 (*bù kěnéng*) is a phrase, which means "impossible." We use it every day in spoken Chinese. The breakdown of 不可能 is: 不 is "not," 可 means "to allow, to be okay," and 能 is "not to be able to do something." 不可能 literally means "to be able to do something." This also functions as "impossible." We can use it as a whole sentence or we can put the phrase into a longer sentence.

For Example:

1. 不可能。
   Bù kěnéng.
   "It's impossible."
2. 他不可能去。
   Tā bù kěnéng qù.
   "He is not possible to go there."
3. 我不可能同意。
   Wǒ bù kěnéng tóngyì.
   "I will never agree."

Formula: subject + 不可能 + verb

For Example:

1. 他不可能来。
   Tā bù kěnéng lái.
   "It's impossible for him to come."
2. 你不可能被开除。
   Nǐ bù kěnéng bèi kāichú.
   "Expulsion is impossible."
3. 她不可能辞职。
   Tā bù kěnéng cízhí.
   "It's impossible for her to resign."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Vaccines for Pets

Taking your pet to the veterinarian's office can be quite simple. Pets in cities are required to have vaccinations. The vaccinations can cost between forty and sixty RMB per shot. To spay or neuter animals, it depends on how you acquired the animal. If you adopted a stray animal off the street, the procedure will be cheaper, somewhere around two hundred and fifty RMB. If the cat is a family pet, the cost will be around three hundred RMB. However, if you found the animal on the street and plan to release it back into the wild, the procedure will be even less.

Correction

In the lesson’s main audio at min [1:12] to [1:14] and [1:45] to [1:50] the instructor says [好像是关于特殊儿童教育的。], but should have said [好像是关于二十一世纪互联网发展的。]

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #4
Why Are You Crying?

CONTENTS

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

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你怎么了?
2. B: 我不好。
3. A: 你为什么哭了?
4. B: 我的狗病了。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你怎麼了?
2. B: 我不好。
3. A: 你為甚麼哭了?
4. B: 我的狗病了。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ zěnme le?
2. B: Wǒ bù hǎo.
3. A: Nǐ wèishénme kū le?
4. B: Wǒ de gǒu bìng le.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: What's wrong?

2. B: I'm not doing too good.

3. A: Why are you crying?

4. B: My dog is sick.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
哭	哭	kū	to cry	verb
笑	笑	xiào	to laugh	verb
生气	生氣	shēngqì	to be angry	verb
高兴	高興	gāoxìng	happy	adjective
伤心	傷心	shāngxīn	to be hurt	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

你哭了吗? Nǐ kū le ma? "Are you crying?"	没事的，别哭了. méishì de , bié kū le . It's ok, stop crying.

别哭了。 Bié kū le. Don't cry.	微笑。 大笑。 傻笑。 嘲笑。 冷笑。 "wēixiào . dàxiào . shǎxiào . cháoxiào . lěngxiào ." Smile. Laugh. Titter. Jeer at. Sneer.
他很高兴，笑了。 Tā hěn gāoxìng, xiào le. He was very happy and laughed.	我很生气。 Wǒ hěn shēngqì. I'm very angry.
你不高兴吗? Nǐ bù gāoxìng ma? You're not happy?	别伤心了。 Bié shāngxīn le. Don't feel hurt.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 为什么, *wèishénme* ("Why")

你为什么哭了?

Nǐ wèishénme kū le?

"Why are you crying?"

为什么 (*Wèi shén me*) is a pronoun we use to ask a "why" question. Its position in the sentence is flexible: it can occur either before or after the subject.

For Example:

1. 你为什么哭了?
   "Why are you crying?"

2. 你为什么不去?
   "Why aren't you going?"

3. 这是为什么?
   "Why is that?"

4. 你为什么迟到?
   "Why are you late?"

5. 他为什么不同意?
   "Why doesn't he agree?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Pressure of China

Life has many pressures. This is very true for life in China. Demands from family, work, and society can all come bearing down at once. Pressures to find a suitable job, marry a suitable spouse, and be successful in life are just a few of the pressures ordinary Chinese people face. In addition to all these things, materialism from commercials and ads lowers people's self-esteem. For the people who are lucky enough to save enough money for a mortgage, rising housing prices have created a phenomenon. The group of people who cannot afford anything in life but to pay off their mortgages are known as 房奴 (*fángnú).*

To escape the pressures of daily life, many people retreat to the Internet where they can engage in a digital fantasy world. As a result, 网瘾, *wǎngyǐn* ("Internet addiction") has become another problem among Chinese youth. Government attempts to crack down on this problem have led to draconian measures including the shutting down of illegal Internet cafes and barring anyone under eighteen years old from using Internet cafes.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #5 Too Tired for Fun in China

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2 Traditional Chinese
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4 Grammar
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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你忙吗?
2. B: 不忙，怎么了?
3. A: 我们出去玩儿吧。
4. B: 对不起，我累了。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你忙嗎?
2. B: 不忙，怎麼了?
3. A: 我們出去玩兒吧。
4. B: 對不起，我累了。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ máng ma?
2. B: Bùmáng, zěnme le?
3. A: Wǒmen chūqù wánr ba.

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Duìbùqǐ, wǒ lèi le.

ENGLISH

1. A: Are you busy?
2. B: No, what's up?
3. A: Let's go out for some fun.
4. B: I'm sorry, I'm tired.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
玩儿	玩兒	wánr	to play	verb
累	累	lèi	tired	adjective
出去	出去	chūqu	to go out	verb
看电影	看電影	kàn diànyǐng	to watch a movie	phrase
喝咖啡	喝咖啡	hē kāfēi	to drink coffee	phrase
忙	忙	máng	busy	adjective
旅游	旅遊	lǚyóu	to travel	verb
买东西	買東西	mǎi dōngxi	to buy things	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我不累，谢谢。 Wǒ bú lèi, xièxie. I'm not tired, thanks.	你今晚想出去吗? nǐ jīnwǎn xiǎng chūqu ma? Do you feel like going out tonight?
一起看电影怎么样? Yìqǐ kàn diànyǐng zěnmeyàng? What do you think about us watching a movie together?	我不喜欢喝咖啡。 Wǒ bù xǐhuān hē kāfēi. I don't like to drink coffee.
你周六忙吗? nǐ zhōuliù máng ma? Are you busy on Saturday?	我喜欢旅游。 Wǒ xǐhuān lǚyóu. I like traveling.
我去超市买东西。 Wǒ qù chāoshì mǎi dōngxi. I'm going to the store to buy things.	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 出去／进来, *chūqù jìnlái* ("to go out/ to come in")

我们出去玩儿吧
Wǒmen chūqù wánr ba.
"Let's go out for some fun."

出去 (*chūqù*) and 进来 (*jìnlái*) are both verbs that indicate a move either from inside to out or from outside to in. 出去 means "to leave the speaker and go out," 出 is "to exit," and 去 is "to go." 出去 means "to go outside." When you use 出去, the speaker must be inside.

For Example:

1. 你出去。
   Nǐ chūqù.
   "You go out." (I am inside.)

2. 我想出去。
   Wǒ xiǎng chūqù.
   "I want to go out." (Now I am inside.)

进来 means "to come in": the speaker is also inside. 进 is "to come in" or "to go in," and 来 is "to come." 进来 is "to come in."

For Example:

1. 请进来。
   Qǐng jìnlái.
   "Please come in."

2. 别进来!
   Bié jìnlái!
   "Don't come in."

3. 我刚刚进来。
   Wǒ gānggāng jìnlái
   "I just came in."

Sample Sentences

---

1. 我们出去玩儿吧?
   Wǒmen chūqù wánr ba?
   "How about let's go out for some fun."

2. *你出去*!
   Nǐ chūqù!
   "Get out!"

3. 我出去吃饭了。
Wǒ chūqù chīfàn le.
"I went out to eat."

4. *你进来看看。*
Nǐ jìnlái kànkan.
"Come in and take a look."

5. 别进来。
Bié jìnlái.
"Don't come in."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Generation Differences

The one difference between the people born after 1980, known as the 八零后, and the older generation, is how they spend their leisure time. The 80s generation is known for being more adventurous both in how they travel and spend their money. In nightclubs throughout China, you can find packed bars with white-collar workers, and other types gleefully spending their paychecks. Besides partying, shopping is also high on the list of ways to kill a Saturday. People are bombarded by ads everywhere they go, including the Internet, so the subconscious reflex to shop is growing. But for some people, the demands of a stressful and laborious job overpower the urge to have fun.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #6 This Chinese Bathroom is Occupied

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

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 洗手间有人吗?
2. B: 有人，稍等!
3. A: 你快点儿!
4. B: 稍等!

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 洗手間有人嗎?
2. B: 有人，稍等!
3. A: 你快點兒!
4. B: 稍等!

PINYIN

1. A: Xǐshǒujiān yǒu rén ma?
2. B: Yǒu rén, shāoděng!
3. A: Nǐ kuài diǎnr!

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Shāoděng!

ENGLISH

1. A: Is there anyone in the bathroom?
2. B: There's someone in here, wait a moment.
3. A: Hurry up.
4. B: Wait a moment.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
洗手间	洗手間	xǐshǒujiān	washroom	noun
上	上	shàng	to get on; on; top, To go up	noun/verb
厕所	廁所	cèsuǒ	bathroom	noun
马桶	馬桶	mǎtǒng	toilet	noun
水龙头	水龍頭	shuǐlóngtóu	water tap	noun
手纸	手紙	shǒuzhǐ	toilet paper	noun
稍等	稍等	shāoděng	to wait a moment	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

洗手间在哪儿? Xǐshǒujiān zài nǎr? Where is the washroom?	上楼梯。 shàng lóutī . Go upstairs.
两只螃蟹在岩石上走。 Liǎng zhī pángxiè zài yánshí shàng zǒu. There are two crabs walking on a rock.	我想上厕所。 Wǒ xiǎng shàng cèsuǒ. I have to go to the bathroom.
马桶坏了。 Mǎtǒng huài le. The toilet is broken.	打开水龙头。 Dǎkāi shuǐlóngtóu. Turn on the tap.
没有手纸了。 méiyǒu shǒu zhǐ le. There's no more toilet paper.	我买了两卷手纸。 Wǒ mǎi le liǎng juǎn shǒuzhǐ. I bought two rolls of toilet paper.
麻烦您稍等, 经理马上就开完会了. máfan nín shāoděng, jīnglǐ mǎshàng jiù kāi wán huì le. Please wait a moment; the manager will be done with his meeting very soon.	请稍等。 Qǐng shāoděng. Please wait a moment.

GRAMMAR

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

洗手间有人吗?

Xǐshǒujiān yǒu rén ma?

"Is there anyone in the bathroom?"

有 is a verb, which means "to have" or "to exist." You can use it to both represent real or abstract ideas or things. For example, *这儿有问题。Zhèr yǒu wèntí.* ("There is some problem here.") The problem is not a tangible thing but represents an idea or thought. Another example is *房间里有人。Fángjiān lǐyǒu rén.* ("There's somebody in the room.") Here, there is a real existing object, in this case, a person. *饭馆儿里有座位。Fàn guǎnr lǐ yǒu zuòwèi.* ("There are some seats in the restaurant.") Here, you can see, when the subject of the sentence is a place or time, and we can translate the sentence as "there is..." or "There are...."

For Example:

1. 洗手间有人。
Xǐshǒujiānyǒu rén.
"There is someone in the bathroom."

2. 厨房没有灯。
Chúfáng méiyǒu dēng.
"There are no lights in the kitchen."

3. 今天晚上有派对。
Jīntiān wǎnshàng yǒu pàiduì.
"There's a party tonight."

4. 那儿有座位。
Nàr yǒu zuòwèi.
"There's a seat there."

5. 这儿有人吗?
Zhèr yǒu rén ma?
"Is there any here?

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Not So Private Bathrooms

Bathrooms in China can be either an enlightening experience or a complete nightmare,

depending on whom you ask. In China's quest for modernity, the upgrade from a mainly squatting toilet culture, to a western toilet bowl-based culture is slowly taking shape. In many of the high rise apartment buildings built within the last ten years, a western seating toilet is the norm. However, in rural China and public places such as train stations, the squatting toilet still is the norm. The lack of privacy in China's toilets can be very unsettling to tourists and recently-arrived foreign expats. In public bathrooms in Beijing, there exist no individual stalls, but an open room with urinals lining the floor. Just remember to bring some toilet paper with you regardless of where you travel.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #7 Two Hungry Stomachs in China

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我们吃饭吧。
2. B: 你饿了吗?
3. A: 嗯。
4. B: 我也饿了。
5. A: 我们出去吃吧。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我們吃飯吧。
2. B: 你餓了嗎?
3. A: 嗯。
4. B: 我也餓了。
5. A: 我們出去吃吧。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒmen chīfàn ba.

CONT'D OVER

2. B: Nǐ è le ma?

3. A: En.

4. B: Wǒ yě è le.

5. A: Wǒmen chūqù chī ba.

ENGLISH

1. A: Let's eat.

2. B: Are you hungry?

3. A: Mmm.

4. B: I'm hungry too.

5. A: Let's go out and eat.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
饿	餓	è	hungry	adjective
困	困	kùn	sleepy	adjective
累	累	lèi	tired	adjective
饱	飽	bǎo	full	adjective

忙	忙	máng	busy	adjective
烦	煩	fán	annoyed	adjective
行	行	xíng	terrific, good	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我饿了。 Wǒ è le. I'm hungry.	你困吗? Nǐ kùn ma? Are you sleepy?
他很累。 Tā hěn lèi. He's very tired.	我很饱。 Wǒ hěn bǎo. I'm very full.
大家都挺忙的。 Dàjiā dōu tǐng máng de. Everyone is all quite busy.	他有点儿烦。 Tā yǒu diǎnr fán. He's a little annoyed.

这个人真行。
Zhè gè rén zhēn xíng.

This person is really terrific.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 也, *yě* ("also")

我也饿了。
Wǒ yě è le.
"I'm hungry too."

也 (*yě*) is an adverb that corresponds to the English words "also" and "too." It follows the subject and comes before the verb of the sentence. In Chinese we also find it before adjectives, which are sometimes known as stative verbs. The meaning of "also" and "too" applies to the subject and not to the verb phrase that follows. For example, we can translate 我也饿了。 *Wǒ yě è le.* ("I (in addition to other people) also am hungry.")

The formula for using 也 in a positive sentence is: (subject) + 也 + (verb/adjective)
The formula for using 也 in a negative sentence is: (subject) + 也 + 不 + (verb/adjective)

For Example:

1. 你不去我也不去。
   Nǐ bú qù wǒ yě bú qù.
   "If you're not going, then I'm not going either."

2. 我也很生气。
   Wǒ yě hěn shēngqì.
   "I'm also really angry."

3. 我也迟到了。
   Wǒ yě chídào le.
   "I'm also late."

4. 我也没吃饭。
   Wǒ yě méi chīfàn.
   "I also haven't eaten."

You can also use 也 to chain together more complex ideas or join together otherwise independent sentences. This can also be used to imply a conditional relationship between the two separate clauses:

1. 你不去，我也不去。
   Nǐ bú qù, wǒ yě bú qù.
   "If you don't go, I won't go either."

2. 我很困，她也很困。
Wǒ hěn kùn, tā yě hěn kùn.
"I'm really sleepy, she's really sleepy too."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Table for One?

Going out to eat can oftentimes be less expensive than cooking a meal yourself. A full meal for one at a 成都小吃 ("Sichuan diner") can run anywhere from eight to fifteen RMB. This is the equivalent to two and a half USD. On the other hand, buying all the necessary ingredients to make a meal yourself can run anywhere from twenty to forty RMB. But the most effective way to eat is with a group. Chinese portions are served not with an individual in mind, but rather a large party. The dishes will be brought out one at a time. Many restaurants will also have a "lazy Susan" that easily accommodates a large amount of people eating at one table and makes it easy for diners to pick and choose between the many dishes ordered.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #8
Excuses for Being Late in China

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- Dialogue - Chinese
  - Simplified
  - English
  - Pinyin
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- Vocabulary
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#8

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 你迟到了！
2. B : 我没有， 还早呢。
3. A : 现在几点？
4. B : 哦……迟到了。

ENGLISH

1. A : You're late.
2. B : No, I'm not. It's still early.
3. A : What time is it right now?
4. B : Oh. I'm late.

PINYIN

1. A : Nǐ chídào le!
2. B : Wǒ méiyǒu, hái zǎo ne.
3. A : Xiànzài jǐdiǎn?
4. B : O .....chídào le.

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 你遲到了！
2. B : 我沒有， 還早呢。
3. A : 現在幾點？
4. B : 哦.....遲到了。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
迟到	遲到	chídào	to be late	verb
还	還	hái	still	adverb
早	早	zǎo	early	adjective
现在	現在	xiànzài	right now	noun
几点	幾點	jǐdiǎn	what time	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我今天迟到了。 *Wǒ jīntiān chídào le.* I was late today.	他的车坏了，现在还在修。 *Tā de chē huài le, xiànzài hái zài xiū.* His car is broken and is still being repaired.
你还在中国吗？ *Nǐ hái zài Zhōngguó ma ?* You are still in China?	我还没吃饭。 *Wǒ hái méi chīfàn.* I still haven't eaten.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 还 (*hái*) "still"
我没有， 还早呢。
Wǒ méiyǒu, hái zǎo ne.
"No I'm not, it's still early."

In its simplest form, the adverb 还 (*hái*) functions as "still" or "as before." We place it in front of verbs or adjectives. To negate 还, you can attach 不 or 没 depending on the tense after the conjunction. For example, 我还有个约会。(*Wǒ hái yǒu gè yuēhuì.)* "I still have one appointment." To negate that sentence, it would be 我还没有约会。 (*Wǒ hái méiyǒu yuēhuì.)* "I still don't have an appointment."

Examples:

1. 还早呢！
Hái zǎo ne!
"It's still early!"

2. 别着急，还有时间。
Bié zháojí, hái yǒu shíjiān.
"Don't be anxious; there's still time."

3. 我还要上课。
Wǒ hái yào shàngkè.
"I still have to go to class."

4. 你还有事儿吗？
Nǐ hái yǒushìr ma?
"Do you still have any problem?"

5. 我还在北京。
Wǒ hái zài Běijīng.
"I'm still in Beijing."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Poor Punctuality

Punctuality is not one of China's strong points. Unlike the West, China did not evolve their business culture from the nine to five model but rather something similar to a piecemeal basis. Depending on the person, being on time can be a personal trait. However, in the larger scheme of Chinese business culture, being on time is not part of the ethos. This mentality is changing as multi-national corporations set the tone for how a twenty-first century business should be run. Standard operating hours are becoming more and more common for franchised businesses both Chinese and foreign owned.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #9
The Unhelpful Chinese Operator

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你好，是小王吗?
2. B: 不是。
3. A: 请问，小王在吗?
4. B: 不在。
5. A: 他去哪儿了?
6. B: 不知道。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你好，是小王嗎?
2. B: 不是。
3. A: 請問，小王在嗎?
4. B: 不在。
5. A: 他去哪兒了?
6. B: 不知道。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐhǎo, shì Xiǎo Wáng ma?

CONT'D OVER

2. B: Bú shì.

3. A: Qǐngwèn, Xiǎo Wáng zài ma?

4. B: Bú zài.

5. A: Tā qù nǎr le?

6. B: Bù zhīdào.

ENGLISH

1. A: Hi, is this Xiao Wang?

2. B: No.

3. A: Excuse me, is Xiao Wang there?

4. B: No.

5. A: Where is he?

6. B: I don't know.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
请问	請問	qǐngwèn	excuse me	phrase
电话	電話	diànhuà	telephone	noun
转	轉	zhuǎn	to turn	verb

号码	號碼	hàomǎ	number	noun
留言	留言	liúyán	to leave a message	verb
在	在	zài	to be at	verb
打	打	dǎ	to flag down	verb
喂	喂	wéi	hello	onomatopoeia

SAMPLE SENTENCES

请问您是? Qǐngwèn nín shì? Excuse me, you are...?	他在打电话。 Tā zài dǎ diànhuà. The person is making a phone call.
请转一下儿，谢谢。 Qǐng zhuǎn yíxiàr, xièxie. Can you transfer me? Thank you.	你的电话号码是多少? Nǐ de diànhuà hàomǎ shì duōshǎo? What is your phone number?
您需要留言吗? Nín xūyào liúyán ma? Do you want to leave a message?	在，你稍等。 Zài, nǐ shāoděng. He's here, please wait.
我打不到出租车。 Wǒ dǎ bú dào chūzūchē. I can't flag down a cab.	喂，你好。 Wéi, nǐhǎo. Wei, hello.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 不, *bù* ("Not")

不知道。

Bù zhīdào.

"I don't know."

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

You can use 不 in three different instances.

1. *bù* + (verb phrase)
2. *bù* + (adjective)
3. *bù* + (adverb)

For Example:

1. 这儿的服务员的态度不好。
   Zhèr de fúwùyuán de tàidù bù hǎo.
   "The waitresses here have bad attitudes."

2. 他们不去看电影。
   Tā men bú qù kàn diànyǐng.
   "They aren't going to see a movie."

3. 王丽不会游泳。
   Wáng lì bú huì yóuyǒng.
   "Wang Li can't swim."

4. 他不在家。
   Tā bú zài jiā.
   "He's not home."

5. 我不高兴。
   Wǒ bù gāoxìng.
   "I'm not happy."

6. 我不明白。
   Wǒ bù míngbai.
   "I don't understand."

7. 这个不好。
   Zhègè bù hǎo.
   "This one isn't good."

8. 我不出去。
Wǒ bù chūqù.
"I'm not going out."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Telephone Rates

Making calls to someone in the same city as you costs much less compared to inner-city, and inner-province calling. Once you are in a different city or province, the best way to communicate with your friends or family is through the Internet. The second best choice is short messages. In China, all the telecommunication companies will charge extra fees if you are not in the city where you bought your SIM card. The worst case is when you work in a big city like Beijing and your hometown is in another province. Every time you call home, the telephone companies will charge you at least three times more money than they usually do. So remember, never call anybody by cell phone if you leave the city where you buy your SIM card.

However, if you call somebody using an IC card, the cost is about fifty percent cheaper. If you want to call somebody in another country, the Hello card is the best choice, or you can just use Skype.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #10 What's the Rush in China?

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你慢点儿。
2. B: 你快点儿。
3. A: 你走路太快。
4. B: 你太慢。
5. A: 我累死了！

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你慢點兒。
2. B: 你快點兒。
3. A: 你走路太快。
4. B: 你太慢。
5. A: 我累死了！

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ màn diǎnr.
2. B: Nǐ kuài diǎnr.
3. A: Nǐ zǒulù tài kuài.

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Nǐ tài màn.

5. A: Wǒ lèi sǐ le!

ENGLISH

1. A: Slow down.

2. B: Go a bit faster.

3. A: You're walking too fast.

4. B: You're too slow.

5. A: I'm exhausted.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
快点儿	快點兒	kuài diǎnr	hurry up	phrase
慢点儿	慢點兒	màn diǎnr	slow down	phrase
早点儿	早點兒	zǎo diǎnr	a little earlier	phrase
晚点儿	晚點兒	wǎn diǎnr	a little later	phrase
大声点儿	大聲點兒	dàshēng diǎnr	a little louder	phrase
小声点儿	小聲點兒	xiǎoshēng diǎnr	a little softer	phrase
死	死	sǐ	to die	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

快点儿，好吗? Kuài diǎnr, hǎo ma? Hurry, all right?	你慢点儿。 Nǐ màn diǎnr. Slow down.
早点儿回家吧。 Zǎo diǎnr huíjiā ba. Come home earlier.	我晚点儿走。 Wǒ wǎn diǎnr zǒu. I'm going later.
请大声点儿 Qǐng dàshēng diǎnr Please speak a bit louder	请小声点儿 Qǐng xiǎoshēng diǎnr Please speak a bit softer.

我已经累死了。
Wǒ yǐjīng lèi sǐ le.

I'm already really tired.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 死了, *sǐ le* (Adverb of Degree - "to death")
我累死了!
Wǒ lèi sǐ le!
"I'm exhausted!"

死 is a verb that means "to die." When followed by 了 and preceded by an adjective, the connotation changes from literal to metaphorical. The particle 了 indicates something will happen in a short time. Here we put 死 and 了 together after a verb or adjective. The meaning then changes to "going to die because of verb/ adjective." For instance: 我饿死了。 *Wǒ è sǐ le.* ("I'm starving"). Another common expression using "...to the death" is 我气死了。 *Wǒ qì sǐ le.* ("I'm infuriated.")

For Example:

1. 我们吃饭吧，我饿死了。
   Wǒmen chīfàn ba, wǒ è sǐ le.
   "Let's go eat some food. I'm starving to death."

2. 气死我了！
Qì sǐ wǒ le.
"I'm infuriated!"

3. 今天忙死我了。
Jīntiān máng sǐ wǒ le.
"I'm extremely busy today."

4. *累死我了，我要休息！*
Lèi sǐ wǒ le, wǒ yào xiūxi!
"I'm exhausted; I need to rest."

5. 你怎么才来？急死我了。
Nǐ zěnme cái lái? Jí sǐ wǒ le.
"How are you only arriving now? I was worried to death."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Personal Shopper

Don't be surprised to see an exasperated man on a shopping trip at the end of his wits. He will be carrying a large assortment of shopping bags and, more often than not, there will be a girl in front with nothing in hand, walking excitedly. Yes, guys hate shopping. At least Chinese guys hate shopping, because their job at that time is not to choose anything they need, but to help their girlfriends carry all their new purchases. At the same time, they must pretend to be very, very happy to do all of this, because their girlfriends will not be pleased and will probably quarrel with them otherwise.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #11
The Brand New Chinese Bike

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你看，我的新自行车。
2. B: 很漂亮！
3. A: 也很便宜，100块钱。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你看，我的新自行車。
2. B: 很漂亮！
3. A: 也很便宜，100塊錢。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ kàn, wǒ de xīn zìxíngchē.
2. B: Hěn piàoliàng!
3. A: Yě hěn piányì, yìbǎi kuài.

ENGLISH

1. A: Hey look, my new bicycle.
2. B: It's really pretty.

CONT'D OVER

3. A: And it was also very cheap. One hundred kuai.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
自行车	自行車	zìxíngchē	bicycle	noun
摩托车	摩托車	mótuōchē	motorcycle	noun
火车	火車	huǒchē	train	noun
出租车	出租車	chūzūchē	taxi	noun
滑板	滑板	huábǎn	skateboard	noun
漂亮	漂亮	piàoliàng	pretty	adjective
便宜	便宜	piányì	inexpensive; cheap	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我可以借你的自行车吗? Wǒ kěyǐ jiè nǐ de zìxíngchē ma? Can I borrow your bicycle?	他不会骑摩托车，撞到了树上。 Tā búhuì qí mótuōchē, zhuàngdào le shù shàng. He couldn't drive a motor bike and hit a tree.
火车就要出站了。 Huǒchē jiù yào chūzhàn le. The train is about to leave the platform.	在饭店的前面有出租车。 Zài fàndiàn de qiánmiàn yǒu chūzūchē. There are taxis in front of the hotel.
我喜欢玩儿滑板。 Wǒ xǐhuān wánr huábǎn. I like skateboarding.	意大利很漂亮。 Yìdàlì hěn piàoliàng. Italy is very beautiful.
前台的小姐很漂亮。 Qiántái de xiǎojiě hěn piàoliàng. The girl at the front desk is very pretty.	便宜一点儿，可以吗? Piányì yìdiǎnr, kěyǐ ma? Can (you) make it a little cheaper?

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Showing Possession with the Structural Particle 的 (*de*)

我的新自行车。
Wǒ de xīn zìxíngchē.
"My new bicycle."

De is a structural particle we use to show possession or ownership. The noun before 的 (*de*) is the owner of the noun after 的 (*de*). For example, to say "my book" in Chinese, one connects 我 *wǒ* ("I") and 书 *shū* ("book") with the particle 的 (*de*): 我的书 (*wǒ de* shū). The word order is always as follows:

[the owner] 的 (*de*) [the owned].

When speaking about family members, we drop 的 (*de*). For example, "my mother" is 我妈妈 (*wǒ māma*).

For Example:

1. 你的车很漂亮。
   Nǐ de chē hěn piàoliàng.
   Your bicycle is very pretty.

2. 他的病好了。
   Tā de bìng hǎo le.
   He has recovered from his illness.

3. 这是谁的东西?
   Zhè shì shéi de dōngxi?
   Whose things are these?

4. 她妈妈很年轻。
   Tā de māma hěn niánqīng.
   Her mother is very young.

5. 我的咖啡呢?
   Wǒ de kāfēi ne?
   What about my coffee?

6. 这辆车的刹车坏了。
Zhè liàng chē de shāchē huài le.
The brakes on this car are broken.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Soaring Bicycle Crime Wave

One fact of life of living in China is that if you have a bicycle, it is not if, but when it will get stolen. Because of this grim statistic, you will find old, dilapidated bikes being ridden around the city. Many of these bikes have been purchased secondhand. Most likely, the bike that they purchased was a stolen bike to begin with. There are some pretty heavy-duty locks on the market, but to a thief, it is just a challenge to break. In the middle of the night, a bike thief will descend with a pair of bolt cutters.

As a way to mitigate the problem, special bike parking zones outside of subway stations have been built in Beijing. Every subway will have a special place for you to put your bikes. However, the workers there will rearrange the bikes to conserve space. Since your bike has been moved to a different spot from where you parked it, some people will stop looking for their bikes because they don't have enough time. Others will just give up and stop looking for their bikes all together since they assume the bike was lifted.

One fail-safe way to keep a bike safe is to bring it into your home after every ride. Even keeping it locked up within the apartment building is not a guarantee.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #12 We All Scream for Ice Cream in China!

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 今天真热。
2. B: 我要吃冰淇淋。
3. A: 我也想吃。
4. B: 我请你。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 今天真熱。
2. B: 我要吃冰淇淋。
3. A: 我也想吃。
4. B: 我請你。

PINYIN

1. A: Jīntiān zhēn rè.
2. B: Wǒ yào chī bīngqílín.
3. A: Wǒ yě xiǎng chī.
4. B: Wǒ qǐng nǐ.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Today is really hot.

2. B: I want to eat ice cream.

3. A: I also feel like eating ice cream.

4. B: I'll treat you.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
热	熱	rè	hot	adjective
凉	涼	liáng	cool	adjective
暖和	暖和	nuǎnhuo	warm	adjective
闷	悶	mēn	humid; stuffy	adjective
冷	冷	lěng	cold	adjective
冰淇淋	冰淇淋	bīngqílín	ice cream	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

今天真热。 Jīntiān zhēn rè. It's really hot today.	今天有点儿凉。 Jīntiān yǒu diǎnr liáng. Today is a little cold.
房间里很暖和。 Fángjiān lǐ hěn nuǎnhuo. It's warm inside the room.	今天很闷。 Jīntiān hěn mēn. Today is very humid.
冬天不太冷。 Dōngtiān bú tài lěng. Winter isn't that cold.	给我一个香草冰淇淋。 Gěi wǒ yīgè xiāngcǎo bīngqílín. Give me a vanilla ice cream.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Degrees of Like

我要吃冰淇淋.

Wǒ yào chī bīngqílín.

"I want to eat ice cream."

想 and 要 both share a meaning of "to want." However, you can use these two verbs in different situations with slight differences in meaning. For example, 要 indicates this is not the first time that you have done an action or have decided to do the action in the future. 要 has the connotation that "there is some kind of plan" to do this. For example, 我要去北京。 *Wǒ yào qù Běijīng.* ("I want to go to Beijing.") In this context, plans already exist to travel to Beijing. Conversely, 想 is just "to want without any plan": the speaker is not sure if the desire will actually be fulfilled or not. For example, 我想去北京。 *Wǒ xiǎng qù Běijīng.* ("I want to go to Beijing, but I'm not sure if I will finally go there or not.")

For Example:

1. 我要去北京。
Wǒ yào qù Běijīng.
"I want to go to Beijing."

2. *我想休息一下儿。*
Wǒ xiǎng xiūxi yí xiàr.
"I'd like a rest."

3. *我要休息一下儿。*
Wǒ yào xiūxi yí xiàr.
"I want a rest."

4. *你想吃什么?*
Nǐ xiǎng chī shénme?
"What do you feel like eating?"

5. 你要吃什么?
Nǐ yào chī shénme?
"What do you want to eat?"

6. 我想回家。
Wǒ xiǎng huíjiā.
"I wish to go home."

7. *我要回家。*

Wǒ yào huíjiā.
"I want to go home."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Chinese Electrical Blackouts

The summer in Beijing is hot and dry. Usually the highest temperature will be over forty degrees Celsius on a sunny day. However, the weather forecasts will never say, "Tomorrow will be over forty degrees." The temperature in the weather forecast will always be thirty-eight, thirty-nine, thirty-nine and a half, etc. There is a reason for this. If the temperature goes above forty, then by law, people who work outside are given a reprieve from the heat, and work halts.

During the height of summer, when air conditioner and refrigerator use are at an all time high, forced electrical blackouts will occur. The electricity will cut out at noon in some regions to make sure other people can have electricity to run the air conditioner! Without electricity during a hot day, people will have to get creative to keep cool. Even factories will lose electricity. This technique is relegated to the smaller cities and towns though. Large cities like Beijing and Shanghai do not experience this unique conservation method.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #13
The Clueless Chinese Linguist

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你会说英语吗?
2. B: 不会。
3. A: 你会说中文吗?
4. B: 不会。
5. A: 骗子!

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你會說英語嗎?
2. B: 不會。
3. A: 你會說中文嗎?
4. B: 不會。
5. A: 騙子!

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?
2. B: Bú huì.
3. A: Nǐ huì shuō zhōngwén ma?

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Bú huì.

5. A: Piànzi!

ENGLISH

1. A: Can you speak English?

2. B: No.

3. A: Can you speak Chinese?

4. B: No.

5. A: Liar!

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
汉语	漢語	hànyǔ	Chinese	noun
英语	英語	yīngyǔ	English	noun
英文	英文	yīngwén	English	noun
中文	中文	zhōngwén	Chinese	noun
法语	法語	fǎyǔ	French	noun
德语	德語	déyǔ	German	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

你的汉语不错。 Nǐ de hànyǔ bú cuò. Your Chinese isn't bad.	我不会说英语。 Wǒ búhuì shuō yīngyǔ. I can't speak English.
我要学英文。 Wǒ yào xué yīngwén. I want to learn English.	他的中文很好。 Tā de zhōngwén hěn hǎo. His Chinese is very good.
你会说法语吗? Nǐ huì shuō fǎyǔ ma? Can you speak French?	德国人说德语。 Déguó rén shuō déyǔ. Germans speak German.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 会, *huì* ("To be able to")
你会说中文吗？ *Nǐ huì shuō zhōngwén ma?*
"Can you speak Chinese?"

会 (*Huì*) is an auxiliary verb used to express that one is able to do a certain acquired skill. In English, the verb "can" covers a wide range of situations. Some simple examples include the ability to speak a foreign language such as in the dialogue, *你会说英语吗？ Nǐ huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?* ("Can you speak English?") Other learned abilities such as playing the piano or cooking food can use the verb 会 (*huì*).

会 (*huì*) precedes the verb: *她会唱歌, Tā huì chànggē* ("She can sing").

For Example:

1. *我不会做饭。*
   Wǒ búhuì zuòfàn.
   "I don't know how to cook."

2. *你会不会用电脑?*
   Nǐ huìbúhuì yòng diànnǎo?
   "Do you know how to use a computer?"

3. 我会说汉语。
Wǒ huì shuō hànyǔ.
"I can speak Chinese."

4. *他不会骑自行车。*
Tā búhuì qí zìxíngchē.
"He doesn't know how to ride a bike."

5. *你会不会开车?*
Nǐ huìbuhuì kāichē?
"Are you able to drive a car?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The English Language in China

Most Chinese people have begun studying English these days, even the taxi drivers. But for many Chinese people, there is another more pressing problem. China has a diverse lexicon of dialects. Often times, people living in the same province but in different villages will have difficulty communicating since their dialects are different. This problem becomes even more exacerbated when people travel from region to region and province to province. The advent of standard Mandarin based on the Northern Beijing dialect was a directive to combat the language confusion.

Some parents see the ability to speak Mandarin as an advantage for their children so they will opt not to speak their local dialect in the house but rather Mandarin. However, the parents' Mandarin isn't that standard, so the inaccuracies will be transmitted to their children. Now the children have a strong accent. They can neither speak their own dialect or proper Mandarin. When they come to Beijing or some other cities in the north, they will encounter some problems because Mandarin speakers will think they are not good learners and their 老乡, *lǎoxiāng* ("fellow villagers") that migrants interact with will not feel comfortable because they cannot speak their dialect.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #14 Lightning Never Strikes Twice

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 打闪了。
2. B: 快下雨了。
3. A: 带伞吧。
4. B: 我们明天去吧。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 打閃了。
2. B: 快下雨了。
3. A: 帶傘吧。
4. B: 我們明天去吧。

PINYIN

1. A: Dǎ shǎn le.
2. B: Kuài xiàyǔ le.
3. A: Dài sǎn ba.
4. B: Wǒmen míngtiān qù ba.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Lightning strike.

2. B: It's about to rain.

3. A: Bring an umbrella.

4. B: How about we go tomorrow.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
打雷	打雷	dǎléi	to thunder	verb
打闪	打閃	dǎshǎn	to have lightning	verb
风	風	fēng	wind	noun
下雨	下雨	xiàyǔ	to rain	verb
下雪	下雪	xiàxuě	to snow	verb
快	快	kuài	quickly; fast	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

打雷了！ Dǎ léi le! It's thundering.	你看，打闪了。 Nǐ kàn, dǎ shǎn le. Look! It's lightning!
现在风很大。 Xiànzài fēng hěn dà. (Right now, the wind is very large) It's really windy.	昨天下雨了。 Zuótiān xià yǔ le. It rained yesterday.

下雪了，我很冷。 Xiàxuě le, wǒ hěn lěng. It's snowing and I'm cold.	快叫人来。 Kuài jiào rén lái . Quick, call for someone to come.

我快到了。
Wǒ kuài dào le 。

I'm almost there.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 快, *kuài* ("About to")
快下雨了。*Kuài xiàyǔ le.*
"It's about to rain."

快 is an adverb that means "about to" or "soon." Usually the particle 了 will follow the adverb. For example, *快下雨了。Kuài xiàyǔ le.* ("It's about to rain"), or 我快迟到了。 ("I'm about to be late.") 快 can also indicate urgency and imperativeness. *时间快到了。Shíjiān kuài dào le.* ("Time is about to be up.")

The formula to use with 快 is (Adverb) + 快 + (Verb) + 了

For Example:

1. 快下雨了。
   Kuài xiàyǔ le.
   "It's about to rain."

2. 我的病快好了。
   Wǒ de bìng kuài hǎo le.
   "I'm about to get over my cold."

3. 快下雪了。
   Kuài xiàxuě le.
   "It's going to snow soon."

4. 我快到了。
   Wǒ kuài dào le.
   "I'm going to arrive soon."

5. *他快没时间了。*
   Kuài méi shíjiān le.
   "He's about to be out of time."

6. *我快吃完了。*

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Wacky Weather in Beijing

The first rain of the year is the sign of spring. In Beijing however, the sign of spring doesn't come in the form of rain but sand. Well, it's not Beijing's fault, but we have to say, the air is a little bit...too dirty in spring. Sand is blown across the Gobi desert from outer and inner Mongolia into the coastal regions of China. Recently, a wall of trees is beginning to be erected by the Chinese government to help block the sandstorms.

Beijing has spring rain too, but not as often as gusting wind. The biggest problem encountered in a sand storm is that you will quickly accumulate a thick layer of sand on your clothes. Many people will wear surgical masks to protect their respiratory system from sand. If you find that the weather is quite exceptional, don't hesitate. Go out and seize the day, because you never know when the sandstorms may return.

The best time to be out and about in Beijing is the short autumn. It's not too hot, not too cold, and there are no pesky sandstorms. It is the golden time to take short trips to the hills and gardens around Beijing.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #15
The Broken Refrigerator

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 啤酒加冰。
2. B: 今天没有冰。
3. A: 为什么没有?
4. B: 冰箱坏了。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 啤酒加冰。
2. B: 今天沒有冰。
3. A: 為甚麼沒有?
4. B: 冰箱壞了。

PINYIN

1. A: Píjiǔ jiā bīng.
2. B: Jīntiān méiyǒu bīng.
3. A: Wèishénme méiyǒu?
4. B: Bīngxiāng huài le.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: A beer with ice.

2. B: There's no ice today.

3. A: Why not?

4. B: The refrigerator is broken.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
可乐	可樂	kělè	cola	noun
冰箱	冰箱	bīngxiāng	refrigerator	noun
冰	冰	bīng	ice	noun
芬达	芬達	fēndá	Fanta	noun
雪碧	雪碧	xuěbì	sprite	noun
果汁	果汁	guǒzhī	juice	noun
啤酒	啤酒	píjiǔ	beer	noun
加	加	jiā	to add	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

可乐加冰。 Kělè jiā bīng. Cola with Ice.	我家有两个冰箱，一个大冰箱，一个小冰箱。 wǒ jiā yǒu liǎng ge bīngxiāng , yíge dà bīngxiāng , yíge xiǎo bīngxiāng . We have two refrigerators in our house, one is a big refrigerator, one is a small refrigerator.

这个女的饿了。他去冰箱里找吃的。 Zhègè nǚ de è le, tā qù bīngxiāng lǐ zhǎo chī de. The woman is hungry. The hungry man is looking for food in the refrigerator.	可乐加冰。 Kělè jiā bīng. Cola with Ice.
她不喝芬达。 Tā bù hē fēndá. She doesn't want to drink fanta.	雪碧很好喝。 Xuěbì hěn hǎohē. Sprite tastes good
我喜欢喝果汁。 Wǒ xǐhuān hē guǒzhī. I like to drink juice.	我不喝啤酒。 Wǒ bù hē píjiǔ. I don't drink beer.
老师加上学生一共20人。 Lǎoshī jiāshàng xuésheng yígòng èrshí rén . "There are a total of 20 people including teachers and students."	加一点盐，再加一点黑胡椒. jiā yī diǎn yán , zài jiā yī diǎn hēi hújiāo . Add a little salt, then add a little black pepper.
我在水里加了点儿糖。 wǒ zài shuǐlǐ jiā le diǎnr táng. I added a bit of sugar to the water.	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 加, *jiā* ("To add")

啤酒加冰。 *Píjiǔ jiā bīng.*
"Add ice to the beer."

加 is a verb meaning, "to add." When cooking, we can use 加 to add ingredients such as 加点儿盐, *jiā diǎnr yán* ("Add some salt"), or 加点儿糖, *jiā diǎnr táng* ("Add some surgar"). When ordering drinks at a restaurant or bar, you can use 加 to mean two different ingredients can be added together. 可乐加冰。*Kělè jiā bīng.* ("Coke with ice.") Notice that we do not use the verb 跟 ("with"). If the waiter asks, 加冰吗？ *Jiā bīng ma* ("Do you need ice?") you can

simply answer by saying, 加冰。*Jiā bīng.*("Yes, I need ice.")

For Example:

1. 可乐加冰。
   Kělè jiā bīng.
   "Soda with ice."

2. 再加点儿糖。
   Zài jiā diǎnr táng.
   "Add a little more sugar."

3. 威士忌加冰。
   Wēishìjì jiābīng.
   "Whiskey and ice."

4. 加糖，不要加盐。
   Jiā táng, búyào jiā yán.
   "Add sugar, no salt."

5. 住单人间要加钱。
   Zhù dānrén jiān yào jiā qián.
   "You need to add money if you want a single room."

6. 老板给我加工资。
   Lǎobǎn gěi wǒ jiā gōngzī.
   "The boss gave me a pay rise."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Hot and Cold Beverages in China

One of the first things a traveler to China may notice is the difference in how beer is consumed and served. If you're lucky, after ordering a beer the waitress will ask if you want a room temperature beer or a cold beer. If you aren't as fortunate, the waitress will bring a warm beer even on a hot day. Chinese people view heat and cold in a health context. Warm drinks are good for your body and overall health, while cold drinks are damaging.

Refrigerators do exist in China and most urban households have one. One peculiar practice in China is by small convenient stores. They will have a handy beverage refrigerator stored with a variety of beverages. But as you open the door, you find that this is only a refrigerator in theory. To your dismay, the refrigerator is not plugged in, and it only serves as a holding case for the beverages.

One further note on cold beverages in China: It is very rare to find ice cubes available in large quantities, if at all. Even in a bar, a cocktail may come with a paltry one or two ice cubes that quickly melt into your beverage, making it even more watered down. Western chain restaurants like KFC and McDonalds will have an ice machine on hand. So if you are craving a chilled drink, just run to you neighborhood golden arches and ask for extra ice.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #16
The Stolen Purse

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#16

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我的钱包丢了。
2. B: 怎么丢的?
3. A: 被偷了。
4. B: 你真倒霉。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我的錢包丟了。
2. B: 怎麼丟的?
3. A: 被偷了。
4. B: 你真倒霉。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒ de qiánbāo diū le.
2. B: Zěnme diū de?
3. A: Bèi tōu le.
4. B: Nǐ zhēn dǎoméi.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: I lost my purse.

2. B: How did you lose it?

3. A: It was stolen.

4. B: You're really unfortunate.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
手机	手機	shǒujī	cellphone	noun
倒霉	倒霉	dǎoméi	unlucky	adjective
自行车	自行車	zìxíngchē	bicycle	noun
丢	丟	diū	to lose	verb
钥匙	鑰匙	yàoshi	keys	noun
钱包	錢包	qiánbāo	wallet	noun
偷	偷	tōu	to steal	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我的手机是黑色的。 Wǒ de shǒujī shì hēisè de. My cell phone is black.	你有手机吗? Nǐ yǒu shǒujī ma? Do you have a mobile phone?
这个人真倒霉。 Zhè gè rén zhēn dǎoméi. This person is really unlucky.	我可以借你的自行车吗? Wǒ kěyǐ jiè nǐ de zìxíngchē ma? Can I borrow your bicycle?

什么东西丢了？ Shénme dōngxi diūle ? what's lost?	这不是我的钥匙。 Zhè bú shì wǒ de yàoshi. This is not my key.
他把我的钱包偷走了。 Tā bǎ wǒ de qiánbāo tōu zǒu le. He stole my wallet.	他把我的钱包偷走了。 Tā bǎ wǒ de qiánbāo tōu zǒu le. He stole my wallet.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 怎么, *zěn me* ("How...")
怎么丢的？ *zěnme diū de?*
"How did you lose it?"

怎么 (*Zěn me*) 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.

怎么 (*Zěn me*) does not always occur before the first verb in a sentence with more than one verb. For example, in the question, "How do you plan to return home?" the proper way to say this in Chinese would be 你打算怎么回家 (*nǐ dǎ suàn zěn me huí jiā*). Notice that 怎么 (*zěn me*) comes after the verb 打算 (*dǎ suàn*) but before the verb 回 (*huí*). This is because *zěn me* functions like an adverb. The speaker wanted to know "how the listener goes home" and not "how the listener plans." 怎么 (*Zěn me*) will typically occur after psychological verbs but before action verbs and directional verbs.

Formula for using 怎么:

(subject) + *zěn me* + (verb phrase)

(subject) + (psychological verb) + *zěn me* + (verb phrase)

For Example:

1. 怎么用这个相机？
   Zěn me yòng zhè ge xiàng jī.
   "How do you use this camera?"

2. 她知道怎么洗去油渍。
Tā zhī dào zěn me xǐ qù yóu zì.
"She knows how to wash out oil stains."

3. 你打算怎么过这个暑假?
Nǐ dǎ suàn zěn me guò zhè ge shǔ jià?
"How do you plan on spending your summer holidays?"

4. 怎么丢的?
Zěnme diū de?
"How did you lose it?

5. 去故宫怎么走?
Qù Gùgōng zěnme zǒu?
"How do you want to go to the Forbidden City?"

6. 这个怎么用?
Zhègè zěnme yòng?
"How do you use this?"

7. 你想怎么做?
Nǐ xiǎng zěnme zuò?
"How do you feel like doing this?"

8. 我不知道怎么办。
Wǒ bù zhīdào zěnme bàn.
"I don't know what to do."

9. 这个怎么卖?
Zhègè zěnme mài?
"How is this sold?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Unfortunately, in China, theft is always an issue. Items such as cell phones, bicycles, and purses are often targets of theft. If something is stolen, there is often little legal recourse that can be taken. That is why prevention is key to stopping theft. If you own a bicycle, it is best to take it into your apartment rather than leave it outside. One of the responses to theft is that most apartments will have steel bars outside their windows. While home burglaries are not a

major problem in China, you can still find apartments on the fifth floor having bars.

Another feature of China, which may or may not have to do with theft, is the ever-present security camera. If your bike is stolen or your car broken into, almost every square inch of the city is covered by security cameras. This feature still does not provide one hundred percent coverage and cars in well-lit parking lots with visible security cameras will still get broken into with no suspect found.

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Absolute Beginner S2 #17 Bright Lights, Big City

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 上海真大!
2. B: 楼也很高。
3. A: 对，真高啊!
4. B: 小心！车!

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 上海真大!
2. B: 樓也很高。
3. A: 對，真高啊!
4. B: 小心！車!

PINYIN

1. A: Shànghǎi zhēn dà!
2. B: Lóu yě hěn gāo.
3. A: Duì, zhēn gāo a!
4. B: Xiǎoxīn! Chē!

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Shanghai is really big.

2. B: The buildings are really tall.

3. A: Right, really tall.

4. B: Careful, car.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
超市	超市	chāoshì	supermarket	noun
车	車	chē	car	noun
超市	超市	chāoshì	supermarket	noun
真	真	zhēn	really	adverb
马路	馬路	mǎlù	street	noun
楼	樓	lóu	building	noun
商场	商場	shāngchǎng	mall	noun
很	很	hěn	very	adverb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

尽管没有多少顾客，这家超市一天24小时都营业。 jǐnguǎn méiyǒu duōshao gùkè, zhè jiā chāoshì yītiān èrshísì xiǎoshí dōu yíngyè . Although there are hardly any customers, the supermarket is open 24 hours a day.	我去超市买东西。 Wǒ qù chāoshì mǎi dōngxi. I'm going to the store to buy things.

你的车很漂亮。 Nǐ de chē hěn piàoliàng. Your car is very good-looking.	我去超市买东西。 Wǒ qù chāoshì mǎi dōngxi. I'm going to the store to buy things.
我真饿。 Wǒ zhēn è. I'm really hungry.	马路很宽。 Mǎlù hěn kuān. The street is very wide.
这儿有很多大楼。 Zhèr yǒu hěn duō dà lóu. There are lots of tall buildings here.	这个商场真大。 Zhègè shāngchǎng zhēn dà. This mall is really big.
这座楼很高。 Zhè zuò lóu hěn gāo. This building is very tall.	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Adverbs of Degree

上海真大！*Shànghǎi zhēn dà!*

"Shanghai is really big!"

Both 真 and 很 are adverbs of degree here. 很 means "very" and indicates a considerable degree. 真 means "really" and stresses both the authenticity and a high degree. In Chinese, 真 is definitely stronger than 很. You can use 真 in exclamatory sentences, but we usually use 很 in statements. For instance, 她很漂亮, *Tā hěn piàoliàng* ("She's very beautiful"). Using 真 instead, we get 她真漂亮! *Tā zhēn piàoliàng!* ("She's really beautiful!") Here this is an exclamation and the degree of beauty is more stressed.

Subject + 真/很 + (Adjective) or (Adverb)

For Example:

1. 她很漂亮。
   Tā hěn piàoliàng.
   "She's very pretty."

2. 她真漂亮。
   Tā zhēn piàoliàng.
   "She's really pretty."

3. 这个人很讨厌。
   Zhè gè rén hěn tǎoyàn.
   "This person is very annoying."

4. 这个人真讨厌。
   Zhè gè rén zhēn tǎoyàn.
   "This person is really annoying."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Rise of the Skyscraper

Chinese cities are growing at a dizzying pace. Skyscrapers seem to appear out of nowhere and elevated highways stand suspended in the air. For most people visiting China, this site can be overwhelming. Just as New York City often draws the stares of tourists upwards to gaze at the skyscrapers, so too does Shanghai feel impressive.

However, the labor used to build these brand new skyscrapers in Chinese cities is drawn from the workers in the countryside moving to the cities where more opportunities lay. For many of these migrant workers, coming to the big city can feel like being in a different country altogether. The migrant workers live in a gray area within the city since China holds a household registration system that links people to the places they were born. Legal rights for migrant workers are few and far between, and many laborers face dangerous working conditions. Most of the pay that the workers make is sent back home in the form of remittances.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #18 The Easy Way

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

#18

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 这个怎么用?
2. B: 很简单，你看。
3. A: 这么简单？谢谢!
4. B: 不客气。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 這個怎麼用?
2. B: 很簡單，你看。
3. A: 這麼簡單？謝謝!
4. B: 不客氣。

PINYIN

1. A: Zhègè zěnme yòng?
2. B: Hěn jiǎndān, nǐ kàn.
3. A: Zhème jiǎndān? Xièxie!
4. B: Bú kèqì.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: How do you use this?

2. B: It's very simple, watch.

3. A: So simple? Thanks.

4. B: Don't mention it.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
简单	簡單	jiǎndān	simple	adjective
容易	容易	róngyì	easy	adjective
难	難	nán	difficult	adjective
方便	方便	fāngbiàn	convenient	adjective
麻烦	麻煩	máfan	troublesome, inconvenient	adjective
不客气	不客氣	bù kèqì	don't be polite	verb phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

这件事情很简单。 Zhè jiàn shìqíng hěn jiǎndān. This matter is very simple.	一人照顾两个孩子是很不容易的. yì rén zhàogu liǎng ge háizi shì hěn bù róngyìde To take care of two children by oneself is really not that easy.
这个问题不容易。 Zhègè wèntí bù róngyì. This problem isn't easy.	很难吗? Hěn nán ma? Is it difficult?

出租车很方便。 Chūzūchē hěn fāngbiàn. Taxis are convenient.	这些事情很麻烦。 Zhèxiē shìqíng hěn máfán. These matters are very troublesome.

没事，不客气。
Méishì, bú kèqì.

It's nothing. Don't be polite about it.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 这么, *zhème* ("So," "Such")
这么简单？ *Zhème jiǎndān?*
"So simple?"

这么 is an adverb. We put it in front of a verb or adjective indicating high degree.

这么 means, "so, such, like this." For instance, *他为什么这么慢？ Tā wèishénme zhème màn* ("Why is he this slow?"), *他这么做是对的。Tā zhème zuò shì duì de.* ("He acts in this way is correct"), or *我没有见过这么漂亮的东西。Wǒ méiyǒu jiànguò zhème piàoliàng de dōngxi.* ("I've never seen anything this beautiful").

For Example:

1. 这么简单？
Zhème jiǎndān?
"This easy?"

2. 这么早！
Zhème zǎo!
"So early!"

3. 她怎么这么漂亮？
Tā zěnme zhème piàoliàng?
"How is she so pretty?"

4. *天气这么好，我们去玩儿吧。*
Tiānqì zhème hǎo, wǒmen qù wánr ba.

"The weather is so nice. Let's go out for fun."

5. 你怎么这么晚?
Nǐ zěnme zhème wǎn?
"How are you so late?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Becoming Adjusted to Life in China

Getting adjusted to life in China can take some time. Often, the system and logic used back home is useless when dealing with obstacles and problems in daily life in China. Simple daily tasks such as using the remote control or locking a door can be mind-boggling endeavors. The best prescription is to exercise patience and to ask questions, even if you feel your question is silly. Looking silly is just something that comes with the territory when living in a foreign country.

For example, using a cell phone. China operates on a debit system and you must manually add money to your SIM card by adding money. Money is added by purchasing a card at a local convenience store, calling a number, and entering in your personal information. After a while though, instances like this become second nature and you adopt, adjust, and assimilate into the normal flow of things.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #19
The Hotpot Dinner

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

#19

DIALOGUE - CHINESE

SIMPLIFIED

1. A : 昨天你吃什么了？
2. B : 我吃火锅了。
3. A : 很贵吗？
4. B : 对。 我一年吃一次。

ENGLISH

1. A : What did you eat yesterday?
2. B : I ate hotpot.
3. A : Was it expensive?
4. B : Yes. I can only eat it once a year.

PINYIN

1. A : Zuótiān nǐ chī shénme le?
2. B : Wǒ chī huǒguō le.
3. A : Hěn guì ma?
4. B : Duì. Wǒ yìnián chī yícì.

TRADITIONAL

1. A : 昨天你吃甚麼了？
2. B : 我吃火鍋了。
3. A : 很貴嗎？
4. B : 對。 我一年吃一次。

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
火锅	火鍋	huǒguō	hotpot	noun
快餐	快餐	kuàicān	fast food	noun
中餐	中餐	zhōngcān	Chinese food	noun
西餐	西餐	xīcān	western food	noun
料理	料理	liàolǐ	cuisine	noun
次	次	cì	time	measure word

SAMPLE SENTENCES

火锅太贵了。 *Huǒguō tài guì le.* Hotpot is too expensive.	快餐店 *kuàicāndiàn* fast food restaurant
我偶爾很想吃快餐。 *Wǒ ǒuěr hěn xiǎng chī kuàicān.* I crave fast food every once in a while.	漢堡跟薯條被認為是快餐。 *Hànbǎo gēn shǔtiáo bèi rènwéishì kuàicān.* Burgers and fries are considered fast food.
快餐 *kuàicān* fast food meal	快餐不健康。 *Kuàicān bú jiànkāng.* Fast food isn't healthy.
中國菜很好吃！ *Zhōngguó cài hěn hǎochī!* Chinese food is delicious!	他想要中國菜，但她想要意大利菜。 *Tā xiǎng yào Zhōngguó cài, dàn tā xiǎng yào Yìdàlì cài.* He wants Chinese food, but she wants Italian.
你喜欢吃中餐吗？ *Nǐ xǐhuān chī zhōngcān ma?* Do you like eating Chinese food?	牛排和馬鈴薯料理是西餐的典型食物。 *Niúpái hé mǎlíngshǔ liàolǐ shì xīcān de diǎnxíng shíwù.* Steak and potato dishes are a great example of western food.
西餐廳 *xīcāntīng* western food restaurant	我喜欢西餐。 *Wǒ xǐhuān xīcān.* I like western food.
日本料理怎么样？ *Rìběn liàolǐ zěnmeyàng?* How about Japanese cuisine?	我一天洗一次澡。 *Wǒ yì tiān xǐ yí cì zǎo.* I shower once a day.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Time Intervals
我一年吃一次。 *Wǒ yìnián chī yícì.*
"I eat it once a year."

---

cì (次) is a verbal measure word indicating the frequency of an action. Furthermore 次 can be combined with another time word such as 年 (*nián*), 周, or 天 to indicate that an action happens at repeated intervals. Take this example: 我一年吃一次。*Wǒ yìnián chī yícì.* ("I eat it once a year"). We repeat the action with the same frequency, yet the formation in Chinese is different. The construct is time + verb + times + object.

For sentences using a verb object phrase, we place the time repetition in between the verb and the object it takes. For instance, 他一天打三次电话。*Tā yì tiān dǎ sān cì diànhuà.* ("He calls once a day"). The verb object 打电话 (to make a telephone call") we split. The new construct is 打 + "repetition" + 电话.

For Example:

1. 我一周做一次饭。
Wǒ yì zhōu zuò yí cì fàn.
"Once a week I cook food."

2. 我一天洗一次澡。
Wǒ yì tiān xǐ yí cì zǎo.
"I shower once a day."

3. 他一周看一次电影。
Tā yì zhōu kàn yí cì diànyǐng.
"He watches one movie a week."

4. 我姐姐一年去两次中国。
wǒ jiějie yì nián qù liǎng cì Zhōngguó.
"My older sister goes to China twice a year."

5. 我三天用一次。
Wǒ sān tiān yòng yí cì.
"I use it every three days."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Hotpot

Hotpot is a specialty dish of China. This cuisine originated along the river banks of Sichuan, where poor river workers needed a warm and filling meal at night. The meal is made up of a large bowl placed in the center of a table. Underneath the table sits a gas burner that cooks the bowl. Different types of soup can be poured into the bowl to give diners a different taste. Hot pot is infamous for its spicy flavor. Sichuan peppers, previously banned in the U.S., are abundant. A large variety of food can be cooked within the pot. Vegetables, meat, tofu, and entire fish are put into the pot to cook. After a few minutes, the food is ready to eat. Usually a large ladle is used to scoop out the pieces of vegetables and meat. Often times an apron is suggested since oil from the soup can spill and ruin even the most careful of eaters.
In Sichuan, it is not uncommon to find men eating hotpot shirtless. Since both the weather is humid and the food insanely spicy, it is culturally accepted to shed a layer of clothing.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #20
The Not So Sweet Tooth

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#20

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 来一杯奶昔吧?
2. B: 我不喜欢甜的。
3. A: 来一个圣代?
4. B: 我说了，我不喜欢甜的。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 來一杯奶昔吧?
2. B: 我不喜歡甜的。
3. A: 來一個聖代?
4. B: 我說了，我不喜歡甜的。

PINYIN

1. A: Lái yì bēi nǎixī ba?
2. B: Wǒ bù xǐhuān tián de.
3. A: Lái yí gè shèngdài?
4. B: Wǒ shuō le, wǒ bù xǐhuān tián de.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Want a milkshake?

2. B: I don't like sweet things.

3. A: Do you want a sundae?

4. B: I said, I don't like sweet things.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
奶昔	奶昔	nǎixī	milk shake	noun
圣代	聖代	shèngdài	Sundae	noun
奶茶	奶茶	nǎichá	milk tea	noun
甜	甜	tián	sweet	adjective
糖	糖	táng	sugar	noun
杯	杯	bēi	glass	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

奶昔很好喝。 Nǎixī hěn hǎohē. Milk shakes are tasty.	我要一个圣代。 Wǒ yào yí gè shèngdài. I want a sundae.
来一杯奶茶。 Lái yì bēi nǎichá. Bring me a glass of milk tea.	我不喜欢甜的。 Wǒ bù xǐhuān tián de. I don't like sweet things.
他不吃糖。 Tā bù chī táng. He doesn't eat sugar.	一杯咖啡多少钱? Yì bēi kāfēi duō shǎo qián ? How much is a cup of coffee?

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 来 *lái* ("To bring")
来一杯奶昔吧？ *Lái yì bēi nǎixī ba?*
"Want a milkshake?"

来 is a verb, which means, "to come." For example, 我来北京 *Wǒ lái Běijīng* ("I'm coming to Beijing") and *稍等，来了！ Shāoděng, lái le!*("Wait a minute, I'm coming!") But when 来 is used when purchasing things at a restaurant or store, the meaning of 来 changes to "bring." *来一瓶啤酒*！(*Lái yì píng píjiǔ!*) literally, it is translated as, "Come a bottle of beer!" If you want to say, "Give me a cup of green tea," say, 来一杯绿茶。

For Example:

1. 来一杯奶昔吧？
   Lái yì bēi nǎixī ba?
   "How about a milkshake?"

2. 来两个苹果。
   Lái liǎng gè píngguǒ.
   "Bring two apples."

3. 给我来一杯咖啡。
   Gěi wǒ lái yì bēi kāfēi.
   "Bring me a cup of coffee."

4. *给我来一瓶啤酒。*
   Gěi wǒ lái yì píng píjiǔ.
   "Bring me a bottle of beer."

5. 来两个汉堡。
   Lái liǎng gè hànbǎo.
   "Bring two hamburgers."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Ice Cream in China

Ice cream is loved all over the world. China is no exception. It is common to find vendors alongside the street selling all sorts of candy, sodas, and ice cream. One company that has taken advantage of this habit is McDonalds. They have adapted their lineup of McFlurries and sundaes to meet the tastes of Chinese consumers. Another company that has also done well in the ice cream market in China is Haagen-Dazs. People are willing to pay upwards of 50RMB for one scoop of Haagen-Dazs ice cream. Other companies such as Cold Stone creamery are trying to make their mark in China. Since dairy products are not a Chinese specialty, foreign brands still maintain the advantage.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #21
Buy Brand China

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#21

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 你的电脑好轻啊!
2. B: 这是新款。
3. A: 很贵吗?
4. B: 不贵。是国产的。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 你的電腦好輕啊!
2. B: 這是新款。
3. A: 很貴嗎?
4. B: 不貴。是國產的。

PINYIN

1. A: Nǐ de diànnǎo hǎo qīng a!
2. B: Zhè shì xīnkuǎn.
3. A: Hěn guì ma?
4. B: Bú guì. Shì guóchǎn de.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Your computer is very light.

2. B: This is the new model.

3. A: Was it expensive?

4. B: No. It's a Chinese brand.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
键盘	鍵盤	jiànpán	keyboard	noun
屏幕	屏幕	píngmù	screen	noun
鼠标	鼠標	shǔbiāo	mouse	noun
硬盘	硬盤	yìngpán	hard drive	noun
耳机	耳機	ěrjī	headphones	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我的键盘不好用。
Wǒ de jiànpán bù hǎo yòng.

My keyboard doesn't work well.

屏幕太脏了。
Píngmù tài zāng le.

This screen is too dirty.

这个鼠标坏了。
Zhègè shǔbiāo huài le.

This mouse is broken.

你的硬盘多大?
Nǐ de yìngpán duō dà?

How big is your hard drive?

那个耳机好用吗?
Nàgè ěrjī hǎoyòng ma?

Do those headphones work well?

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 好 *hǎo* (Adverb of Degree- "Very")
你的电脑好轻啊！ *Nǐ de diànnǎo hǎo qīng a!*
"Your computer is very light."

We usually use 好 as an adjective which means, "good." However, recently, 好 now can function as an adverb taking the same meaning as 很. For example: 这朵花很红, *Zhè duǒ huā hěn hóng.* ("This flower is red"). Here, 很 is functioning as "is," and not "very." If this same sentence were to use 好 the meaning would change. For instance, *这朵花好红啊。Zhè duǒ huā hǎo hóng ā.* ("This flower is very red"). 好 can have a stronger and more emphatic connotation than 很. One thing should be noticed: 好 as an adverb is generally used by women. Also, the older generation will not use 好.

For Example:

1. 你的电脑好轻啊。
   Nǐ de diànnǎo hǎo qīng ā.
   "Your computer is very light."

2. 他好年轻啊。
   Tā hǎo niánqīng a.
   "He's very young."

3. 你好漂亮呀。
   Nǐhǎo piàoliàng ya.
   "You're so pretty."

4. 那个地方好干净啊。
   Nà gè dìfāng hǎo gānjìng ā.
   "That place is very clean."

5. 小狗好可爱啊。
   Xiǎogǒu hǎo kěài ā.
   "The puppy is very cute."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Computer Trends in China

Laptops are one of the hottest selling items in Mainland China. Sought out for their portability and usability, college students and professionals alike are scooping up the latest models to come off the production lines. The biggest manufacturer of laptops in China by far is Lenovo. As of February 2010, Lenovo owns over thirty-three percent of the PC market in China. The costs of PCs and laptops have made them affordable for the burgeoning middle class. Government subsidies for electronic purchases also boost consumption and sales. Taiwanese brands such as Acer is a popular seller for their lightweight and dependability.

Another computer brand that is steadily rising in China is Apple. Aside from Flagship stores in Beijing, across the country authorized resellers of Apple products are meeting demand with supply. Apple however is still a small fish in a big sea with only a small percent of forward thinking users. Many Chinese will run a Microsoft operating system on their Macintosh due to the incompatibility constraints that having an Apple poses.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #22 Chinese Colors

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22

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 这件蓝色的怎么样?
2. B: 有点儿大。
3. A: 那件绿色的呢?
4. B: 太难看了。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 這件藍色的怎麼樣?
2. B: 有點兒大。
3. A: 那件綠色的呢?
4. B: 太難看了。

PINYIN

1. A: Zhè jiàn lánsè de zěnmeyàng?
2. B: Yǒu diǎnr dà.
3. A: Nà jiàn lǜsè de ne?
4. B: Tài nánkàn le.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: What do you think about this blue one?

2. B: It's a little big.

3. A: What about that green one?

4. B: Too ugly.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
难吃	難吃	nán chī	taste awful	adjective
难看	難看	nánkàn	ugly; look awful	adjective
绿色	綠色	lǜsè	green	noun
颜色	顏色	yánsè	color	noun
红色	紅色	hóngsè	red	noun
蓝色	藍色	lánsè	blue	noun
白色	白色	báisè	white	noun
黑色	黑色	hēisè	black	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

这家店的东西真难吃。 zhè jiā diàn de dōngxi zhēn nánchī. Food in this restaurant tastes bad.	你的毛衣很难看。 Nǐ de máoyī hěn nánkàn. Your sweater is very ugly.

绿色很漂亮。 Lǜsè hěn piàoliàng. Green is very pretty.	粉红色是我最不喜欢的颜色。 Fěnhóngsè shì wǒ zuì bù xǐhuān de yánsè. Pink is my least favorite color.
中国人喜欢红色。 Zhōngguórén xǐhuān hóngsè. Chinese people like red.	我喜欢蓝色。 Wǒ xǐhuān lánsè. I like the color blue.
他有一件白色的运动衫。 Tā yǒu yí jiàn báisè de yùndòngshān. He has a white sports jersey.	我的手机是黑色的。 Wǒ de shǒujī shì hēisè de. My cell phone is black.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 难 *nán* ("Negative Prefix")

太难看了。

Tài nánkàn le.

"Too ugly."

难 (*Nán*～) is a phrase used to express that an action is unpleasant or has a negative connotation. It's formed by adding an action verb after *nán*. The phrase functions like an adjective-it's usually used to modify nouns and it can be preceded by degree adverbs like 非常 (*fēi cháng*) and 很 (*hěn*) and 太.

Several verb combinations with *nán* have become set phrases, such as 难吃 *nánchī* ("bad-tasting"), 难看, *nánkàn* ("ugly"), 难听, *nántīng* ("awful-sounding"), etc.

Conversely, we use the adverb 好 (*hǎo*) to express that an action is good and has a negative connotation. 好 functions exactly the same as 难 in the fact that it can be used as a set phrase such as 好吃 *hǎochī* ("tasty"), 好看, *hǎokàn* ("beautiful"), and 好听, *hǎotīng* ("pleasant sounding").

For Example:

1. 太难看了。
   Tài nánkàn le.
   "That's too ugly."

2. 这首歌很难听。
   Zhè shǒu gē hěn nántīng.
   "This song sounds horrible."

3. 味道很难闻。
   Wèidào hěn nánwén.
   "It smells awful."

4. 这个菜很难吃。
   Zhègè cài hěn nánchī.
   "This dish tastes bad."

5. 你很好看。
   Nǐ hěn hǎokàn.
   "You're very pretty."

6. 这首歌很好听。
   Zhè shǒu gē hěn hǎotīng.
   "This song is really good."

7. 饭很好吃。
   Fàn hěn hǎochī.
   "This food is very delicious."

8. 香水很好闻。
   Xiāngshuǐ hěn hǎo wén.
   "The perfume smells really good."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

"Crazy" Colors in China

In China, the color green and red we will never put together in an outfit. Old Chinese villagers may think both green and red are beautiful colors and if they put them together, it will turn into the most beautiful thing. However, in the cities, the fashion faux pas of red and green has a saying behind it - 红配绿，赛狗屎, which means, "If you put the two colors together, the thing will become the same as crap."

Also in Peking opera, if a female character wore the two colors at the same time, she is designated as being insane in the opera. That is to say, that "green and red" is a sign of a psychological problem.

Nowadays, only the Christmas theme outfits of red and green are not taken as "crazy." So don't put anything with green and red together except during Christmas if you are trying to appear as a normal person in China.

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Absolute Beginner S2 #23 High Tech China

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 老公，我要新手机！
2. B: 你的手机很新。
3. A: 但是不好看。
4. B: 我没钱，你自己买吧。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 老公，我要新手機！
2. B: 你的手機很新。
3. A: 但是不好看。
4. B: 我沒錢，你自己買吧

PINYIN

1. A: Lǎogōng, wǒ yào xīn shǒujī!
2. B: Nǐ de shǒujī hěn xīn.
3. A: Dànshì bù hǎokàn.

CONT'D OVER

4. B: Wǒ méi qián, nǐ zìjǐ mǎi ba.

ENGLISH

1. A: Husband, I want a new cell phone.
2. B: Your cell phone is really new.
3. A: But it's ugly.
4. B: I don't have any money, you can buy one yourself.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
相机	相機	xiàngjī	camera	noun
手机	手機	shǒujī	cellphone	noun
电脑	電腦	diànnǎo	computer	noun
手表	手錶	shǒubiǎo	watch	noun
音箱	音箱	yīnxiāng	speakers	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

这是他的相机。 Zhè shì tā de xiàngjī. This is his camera.	对不起，我的手机没电了。 Duìbùqǐ, wǒ de shǒujī méidiàn le. I am sorry, but my phone is out of battery.
他的手机被偷了。 Tā de shǒujī bèi tōu le. His cellphone was stolen.	我不想玩手机啦，我想和你一起出去散步。 Wǒ bùxiǎng wán shǒujī la, wǒ xiǎng hé nǐ yīqǐ chūqù sànbù. I don't want to play with the cellphone, I want to take a walk with you.
我的手机很便宜。 Wǒ de shǒujī hěn piányì. My cell phone is very inexpensive.	你有电脑吗? Nǐ yǒu diànnǎo ma? Do you have a computer?
这块手表是名牌。 Zhè kuài shǒubiǎo shì míngpái. This watch is from a famous brand.	我电脑的音箱不好。 Wǒ diànnǎo de yīnxiāng bù hǎo. My computer's speakers are not good.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 自己, *zìjǐ* ("Oneself")

我没钱，你自己买吧。*Wǒ méi qián, nǐ zìjǐ mǎi ba.*

"I don't have any money, you can buy one yourself."

自己 (*zìjǐ*) is a pronoun meaning, "oneself." It is commonly used with other pronouns such as 你 (*nǐ*), 我 (*wǒ*), and 他 (*tā*). For example, "myself" is 我自己, "himself" is 他自己, and "yourself" is 你自己. So "I will go there by myself" is 我自己去, literally, "myself go." It's the same in the following sentences: *我自己工作。Wǒ zìjǐ gōngzuò* ("I work by

myself") and *你自己解决问题吧。Nǐ zìjǐ jiějué wèntí ba* ("How about you solve the problem by yourself?") If 自己 is used by itself without 你 我 他, the meaning changes to "everybody themselves." For example, *自己的事情自己做。Zìjǐ de shìqíng zìjǐ zuò.* ("Everybody should do their own job by themselves.")

For Example:

1. 我没钱，你自己买吧。
   Wǒ méi qián, nǐ zìjǐ mǎi ba.
   "I don't have any money. You buy it yourself."

2. *他自己走了。*
   Tā zìjǐ zǒu le.
   "He's gone by himself."

3. 我自己去买东西。
   Wǒ zìjǐ qù mǎi dōngxi.
   "I'm going myself to buy some things."

4. *你自己干吧。*
   Nǐ zìjǐ gàn ba.
   "You do it yourself."

5. 我自己工作。
   Wǒ zìjǐ gōngzuò.
   "I'll work by myself."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Cell Phone Turnaround

Cell phones in China are considered to be on the front lines of status in China. Your cell phone is one of the first things that can be seen to signify you are tech savvy as well as how deep your pockets are. Cell phones are also one of the main devices that Chinese people use to access the Internet. Song downloads and games are also quite popular and

make up a good deal of revenue for the Chinese telecommunications companies.

To meet the demand of cell phone users, numerous cell phone shops line the streets. Large electronics districts are dotted throughout the city in which you can find any model of phone along with accessories. The gray market also can be found in these areas. Since the iPhone wasn't officially released in China until late 2009, many illegally imported phones from Hong Kong and elsewhere were available for purchase, albeit at a substantially higher price. Apple now has a contract set up with China Unicom, but the price, along with limited Wi-Fi and 3G coverage, serve to constrain growth.

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Absolute Beginner S2 #24 Stargazing in China

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 我看不见星星。
2. B: 为什么?
3. A: 云太多了。
4. B: 那不是云，是污染。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 我看不見星星。
2. B: 為甚麼?
3. A: 雲太多了。
4. B: 那不是雲，是污染。

PINYIN

1. A: Wǒ kànbújiàn xīngxing.
2. B: Wèishénme?
3. A: Yún tài duō le.
4. B: Nà bú shì yún, shì wūrǎn.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: I can't see the stars

2. B: Why not?

3. A: There's so many clouds.

4. B: Those aren't clouds, that's pollution.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English
星星	星星	xīngxing	stars
太阳	太陽	tàiyáng	sun
月亮	月亮	yuèliàng	moon
云	云	yún	clouds
污染	污染	wūrǎn	pollution
雾	霧	wù	fog

SAMPLE SENTENCES

你看，那颗星星。 Nǐ kàn, nà kē xīngxing. Look at that star!	今天太阳很好。 Jīntiān tàiyáng hěn hǎo. The sun is shining brightly today.
月亮代表我的心。 Yuèliàng dàibiǎo wǒ de xīn. The moon represents my heart.	天上没有云。 Tiānshàng méiyǒu yún. There is no clouds in the sky.

空气很污染。 Kōngqì hěn wūrǎn. The air is very polluted.	今天有雾。 Jīntiān yǒu wù. Today is foggy.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 太多, *tài duō* ("So Many")
云太多了。 *Yún tài duō le.*
"There's so many clouds."

太...了 (*tài ...le*) can be used to modify adjectives, certain verbs, auxiliary verbs, and phrases meaning, "too," or "excessively."

For Example:

1. 东西太多了。
   Dōngxi tài duō le.
   "There are too many things."

2. 这个人太丑了。
   Zhè gè rén tài chǒu le.
   "This person is excessively ugly."

It can also be used to modify words or phrases with a laudatory sense, meaning, "really," or "extremely."

For Example:

1. 你人太好了。
   Nǐ rén tài hǎo le
   "You are really nice."

2. 这个东西太珍贵了。
   Zhègè dōngxi tài zhēnguì le
   "This thing is really precious."

Formula: noun or/and verb + 太 + adjective + 了.

For Example:

1. 云太多了。
   Yún tài duō le.
   "There's too many clouds."

2. 车太多了。
   Chē tài duō le.
   "There's too many cars."

3. 人太多了，工作太少了。
   Rén tài duō le, gōngzuò tài shǎo le.
   "There's too many people, and not enough work."

4. 东西太多了。
   Dōngxi tài duō le.
   "There's too many things."

5. 你的行李太多了。
   Nǐ de xínglitài duō le.
   "You have too much luggage."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Blue Sky Days in China

Throughout China, and especially in city centers, air pollution is a major problem. Pollution from coal plants and from carbon emissions float into the sky and will create a thick layer of smog and haze. The contrast between a sunny and clear day can be quite stark when examined next to a smog day. One way to measure air quality is to examine PM (Particulate Matter) 10 and PM 2.5. China however does not release this data on a regular basis, but atop the US Embassy in Beijing lays an air quality measuring device. This device will broadcast the reading through a twitter feed.

In the run-up to the Beijing Olympics, the government vowed to provide more "Blue Sky" days.

A Blue Sky day is when the air pollution index was at a Grade II or below. These are nominal figures and a "Blue Sky" day might not be blue at all. The goal for the Olympics was to have two hundred and fourty-five blue sky days a year. In order to reach this goal, a license program was instituted to take cars off the street. The government also shoots pellets of silver iodide into the air when there appears to be a chance of rain.

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S2 #25 Playing the China Card

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SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. A: 想打麻将吗?
2. B: 但我们没有麻将。
3. A: 打扑克怎么样?
4. B: 好吧。我洗牌。

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 想打麻將嗎?
2. B: 但我們沒有麻將。
3. A: 打撲克怎麼樣?
4. B: 好吧。我洗牌。

PINYIN

1. A: Xiǎng dǎ májiàng ma?
2. B: Dàn wǒmen méiyǒu májiàng.
3. A: Dǎ pūkè zěnmeyàng?
4. B: Hǎo ba. Wǒ xǐpái.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: Do you feel like playing Mahjong?

2. B: But I don't have (a set of) Mahjong.

3. A: How about playing poker?

4. B: Okay. I'll shuffle the deck.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
扑克	撲克	pūkè	poker	noun
游戏	遊戲	yóuxì	game	noun
可是	可是	kěshì	but	conjunction
电脑游戏	電腦遊戲	diànnǎo yóuxì	computer games	noun
牌	牌	pái	cards	noun
麻将	麻將	májiàng	mahjong	noun
赌博	賭博	dǔbó	to gamble	verb
但(是)	但(是)	dàn(shì)	but	conjunction

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我们打扑克吧。 Wǒmen dǎ pūkè ba. How about we play poker.	他喜欢玩游戏。 Tā xǐhuān wán yóuxì. He likes to play games.
我喜欢你，可是我不爱你。 Wǒ xǐhuan nǐ, kěshì wǒ bù ài nǐ. I like you, but I don't love you.	电脑游戏很有意思。 Diànnǎo yóuxì hěn yǒu yìsi. Computer games are very interesting.

你会打牌吗? Nǐ huì dǎpái ma? Do you know how to play cards?	你会玩儿麻将吗? Nǐ huì wánr májiàng ma? Can you play Mahjong?
赌博不好。 Dǔbó bù hǎo. Gambling isn't good.	他想来，但是太晚了。 Tā xiǎnglái, dànshì tài wǎn le. He wants to come, but it's too late.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is 但, *dàn* ("But")
但我们没有麻将。 *Dàn wǒmen méiyǒu májiàng.*
"But I don't have (a set of) Mahjong."

但 (*dàn*), 但是 (*dànshì*), 可 (*kě*), and 可是 (*kěshì*) are all conjunctions meaning "but," and all of them can be used colloquially.

For Example:

1. 你满意，但/但是/可/可是我不满意。
   Nǐ mǎnyì, dàn /dànshì /kě /kěshì wǒ bù mǎnyì
   "You are satisfied, but I'm not."

2. 你想去，但/但是/可/可是我不想去。
   Nǐ xiǎngqù, dàn /dànshì /kě /kěshì wǒ bù xiǎngqù.
   "You want to go there, but I don't."

Usually we do not use 但 and 可in formal occasions, but instead the use of 但是 and 可是 is standard. So we can say 但是 and 可是 are formal.

For Example:

1. 但我们没有麻将台。
   Dàn wǒmen méiyǒu májiàng tái.
   "But we don't have a Mahjong table."

2. 你不累，但我累了。
Nǐ bú lèi, dàn wǒ lèi le.
"You're not tired, but I'm tired."

3. 你喜欢这个，但我不喜欢
Nǐ xǐhuān zhège, dàn wǒ bù xǐhuān.
"You like this one, but I like don't like it."

4. 他很高，但很难看。
Tā hěn gāo, dàn hěn nánkàn.
"He's very tall, but ugly."

5. 这个很便宜，但不好看。
Zhège hěn piányì, dàn bù hǎo kàn.
"This one is very cheap, but not attractive."

6. 他完成了工作，但我不满意。
Tā wánchéng le gōngzuò, dàn wǒ bù mǎnyì.
"He's finished his work, but I'm still not satisfied."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Mahjong in China

"Mahjong" (麻將, *má jiàng*) is the Chinese national gambling game, which normally requires four players. Mahjong involves skill, strategy, and calculation, as well as a certain degree of luck (depending on the variation played luck can be anything from a minor to a dominant factor in winning).

In the game, each player is dealt either thirteen or sixteen (in Taiwan Mahjong) tiles in a hand, depending on the variation being played. On their turn, players draw a tile and discard one with the goal of making three, four, or five melds (also depending on the variation) and one pair, or "eye." Winning comes "on the draw" by drawing a new tile or taking one that other players discard that completes the hand.

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