



Absolute Beginner S1 Slowing Down the Cantonese

21

Traditional	2
Jyutping	2
English	2
Vocabulary	2
Grammar Points	3
Cultural Insight	4

Traditional Chinese

唔好意思。
咩事？
我聽唔明啊。
咁...
你可唔可以講慢啲啊？
冇問題。

Jyutping

m4 hou2 ji3 si1。
me1 si6 ?
ngo5 teng1 m4 ming4 a3。
gam2...
nei5 ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 gong2 maan6 di1 a3 ?
mou5 man6 tai4。

English

Excuse me.
What's the matter?
I don't understand.
So...
Can you slow it down a bit?
No problem.

Vocabulary

CantoneseClass101.com

Learn Cantonese with **FREE** Podcasts

Traditional	Jyutping	English
聽唔明	teng1 m4 ming4	to not understand
咁	gam2	so
慢	maan6	slow
講	gong2	to speak
快	faai3	fast
勤力	kan4 lik6	diligent
啲	di1	-er

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

我聽唔明。 咁... 唔該講慢啲。 行慢啲。 唔該講多次。 你識唔識講廣東話？	ngo5 teng1 m4 ming4。 gam2... m4 goi1 gong2 maan6 di1 。 haang4 maan6 di1. m4 goi1 gong2 do1 ci3。 nei5 sik1 m4 sik1 gong2 gwong2 dung1 waa2? gong2 faai3 di1。 kan4 lik6 di1。 m4 goi1 maan6 di1 gong2 do1 ci3 。 haang4 maan6 di1. m4 goi1 sai3 seng1 di1。	I don't understand. So... Can you speak slowly please? Walk slower. Can you repeat that please? Do you speak Cantonese? Speak faster. (Work) harder! Can you repeat again, slowly please? Walk slower. Please lower your volume.
--	--	---

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is 啲, di1 ("-er")

你可唔可以講慢啲？

nei5 ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 gong2 maan6 di1 ?

"Can you slow it down a bit?"

In Cantonese, the character 啲 (di1) modifies adjectives and verbs and functions as the English equivalent of "-er." For example, the Cantonese words for "fast" (快) and "slow" (慢)

CantoneseClass101.com

Learn Cantonese with **FREE** Podcasts

turn into "faster" (快啲, faai3 di1) and "slower" (慢啲, maan6 di1). Notice that the 啲 directly follows the adjective or verb. We place adjectives that modify verbs behind the verb.

Formula: Verb + Adjective + 啲

For Example:

1. 食慢啲。
sik6 maan6 di1
"Eat slower."
2. 飲慢啲。
jam2 maan6 di1
"Drink slower."
3. 行快啲。
haang4 faai3 di1
"Go faster."
4. 勤力啲。
kan4 lik6 di1
"Work harder."

You can negate 啲 by placing 唔好 before the verb/adjective phrase.

For Example:

1. 唔好講慢啲。
m4 ho2 gong2 maan6 di1
"Don't speak slower."

In the dialogue, we used the grammar pattern 可唔可以 ("can or cannot") in conjunction with 啲.

For Example:

1. 你可唔可以講慢啲?
nei5 ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 gong2 maan6 di1
"Can you speak slower?"

Cultural Insight

Cultural Misunderstandings

One of the biggest hurdles in living and working in both Hong Kong and Guangdong are not only the linguistic differences but the cultural differences as well. While Westerners can be given a free pass on many faux pas, there are a few proactive steps you can take to avoid

CantoneseClass101.com

Learn Cantonese with **FREE** Podcasts

stepping in cultural pot holes.

The first is the handshake. There is no need to bow in Chinese culture and oftentimes a handshake will suffice. You may notice that by American and European standards, a Chinese handshake is rather limp. The thumbs-up is quite ubiquitous in Hong Kong and mainland Guangdong, meaning "excellent!" You won't get too far with high fives though. You may also notice that many Hong Kong Chinese who do business with foreigners will use a "Western" name that is easier for them to remember and pronounce. These names are often generic and easy to pronounce, like "Eric," "Mike," or "Bill."

Gift giving is part and parcel of doing business in Hong Kong. It helps establish and maintain relationships. Gifts are always exchanged between business associates at Christmas and the Chinese New Year. Usually a red envelope with money inside is presented at both the Chinese New Year's and weddings. When giving and accepting gifts, use both hands. Gifts should be reciprocated.

Entertaining is a critical part of doing business in Hong Kong. Just like gifts, meals should also be reciprocated. Chinese tables are round and will have a "lazy Susan" in the middle so that the food can be distributed evenly. The guest of honor will sit furthest from the entrance while the host will sit closest to the entrance so they can better deal with wait staff.