

LESSON NOTES

Beginner S1 #24

A Cooking Class in Hong Kong

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 條魚要蒸幾耐?
2. B: 大概十分鐘。
3. A: 咁豬肉呢?
4. B: 差唔多廿分鐘。

JYUTPING

1. A: tiu4 jyu2 jiu3 zing1 gei2 noi6 ?
2. B: daai6 koi3 sap6 fan1 zung1
3. A: gam2 zyu1 juk6 ne1 ?
4. B: caa1 m4 do1 jaa6 fan1 zung1

ENGLISH

1. A: How long does it take to steam the fish?
2. B: About ten minutes.
3. A: How about the pork?
4. B: About twenty minutes.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Romanization	English	Class
豬肉	zyu1 juk6	pork	noun
蒸	zing1	to steam	verb
分鐘	fan1 zung1	minutes	noun
鐘 (頭)	zung1 tau4	hours	noun
廿	jaa6	twenty	noun
差唔多	caa1 m4 do1	more or less	adverb
大概	daai6 koi3	around	adverb
魚	jyu2	fish	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>豬肉三斤。 <i>Zyu1 juk6 saam1 gan1.</i></p> <p>Three jin(=1.5 kilograms) of pork.</p>	<p>蒸雞好食。 <i>Zing1 gai1 hou2 sik6.</i></p> <p>Steamed chicken is delicious.</p>
<p>六分鐘就夠。 <i>Luk6 fan1 zung1 zau6 gau3.</i></p> <p>Six minutes is enough.</p>	<p>我等咗你成個鍾! <i>Ngo5 dang2 zo2 nei5 cing4 go3 zung1!</i></p> <p>I've been waiting for you for one hours!</p>
<p>佢廿歲離開香港。 <i>Keoi5 jaa6 seoi3 lei4 hoi1 hoeng1 gong2.</i></p> <p>He left Hong Kong at twenty years old.</p>	<p>差唔多就得。 <i>Caa1 m4 do1 zau6 dak1.</i></p> <p>Being average is okay.</p>
<p>大概三百蚊。 <i>daai6 koi3 saam1 baak3 man1.</i></p> <p>About three hundred yuan.</p>	<p>鷹突然撲下來抓魚。 <i>jing1 dat6 jin4 pok3 haa6 loi4 zaa1 jyu4</i></p> <p>The eagle is flying and swooping for fish.</p>

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is How to Discuss Lengths of Time in Cantonese

十分鐘。

"Ten minutes."

Our grammar focus in this lesson is talking about lengths of time in Cantonese, as with 十分鐘 (*sap6 fan1 zung1*) "ten minutes" or 三秒鐘 (*saam1 miu5 zung1*) "three seconds." Before we get to the heart of this discussion though, let's first review the most common time words we encounter in Cantonese:

1. 秒
miu3 "second"
2. 分
fan1 "minute"
3. 小時
siu2 si4
"hour" (written)
4. 鐘
zung1
"hour" (colloquial)
5. 月
jyut6 "month"
6. 季度
gwai3 dou6 "season"
7. 年
nim4 "year"

Now that we've reviewed these common time words, let's review the two most common structures we have for indicating lengths of time. The latter is the more colloquial of the two:

1. number + time word

2. number + time word + 鐘

What makes time tricky in Cantonese is that some time words must also be preceded by the measure word 個 (*go3*) when indicating lengths of time. There is no easy rule for remembering these time words: 鐘 (*zung1*) "hour (colloquial)," 鐘 (*zung1*) "hour (colloquial)," 季度 (*gwai3 dou6*) "season." For instance, to say "ten hours" we are required to say 十個鐘 (*sap6 go3 zung1*). This is a somewhat arbitrary rule, but you will need to internalize it in order to speak natural Cantonese.

For further examples, consider the following sample sentences:

1. 廿分鐘
jaa6 fan1 zung1
"20 minutes"
2. 半個鐘
bun3 go3 zung1
"half an hour"
3. 一個鐘
jat1 go3 zung1
"one hour"
4. 兩個鐘
leung5 go3 zung1
"two hours"
5. 一個半鐘
jat1 go3 bun3 zung1
"one and a half hours"

Language Tip

In addition to 個 (*go3*), another colloquial and common measure word you can use for "hour" is 粒 (*nap1*). So "one hour" can be either 一個鐘 or 一粒鐘. "Eight hours" can be either 八個鐘 or 八粒鐘.

On a final point, there are a very few cases in Cantonese where these rules don't apply. The

most common example is the phrase "24 hours," which is a set expression in Cantonese: 廿四小時 (*jaa6 sei3 siu2 si4*) and thus drops the measure word. The sentence "7-11 opens 24 hours a day" is thus translated as 七十一廿四小時都開 (*cat1 sap6 jat1 jaa6 sei3 siu2 si4 dou1 hoi1*).

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Learn to Cook in Hong Kong!

Hong Kong is considered a culinary paradise, and not only for its amazing restaurants but also for its huge variety of cooking classes. Just as you can find restaurants providing different kinds of global cuisine on the island, so can you find an incredibly international array of culinary classes. Some professional chefs from other countries even travel to Hong Kong to receive training in how to prepare Chinese food, Thai food, Indian food, Southeast Asian food, and even breads and beverages.