

LESSON NOTES

Learn Cantonese in Three Minutes #15 Using Cantonese Adjectives

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GRAMMAR

The focus of this lesson is adjectives and how to use them properly in Cantonese

Topic 1: Cantonese Adjectives

To use Cantonese adjectives, you must first know the word 好 *hou*. It literally means "very much" as an adverb, or "good" when used as an adjective. But for this lesson's theme, 好 (*hou2*) is the default adverb for adjectives.

1. Here are some examples:

我好開心 (*ngo5 hou2 hoi1 sum1*) → "I'm happy"/"I'm very happy"

佢好靚 (*keoi5 hou2 leng3*) → "She's beautiful"/"She's very beautiful"

件衫好平 (*gin3 saam1 hou2 pen4*) → "the shirt is cheap"/"the shirt is very cheap"

Other than 好 (*hou2*), we can also use the word 幾 (*gei2*) in front of adjectives, it is similar to the "pretty" in "pretty good"

1. Let's see the same example with 幾 (*gei2*):

我幾開心 (*ngo5 gei2 hoi1 sum1*) → "I'm pretty happy"

佢幾靚 (*keoi5 gei2 leng3*) → "she's pretty beautiful"

件衫幾平 (*gin3 saam1 gei2 pen4*) → "the shirt is pretty cheap"

2. Here are a few more Cantonese adjectives and sample sentences:

熱 *jit6* "hot temperature"

今日好熱 (*gam1 jat6 hou2 jit6*) "it's hot today"/"it's very hot today"

今日幾熱 (*gam1 jat6 gei2 jit6*) "it's pretty hot today"

凍 (*dung3*) "cold"

尋日好凍 (*cam4 jat6 hou2 dung3*) "it was cold yesterday"/"it was very cold yesterday"

尋日幾凍 (*cam4 jat6 gei2 dung3*) "it was pretty cold yesterday"

3. Here is a short list of some of the most common adjectives in Cantonese:

大 (*daai6*) "big"

細 (*sai3*) "small"

高 *gou1* "tall"

矮 *aai2* "short in height"

肥 *fei4* "fat"

瘦 *sau3* "thin"

多 *do1* "many"

少 *siu2* "few"

Language Tip!

If you want to exaggerate, just drag the 好 (*hou2*) word out really long, or use the word 非常 (*fei1 soeng4*) before the adjectives. As in 好~熱 (*hooou2 jit6*), or 非常熱 (*fei1 soeng4 jit6*), which means "really hot," or 好~靚 (*hooou2 leng3*), or 非常靚 (*fei1 soeng4 leng3*), "really beautiful."