

LESSON NOTES

Learn Cantonese in Three Minutes #4 Do you speak English?

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GRAMMAR

The focus of this lesson is **Do you speak English? in Cantonese**

Topic 1: How to ask someone if she/he speaks English

Sentence from the lesson:

你識唔識講英文？

nei5 sik1 m4 sik1 gong2 jing1 man2?

"Do you speak English?"

1. *Nei5* means "you." *sik1 m4 sik1* is a form used to introduce the question using the verb "to know."
2. It literally means "know don't know," but this is how we form the question "Do you know how to..?"
3. Then we have the verb "to speak," *gong2*, followed by *jing1 man2*, which means "English." Literally, it means "You know or not know English?"

For Example:

唔好意思, 你識唔識講英文？

m4 ho2 ji3 si1, nei5 sik1 m4 sik1 gong2 jing1 man2 ?

"Excuse me, but do you speak English? (more polite)"

Topic 2: Responses you will receive Yes/No

Sentence from the lesson:

識

sik1 "Yes"

1. The responses you will receive could be one of these three:
識 *sik1* "Yes."
少少 *siu2 siu2* "A little."
唔識 *m4 sik1* "No."

Language Tip!

For those of you who are not only English speakers, you can obviously use this question with any language you need. Many people in Hong Kong study other languages, so maybe you will get lucky!

Just substitute:

英文 *jing1 man2* with...

日文 *jat6 man2* for "Japanese."

西班牙文 *saai1 baan1 aa4 man2* for "Spanish."

德文 *dak1 man2* for "German."

意大利文 *ji3 daai6 li6 man2* for "Italian."