



Lower Intermediate S1 Avoiding Complexity in China

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Traditional Chinese

- A 你知唔知附近有冇郵局？
B 有，隔兩條街就有。
A 咁即係點行？
B 直行，然後轉左，再轉右就到。
A 咁複雜嘅！你講多次？
B 我都係帶你去喇！

Jyutping

- A nei5 zi1 ng4 zi1 fu6 gan6 jau5 mou5 jau4 guk6 ?
B jau5, gaak3 loeng5 tiu4 gaai1 zau6 jau5 .
A gam2 zik1 hai6 dim2 haang4 ?
B zik6 haang4, jin4 hau6 zyun3 zo2, zoi3 zyun3 jau6 zau6 dou3 .
A gam3 fuk1 zaap6 ge2 ! nei5 gong2 do1 ci3 ?
B ngo5 dou1 hai6 daai3 nei5 heoi3 laa6 !

English

- A Is there a post office around?
B Yes, there's one just two street away from here.
A How to get there?
B Go straight, then turn left, and then turn right.
A It's complicated! Can you repeat it?
B I better take you there!

Vocabulary

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Traditional	Jyutping	English
郵局	jau4 guk2	post office
附近	fu6 gan6	nearby
隔	gaak3	away from
直行	zik6 haang4	to go straight
轉左	zyun3 zo2	turn left
轉右	zyun2 jau6	turn right
複雜	fuk1 zaap6	complicated
帶	daai3	to bring
多次	do1 ci3	again; once more

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

呢度有冇郵局？	ni1 dou6 jau5 mou5 jau4 guk2 ?	Is there a post office near here?
附近邊度有餐廳？	fu6 gan6 bin1 dou6 jau5 caan1 teng1 ?	Where's the restaurant nearby?
佢隔兩日就返。	keoi5 gaak3 loeng5 jat6 zau6 fan1。	He'll be back two days later.
喺彌敦道直行。	hai2 nei4 deon1 dou6 zik6 haang4。	At Nathan Road, go straight.
向前直行大概一百米。	Hoeng3 cin4 zik6 haang4 daai6 koi3 jat1 baak3 mai5 ,	Walk about one meters straight to your front.
一陣轉左。	jat1 zan6 zyun3 zo2。	Turn left in a bit.
前面轉右。	cin4 min6 zyun3 jau6。	Turn right at the front.
依兩個國家之間嘅關係好複雜。	ji1 loeng5 go3 gwok3 gaa1 zi1 gaan1 ge3 gwaan1 hai6 hou2 fuk1 zaap6。	These two countries have a very complicated relationship.
寶寶係一隻貴婦狗，帶俾我哋好多歡樂。	bou2 bou2 hai6 jat1 zek3 gwai3 fu5 gau2, daai3 bei2 ngo5 dei6 hou2 do1 fun1 lok6。	Bobo is a poodle and brings us a lot of happiness.
每個月我阿嫲都帶我去寺廟燒香。	mui5 go3 jyut6 ngo5 aa2 maa4 dou1 daai2 ngo5 heoi2 zi6 miu6 siu1 hoeng1。	Every month, my grandmother will bring me to the temple to burn incense.
可唔可以講多次？	ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 gong2 do1 ci3 ?	Can you say it again?

Grammar Points

Communicating Resignation or Reluctance

我都係帶你去喇！

"I'd better take you there myself."

In much earlier lessons, we taught you how to say "all" using the adverb 都, and learned to combine this with the verb 係 to form one of the most common sentence patterns in Cantonese. This gives us sentences like 我地都係學生 ("We all are students") or 我地都係老師 ("We are all teachers"). In this lesson we want to focus on another more advanced use of the phrase 都係. This is a somewhat complex usage, so let's start by looking at a few example sentences:

1. 我都係帶你去喇。
"I'll take you there."
2. 我都係唔去喇。
"I won't go after all."

What's important in these sentences isn't what is said so much as what is implied. What the speaker really means is that they are doing the action because they don't feel that there is any other option. They're communicating a reluctance to take some action. In the first example above the speaker agrees to take someone somewhere because there's no better choice, but still lets us know they aren't terribly happy doing this. Adding 都係 before the verb is therefore one way of communicating a specific type of emotion, and a sense that you are compelled or reluctant to do something. For another example, consider the sentence:

1. 佢都係唔買呢個喇。
"He won't buy this after all."

In this example the person clearly has a choice. They desire (or desired) to purchase something, but for whatever reason changed their mind.

Cultural Insight

Getting to the Post Office in Hong Kong

Most post offices in Hong Kong open to the public at 9:30 A.M. and close at 5:00 P.M. The

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exception to this is the General Post Office at 2 Connaught Place (Central), which opens at 8:00 A.M. and remains open until 6:00 P.M. Most post offices are also open on Saturday morning until roughly noon, and are all closed as a rule on Sunday.