



Survival Phrases S1

Where is the Bathroom in Hong Kong?

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Traditional Chinese

廁所
洗手間
係
邊
邊度
可唔可以
借

Jyutping

ci3 so2
sai2 sau2 gaan1
hai6
bin1
bin1 dou6
ho2 m4 ho2 ji5
ze3

English

toilet
washroom
to be
where
where
can or cannot
to borrow

Vocabulary

Traditional	Jyutping	English
廁所	ci3 so2	washroom
洗手間	sai2 sau2 gaan1	washroom
邊	bin1	which, where, who, side
邊度	bin1 dou6	where
可唔可以	ho2 m4 ho2 ji5	can or cannot
借	ze3	to borrow
係	hai6	to be

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

廁所喺邊？	ci3 so2 hai2 bin1 ?	Where is the washroom?
洗手間喺邊？	sai2 sau2 gaan1 hai2 bin1 ?	Where is the washroom?
廁所喺邊度？	ci3 so2 hai2 bin1 dou6?	Where is the toilet?
邊度有廁所？	bin1 dou6 jau5 ci3 so2 ?	Where is the washroom?
可唔可以借洗手間？	ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 ze3 sai2 sau2 gaan1 ?	Can I use the washroom?
可唔可以借洗手間？	ho2 m4 ho2 ji5 ze3 sai2 sau2 gaan1 ?	Can I use the washroom?
佢係女仔。	keoi5 hai6 nei5 zai2.	She is a girl.

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Grammar Points

In Cantonese, the word for "bathroom" is very straightforward. Breaking down the word 洗手間, gives us 洗, sai2 ("to wash"); 手, sau2 ("hand"); and 間, gaan1 ("room"). Together, this is "wash-hand-room." Other words for "bathroom" include 廁所, cak1 so2 ("toilet") and 衛生間, wai6 saang1 gaan1 ("restroom").

Cultural Insight

Quick Tip

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When going to the bathroom, don't mix up the sign for men and women! Usually a 男 "male" can be seen outside a men's bathroom, and 女 "female" outside a ladies' bathroom. But to avoid embarrassing moments, most of the shopping malls use picture signs now.

Bathrooms in China and Hong Kong differ greatly in quality, size, and cleanliness. At many larger restaurants, you can find 洗手間 in-house. For smaller shops, there may be a "communal bathroom" located on the street called a 公共衛生 (gung1 gung6 wai6 saang1). Oftentimes, these are squat toilets that experience high traffic, so come prepared with your own toilet paper.