

LESSON 1

Gwongdung
Gwongjau
Junggwok

Kwangtung
Canton
China

wah

language or dialect

Gwongdung wah
Gwongjau wah

Cantonese (Kwangtung-language)
Cantonese (Canton-language)

Gwongdung wah is the word mostly used.

Junggwok wah
jungman

Chinese
Chinese (written form)

Heung Gong

Hong Kong

Gwong-dung
Gwong-jau
Jung-gwok
Heung-Gong

broad-east
broad-state
middle-country
fragrant-harbour

saanjih

Vocabulary

ngo
nei
keuih

I, me.
you.
he, she, him, her.

ngodeih
neideih
keuihdeih

we, us.
you (lot).
they, them.

-deih

plural.

In Cantonese there are **L** and **N** sounds depending on what part of the city one was from meaning neideih can also be pronounced leihdeih.

haih
'm' haih

to be, it is the case, is, are, and does.
not to be, not to be the case.

'm' is pronounced like 'mmh' as in something delicious

yauh
mou

to have.
not to have.

In Cantonese there is no direct way of **yes** or **no** it's always indirect.

Examples

Nei yauh mou
Keuih haih 'm' haih
Haih 'm' haih

do you have or not have.
is she or he.
is it the case or not.

Vocabulary

dimgaai?
seung

hohk
jungyi
gei
hou
hou

why? how is it that...?

consider (doing something) plan to, want to,
wish to, would like to.

learn, study, learn to, study how to.

to like, be fond of.

quite, fairly.

very, quite.

be good, fine, okay, well.

Pattern sentences

1. Ngo hou
2. Ngo yauh
3. Keuih mou
4. Ngodeih haih
5. Neideih seung
6. Keuihdeih hohk
7. Nei jungyi
8. Ngo gei
9. Keuih hou hou
10. Dimgaai keuih

I am fine/okay/well

I have...

He does not have

We are

You wish to

They learn

You like

I am fairly

She is very good

Why is it he...?

11. Ngo hou, keuih gei hou
12. Ngodeih yauh, keuihdeih mou
13. Keuih gei hou, ngodeih hou hou
14. Junggwok gei hou
15. Gwongjau hou hou
16. Ngo seung hohk Gwongdung wah
17. Ngo jungyi neideih
18. Ngo hou jungyi Hueng Gong
19. Dimgaai keuih haih ...
20. Ngodeih haih, keuihdeih 'm' haih

I am fine, he is very well

We have, they do not have

He is quite well, we are very well

China is quite nice

Canton is very nice

I want to learn Cantonese

I like you

I like Hong Kong very much

Why is it that she...

We are, they are not

The negative prefix 'm'

Negative prefix added to (unmodified verbs)
for a negative outcome.

Example drills

'm' haih
'm' seung
'm' jungyi
'm' hou
'm' hohk

It is not the case, not be the case.

Do not wish to, do not plan to.

Do not like.

Is not good or well, okay

Will not learn

Ngodeih 'm' seung hohk Gwongdung wah
Keuihdeih 'm' jungyi ngodeih
Ngodeih 'm' haih gei hou
Keuihdeih 'm' hohk Jungman
Heung Gong 'm' hou

We do not wish to learn Cantonese

They do not like us

We are not very well

They will not learn Chinese

Hong Kong is not good

Questions forms

ma?

Makes a sentence particle into a yes-no
statement

a? A sentence particle to choice type question forming positive and negative and also questions that are not **yes-no** answers

ah? A sentence particle that makes a statement into a **yes-no** question; expresses surprise, disbelief asks confirmation of surprising statement

All three particles come at the end of the sentence

Examples

Nei hou ma? Are you fine?
Nei jungyi keuih ma? Do you like him?
Nei seung hohk ma? Do you want to learn?
Junggwok hou ma? Is China nice?
Keuihdeih Gei hou ma? Are they very well?

Nei hou 'm' hou a? Are you okay or not?
Nei jung (yi) 'm' jungyi keuih a? Do you like him or not?
Nei seung 'm' seung hohk Gwongdung wah a? Do you want to learn Cantonese?
Hueng Gong hou 'm' hou a? Is Hong Kong nice or not?
Keuihdeih hou 'm' hou a? Are they nice or not?

Dimgaai nei seung hohk Gwongdung wah a? Why do you want to learn Cantonese?
Dimgaai nei 'm' jungyi ngodeih a? Why do you not like us?
Dimgaai Hueng Gong hou hou a? Why is Hong Kong very nice?

Nei 'm' jungyi ah? Don't you like it?
Keuih 'm' hohk ah? Won't he learn?
Keuih 'm' haih ah? Isn't she?

Short dialogues

- A: Junggwok hou ma? Is China nice?
B: Junggwok hou hou China is very nice
- A: Hueng Gong hou 'm' hou a? Is Hong Kong nice or not?
B: Heung Gong 'm' haih gei hou Hong Kong is not very nice
- A: Gwongjau gei hou ma? Is Canton quite nice?
B: Haih, Gwongjau gei hou That's correct, Canton is quite nice
- A: Nei seung hohk Gwongjau wah ma? Do you want to learn Cantonese?
B: Ngo seung hohk I want to learn
- A: Keuih gei hou ma? Is she good?
B: Keuih 'm' haih gei hou She is not very good
- A: Nei yauh mou hohk Junggwok wah a? Did you study Chinese?
B: Yauh Yes
- A: Keuih Gwongdung wah hou 'm' hou a? Is his Cantonese good or not?
B: Hou hou It is very good
- A: Nei jungyi keuih ma? Do you like her?
B: Hou jungyi I like her very much

9. A: Nei haih 'm' haih Jungyi ngodeih a? Do you like us or not?
 B: Jungyi Yes
- 10.A: Dimgaai nei seung hohk Gwongdung wah a? Why do you wish to learn Cantonese?
 B: Ngo hou jungyi Junngwok I really like China

Vocabulary

sik	know (a person or a subject), become acquainted with, recognize
yahn	person, human
pahngyauh	friend
gam	so, such
taai	too
poutung	be commom, ordinary

Short dialogues

1. A: Nei yauh mou Junggwok pahngyauh a? Do you have a Chinese friend?
 B: Ngo yauh I have (yes)
 C: Haih 'm' haih a? Is it true? (Doubt)
2. A: Nei sik 'm' sik keuih a? Do you know him?
 B: 'm' sik I do not know
 A: Ngo sik keuih I know him
3. A: Keuih haih 'm' haih Hueng Gong yahn a? Is he a Hong Kongese or not?
 B: Haih Yes
 C: 'm' haih, keuih haih Gwongdung yahn No, he is a Kwangtung person
4. A: Ngo seung hohk Gwongdung wah I want to learn Cantonese
 B: Dimgaai a? Why?
 A: Ngo yauh Junggwok pahngyauh I have a Chinese friend
5. A: Keuihdeih haih 'm' haih hou yahn a? Are they good people?
 B: Keuihdeih 'm' haih gei hou yahn They aren't very nice people
 A: 'm' haih, keuihdeih gei hou yahn It's not true they are quite nice people
6. A: Nei jung (yi) m jungyi Gwongdung yahn a? Do you like Cantonese people?
 B: Ngo hou jungyi I really like them
 A: Ngo jungyi Heung Gong yahn I like Hong Kong people
7. A: Nei sik 'm' sik Jungman a? Do you know Chinese?
 B: Sik I know
 C: Keuih sik 'm' sik a? Does she know?
8. A: Ngo mou Junggwok pahngyauh I have no Chinese friends
 B: Dimgaai a? Why not?
 A: Ngo 'm' sik Junggwok wah I don't know Chinese
9. A: Nei Gwongdung wah gam hou Your Cantonese is so good
 B: Ngo ah? me?
 A: Haih, taai hou Yes, too good
- 10.A: Dimgaai nei sik Gwongdung wah gam hou a? How is it that you can speak Cantonese so well?
 B: Ngo hou jungyi hohk wah I like learning languages

A: Nei 'm' haih poutung yahn

You are special (not the ordinary person)

Hou when connected to '**sik, jungyi, seung**' takes a meaning of **really**

Examples

hou seung	Really want to	Very-wish/want
hou jungyi	Really like	Very-like
hou sik	Really-knows	Very-know
Ngo hou jungyi nei		I really like you
Ngo hou seung hohk Junggwok wah		I really want to learn Chinese
Keuih hou sik Gwongdung wah		He really knows Cantonese
Ngo hou jungyi Junggwok yahn		I really like Chinese people

Haih when used before a verb/adverb shows **emphasis**

Examples

Keuih haih hou yahn	He is a good person
Ngo haih jungyi leih	I do like you
Keuih haih hou hou	He is very nice

Poutung connected with **wah** becomes **Mandarin**

Poutung wah - ordinary language

Gwok can also mean Mandarin

Gwok - national, country

yuh - language

yuhyih - language

Vocabulary

gwokga	country, nation, state
bundeih	local, be local
jingsik	formal, be official, the real, officially, properly,
Victor	a person's name
Victor keuihdeih	Victor and his friends
Yinggwok	England
yingman	English (written)
ying (hung)	Hero
(faan) gwailouh	Foreigner (unflattering name given to European males)
gwai	devil, ghost
louh	fellow
ngoigwokiyahn	foreigner (polite word)
ngoigwok	outside, foreign, abroad
saiyahn	westerner
sai	west
haakjuhngyahn	a black person
baahjuhngyahn	a white person
wongjuhngyahn	a yellow person

haak
baahk
wong
-juhng

black
white
yellow
kind, sort

Short dialogues

1. A: Nei sik 'm' sik Gwokjuh a? Do you know Mandarin?
B: 'm' sik, ngo sik Gwongdung wah I do not know, I know Cantonese
A: Nei sik 'm' sik ngoigwok wah a? Can you speak a foreign language?
B: Sik I know
- 2 A: Nei yauh mou ngoigwok pahngyauh a? Do you have any foreign friends?
B: Mou I do not have
A: Dimgaai a? Why not?
- 3 A: Ngo 'm' seung hohk poutung wah I do not want to learn Mandarin
B: Dimgaai ah? Why not?
A: Ngo seung hohk Gwongjau wah I wish to learn Cantonese
4. A: Ngo gwokga haih Yinggwok My country is England
B: Ngo gwokga haih Junggwok My country is China
C: Ngo haih bundeih yahn I'm local
D: Ngo haih jingsik Heung gong yahn I am a (the real) Hong Kongese
5. A: Victor haih 'm' haih Junggwok yahn a? Is Victor a Chinese?
B: 'm' haih, keuih haih sai yahn yahn No, he is a westerner
A: Ngoigwoklauh ah? A foreigner!

Reading:

Victor haih sai yahn. Keuih gwokga haih Yinggwok. Keuih hou jungyi hohk wah. keuih hou sik Junggwok wah, 'm' haih Gwokjuh, haih Gwongdung wah. Keuih yauh hou Junggwok pahngyauh. Keuih pahngyauh 'm' sik Yingman. Keuih sik Gwongdung wah, sik Poutung wah. Victor hou jungyi Junggwok, hou Jungyi Junggwok yahn. Victor sik Gwongdung wah gam hou. Junggwok yahn hou jungyi keuih. Keuih hou pahngyauh haih jingsik Heung Gong yahn.

Further vocabulary

yeuhngyahn	foreigner
yeuhng wah	foreign language
faan wah	foreign language
Tong yahn	Chinese person
Tongsahn	China
Tong wah	Chinese
Baahk wah	Cantonese (used in China)

The above are either seldom used or old vocabulary.

Fill in the missing words

1. Ngo 'm' haih yahn
2. Keuih seung Jungman
3. Nei haih ... yahn
4. Ngo nei
5. Dimgaai 'm' nei a?

6. Ngo Wa ... hou
7. Nei sik 'm' ... keuih .?
8. Ngo 'm' Gwailouh
9. Junggwok ... 'm' hou a?
10. Nei ... hou

Translate the following into Cantonese

1. I am a good person
2. His Cantonese is not very good
3. Why do you want to learn Chinese?
4. Is he a good person?
5. I really like her