

LESSON NOTES

Upper Beginner S1 #1

The Post Office in Hong Kong

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 請問郵局喺邊?
2. 呢度就係，你要寄咩?
3. 想寄封信。
4. 填好地址未?
5. 填好晒。
6. 郵票貼好未?
7. 貼好咗啦。
8. 咁交俾我啦。
9. 不過封信未寫好。

JYUTPING

1. cing2 man6 jau4 guk2 hai2 bin1 ?
2. ni1 dou6 zau6 hai6, nei5 jiu3 gei3 me1 ?
3. soeng2 gei3 fung1 seon3.
4. tin4 hou2 dei6 zi2 mei6 ?
5. tin4 hou2 saai3.

CONT'D OVER

6. jau4 piu3 tip3 hou2 mei6 ?
7. tip3 hou2 zo2 laa6.
8. gam2 gaau1 bei2 ngo5 laa1.
9. bat1 gwo3 fung1 seon3 mei6 se2 hou2.

ENGLISH

1. A: Excuse me, where is the post office?
2. B: It's right here. What do you want to mail?
3. A: I want to mail a letter.
4. B: Filled out the address yet?
5. A: Yes. It's done.
6. B: Put on a stamp yet?
7. A: Yes, it's done.
8. B: Then give it to me.
9. A: But the letter's not finished, though.

VOCABULARY

| Traditional | Romanization | English | Class |
|-------------|--------------|---------|-------|
|-------------|--------------|---------|-------|

| | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------------------|------------|
| 信 | seon3 | letter, to believe | noun, verb |
| 包裹 | baau1 gwo2 | package | noun |
| 收件人 | sau1 gin2 jan4 | receiver | noun |
| 郵票 | jau4 piu3 | stamp | noun |
| 填 | tin4 | to fill (out) a form | verb |
| 郵局 | jau4 guk2 | post office | noun |
| 地址 | dei6 zi2 | Address | noun |
| 請問 | cing2 man6 | may I ask | phrase |
| 寄件人 | gei3 gin2 jan4 | sender | noun |

SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>你太容易信人啦。 <i>Nei5 taai3 jung4 ji6 seon3 jan4 laa3.</i></p> <p>You trust people too easily.</p> | <p>我寫咗封信俾我朋友。 <i>ngo5 se2 zo2 fung1 seon3 bei2 ngo5 pang4 jau5.</i></p> <p>I wrote a letter to my friend.</p> |
| <p>我尋日寫咗封信俾你。 <i>ngo5 cam4 jat6 se2 zo2 fung1 seon3 bei2 nei5.</i></p> <p>I wrote you this letter yesterday.</p> | <p>你有一個包裹。 <i>nei5 jau5 jat1 go3 baau1 gwo2.</i></p> <p>You have a package.</p> |
| <p>收件人收到份包裹。 <i>sau1 gin2 jan4 sau1 dou3 fan6 baau1 gwo2.</i></p> <p>The receiver got the package.</p> | <p>我細個有儲郵票。 <i>ngo5 sai3 go3 jau5 cou5 jau4 piu3.</i></p> <p>I used to collect stamps when I was younger.</p> |
| <p>請喺信封上貼上郵票。 <i>cing2 hai2 seon3 fung1 soeng6 tip3 soeng5 jau4 piu3.</i></p> <p>Please put a stamp on the envelope.</p> | <p>請填好呢份表格。 <i>cing2 tin4 hou2 ni1 fan6 biu2 gaak3.</i></p> <p>Please fill out this form.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>歐洲啲郵局好靚。 <i>au1 zau1 di1 jau4 guk2 hou2 leng3.</i></p> <p>Post offices in Europe are very beautiful.</p> | <p>我去郵局寄信。 <i>ngo5 heoi3 jau4 guk2 gei3 seon3.</i></p> <p>I go to the post office to mail a letter.</p> |
| <p>呢條街有間郵局。 <i>ni1 tiu4 gaai1 jau5 gaan1 jau4 guk2.</i></p> <p>There is a post office in this street.</p> | <p>郵局喺銀行附近。 <i>jau4 guk2 hai2 ngan4 hong4 fu6 gan6.</i></p> <p>The post office is near the bank.</p> |
| <p>呢度有冇郵局？ <i>ni1 dou6 jau5 mou5 jau4 guk2?</i></p> <p>Is there a post office near here?</p> | <p>運貨需要一個運貨地址。 <i>wan6 fo3 seoi1 jiu3 jat1 go3 wan6 fo3 dei6 zi2.</i></p> <p>The shipping form needs to include a shipping address.</p> |
| <p>唔好意思，請問郵局喺邊？ <i>m4 hou2 ji3 si1, cing2 man6 jau4 guk2 hai2 bin1 ?</i></p> <p>Excuse me, where is the post office?</p> | <p>寄件人寄出咗份信件。 <i>gei3 gin2 jan4 gei3 ceot1 zo2 fan6 seon3 gin2.</i></p> <p>The sender mails the letter.</p> |

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is Describing Completed Actions in Cantonese

填好晒

"The form is filled out."

Our focus in this lesson is on a verb complement used to describe finished actions in Cantonese. It is the complement 好晒 *hou2 saai3* ("to finish doing something"). You can add it to the end of any action that takes a bit of time to complete. In our dialogue, the verb we used this with was 填 *tin4* ("to fill out") which we modified to 填好晒 *tin4 hou2 saai3* ("to finish filling out"). This causes a subtle shift in meaning, in which our sense changes from "filling something out" to the more time-intensive "finishing the process of completing the form."

Cantonese speakers will often use this verb complement when describing routine processes or mundane work that may take a bit of time to complete and is not necessarily fun or intellectually stimulating, as with these examples:

1. 填好晒個地址
tin4 hou2 saai3 go3 dei6 zi2
"to have filled out the address"
2. 寫好晒封信
se2 hou2 saai3 fung1 seon3
"to have written up the letter"
3. 唔該, 幫我執好晒個包裹啊。
m4 goi1, bong1 ngo5 zap1 hou2 saai3 go3 baau1 gwo2 aa1。
"Please, help me wrap up the package"
4. 我查好晒郵局嘅地址。
ngo5 caa4 hou2 saai3 jau4 guk2 ge3 dei6 zi2。
"I looked up the address of the post office"

Another common verb complement we can use to say that an action is completed is 完晒 *jyun4 saai3* ("to finish doing something"). This literally means "finish all" and is put at the end of actions that have taken quite a long time. For instance, if you write 填完晒 (*tin4 jyun4 saai3*) you are telling us that the form took a long time to complete, and if you said 我做完晒 啲嘢之後就去睇戲 *ngo5 zou6 jyun4 saai3 di1 je5 zi1 hau6 zau6 heoi3 tai2 hei3* ("I'll go see a movie after I finish work") you are telling us that you have quite a bit of work left to do.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

See the Hong Kong Post Office

Looking for a neat place to send your letters or parcels? The oldest post office in Hong Kong is the Stanley Post Office, which opened in 1937 and is still in service. The post office continues to occupy its original building, which is a single-story wooden cabin with little in the way of decoration save for the GR (George Rex) insignia on the windows. Renovation work was done in 2007 to keep the building serviceable and maintain it as a bit of a time capsule for Hong Kong residents. Although the post office is a bit out of the way for those living and working downtown, it helps add to the charm of Stanley and is the center of Hong Kong's philatelist society.