

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

# Basic Bootcamp #1

## Basic Bootcamp: Self-Introduction

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# **1**

## INTRODUCTION

Nicole: Hi everyone, I'm Nicole.

Matt: And I'm Matt.

Nicole: Welcome to Basic Bootcamp lesson 1. This five-part series will help you ease your way into Cantonese.

Matt: Now, the idea of boot camp calls to mind sweating and toil. But, our boot camp is different!

Nicole: Yes, you won't have to sweat, we promise.

Matt: We'll go over all the basics that will really help you understand Cantonese much quicker and easier.

Nicole: And we'll have fun doing it!

Matt: Yes, and we won't blow any whistles or scream at you to do two hundred pushups. Though that might work too... we'll see how it goes.

Nicole: Okay, so in this lesson, you will learn how to introduce yourself.

Matt: Now what could be more basic than this...I promise you, you will have this conversation like two hundred times in your first month in the Cantonese world.

Nicole: Yep...maybe more.

Matt: In this lesson, you will learn how to greet someone, and introduce yourself.

Nicole: This conversation takes place anywhere.

Matt: This conversation is between two strangers, meeting for the first time.

Nicole: The speakers are strangers, but it is an informal occasion, so they'll be speaking informally.

Matt: Alright, Nicole. Let's take a look at today's dialogue.

## DIALOGUE

A: 你好，我叫王家衛。(nei5 hou2, ngo5 giu3 wong4 gaa1 wai6.)

B: 我叫張曼玉。好高興認識你。(ngo5 giu3 zoeng1 maan6 juk2. hou2 gou1 hing3 jing6 sik1 nei5.)

A: 我都係。(ngo5 dou1 hai6.)

Matt: And one time slowly.

A: 你好，我叫王家衛。(nei5 hou2, ngo5 giu3 wong4 gaa1 wai6.)

B: 我叫張曼玉。好高興認識你。(ngo5 giu3 zoeng1 maan6 juk2. hou2 gou1 hing3 jing6 sik1 nei5.)

A: 我都係。(ngo5 dou1 hai6.)

Matt: One more time, with the English.

Nicole: 你好，我叫王家衛。(nei5 hou2, ngo5 giu3 wong4 gaa1 wai6.)

Matt: Hi. My name's Wong Kar Wai.

Nicole: 我叫張曼玉。好高興認識你。(ngo5 giu3 zoeng1 maan6 juk2. hou2 gou1 hing3 jing6 sik1 nei5.)

Matt: My name's Maggie Cheung. Very nice to meet you.

Nicole: 我都係。(ngo5 dou1 hai6.)

Matt: I am, too.

## POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Matt: So Nicole, what do Cantonese people do when they first meet? Like, is there any sort of custom that we should be aware of?

Nicole: Yes. Unlike most polite Asian people, we yell and punch each other on the face.

Matt: Is that right? No wonder you have bruises all over your face.

Nicole: No, I don't. I was just kidding. Seriously, nowadays our first meeting custom is quite western, and my face looks fine.

Matt: Right. Sometimes people would shake hands, but most often, nothing is necessary beyond a simple smile or a nod.

Nicole: Yeah. I think the Cantonese are not overly demonstrative.

Matt: One interesting thing, is when I was trying to hug some of my Cantonese friends. They were standing two meters away to avoid it.

Nicole: Are you sure it wasn't you that they were avoiding?

Matt: Hmm...maybe. I just remember that their body went stiff.

Nicole: Honestly, I guess we don't mind. But it's just a bit weird to us.

Matt: So what about kissing on the cheek then?

Nicole: No! Waaay over the line. Okay, let's take a closer look into these self-introductions.

Matt: Yes! This is a boot camp after all; we have to get all intense and order people around and stuff.

## VOCAB LIST

Matt: OK Let's take a look at the vocabulary for this lesson. The first word is...

Nicole: 認識 (jing6 sik1) [natural native speed]

Matt: to know, to recognize

Nicole: 認識 (jing6 sik1) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 認識 (jing6 sik1) [natural native speed]

Nicole: 高興 [natural native speed]

Matt: happy

Nicole: 高興 (gou1 hing3) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 高興 [natural native speed]

Nicole: 好 (hou2) [natural native speed]

Matt: very

Nicole: 好 (hou2) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 好 (hou2) [natural native speed]

Nicole: 我 (ngo5) [natural native speed]

Matt: I

Nicole: 我 (ngo5) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 我 (ngo5) [natural native speed]

Nicole: 你 (nei5) [natural native speed]

Matt: you (singular)

Nicole: 你 (nei5) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 你 (nei5) [natural native speed]

Nicole: 叫 (giu3) [natural native speed]

Matt: to be called; call

Nicole: 叫 (giu3) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 叫 (giu3) [natural native speed]

Nicole: 都 (dou1) [natural native speed]

Matt: also

Nicole: 都 (dou1) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 都 (dou1) [natural native speed]

Nicole: 係 (hai6) [natural native speed]

Matt: to be

Nicole: 係 (hai6) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Nicole: 係 (hai6) [natural native speed]

## VOCAB AND PHRASE USAGE

Matt: Let's have a closer look at the usage for some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

Nicole: The first phrase we have....

Matt: Okay, so what is our hello in this dialog here?

Nicole: 你好 (nei5 hou2).

Matt: Now the Cantonese hello is quite particular. Literally translated, it is "you good." I haven't quite figured out yet if the story behind this is that they are really complimenting the person - "you good." Or, if its meaning is kind of irrelevant meaning. What do you think, Nicole?

Nicole: I've never examined Cantonese in this way. But I guess "nei hou" could be from the greeting "nei hou ma?" which means "how are you?" or literally, "are you good?"

Then gradually, people simplified it to "you good." 你好 (nei5 hou2).

Matt: Okay. So the point is that you can say "ni hao" to say "hello." AND you just learned two very useful words, within this is "hello." "You..."

Nicole: 你 (nei5)

Matt: And "good..."

Nicole: 好 (hou2)

Matt: Now, can this be used any time of day, with anyone in any circumstance, Nicole?

Nicole: Definitely, no problem.

Matt: Okay, so there we have it. Our greeting for the day!

Nicole: 你好 (nei5 hou2).

Matt: Hope everyone isn't getting too overheated in the boot camp now. Maybe it's time for some pushups?

Nicole: I think I could use some; I'm getting fat.

Matt: Now this is a common thing that you're going to bump into when you're here in Hong Kong, a skinny Cantonese girl claiming herself to be 'too fat...'

Nicole: The response should always be "No you're not! A skeleton weighs more than you. "

Matt: That's right, you should always compliment the women. So next, we heard...

Nicole: 我叫王家衛 (ngo5 giu3 wong4 gaa1 wai2).

Matt: In Cantonese, one simple way of stating your name is saying...

Nicole: 我叫 (ngo5 giu3...)

Matt: Which literally means "I."

Nicole: 我 (ngo5)

Matt: "To be called" or "am called".

Nicole: 叫 (giu3)

Matt: Then your name.

Nicole: 我叫王家衛 (ngo5 giu3 wong4 gaa1 wai2).

Matt: Or "I'm wong kar wai."

Nicole: 我叫 (ngo5 giu3...) Laam Wai.

Matt: 我叫 (ngo5 giu3...) Matt.

Nicole: Okay, now what is said in response then, actually, is 我叫張曼玉 (ngo5 giu3 zoeng1 maan6 juk2.)

Matt: "I'm maggie cheung."

Matt: So our lady's name is...

Nicole: 張曼玉 (zoeng1 maan6 juk2)

Matt: We'll talk more about names later, but here Maggie Cheung's response mirrors the first speaker's.

Nicole: Yeah 我叫 (ngo5 giu3) then your name.

Matt: Simple!

Nicole: Yes. But now, if you want to add something really nice, you can say what she just did.

Matt: Which is...

Nicole: 好高興認識你 (hou2 gou1 hing3 jing6 sik1 nei5).

Matt: Which means "very nice to meet you." Let's break down the words there for a minute.

Nicole: 好 (hou2)

Matt: "Very".

Nicole: 高興 (gou1 hing3)

Matt: "Happy".

Nicole: 認識 (jing6 sik1)

Matt: "To meet"; or "meet."

Nicole: 你 (nei5)

Matt: "You".

Nicole: 好高興認識你 (hou2 gou1 hing3 jing6 sik1 nei5).

Now we should mention something about the verb here.

Nicole: 認識 (jing6 sik1).

Matt: Right, this means "to know" or "to be familiar with."

Nicole: However, in the context of this phrase, 好高興認識你 (hou2 gou1 hing3 jing6 sik1 nei5), the implication of the word is "to meet."

Matt: Right, this meeting signifies a making of one's acquaintance, and thus, thereafter, they will "know" each other. So, in this case we don't use the verb "to meet." We use...

Nicole: 認識 (jing6 sik1).

Matt: So, "nice to meet you"

Nicole: 好高興認識你。 (hou2 gou1 hing3 jing6 sik1 nei5.) Now that you said that, I can't help but want to naturally respond. 我都係 (ngo5 dou1 hai6).

Matt: Just like our characters in the dialogue.

Nicole: 我都係 (ngo5 dou1 hai6). It means "I also am." That's the literal translation.

Matt: Yes, so Maggie says she is happy to meet Wong Kar-wai, and his natural response in Cantonese would be...

Nicole: 我都係 (ngo5 dou1 hai6).

## LESSON FOCUS

Matt: Now, Cantonese names are something we must visit.

Nicole: Yes, because you are going to need one.

Matt: The first thing we should mention, is that in a Cantonese name, the last name always comes first.

Nicole: That's right, so in the self-introductions, we just heard, the man's last name was Wong. His given name is Kar-Wai.

Matt: So Nicole, in your case, what is your Cantonese name?

Nicole: 藍蔚 (laam4 wai6).

Matt: Okay, so your last name is...

Nicole: 藍 (laam4).

Matt: And then your given name is...

Nicole: 蔚 (wai6).

Matt: So how are Cantonese names chosen? Do people just randomly make one up, or are there set names like 'Michael' or 'Bob' in Cantonese that everyone has?

Nicole: Not really. Cantonese people choose characters they like and mix them together.

Matt: So what does your name mean?

Nicole: My surname, 藍 (laam4), is the color "blue," which is very rare as a surname in Cantonese. The given name, 蔚 (wai6), means "colorful."

Matt: I see your parents want you to be a painter or an artist.

Nicole: No kidding. Because if you say my name backward, 蔚藍 (wai6 laam4), it'll be "sky blue."

Matt: So you'll notice that the first person in the self-introduction, when introducing themselves, used all three all their names, Wong Kar-wai. Is that significant?

Nicole: Yes, we will always generally give our full name when making a self-introduction, but not always.

Matt: But some people just have two characters in their names, like you for instance.

Nicole: Yes. Our surname is the first one, and then the given name is the second one.

Matt: Actually, now that I think about it, there are occasions where people will just say one name, too, right?

Nicole: Yes, on some formal occasions, people will just give their surname. If you want to say it that way you just say 我姓 (ngo5 sing3)... and then plus your surname.

Matt: Because "sing" means "surname." So for you, if just formally mentioning your family name, you would say...

Nicole: 我姓藍 (ngo5 sing3 laam4).

Matt: It all seems quite formal. But what about amongst friends...I'm pretty sure I heard friends calling each other by their entire names a lot in China. Not just their first name.

Nicole: Yes, that's true, that happens.

Matt: Wow, it seems so formal to most of us.

Nicole: Yes, I think it may be because there are so many people in China.

Matt: Ah you see, maybe you need all three names to be specifically you.

Nicole: Yes, otherwise, maybe there are fifteen friends named Zeong or Wong.



Matt: Can get pretty confusing, yes!

Nicole: Yes, very confusing!

Matt: Okay, now what about if a person wants their own Cantonese name...

Nicole: The trick is, do not choose your own Cantonese name!!!!

Matt: That's right, trust us here at boot camp! If you choose your own name, we might have to come and boot camp you.

## OUTRO