

Complete Lesson Transcript – Lesson 003

Hosts: Adam Menon / Kirin Yang

Adam: Hello and welcome to lesson 3 of ChineseLearnOnline.com. My name is Adam.

Kirin: [Nǐ hǎo](#) . My name is Kirin.

Adam: For lesson transcripts and other tools to help you learn Chinese, please visit our website at ChineseLearnOnline.com. You can also try to view lyrics or descriptions on your MP3 player if it's capable of doing so. On newer generation iPODS you can do so by clicking the center wheel button a few times. We have placed some brief lesson summaries there to help you follow along.

Now let's start with a review by having a very simple conversation using some of the vocabulary learned in Lesson Two.

Kirin: [Nǐ hǎo](#) .

Adam: [Nǐ hǎo](#) .

Kirin: [Nǐ hǎo ma?](#)

Adam: [Wǒ hěn hǎo](#) . [Xièxie](#) .

Kirin: [Zàijiàn](#) .

Adam: [Zàijiàn](#) .

Adam: [Hǎo](#) . Hopefully you were able to follow along. Now, just in case you forgot I'm going to use the word [hǎo](#) from time to time in the context of 'ok.'

As we've said before, where possible please try to repeat the words as you hear them either out aloud or in your mind. It's very important to repeat the tones exactly as you hear them especially in these early stages since that will make things much easier as you go along.

Now we know how to say 'hello.' What if I wanted to say "Hello everybody" or "Hello everyone"? How would I say that?

Kirin: [Dàjiā hǎo](#) .

Adam: Again?

Kirin: [Dàjiā hǎo](#) .

Adam: [Hǎo](#) , so let's break that down. This is an interesting one. There are three words here, two of which are new. The first one was [dà](#) which is a falling tone. [Dà](#) means 'big.'

The second word was **jiā** which was a high tone. Jiā means ‘house’ or ‘family,’ and the last word we should all know by now **hǎo** which means ‘good.’

So putting those three together we get “big family good.” So in this context “big family” or “my very extended family” means...everyone! So by saying “everyone good” you are actually saying “Hello everyone!”

Kirin: **Dàjiā hǎo** .

Adam: As we said in our last lesson, where possible we try and break down the meanings of words into their literal definitions to help you figure out how these words and phrases are constructed and to help you piece things together on your own. I find that it also helps in memory to translate these words into something tangible to help you remember them.

So we’ll continue on with a very simple introduction – “I am Adam.” How would I say that, Kirin?

Kirin: **Wǒ shì Adam** .

Adam: **Hǎo** , so let’s analyze that. We have **wǒ** , which means ‘I.’ Then you have a new word **shì** . That’s a falling tone and is the verb ‘to be’ followed by ‘Adam,’ which is my English name.

Kirin: **Wǒ shì Adam** .

Adam: Now one nice thing about Chinese is you don’t have to worry about conjugations of verbs. So in English you’d have “I am,” “you are,” “he or she is”. In Chinese you just use the verb **shì** . Now we already know the words for I, you and he or she so that gives us again...“I am.”

Kirin: **Wǒ shì** .

Adam: You are.

Kirin: **Nǐ shì** .

Adam: He or she is.

Kirin: **Tā shì** .

Adam: Great. So moving along, usually during introductions people want to know where you’re from so let’s look at some popular countries. Let’s start with America:

Kirin: **Měiguó** .

Adam: So that's a falling rising tone followed by a rising tone. Again?

Kirin: [Měiguó](#) .

Adam: Now [měi](#) means 'beautiful' and [guó](#) means 'country' so the literal translation for 'America' in Chinese is actually "beautiful country."

Kirin: [Měiguó](#)

Adam: Isn't that interesting? Let's do another one: China

Kirin: [Zhōngguó](#) .

Adam: So that's a high tone followed by a rising tone.

Kirin: [Zhōngguó](#) .

Adam: Now this actually ends up meaning "middle country" which makes sense since that's where the Chinese language originates.

Kirin: [Zhōngguó](#) .

Adam: Now the names of many countries in Chinese end in [guó](#) meaning country. In some cases there is a literal meaning as in the case of China or America. In other cases though, the Chinese version is just a transliteration of the English name into Chinese characters. For example, how would you say Canada?

Kirin: [Jiānádà](#) .

Adam: So that's a high, rising and falling tone for the three words there.

Kirin: [Jiānádà](#) .

Adam: In this case there is no sense in forming a literal meaning since there isn't one – it's just meant to sound a little like the English name 'Canada.'

Kirin: [Jiānádà](#) .

Adam: Let's do another one – England

Kirin: [Yīngguó](#) .

Adam: That's a high tone [Yīng](#) followed by [guó](#) .

Kirin: [Yīngguó](#) .

Adam: How about France?

Kirin: Fàguó .

Adam: So that's a falling tone followed by the rising tone for guó . Now depending on where you are, you may also hear it pronounced as:

Kirin: Fǎguó .

Adam: ...which is a high tone followed by a rising tone. Now, in many languages, especially one like Chinese that is spoken by so many people around the world, you can expect to hear differences in dialect. However, don't worry – just as it's possible for someone from America to easily communicate with someone from England or Australia despite differences in speech, in general the vocabulary and manner of speech you hear here can easily be used anywhere where Mandarin Chinese is spoken. So let's continue with our countries - how about Australia?

Kirin: Àozhōu .

Adam: So that's a falling tone and a high tone.

Kirin: Àozhōu .

Adam: Now in the case of Australia they don't use guó for 'country,' they use zhōu which actually means 'continent,' so it has its own special name! Now of course we recognize that there are a lot of countries out there and we do have listeners from different parts of the world so on our website ChineseLearnOnline.com under our "Lesson three Premium notes," we do have a listing of other popular countries and their Chinese equivalents. If there is one that you'd like to know that isn't on the list you're welcome to email us directly for a translation.

Now knowing the word in Chinese for a country allows you easy access to some other useful vocabulary. How would you say 'American'?

Kirin: Měiguórén .

Adam: As you can see, this is the name of the country with a rising tone rén added to the end of it.

Kirin: Měiguórén .

Adam: Rén means 'person' so by saying Měiguórén you are literally saying "America person" or 'American.'

Kirin: Měiguórén .

Adam: Similarly, to say a ‘Chinese person’ you would say:

Kirin: [Zhōngguó rén](#) .

Adam: How about Canadian?

Kirin: [Jiānádà rén](#) .

Adam: Someone from Britain?

Kirin: [Yīngguó rén](#) .

Adam: And so on. Now by knowing the country you can also come up with the names of some languages. How do you say the “Chinese language”?

Kirin: [Zhōngwén](#) (language).

Adam: So here you have [Zhōng](#) from [Zhōngguó](#) with a rising tone [wén](#) added after it.

Kirin: [Zhōngwén](#) .

Adam: That gives us the language spoken in [Zhōngguó](#) – Chinese. Similarly, for ‘English’ we would say:

Kirin: [Yīngwén](#) .

Adam: ...which is the language from [Yīngguó](#) – English. Again take a look at our Premium lesson notes for [lesson three](#) on our website to see various countries, their people and their languages.

I think that’s a lot of new information for today. We’ll be building on it in our next lesson so take the time to review all of it by listening to this podcast again or by reviewing the transcript on our website [ChineseLearnOnline.com](#). [Xièxie dàjiā](#) !

Kirin: [Zàijiàn](#) !