

Complete Lesson Transcript – Lesson 6 [Traditional]

Hosts: Adam Menon / Kirin Yang

Adam: Welcome to ChineseLearnOnline.com. I'm your host, Adam.

Kirin: 大家好. 我是 Kirin.

Adam: This is lesson 6 of our podcast series teaching Mandarin Chinese. And today's lesson is all about numbers. If you know your numbers, then lots of other vocabulary becomes quite easy as you'll soon see.

Now we'll start with the numbers zero through ten. This is also a good way to practice your tones. Listen and try to figure out what tone it is and then try and repeat out loud or in your head. So let's start with zero.

Kirin: 零.

Adam: That's a second tone.

Kirin: 零.

Adam: One.

Kirin: 一.

Adam: That's a first tone.

Kirin: 一.

Adam: Two.

Kirin: 二.

Adam: That's a fourth tone.

Kirin: 二.

Adam: Three.

Kirin: 三.

Adam: That's a first tone.

Kirin: 三.

Adam: Four.

Kirin: 四.

Adam: That's a fourth tone.

Kirin: 四.

Adam: Five.

Kirin: 五.

Adam: That's a third tone.

Kirin: 五.

Adam: Six.

Kirin: 六.

Adam: That's a fourth tone.

Kirin: 六.

Adam: Seven.

Kirin: 七.

Adam: That's a first tone.

Kirin: 七.

Adam: Eight.

Kirin: 八.

Adam: That's also a first tone.

Kirin: 八.

Adam: Nine.

Kirin: 九.

Adam: That's a third tone.

Kirin: 九.

Adam: Ten.

Kirin: 十.

Adam: That's a second tone.

Kirin: 十.

Adam: In the Premium section of our website, you'll see the numbers in Chinese and in English so you can get some idea of what the characters look like for these numbers. So Kirin why don't you repeat the numbers again from zero to ten.

Kirin: 零, 一, 二, 三, 四, 五, 六, 七, 八, 九, 十.

Adam: Now once you know the numbers from zero to ten, that gives you easy access to the rest of the numbers all the way up to ninety-nine.

Eleven is just "ten - one" or...

Kirin: 十一.

Adam: Twelve becomes "ten - two."

Kirin: 十二.

Adam: And so on up to twenty which is "two - ten" or...

Kirin: 二十.

Adam: Twenty one would then be "two - ten - one" and so on. Thirty would be "three - ten" all the way to ninety nine which would be "nine - ten - nine." So with that in mind,

let's see how good you are with numbers. Kirin, why don't you give us some numbers in Chinese, and we'll try to figure out what they are in English.

Kirin: 好. 三十二.

Adam: Did you figure that out? It was... thirty two.

Kirin: 七十六.

Adam: Seventy six.

Kirin: 十三.

Adam: Thirteen.

Kirin: 五十.

Adam: Fifty.

Kirin: 四十四.

Adam: Forty four.

Alright, I think we get the hang of that. Now as I said before, practicing numbers is a good way to practice tones, especially with the last example. It is very easy to confuse four (四) with ten (十) so practicing numbers should help you distinguish between the different tones.

We'll now use our knowledge of numbers to tell the different months of the year, starting with January...

Kirin: 一月.

Adam: January in Chinese is the number "one" followed by the character for month 月 which is a fourth tone.

Kirin: 一月.

Adam: Similarly, February is...

Kirin: 二月.

Adam: Or “two - month.” Try to figure out the rest of the months in the same way.

March.

Kirin: 三月.

Adam: April.

Kirin: 四月.

Adam: May.

Kirin: 五月.

Adam: June.

Kirin: 六月.

Adam: July.

Kirin: 七月.

Adam: August.

Kirin: 八月.

Adam: September.

Kirin: 九月.

Adam: October.

Kirin: 十月.

Adam: November.

Kirin: 十一月.

Adam: December.

Kirin: 十二月.

Adam: Easy, wasn't that? Let's now learn how to say dates. How would you say August 10th?

Kirin: 八月十號.

Adam: So the literal translation for that is “eight month ten number.” The word for number is 號 which uses a fourth tone. Don't confuse that with 好 which is a third tone. Sometimes, instead of 號, you can also use 日 meaning “day.” So Kirin maybe you can give us both versions. Let's try another date: March 16.

Kirin: 三月十六號. 三月十六日.

Adam: December 2nd.

Kirin: 十二月二號. 十二月二日.

Adam: July 30th.

Kirin: 七月三十號. 七月三十日.

Adam: September 14th.

Kirin: 九月十四號. 九月十四日.

Adam: Ok, so hopefully you'll see how it works.

Let's now do years. Years are quite simple in that you just sound out each digit of the year separately. So for example, that's do the year 2006 which is:

Kirin: 二〇〇六年.

Adam: The last character 年 is a second tone and means year. So basically we're saying “two zero zero six year.”

Kirin: 二〇〇六年.

Adam: The word for “today” is 今天 which has two first tones. 今 refers to the “current” while 天 means “day.”

Kirin: 今天.

Adam: We can also say...

Kirin: 今年

Adam: ...which would mean “this year.”

“Tomorrow” is ...

Kirin: 明天

Adam: which is a second tone 明 followed again by 天. Interestingly, 明 means “bright” so the literal translation for “tomorrow” is “bright day.” Very optimistic indeed. Similarly, “next year” would be...

Kirin: 明年.

Adam: “Yesterday” and “last year” are however different. We say...

Kirin: 昨天.

Adam: For yesterday. A second tone 昨 followed by 天. For “last year” though we say...

Kirin: 去年.

Adam: A fourth tone followed by 年. Let’s look at those words again. Today.

Kirin: 今天.

Adam: This year.

Kirin: 今年.

Adam: Tomorrow.

Kirin: 明天.

Adam: Next year.

Kirin: 明年.

Adam: Yesterday.

Kirin: 昨天.

Adam: Last year.

Kirin: 去年.

Adam: So how would you say “Today is August 10, 2006”?

Kirin: 今天是二〇〇六年八月十號.

Adam: Notice that in Chinese you start with the year first and work your way down. In Chinese, dates always go from largest to smallest.

Kirin: 今天是二〇〇六年八月十號.

Adam: This gives us a nice tie in to birthdays. Let’s look at the word for birthday.

Kirin: 生日.

Adam: So that’s a first tone and a fourth tone. 生 literally means “born” while 日 has a meaning of “sun” or “day” as we saw before. So in this case we get the meaning “born day” or “birthday!” So knowing that, how would you say: “My birthday is on February 15, 1980?”

Kirin: 我的生日是一九八〇年二月十五號.

Adam: So let’s see if you can practice this with your own birthday. Premium subscribers have an assignment for this lesson in the exercises section, which is to tell us what your birthday is. You can record your own answer and then submit it to us. One of our teachers will then correct it and send you a reply. So try that out and practice on your own. Since we’ll be building on this in future lessons. So hope you’ll join us again.

Kirin: 再見!