

Complete Lesson Transcript – Lesson 7 [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 7 of our podcast series teaching Mandarin Chinese. Please refer to our website ChineseLearnOnline.com to see detailed transcripts of this and our previous lessons. Today, we are going to continue with introductions and try to use some of the numbers we learned on our last lesson. We will start today with the phrase...

Kirin: 請問

Adam: There are two characters there. The first one is

Kirin: 請.

Adam: ...which has a third tone and means “please.” The second character is

Kirin: 問

Adam: ...which has a fourth tone and means “to ask.” So together that gives us

Kirin: 請問.

Adam: “Please ask” – which is actually a polite request you make before you ask a question. It is used in situations where you want to excuse yourself for asking the question. It is rhetorical, so you include it as a part of your question. So for example, if we wanted to ask someone what their name was we could ask...

Kirin: 請問，你叫什麼名字？

請問，你叫什麼名字？

Adam: So we have some new characters there to look at. We know the first few words “Can I please ask you a question?” That is followed by 你叫. 叫 is a fourth tone and means “to call” or “to be called.” This is followed by 什麼. That’s a second tone and a neutral tone. It’s a question word meaning “what.” The last word is 名字. That’s a second

tone and a neutral tone, which means “name.” So putting all these together gives us “You called what name?”

Kirin: 請問, 你叫什麼名字?

Adam: Or... “What’s your name?”

Kirin: 你叫什麼名字?

Adam: Another way to ask this question would be to ask:

Kirin: 請問, 你的名字是...

Adam: “Excuse me, can I ask, your name is...?”

Kirin: 請問, 你的名字是...

Adam: Great, and how do we answer that?

Kirin: 我叫 Kirin.

Adam: Alright, easy enough. “I called Kirin.” Or in my case

Kirin: 我叫 Adam.

Adam: Another way to say this which we have seen before would be:

Kirin: 我是 Kirin.

Adam: “I am Kirin.” For me of course I would say...

Kirin: 我是 Adam.

Adam: Now that’s used for the first name. In Chinese your last name is very important so they have a different way of asking you for that.

Kirin: 您貴姓?

Adam: Now sometimes you’ll hear 您 rather than 你. 您 is a second tone and is a much more polite form that you may use when you want to show respect towards someone. 貴姓 is two fourth tones. The first character means “expensive” or in this case “honorable”

and the second character means your “surname” or your “last name.” So together that becomes “What is your surname?”

Kirin: 您貴姓?

Adam: If you want to give out your full name, how would you do that, Kirin?

Kirin: 我姓楊, 叫 Kirin.

Adam: So she first gave us her last name “Yang” followed by her first name “Kirin.”

Kirin: 我姓楊, 叫 Kirin.

Adam: “I last name Yang, called Kirin” would be the literal translation.

To address someone you can use a title such as Mister, Mrs. or Ms. For “Mister” we would say...

Kirin: 先生.

Adam: Separately, these two characters are both first tones, but together you often hear it as a first tone and a neutral tone. 先 actually means “first,” while 生 means “born.” You may remember it from 生日 which means... “birthday.”

Kirin: 先生.

Adam: For a young woman you can address her as...

Kirin: 小姐.

Adam: That’s two third tones.

Kirin: 小姐.

Adam: This is equivalent to “Miss” in English although it’s in a much more broader sense. It literally means “little sister.” 小 means “little.” And do you remember the word for “big”? We taught it a few lessons ago. It’s 大. So now you know 大 and 小. “Big” and “small.” So getting back to our example here, if you aren’t sure if a woman is married or not, it is much safer to use:

Kirin: 小姐.

Adam: For a married woman we can refer to her as:

Kirin: 太太.

Adam: This is two fourth tones. But again, sometimes the second character becomes a neutral tone.

Kirin: 太太.

Adam: Now 太 on its own means “too much of something.” So I’ll leave it to you to figure out why 太太 refers to a married woman. If you don’t know someone’s name, it is perfectly acceptable to address them as 先生 for men and 小姐 or 太太 for women.

If you do know their last name you can attach it to the front. So Kirin here would be 楊小姐.

Alright, so the next question we may ask someone is “how old they are.” How do we ask this?

Kirin: 你幾歲?

Adam: So we have “you,” followed by a third tone 幾 and a fourth tone 歲.

Kirin: 你幾歲?

Adam: 幾 means “how many” and 歲 means “years of age.” So literally that becomes “You how many years of age,” or as in English “How old are you?”

Kirin: 你幾歲?

Adam: Like in English, this question is mainly used to ask younger people their age. Now how would we answer that?

Kirin: 我二十五歲.

Adam: So hopefully you can figure that out as “I twenty five years of age,” or “I am twenty five.”

Kirin: 我二十五歲.

Adam: So practice this with your own age.

We can use some of this vocabulary to come up with another question.

Kirin: 今天是幾號?

Adam: Now we know what these words mean. Let's see if we can piece together the meaning of this question. "Today is how many number?"

Kirin: 今天是幾號?

Adam: This is the form we use to ask "What is today's date?" So again?

Kirin: 今天是幾號?

Adam: Great, now how would we answer that? Let's say we wanted to say "Today is August 11." How would we say that?

Kirin: 今天是八月十一號.

Adam: Here's another question we could also ask using some of the vocabulary we have learned:

Kirin: 你的生日是幾號?

Adam: So hopefully you could figure out that as "When is your birthday?"

Kirin: 你的生日是幾號?

Adam: So let's give an answer to that.

Kirin: 我的生日是五月二號.

Adam: Ah. So everyone don't forget. Kirin's birthday is on May 2nd.

Kirin: 我的生日是五月二號.

Adam: Let's take a break to review some of this vocabulary by looking at a dialogue between two people introducing themselves. There will be a quiz afterwards to test your understanding so pay close attention

Kirin: 請問，你貴姓?

Raphael: 我姓賴，叫 Raphael.

Kirin: 賴先生，你好.

Raphael: 你好.

Kirin: 請問，你幾歲?

Raphael: 我二十五歲.

Kirin: 你的生日是幾號?

Raphael: 我的生日是七月十八號.

Adam: Ok, now let's listen to each sentence of the dialogue again, a little slower. Repeat it if you have to and check your understanding.

Kirin: 請問，你貴姓?

Raphael: 我姓賴，叫 Raphael.

Kirin: 賴先生，你好.

Raphael: 你好.

Kirin: 請問，你幾歲?

Raphael: 我二十五歲.

Kirin: 你的生日是幾號?

Raphael: 我的生日是七月十八號.

Adam: Alright, quiz time. Here's a few questions to test your understanding. Try to come up with the answer first before listening to the answer.

What's the man's first name?

Raphael: 我姓賴，叫 Raphael.

Adam: So hopefully you understand that his first name was Raphael.

What was his last name? The answer was... Lai.

How old is he?

Raphael: 我二十五歲.

Adam: The answer is... 25.

And when is his birthday?

Raphael: 我的生日是七月十八號.

Adam: The answer is... July 18.

So look at that, seven lessons in, and you can already understand a conversation like this.
Give yourselves a pat on the back!

We'll be back with more in lesson eight. In the meantime, premium subscribers can check all the notes and additional resource we have on our website ChineseLearnOnline.com. So you can review all the vocabulary we've learned so far before our next lesson. See you next time.

Kirin: 再見!