

Complete Lesson Transcript – Lesson 9 [Pinyin]

Hosts: Adam Menon / Kirin Yang

Adam: Hello and welcome to lesson 9 of ChineseLearnOnline.com. I'm Adam.

Kirin: [Dàjiā hǎo](#) . [Wǒ shì Kirin](#) .

Adam: Today we're looking at money. It's always nice when you get to speak some Chinese when shopping, especially if you want to be able to bargain with someone. This could be used when traveling in China itself or hey even in your local Chinatown.

We'll begin today's lesson with asking how much something is. Now normally if you're out shopping and looking at something you have to first point out what it is you're interested in, so let's first learn how to say "this one." How do we say that, Kirin?

Kirin: [Zhège](#) .

Adam: So that's a fourth tone and a neutral tone.

Kirin: [Zhège](#) .

Adam: So that means "this one." Now what if we wanted to say "that one"?

Kirin: [Nàge](#) .

Adam: So again a fourth tone and a neutral tone.

Kirin: [Nàge](#) .

Adam: So before you ask how much something is you first identify it using [zhège](#) or [nàge](#) . How do you then ask "How much is it?"

Kirin: [Duōshǎo qián](#) ?

Adam: So that's a first tone [duō](#) , a third tone [shǎo](#) and a second tone [qián](#) .

Kirin: [Duōshǎo qián](#) ?

Adam: Great, so let's break down the meanings there. [duō](#) means "many" while [shǎo](#) means "a few." In Chinese you'll see many times that when two opposites are put together, it forms a question. We'll explore this more later. The last character [qián](#) means

“money.” So by asking “many few money,” you are basically asking “how much money” or “how much” something is.

Kirin: *Duōshǎo qián ?*

Adam: So if I ask how much something is and it's fifty dollars, how would they say that?

Kirin: *Zhège wǔshí kuài qián .*

Adam: So that's saying “This one is fifty dollars money.”

Kirin: *Zhège wǔshí kuài qián .*

Adam: The only new word there is *kuài* which is a fourth tone and is a generic unit of currency. That's followed by *qián* which is just specifying that it's money we are talking about. Since that may be obvious you may just hear:

Kirin: *Zhège wǔshí kuài .*

Adam: Now in some places instead of *kuài* you may hear another word.

Kirin: *Yuán .*

Adam: That's a second tone and specifically refers to dollars.

Kirin: *Yuán .*

Adam: Now you may recall a couple of lessons ago we introduced a question word – *jǐ* ?. Do you remember what “*jǐ* ?” means? It means... “how many?” So sometimes, usually for smaller amounts, instead of saying...

Kirin: *Duōshǎo qián ?*

Adam: ... we can say:

Kirin: *Jǐ kuài qián ?*

Adam: So literally that's “How many dollars of money?”

Kirin: *Jǐ kuài qián ?*

Adam: Now this seems to be a good time to introduce another concept in Chinese – and that's measure words. Now there are actually two of them in this sentence:

Kirin: Zhège jǐ kuài qián ?

Adam: Now, **qián** is money and it is measured in **kuài** – which just means “a unit of money” – doesn’t matter what currency. Different objects use different measure words.

So in this case, money is measured in **kuài** . Generic objects are measured in **ge** . So when we say **zhège** , we haven’t specified what it is we’re talking about so we just use **zhège** , or “this object.” Over time, as we introduce new vocabulary you’ll start to see new measure words being introduced as well. Now since we’re talking about money, let’s introduce the some different forms of currency. We’ll start with US dollars – which is...

Kirin: Měijīn .

Adam: So that’s the **měi** from **Měiguó** or America followed by a first tone **jīn** which refers to the money they use in America.

Kirin: Měijīn .

Adam: Another currency that may be worth noticing is the type used in China which is...

Kirin: Rénmínbì .

Adam: Now **rén** we’ve seen before – that’s a second tone and means... “person or people.” **Mín** is also a second tone and in this context with the **rén** means “citizen.” The last word is a fourth tone **bì** that refers to money. So putting them together we get “the people’s money” or the money used in the People’s Republic of China.

Kirin: Rénmínbì .

Adam: **Bì** is commonly used when referring to the currencies of many countries. On our website, in the premium section of this lesson, you will see a list of currencies from some other countries too.

So let’s have a test for our listeners now. Imagine you’re out shopping for souvenirs and you ask the clerk what the price is. So first, how do you ask “How much is this one?”

Kirin: Zhège duōshǎo qián ?

Adam: Alright, so here are some prices. Let’s see if you can figure out how much they are.

Kirin: Liǎng bǎi wǔshí kuài .

Adam: So that is...250 dollars. Let's try another one.

Kirin: Qī qiān sān bǎi èr shí kuài .

Adam: 7320 dollars. Here's one more...

Kirin: Jiǔ shí yī kuài .

Adam: So that's...91 dollars. Great, so continuing with this scenario, the clerk has just told you the price and you think it's too expensive. How would you let them know that?

Kirin: Tài guì le !

Adam: So there are three characters there – the first two are fourth tones and the last word is a neutral tone.

Kirin: Tài guì le !

Adam: We've actually seen all three words before. We saw tài in Tàitai . Do you remember what “tài ” means? It means... “too much of something.” We also saw guì in “Nín guì xìng ?” Guì means “honorable” or in this case “expensive.” The last character le is just a particle used in expressions of this nature. We will study it in more detail in future lessons. So again – “Too expensive!”

Kirin: Tài guì le !

Adam: You can see more examples using the same construct in the premium section of this lesson found on our website. Now how about if you wanted a cheaper price, how would you ask for that?

Kirin: Kěyǐ piányí yīdiǎn ma ?

Adam: Wow, so a few new words in there. Let's break it down for you. We know it's a question because of the ma at the end. The first part is kěyǐ which is two third tones and that means “to be allowed to do something.” Since this is a question you are asking if something is permissible. This is followed by piányí which is two second tones and that means “cheap.” We then have yīdiǎn which we've seen before. Do you remember what “yīdiǎn ” means? It means... “a little.” So putting that all together gives us “Can cheaper a little?” or “Can you make this a little cheaper?”

Kirin: Kěyǐ piányí yīdiǎn ma ?

Adam: Let's continue this dialogue. You've found what you want, you like the price so you want to let the clerk know that you want to purchase it. For this, we need to know the verb "want" which is...

Kirin: Yào .

Adam: That's a fourth tone.

Kirin: Yào .

Adam: So knowing that, we have all the vocabulary necessary to say "I want this one." Can you figure out how to say that?

Kirin: Wǒ yào zhège .

Adam: I hope you got that right.

Kirin: Wǒ yào zhège .

Adam: Now what if you wanted to say "I want two of them." How would you say that?

Kirin: Wǒ yào liǎng ge .

Adam: So we use liǎng meaning "two" followed by ge which is the generic measure word so liǎng ge means "two of something." Similarly how would you say "five of something?"

Kirin: Wǔ gè .

Adam: And so on. You are now ready to pay for your purchase. For that, you'll need to give the cashier some money, so first let's look at the verb "to give."

Kirin: Gěi .

Adam: That's a third tone.

Kirin: Gěi .

Adam: So if the item is a hundred dollars, you need to say "Give you 100 dollars."

Kirin: Gěi nǐ yī bǎi kuài .

Adam: Note that in many cases you can leave out pronouns when they are obvious, so in this case you wouldn't need to say "I am giving you money" since the "I" is implied.

Kirin: [Gěi nǐ yī bǎi kuài](#) .

Adam: I hope you got all that. That brings us to the end of lesson 9. Don't forget to take a look at the extra notes and activities to available to premium subscribers on our website ChineseLearnOnline.com for a more detailed explanation of today's lesson plus more review questions and supplemental vocabulary to get you through to the next lesson. We'll continue Lesson 10 where we left off today so be sure to join us then.

Kirin: [Zàijiàn](#) .