

Complete Lesson Transcript – Lesson 14 [Simplified]

Hosts: Adam Menon / Kirin Yang

Adam: Hello and welcome to lesson 14 of the ChineseLearnOnline.com podcast series teaching Mandarin Chinese. I'm your host, Adam.

Kirin: 大家好. 我是 Kirin.

Adam: This is an interactive course that takes you through all the basics of learning Chinese one lesson at a time. You can maximize your learning experience by going through all the review tools on our website. You can also follow along with the included lesson summary by viewing lyrics on your MP3 player if it's capable of doing so.

We will begin today's lesson by listening to a conversation. There are actually two parts to it, so we'll listen to the first part today and then finish off in our next lesson. The dialogue uses vocabulary that has previously been taught in earlier lessons while introducing some new characters along the way. So let's listen in, shall we?

Cindy: 好久不见. 你今天有空吗? 我要去吃饭.

Yann: 我现在很忙. 明天可以吗?

Adam: Let's now listen to the dialogue at slow down speed. Please repeat after Kirin.

Kirin: 好久不见. 你今天有空吗? 我要去吃饭.
我现在很忙. 明天可以吗?

Adam: Ok, so let's break this down and analyze it starting with the first sentence.

Kirin: 好久不见.

Adam: Now the first character 好 is very versatile indeed. We've already seen it used in the context of "good" and "ok." Here it's being used in the context of "so" or "very."

Kirin: 好久不见.

Adam: 久 is a third tone and means "a long time." It is usually preceded with a 很 or 好 meaning "very" so that gives us "very long time." We then have 不见. We actually know both these characters. 不 means "not" and 见 is the same 见 from the 再见 which we tell you at the end of every show. Do you remember what "见" literally means? It means "to see someone" or "meet someone." So 再见 means "see you again." So what do you think

“好久不见” means? This one is easy because the literal translation is the same as the proper translation – “Long time no see.”

Kirin: 好久不见.

Adam: From what I hear, the English phrase “Long time no see” may have been imported directly from Chinese – so there you go. It’s as popular a phrase in Chinese as it is in English, so you’ll hear that often when you haven’t seen someone for a while.

Kirin: 好久不见.

Adam: Let’s look at the next line that was said.

Kirin: 你今天有空吗?

Adam: Now we’ve seen most of these characters before, so this is good review. We have 你, which means “you” followed by 今天. Do you remember what “今天” means? It means... “today.” We then have the verb 有. What does the verb 有 mean? It’s the verb... “to have.” We then have a new character 空. 空 is a fourth tone and means “free time.” The last character is 吗 we know means that this is a question. So putting those characters together gives us “you today have free time?” In other words, “Do you have any free time today?”

Kirin: 你今天有空吗?

Adam: Note the word order there. It’s very important in Chinese. The time goes after the subject. You will see more examples of this in the notes page of this lesson on our website. So take a look at that. Let’s now look at the next line of the dialogue.

Kirin: 我要去吃饭.

Adam: Alright, let’s study this one. 我要– we have seen the verb 要 before. Do you remember what it means? It’s the verb “to want.” So that gives us “I want.” We then have a new verb 去. That’s a fourth tone and is the verb “to go.” So that gives us “I want to go 吃饭.” That’s a first tone 吃 and a fourth tone 饭. 吃饭. 吃 is the verb “to eat.” Now many verbs in Chinese don’t make any sense unless they have an object in front of them. 吃 is one of these verbs. In English we can say “I want to go eat.” In Chinese you have to specify what it is you’re going to eat – even if you don’t know, so the common word that goes with 吃 is 饭. 饭 literally means “rice” but when put together with 吃, 吃饭 just means “to eat a “meal,” not necessarily “rice.” Although, usually that is the case.

Kirin: 我要去吃饭.

Adam: “I want to go out and eat.” Now let’s look at the reply.

Kirin: 我现在很忙.

Adam: Ok, so there's a couple of new words there to look at. We first have 我 which of course means "I." That's followed by 现在. That's two fourth tones and means "right now." That's followed by 很忙. We know that 很 means "very." 忙 is a second tone and means "busy." So that gives us "I now very busy" or "I am very busy right now."

Kirin: 我现在很忙.

Adam: Notice that the time word follows the subject again. So we say "I now", rather than "now I". It's very important to follow this order in Chinese. The next line of the dialogue is:

Kirin: 明天可以吗?

Adam: So hopefully you can figure this out. We've learned all these words before. We earlier saw 今天 which means "today." What does "明天" mean? That means... "tomorrow." That's followed by 可以吗? That's a question asking for permission. So in other words "Is tomorrow ok for you?"

Kirin: 明天可以吗?

Adam: And... that's the end of the dialogue, well for this lesson anyway. So yes, we've left you with a cliffhanger. I'm sure you will all be on the edge of your seats waiting for our next lesson to find out if she accepts this invitation or not. For now though, I'll get Kirin to read each line of the dialogue again. Please repeat the lines after her.

Kirin: 好久不见. 你今天有空吗? 我要去吃饭.
我现在很忙. 明天可以吗?

Adam: And let's listen to the dialogue again at normal speed.

Cindy: 好久不见. 你今天有空吗? 我要去吃饭.

Yann: 我现在很忙. 明天可以吗?

Adam: Ok, so that's it for today's lesson. As I said before, we'll continue this dialogue in our next lesson, so please join us for that. In the meantime, be sure to do all the exercises available to premium subscribers on the vocabulary page for this lesson on our website ChineseLearnOnline.com. See you next time!

Kirin: 再见.