

## Lesson 4: Time and Date

### Dialogue 1

#### Yale Romanization

**John:** wei<sup>6</sup> Mary, nei<sup>5</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> m<sup>4</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> hai<sup>2</sup> Ga<sup>1</sup>Jau<sup>1</sup> cheut<sup>1</sup>sai<sup>3</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** m<sup>4</sup> hai<sup>6</sup>, ngo<sup>5</sup> hai<sup>2</sup> Nau<sup>2</sup>Yeuk<sup>3</sup> cheut<sup>1</sup>sai<sup>3</sup>.

**John:** o<sup>6</sup>, nei<sup>5</sup> gei<sup>2</sup>si<sup>4</sup> saang<sup>1</sup>yat<sup>4</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** sap<sup>6</sup>yat<sup>1</sup>yut<sup>6</sup> ya<sup>6</sup>saam<sup>1</sup>hou<sup>6</sup>.

**John:** yi<sup>2</sup>! jik<sup>1</sup>hai<sup>6</sup> Gam<sup>2</sup>Yan<sup>1</sup>Jit<sup>3</sup>!

**Mary:** mou<sup>5</sup> cho<sup>3</sup>! nei<sup>5</sup> lei<sup>4</sup> m<sup>4</sup> lei<sup>4</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> go<sup>3</sup> pa<sup>1</sup>ti<sup>4</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**John:** gang<sup>2</sup>hai<sup>6</sup> lei<sup>4</sup> la<sup>1</sup>! gei<sup>2</sup>dim<sup>2</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** ye<sup>6</sup>maan<sup>5</sup> gau<sup>2</sup>dim<sup>2</sup>.

**John:** jou<sup>6</sup>me<sup>1</sup> gam<sup>3</sup> ye<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** yan<sup>1</sup>wai<sup>6</sup> gau<sup>2</sup>dim<sup>2</sup> ji<sup>1</sup>chin<sup>4</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> di<sup>1</sup> pang<sup>4</sup>yau<sup>5</sup> m<sup>4</sup> dak<sup>1</sup>haan<sup>4</sup>.

*Note: hai<sup>6</sup> m<sup>4</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> is often contracted to hai<sup>6</sup> mai<sup>6</sup> in conversation*

#### English Translation

**John:** Hey Mary, were you born in California?

**Mary:** Nope, I was born in New York.

**John:** Oh, when's your birthday?

**Mary:** November 23rd

**John:** Hey! That would be Thanksgiving!

**Mary:** That's right! Are you coming to my party?

**John:** Of course I'm coming! What time?

**Mary:** At night, 9pm

**John:** How come so late?

**Mary:** Because before 9pm, my friends won't be free

### Vocabulary

<u>Yale Romanization</u>	<u>Part of Speech</u>	<u>English Meaning</u>
cheut <sup>1</sup> sai <sup>3</sup>	V	to be born
gei <sup>2</sup> si <sup>4</sup>	QW	when?
yut <sup>6</sup>	N	month
hou <sup>6</sup>	N	day; number
yi <sup>2</sup> !	Interjection	Oh, hey!
jik <sup>1</sup> hai <sup>6</sup>	Expression	would be; that is
Gam <sup>2</sup> Yan <sup>1</sup> Jit <sup>3</sup>	Proper Noun	Thanksgiving
mou <sup>5</sup> cho <sup>3</sup>	Expression	Right on!
lei <sup>4</sup>	V	to come
pa <sup>1</sup> ti <sup>4</sup>	N	party
gang <sup>2</sup> hai <sup>6</sup>	Adv	of course
la <sup>1</sup>	Part.	[used to lighten tone]
ye <sup>6</sup> maan <sup>5</sup>	Time Word	at night
jou <sup>6</sup> me <sup>1</sup> (me <sup>1</sup> =mat <sup>1</sup> ye <sup>5</sup> )	QW	how come; why?
gam <sup>3</sup> + Adj.	Adv.	so; that (ex: so late)
...ji <sup>1</sup> chin <sup>4</sup>	Time Word	before...
ye <sup>3</sup>	Adj.	late at night
dak <sup>1</sup> haan <sup>4</sup>	Adj.	to be free, not busy

### Supplementary Vocabulary

<u>Yale Romanization</u>	<u>Part of Speech</u>	<u>English Meaning</u>
jou <sup>2</sup>	Adj.	early
chi <sup>4</sup>	Adj.	late
jeun <sup>2</sup> si <sup>4</sup>	Adj.	on time
chi <sup>4</sup> dou <sup>3</sup>	V	to arrive late

### Dialogue 2 ::David runs into Mary as she goes to class::

#### Yale Romanization

**Mary:** wei<sup>6</sup> David, nei<sup>5</sup> heui<sup>3</sup> bin<sup>1</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**David:** ngo<sup>5</sup> heui<sup>3</sup> sik<sup>6</sup> faan<sup>6</sup>. nei<sup>5</sup> sik<sup>6</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>, daan<sup>3</sup>hai<sup>6</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> ngaam<sup>1</sup> ngaam<sup>1</sup>

#### English Translation

**Mary:** Hey David, where are you going?

**David:** I'm going to eat. Have you eaten yet?

**Mary:** I also haven't, but I just drank a milk tea. I

yam<sup>2</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> (yat<sup>1</sup>) bui<sup>1</sup> naai<sup>5</sup> cha<sup>4</sup>. ngo<sup>5</sup> gam<sup>1</sup> yat<sup>6</sup>  
yat<sup>1</sup> dim<sup>2</sup> bun<sup>3</sup> sin<sup>1</sup> lok<sup>6</sup> tong<sup>4</sup>. dou<sup>3</sup> si<sup>4</sup> sin<sup>1</sup> sik<sup>6</sup> faan<sup>6</sup>.

**David:** o<sup>6</sup>... hai<sup>6</sup> wo<sup>3</sup>, nei<sup>5</sup> jou<sup>6</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> fan<sup>6</sup> jung<sup>1</sup> man<sup>4</sup>  
gung<sup>1</sup> fo<sup>3</sup> mei<sup>3</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** jou<sup>6</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> la<sup>3</sup>, nei<sup>5</sup> ne<sup>1</sup>?

**David:** mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>, ni<sup>1</sup> fan<sup>6</sup> chiu<sup>1</sup> naan<sup>4</sup> jou<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>! dim<sup>2</sup>  
syun<sup>3</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** yu<sup>4</sup> gwo<sup>2</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> gam<sup>1</sup> maan<sup>1</sup> yau<sup>5</sup> si<sup>4</sup> gaan<sup>3</sup>  
ge<sup>3</sup> wa<sup>2</sup>, ngo<sup>5</sup> jau<sup>6</sup> bong<sup>1</sup> nei<sup>5</sup> la<sup>1</sup>!

**David:** hou<sup>2</sup>! m<sup>4</sup> goi<sup>1</sup> saai<sup>3</sup>!

**Mary:** m<sup>4</sup> sai<sup>2</sup> haak<sup>3</sup> hei<sup>3</sup>!

won't get off class until 1:30 today. I won't eat till then.

**David:** Oh...oh right, have you finished your Chinese homework?

**Mary:** I've done it, you?

**David:** Not yet, this one is really hard to do. What do I do?

**Mary:** If I have time tonight, then I'll help you!

**David:** Great, thanks a lot!

**Mary:** Don't mention it!

### Vocabulary

#### Yale Romanization

#### Part of Speech

#### English Meaning

heui <sup>3</sup>	V	to go
sik <sup>6</sup> faan <sup>6</sup>	V	to eat (lit. eat rice)
-jo <sup>2</sup>	Part.	[indicates completed action]
mei <sup>6</sup>	Neg.	not yet
ngaam <sup>1</sup> ngaam <sup>1</sup>	Adv	just a moment ago
yam <sup>2</sup>	V	to drink
bui <sup>1</sup>	MW	a cup of
naai <sup>5</sup> cha <sup>4</sup>	N	milk tea
g am <sup>1</sup> yat <sup>6</sup>	Time Word	today
sin <sup>1</sup> (ji <sup>3</sup> )	Adv.	not until; only then...
lok <sup>6</sup> tong <sup>4</sup>	VO (Verb + Object)	to get off class
dou <sup>3</sup> si <sup>4</sup>	Time Word/Adv	when the time comes
hai <sup>6</sup> wo <sup>3</sup>	Expression	"Oh right!"
jou <sup>6</sup>	V	to do
fan <sup>6</sup>	MW	measure for copies of documents (report, newspaper, homework)
jung <sup>1</sup> man <sup>4</sup>	N	Chinese language
gung <sup>1</sup> fo <sup>3</sup>	N	homework
la <sup>3</sup> (sometimes laak <sup>3</sup> )	Part.	[indicates affirmation; new situation; current relevance]
chiu <sup>1</sup>	Adv.	extremely (very colloq.)
dim <sup>2</sup> syun <sup>3</sup> a <sup>3</sup> ?	Expression	"What do I do?"
yu <sup>4</sup> gwo <sup>2</sup> ... (ge <sup>3</sup> wa <sup>2</sup> )	Conj.	If...
jau <sup>6</sup>	Conj./Adv	then, therefore
bong <sup>1</sup>	V	to help
m <sup>4</sup> goi <sup>1</sup>	V	to thank
saai <sup>3</sup>		[indicates quantity 'all' and used for emphasis]
m <sup>4</sup> sai <sup>2</sup>	Part.	no need to
haak <sup>3</sup> hei <sup>3</sup>	Neg.	to be courteous; polite;

### Supplementary Vocabulary

#### Yale Romanization

#### Part of Speech

#### English Meaning

seung <sup>5</sup> tong <sup>4</sup>	VO	to go to class
faan <sup>1</sup> hok <sup>6</sup>	VO	to go to school
faan <sup>1</sup> gung <sup>1</sup>	VO	to go to work
faan <sup>1</sup> uk <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>2</sup>	VO	to return/go home
fong <sup>3</sup> hok <sup>6</sup>	VO	to get out of class/school
fong <sup>3</sup> gung <sup>1</sup>	VO	to get off work

jau2	V	to run, to leave
gaan1	MW	measure for certain buildings and structures
uk1 (MW: gaan1)	N	house
fong2 (MW: gaan1)	N	room
hok6haau6 (MW: gaan1)	N	school

### Dialogue 3

#### Yale Romanization

**Mary:** wei<sup>6</sup> Susan, ni<sup>1</sup>paai<sup>4</sup> hou<sup>2</sup> mong<sup>4</sup> a<sup>4</sup>?

**Susan:** gang<sup>2</sup>hai<sup>6</sup> la<sup>1</sup>! seng<sup>4</sup>yat<sup>6</sup> dou<sup>1</sup> yiu<sup>3</sup> heui<sup>3</sup> gin<sup>3</sup>gung<sup>1</sup>.

**Mary:** gam<sup>3</sup> faai<sup>3</sup>?! nei<sup>5</sup> gei<sup>2</sup>si<sup>4</sup> bat<sup>1</sup>yip<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Susan:** gam<sup>1</sup>nin<sup>2</sup> ng<sup>5</sup>yut<sup>6</sup>fan<sup>6</sup>. nei<sup>5</sup> ne<sup>1</sup>? nei<sup>5</sup> bat<sup>1</sup>yip<sup>6</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>.

**Susan:** dim<sup>2</sup>gaai<sup>2</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Mary:** yan<sup>1</sup>wai<sup>6</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> seung<sup>2</sup> ha<sup>6</sup> hok<sup>6</sup>kei<sup>4</sup> heui<sup>3</sup> Heung<sup>1</sup>Gong<sup>2</sup> lau<sup>4</sup>hok<sup>6</sup>. gam<sup>2</sup>... nei<sup>5</sup> bat<sup>1</sup>yip<sup>6</sup> ji<sup>1</sup>hau<sup>4</sup> seung<sup>2</sup> jou<sup>6</sup> di<sup>1</sup> mat<sup>1</sup>ye<sup>5</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?

**Susan:** ngo<sup>5</sup> seung<sup>5</sup> wan<sup>2</sup> fan<sup>6</sup> gung<sup>1</sup> jou<sup>6</sup>, daan<sup>6</sup>hai<sup>6</sup> yi<sup>4</sup>ga<sup>1</sup> hou<sup>2</sup> naan<sup>4</sup> wan<sup>2</sup> ye<sup>5</sup> jou<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>.

#### English Translation

**Mary:** Hey Susan, you really busy recently?

**Susan:** Of course, I always have to go to job interviews.

**Mary:** So fast?! When are you graduating?

**Susan:** In May of this year. How about you? Are you graduating yet?

**Mary:** Not yet.

**Susan:** Why?

**Mary:** Because next semester I want to go abroad to Hong Kong. So...after you graduate, what do you want to do?

**Susan:** I want to find a job to do, but now it's hard to find things (a job) to do.

### Vocabulary

Yale Romanization	Part of Speech	English Meaning
mong4	Adj	busy
seng4yat6	Adv	all the time; all day
gin3gung1	VO	to go to an interview
faai3	Adj	fast
gei2si4	QW	when?
bat1yip6	V	to graduate
gam1nin2	Time Word	this year
# + yut6fan6	Time Word	in the month of...
seung2	V	to want to
lau4hok6	VO	to study abroad
hok6kei4	N	school semester
...ji1hau6	Time Word	after...
jou6	V	to do; to make
jou6 (jo2) di1 mat1ye5 a3?	Expression	what do (did) you do?
wan2	V	to find
fan6	MW	(same as in Dialogue 2)
gung1	N	work; job
naan4	Adj	difficult
ye5	N	things
jou6ye5	VO	to work ( <i>lit. to do things</i> )

### Grammar

#### 1) Emphatic Sentence *hai<sup>6</sup>...ge<sup>3</sup>*

In Lesson 1, it was mentioned that the verb *hai<sup>6</sup>* 'to be' only connects nouns. However, there exists a special usage of the verb *hai<sup>6</sup>*, which places emphasis on the clause following *hai<sup>6</sup>*. (*We actually used it once in Lesson 2*). It is used in situations where there is some sort of assumption or supposition. In English, this translates to something like "*it is the case that...*" or "*it is that...*"

ngo<sup>5</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> m<sup>4</sup> jung<sup>1</sup>yi<sup>3</sup> yam<sup>2</sup> be<sup>1</sup>jau<sup>2</sup> ge<sup>3</sup>. (yam<sup>2</sup> 'to drink'; be<sup>1</sup>jau<sup>2</sup> 'beer')  
I don't like to drink beer.

In yes/no question form, the construction is:

hai<sup>6</sup> m<sup>4</sup> hai<sup>6</sup>...ga<sup>3</sup>/a<sup>3</sup>? (ga<sup>3</sup>: ge<sup>3</sup> + a<sup>3</sup>)

nei<sup>5</sup> ting<sup>1</sup>yat<sup>6</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> m<sup>4</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> heui<sup>3</sup> Nau<sup>2</sup>Yeuk<sup>3</sup> ga<sup>3</sup>/a<sup>3</sup>?  
Are you going to New York tomorrow?

Note: Sometimes, a<sup>3</sup> is used as the ending particle in both the statement and question form of this construction.

ngo<sup>5</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> jang<sup>1</sup> keui<sup>5</sup> a<sup>3</sup>! gam<sup>2</sup> yau<sup>6</sup> dim<sup>2</sup> a<sup>1</sup>? (jang<sup>1</sup> 'to hate')  
I do hate him! So what?

## 2) Time Words

Time words (or time adverbs) in Cantonese generally go at the beginning of the sentence/clause or directly after the subject. They indicate the time at which the situation or event in the sentence is occurring.

sing<sup>1</sup>kei<sup>4</sup>yat<sup>1</sup> yiu<sup>3</sup> haau<sup>2</sup>si<sup>3</sup>. Monday, ( I ) have to take a test.

keui<sup>5</sup> kam<sup>4</sup>yat<sup>6</sup> sik<sup>6</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> ng<sup>5</sup> go<sup>3</sup> chaang<sup>2</sup>. (chaang<sup>2</sup>: orange)  
He ate 5 oranges yesterday.

## 3) Time Word Pattern: ...ji<sup>1</sup>chin<sup>4</sup> / ...ji<sup>1</sup>hau<sup>6</sup> "Before... / After..."

Placing ji<sup>1</sup>chin<sup>4</sup>/ji<sup>1</sup>hau<sup>6</sup> after a verb phrase or after a noun/time phrase gives the meaning 'before.../after ...'

Examples:

sik<sup>6</sup>faan<sup>6</sup> ji<sup>1</sup>chin<sup>4</sup> 'before eating'                      ng<sup>5</sup>yut<sup>6</sup> ji<sup>1</sup>hau<sup>6</sup> 'after May'  
saam<sup>1</sup>dim<sup>2</sup> ji<sup>1</sup>chin<sup>4</sup> 'before 3 o'clock'  
bat<sup>1</sup>yip<sup>6</sup> ji<sup>1</sup>hau<sup>6</sup> 'after graduation'

## 4) Dealing with Tense

In English, verbs must agree with their tense, in which information such as past, present, or future is indicated. In Cantonese, **no** such system of tense agreement exists with verbs. Instead Cantonese a different system called *aspect* exists, which does not deal with concepts such as past, present, or future, but instead utilizes certain aspectual particles along with time words to express the time and status of events and situations. Note the following examples:

ngo<sup>5</sup> yi<sup>4</sup>ga<sup>1</sup> da<sup>2</sup> mong<sup>5</sup>kau<sup>4</sup>                      Now I play tennis.

ngo<sup>5</sup> yi<sup>5</sup>chin<sup>5</sup> da<sup>2</sup> paang<sup>5</sup>kau<sup>4</sup> (yi<sup>5</sup>chin<sup>4</sup>: before; in the past)  
In the past, I played baseball.

ngo<sup>5</sup> yi<sup>5</sup>chin<sup>5</sup> da<sup>2</sup> gwo<sup>3</sup> paang<sup>5</sup>kau<sup>4</sup> (gwo<sup>3</sup>: [experiential particle])  
I have played baseball before (meaning had the experience of)

ngo<sup>5</sup> kam<sup>4</sup>yat<sup>6</sup> da<sup>2</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> mong<sup>5</sup>kau<sup>4</sup> (jo<sup>2</sup>: [aspectual particle])  
I played tennis yesterday. (Meaning the action was completed)

### 5) Aspect Particle *jo*<sup>2</sup> (completed action)

The particle *jo*<sup>2</sup> is typically used to indicate that some action occurring in the past has completed, but it is by no means equivalent to the English simple past tense, though sometimes it translates that way. In several cases, it is rather close to the English perfect (has V-ed), because it involves time up to the present.

Statements with *jo*<sup>2</sup> have the following pattern:

*Subject + Verb + jo*<sup>2</sup> + *Object*

Examples:

keui<sup>5</sup> sik<sup>6</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> faan<sup>6</sup> la<sup>3</sup>. 'He has eaten dinner'

ngo<sup>5</sup> yam<sup>2</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> saam<sup>1</sup> bui<sup>1</sup> ga<sup>3</sup> fe<sup>1</sup>. 'I drank 3 cups of coffee'

ngo<sup>5</sup> hai<sup>2</sup> Paak<sup>3</sup> Hak<sup>1</sup> Loi<sup>4</sup> duk<sup>6</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> leung<sup>5</sup> nin<sup>4</sup> syu<sup>1</sup>.  
'I have studied at Berkeley for two years.'

nei<sup>5</sup> duk<sup>6</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> gei<sup>2</sup> do<sup>1</sup> nin<sup>4</sup> jung<sup>1</sup> man<sup>4</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?  
'How many years of Chinese have you taken?'

To ask a yes/no question with *jo*<sup>2</sup> the pattern is:

*Subject + Verb + jo*<sup>2</sup> + *Object* + mei<sup>6</sup>

Example:

nei<sup>3</sup> sik<sup>6</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> faan<sup>6</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>? 'Have you eaten dinner?'

nei<sup>3</sup> faan<sup>1</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> uk<sup>1</sup> kei<sup>2</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>? 'Have you gone home yet?'

In the response, the object may be omitted, for example:

sik<sup>6</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> la<sup>3</sup> 'I've eaten'      faan<sup>1</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> la<sup>3</sup> 'I've returned'

### 6) Negative *mei*<sup>6</sup> 'not yet'

The verbal negative *mei*<sup>6</sup> simply means that an action or event has not taken place yet. As such, it suggests such an action or event may occur. *mei*<sup>6</sup> can be reinforced with the adverb *jung*<sup>6</sup> 'still' for emphasis, but it is not needed for the basic negation.

Examples:

ngo<sup>5</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> sik<sup>6</sup> faan<sup>6</sup> 'I have not eaten yet'

keui<sup>5</sup> jung<sup>6</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> seung<sup>5</sup> tong<sup>4</sup>! 'He still hasn't gone to class yet'

### 7) Particle *la*<sup>3</sup> (*laak*<sup>3</sup>) (affirmation, new situation, current relevance)

The sentence-final particle *la*<sup>3</sup> is used quite often in various contexts. When used in a response to a "*jo*<sup>2</sup>...*mei*<sup>6</sup>?" question it adds a sense of affirmation and finality.

Example:

nei<sup>5</sup> bat<sup>1</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> yip<sup>6</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>? 'Have you graduated yet?'

bat<sup>1</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> (yip<sup>6</sup>) la<sup>3</sup> 'I've graduated'

keui<sup>5</sup> jau<sup>2</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> mei<sup>6</sup> a<sup>3</sup>? 'Did he leave yet?'

jau<sup>2</sup> *jo*<sup>2</sup> la<sup>3</sup> 'Yes, he left'

In other situations, the sentence with *la*<sup>3</sup> indicates that the statement is a new situation or what is mentioned has some current relevance.

chaai<sup>1</sup>yan<sup>4</sup> lei<sup>4</sup> *la*<sup>3</sup>! 'The cops are coming!'

ngo<sup>5</sup> m<sup>4</sup> jou<sup>6</sup> go<sup>2</sup> fan<sup>6</sup> gung<sup>1</sup> *la*<sup>3</sup>! 'I'm not working at that job anymore!'

ngo<sup>5</sup> duk<sup>2</sup>jo<sup>2</sup> gei<sup>2</sup>sap<sup>6</sup> chi<sup>3</sup> *la*<sup>3</sup>! (*gei<sup>2</sup>sap<sup>6</sup>*: several tens; *chi<sup>3</sup>*: MW times)  
'I've read it dozens of times! (*Let's say someone says you've never read it.*)'

### 8) Question Words Overview

Here's a list of question words:

bin <sup>1</sup> go <sup>3</sup>	'who?'	gei <sup>2</sup> si <sup>4</sup>	'when?'
bin <sup>1</sup> dou <sup>6</sup>	'where?'	gei <sup>2</sup> dim <sup>2</sup> (jung <sup>2</sup> )	'what time?'
bin <sup>1</sup> + MW	'which...?'	gei <sup>2</sup> do <sup>1</sup> + MW	'how many...?'
mat <sup>1</sup> ye <sup>5</sup>	'what?'	gei <sup>2</sup> + adj.	'how (adj.)...'
dim <sup>2</sup> yeung <sup>2</sup> + V	'how?'	jou <sup>6</sup> me <sup>1</sup>	'how could it be...?, how is it that...?'
dim <sup>2</sup> gaai <sup>2</sup>	'why?'		
dim <sup>2</sup>	'how?'		

### 9) Sentences with Several Verbs

In Cantonese, you can link several verbs together in sequence to form sentences, which in English would have to be done with helping words and particles. Part of this is due to the flexibility in function of certain words like *heui*<sup>3</sup> 'to go' and *lei*<sup>4</sup> 'to come'. The following somewhat nonsensical sentence illustrates this point; verbs are italicized.

keui<sup>5</sup> *heui*<sup>3</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> wan<sup>2</sup> yan<sup>4</sup> lei<sup>4</sup> ni<sup>1</sup>dou<sup>6</sup> bong<sup>1</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> lam<sup>2</sup> baan<sup>6</sup>faat<sup>6</sup> *heui*<sup>3</sup> wan<sup>2</sup> chin<sup>2</sup>.  
he- go- [part.]- find- person- come- here- help- me- think- method- go- find money.  
He went to find someone to come here and help me think of a way to go and make money.

### 10) Verbs: *seung*<sup>2</sup> + verb 'to want to' and *yiui*<sup>3</sup> + verb 'to need to; to have to'

This pattern has the English meanings above only when patterned with verbs phrases. When patterned with nouns or whole sentences, they have different meanings, so pay attention to the context. The following examples show how to indicate *wants* and *needs*.

Example:

ngo<sup>5</sup> *seung*<sup>2</sup> sei<sup>3</sup>dim<sup>2</sup> sik<sup>6</sup>faan<sup>6</sup>.  
'I want to eat at 4 o'clock.'

ngo<sup>5</sup> *yiui*<sup>3</sup> sei<sup>3</sup>dim<sup>2</sup> sik<sup>6</sup>faan<sup>6</sup>.  
'I have to eat at 4 o'clock.'

nei<sup>5</sup> dim<sup>2</sup>gaai<sup>2</sup> *seung*<sup>2</sup> duk<sup>6</sup> jung<sup>1</sup>man<sup>4</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?  
'Why do you want to study Chinese?'

nei<sup>5</sup> dim<sup>2</sup>gaai<sup>2</sup> *yiui*<sup>3</sup> duk<sup>6</sup> jung<sup>1</sup>man<sup>4</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?  
'Why do you have to study Chinese?'

### 11) Possessives in Cantonese

There are several ways to form the possessive in Cantonese. Depending on the situation, more than one form may be allowed.

#### a) Possessor + Measure Word + Possessed

This is the preferred colloquial construction used for nouns that have associated measure words

Examples:

ngo<sup>5</sup> go<sup>3</sup> pang<sup>4</sup> yau<sup>5</sup>      keui<sup>5</sup> jek<sup>3</sup> gau<sup>2</sup>      nei<sup>5</sup> gaan<sup>1</sup> uk<sup>1</sup>  
 'My friend'                              'His dog'                              'Your house'

To indicate plural number, the measure word *di1* can be used.

ngo<sup>5</sup> di<sup>1</sup> pang<sup>4</sup> yau<sup>5</sup>      nei<sup>5</sup> dei<sup>6</sup> di<sup>1</sup> man<sup>6</sup> tai<sup>4</sup>  
 'my friends'                              'your (pl.) questions/problems'

b) Possessor + *ge3* + Possessed

This construction tends to be used in formal contexts (i.e. news broadcast), or when there is no associated measure word.

Mei<sup>5</sup> Gwok<sup>3</sup> ge<sup>3</sup> ging<sup>1</sup> jai<sup>3</sup>      ni<sup>1</sup> dou<sup>6</sup> ge<sup>3</sup> fuk<sup>6</sup> mou<sup>6</sup> (also *di1*)  
 'America's economy'                              'the service here'

However, when you use *ge3* with nouns that definitely have a measure word, the number becomes ambiguous and it could sometimes sound more awkward.

Example:

ngo<sup>5</sup> ge<sup>3</sup> pang<sup>4</sup> yau<sup>5</sup> (in this case, *go3* or *di1* is preferred)  
 'my friend(s)'

Mei<sup>5</sup> Gwok<sup>3</sup> ge<sup>3</sup> daai<sup>6</sup> hok<sup>6</sup> (both *ge3* and *di1* are acceptable)  
 'America's schools'

nei<sup>5</sup> ge<sup>3</sup> gai<sup>3</sup> waak<sup>6</sup> (also *go3*)  
 'your plan'

Note: In cases where the possessor is a pronoun and the possessed is a kinship term or closely linked to the possessor, the possessive marker may be omitted, for example: ngo<sup>5</sup> ma<sup>4</sup> ma<sup>1</sup> 'my mother', nei<sup>5</sup> uk<sup>1</sup> kei<sup>2</sup> 'your home'

c) Possessor + *ni1/go2* + Measure Word + Possessed

The *ni1/go2* can be added to further specify the possessed item.

Examples:

ngo<sup>5</sup> ni<sup>1</sup> fan<sup>6</sup> gung<sup>1</sup> nei<sup>5</sup> go<sup>2</sup> gaan<sup>1</sup> uk<sup>1</sup>  
 'this job of mine' 'that house of yours'

**12) Adverb *sin1(ji3)* 'not until.../only then...'**

The adverb *sin1(ji3)* actually has a meaning of 'only then...', but 'not until', despite being a negative, is the closest equivalent in English. This is just one of the meanings of *sin1(ji3)*.

Examples:

ngo<sup>5</sup> bat<sup>1</sup> jo<sup>2</sup> yip<sup>6</sup> sin<sup>1</sup> ji<sup>3</sup> wan<sup>2</sup> gung<sup>1</sup>.  
 'I won't look for work until after I graduate.'

keui<sup>5</sup> ng<sup>5</sup> dim<sup>2</sup> sin<sup>1</sup> dou<sup>3</sup>.                              'He isn't arriving until 5 o'clock.'

It can also be used to emphasize a contrast.

Examples:

keui<sup>5</sup> sin<sup>1</sup>ji<sup>3</sup> hai<sup>6</sup> go<sup>3</sup> hou<sup>2</sup> hok<sup>6</sup>saang<sup>1</sup>  
 'Now, he is (what you would call) a good student'

ngo<sup>5</sup> sin<sup>1</sup>ji<sup>3</sup> m<sup>4</sup> jung<sup>1</sup>yi<sup>3</sup>. 'Now, I for one, don't like it'

### 13) Adverb *gam*<sup>3</sup> + Adj 'so...; that...'

The adverb *gam*<sup>3</sup> patterns with an adjective to give emphasis to it.

Examples:

*gam*<sup>3</sup> gwai<sup>3</sup> *gam*<sup>3</sup> naan<sup>4</sup>jou<sup>6</sup> *gam*<sup>3</sup> hou<sup>2</sup> a<sup>4</sup>?  
 'so expensive' 'so difficult to do' 'that great?'

yu<sup>6</sup>gwo<sup>2</sup> keui<sup>3</sup> *gam*<sup>3</sup> lek<sup>1</sup>, jou<sup>6</sup>me<sup>1</sup> keui<sup>3</sup> m<sup>4</sup>sik<sup>1</sup> jou<sup>6</sup> ga<sup>6</sup>? (*sik*<sup>1</sup>: to know)  
 'if he's that smart, how come he doesn't know how to do it?'

### 14) Pattern: *yu*<sup>4</sup>*gwo*<sup>2</sup>... (*ge*<sup>3</sup>*wa*<sup>2</sup>), (subject) + *jau*<sup>6</sup> + ... 'if...,then...'

In a statement, the *yu*<sup>4</sup>*gwo*<sup>2</sup> introduces the condition, and then the *jau*<sup>6</sup> is used in the second clause to indicate the consequence or result. *jau*<sup>6</sup> can be omitted depending on context.

Examples:

*yu*<sup>4</sup>*gwo*<sup>2</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> yau<sup>5</sup> si<sup>4</sup>gaan<sup>3</sup>, *jau*<sup>6</sup> lei<sup>4</sup> nei<sup>5</sup> go<sup>3</sup> saang<sup>1</sup>yat<sup>6</sup> pa<sup>1</sup>ta<sup>1</sup> (la<sup>1</sup>!)  
 'If I have time, then I'll come to your birthday party'

*yu*<sup>4</sup>*gwo*<sup>2</sup> m<sup>4</sup>sik<sup>1</sup> jou<sup>6</sup> ni<sup>1</sup> fan<sup>6</sup> gung<sup>1</sup>fo<sup>3</sup>, *jau*<sup>6</sup> dim<sup>2</sup>syun<sup>3</sup> a<sup>3</sup>?  
 'If I don't know how to do this homework, then what am I going to do?'

*yu*<sup>4</sup>*gwo*<sup>2</sup> ngo<sup>5</sup> gam<sup>1</sup>nin<sup>2</sup> bat<sup>1</sup>yip<sup>6</sup> ge<sup>3</sup>wa<sup>2</sup>, yi<sup>4</sup>ga<sup>1</sup> *jau*<sup>6</sup> yiu<sup>3</sup> heui<sup>3</sup> wan<sup>2</sup>gung<sup>1</sup>  
 ge<sup>3</sup> la<sup>3</sup>.  
 'If I graduate this year, then I'll have to go find a job now'



## Time and Date Overview

### Time

Times on the Hour are simply #Hr + dim (or dim<sup>2</sup> jung<sup>1</sup>). Hours + Minutes are expressed as #Hr + dim<sup>2</sup> + #Min + fan<sup>1</sup>.

Example:

1:14           yat<sup>1</sup> dim<sup>2</sup> sap<sup>6</sup> sei<sup>3</sup> fan<sup>1</sup>  
 11:00          sap<sup>6</sup> yat<sup>1</sup> dim<sup>2</sup> [jung<sup>1</sup>]  
 2:30           leung<sup>5</sup> dim<sup>2</sup> bun<sup>3</sup>

Other ways of Expressing Minutes:

Daap<sup>6</sup> + Clock Number

Example: daap<sup>6</sup> 7 = 35 fan<sup>1</sup>

Clock Number + go<sup>3</sup> ji<sup>3</sup>

Example: 3 go<sup>3</sup> ji<sup>3</sup> = 15 fan<sup>1</sup>

### Specifying Times of Days

To specify time of day, place the following time words before the time

morning	jiu <sup>1</sup> jou <sup>2</sup> , yat <sup>1</sup> jou <sup>2</sup> , jou <sup>2</sup> seung <sup>6</sup> (fml.)	afternoon	aan <sup>3</sup> jau <sup>3</sup> , ha <sup>6</sup> ng <sup>5</sup> (fml.)
evening, night	ye <sup>6</sup> maan <sup>5</sup> , mann <sup>5</sup> seung <sup>6</sup> (fml.)	midnight	bun <sup>3</sup> ye <sup>2</sup>
		early morning	ling <sup>4</sup> san <sup>4</sup>

### Day (Relative)

today	gam <sup>1</sup> yat <sup>6</sup>	yesterday	kam <sup>4</sup> /cham <sup>4</sup> yat <sup>6</sup>
tomorrow	ting <sup>1</sup> yat <sup>6</sup>	the day before	chin <sup>4</sup> yat <sup>6</sup>
the day after	hau <sup>6</sup> yat <sup>6</sup>	yesterday	

### Abbreviated Forms

<u>Time Of Day</u>	<u>Yesterday</u>	<u>Today</u>	<u>Tomorrow</u>
Morning	kam <sup>4</sup> yat <sup>6</sup> jiu <sup>1</sup>	gam <sup>1</sup> jiu <sup>1</sup>	ting <sup>1</sup> jiu <sup>1</sup>
Afternoon	kam <sup>4</sup> yat <sup>6</sup> aan <sup>3</sup> jau <sup>3</sup>	gam <sup>1</sup> yat <sup>6</sup> aan <sup>3</sup> jau <sup>3</sup>	ting <sup>1</sup> yat <sup>6</sup> aan <sup>3</sup> jau <sup>3</sup>
Night	kam <sup>4</sup> maan <sup>5</sup>	gam <sup>1</sup> maan <sup>5</sup>	ting <sup>1</sup> maan <sup>5</sup>

### Days of the Week

The days of the week are expressed with lai<sup>5</sup> baai<sup>3</sup> or sing<sup>1</sup> kei<sup>4</sup>, both expressions are used interchangeably in conversation.

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup> yat <sup>1</sup> lai <sup>5</sup> baai <sup>3</sup> yat <sup>1</sup>	sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup> yi <sup>6</sup> lai <sup>5</sup> baai <sup>3</sup> yi <sup>6</sup>	sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup> saam <sup>3</sup> lai <sup>5</sup> baai <sup>3</sup> saam <sup>3</sup>	sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup> sei <sup>3</sup> lai <sup>5</sup> baai <sup>3</sup> sei <sup>3</sup>	sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup> ng <sup>5</sup> lai <sup>5</sup> baai <sup>3</sup> ng <sup>5</sup>	sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup> luk <sup>6</sup> lai <sup>5</sup> baai <sup>3</sup> luk <sup>6</sup>	sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup> yat <sup>6</sup> lai <sup>5</sup> baai <sup>3</sup> yat <sup>6</sup>

### Month

Months are expressed by Number + Yut<sup>6</sup>

January	yat <sup>1</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>	July	chat <sup>1</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
February	yi <sup>6</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>	August	baat <sup>3</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
March	saam <sup>3</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>	September	gau <sup>2</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
April	sei <sup>3</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>	October	sap <sup>6</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
May	ng <sup>5</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>	November	sap <sup>6</sup> yat <sup>1</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
June	luk <sup>6</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>	December	sap <sup>6</sup> yi <sup>6</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>

### Date

Dates are expressed by Number + hou<sup>6</sup> (formal: number + yat<sup>6</sup>)

Example: 10/31           sap<sup>6</sup> yut<sup>6</sup> saam<sup>1</sup> sap<sup>6</sup> yat<sup>1</sup> hou<sup>6</sup>

**Year**

Years are expressed by Number + nin<sup>4</sup>

When reading the years, read each number individually, unlike counting

Example:     1996   yat<sup>1</sup> gau<sup>2</sup> gau<sup>2</sup> luk<sup>6</sup> nin<sup>4</sup>  
               2008   yi<sup>6</sup> ling<sup>4</sup> ling<sup>4</sup> baat<sup>3</sup> nin<sup>4</sup>

**Weeks and Months (Relative)**

This is expressed by *seung<sup>6</sup> go<sup>3</sup>* (last) and *ha<sup>6</sup> go<sup>3</sup>* (next)

this week	ni <sup>1</sup> go <sup>3</sup> sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup>	this month	ni <sup>1</sup> go <sup>3</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
	gam <sup>1</sup> go <sup>3</sup> sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup>		gam <sup>1</sup> go <sup>3</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
last week	seung <sup>6</sup> go <sup>3</sup> sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup>	last month	seung <sup>6</sup> go <sup>3</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>
next week	ha <sup>6</sup> go <sup>3</sup> sing <sup>1</sup> kei <sup>4</sup>	next month	ha <sup>6</sup> go <sup>3</sup> yut <sup>6</sup>

Beginning of the month	~ yat <sup>6</sup> tau <sup>4</sup> ~ yut <sup>6</sup> cho <sup>1</sup>	Middle of the month	~ yut <sup>6</sup> jung <sup>1</sup>	End of the month	~ yut <sup>6</sup> mei <sup>5</sup> ~ yut <sup>6</sup> dai <sup>2</sup>
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**Years (Relative)**

this year	gam <sup>1</sup> nin <sup>2</sup>	next year	cheut <sup>1</sup> nin <sup>2</sup>
last year	gau <sup>6</sup> nin <sup>2</sup>		ha <sup>6</sup> nin <sup>2</sup>
	seung <sup>6</sup> nin <sup>2</sup>		ming <sup>4</sup> nin <sup>4</sup> (fml)
	heui <sup>3</sup> nin <sup>4</sup> (fml)	year after next	hau <sup>6</sup> nin <sup>2</sup>
year before last	chin <sup>2</sup> nin <sup>2</sup>		

**More Complex Examples (note the order in Chinese)**

Wed, 9/20/2006:     yi<sup>6</sup> ling<sup>4</sup> ling<sup>4</sup> luk<sup>6</sup> nin<sup>4</sup>, gau<sup>2</sup> yut<sup>6</sup> yi<sup>6</sup> sap<sup>6</sup> hou<sup>6</sup>, sing<sup>4</sup> kei<sup>4</sup> saam<sup>3</sup>

End of August of Next Year:     cheut<sup>1</sup> nin<sup>2</sup> baat<sup>3</sup> yut<sup>6</sup> mei<sup>5</sup>

Next Thursday at 8:20 PM:     ha<sup>6</sup> go<sup>3</sup> sing<sup>1</sup> kei<sup>4</sup> sei<sup>3</sup>, ye<sup>6</sup> maan<sup>5</sup> baat<sup>3</sup> dim<sup>2</sup> yi<sup>6</sup> sap<sup>6</sup> fan<sup>1</sup>