

## ⇒ How to Start a Conversation in Mandarin Chinese

### PHRASES FOR STARTING A CONVERSATION WITH A CHINESE FRIEND

#### #1

zěn me yàng ?

怎么样?

How's it going?/What's up?

#### #2

nǐ qù nǎ er ?

你去哪儿?

Where are you going?

#### #3

nǐ chī guò le ma ?

你吃过了吗?

"Have you eaten?" (used in a similar way as "How are you?" in English)

#### #4

hǎo jiǔ bú jiàn !

好久不见!

Long time no see!

## #5

zuì jìn nǐ zài zuò shén me ?

最近你在做什么？

What have you been up to lately?

## #6

jiā rén dōu hǎo ba ?

家人都好吧？

How's your family?

## #7

nǐ hái zài xīng bā kè gōng zuò ma ?

你还在星巴克工作吗？

Are you still working at Starbucks?

## #8

shēn tǐ zěn me yàng ?

身体怎么样？

How are you feeling? lit. "How's your body?" (commonly used with elder people)

## PHRASES FOR STARTING A CONVERSATION WITH A CHINESE COWORKER

### #1

nǐ máng shén me ne ?

你忙什么呢？

What are you working on?

### #2

nǐ jīn tiān gōng zuò shùn lì ma ?

你今天工作顺利吗？

Is your work “going smoothly” today?

### #3

nǐ yǒu jǐ fēn zhōng de shí jiān ma ?

你有几分钟的时间吗？

Do you have a few minutes?

### #4

qǐng wèn nǐ duì zhè gè yǒu shén me xiǎng fǎ ?

请问你对这个有什么想法？

May I ask for your thoughts/opinion on this?

### #5

nǐ yǒu tīng shuō xīn jīng lǐ lǐ xià zhōu yī kāi shǐ shàng bān ma ?

你有听说新经理下周一开始上班吗？

Did you hear that the new manager starts on Monday?

## #6

nǐ zhè gè zhōu mò dǎ suàn zuò shén me ?

你这个周末打算做什么？

(at the end of the week): Do you have any plans for the weekend?

## #7

nǐ de zhōu mò guò de zěn me yàng ?

你的周末过得怎么样？

(at the beginning of the week): How was your weekend?

## PHRASES FOR STARTING A CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE YOU'VE JUST BEEN INTRODUCED TO IN CHINESE

### #1

xìng huì xìng huì !

幸会幸会!

Pleased to meet you!

### #2

nǐ men liǎ shì zěn yàng rèn shí de ?

你们俩是怎样认识的？

How do you two know each other?

## #3

nǐ shì nǎ lǐ rén ?

你是哪里人？

Where are you from?

## #4

nǐ shì zuò shén me gōng zuò de ?

你是做什么工作的？

What do you do for a living?

## #5

nǐ shì xué shén me de ?

你是学什么的？

What are you studying?

## #6

nǐ zài zhè lǐ gōng zuò duō jiǔ le ?

你在这里工作多久了？

How long have you been working here?

## #7

nǐ zuò yú jiā duō jiǔ le ?

你做瑜伽多久了？

How long have you been doing yoga?

## PHRASES FOR STARTING A CONVERSATION WITH A STRANGER IN CHINESE

### *You're outside...*

#### #1

jīn tiān tiān qì fēi cháng rè !

今天天气非常热！

It's really hot today!

#### #2

tài lěng le !

太冷了！

It's really cold!

#### #3

kàn qǐ lái yào xià yǔ le .

看起来要下雨了。

It looks like it's going to rain.

#### #4

nǐ de xiǎo gǒu zhēn kě ài . tā jiào shén me míng zì ?

你的小狗真可爱。它叫什么名字？

Your dog is so cute! What's its name?

## *You're at a work conference...*

### #5

gāng cái de chéng xiàn fēi cháng hǎo, wǒ xué le hěn duō dōng  
xī . nǐ ne ?

刚才的呈现非常好，我学了很多东西。你呢？

That was a great presentation – I learned a lot. How about you?

### #6

nǐ zài nǎ jiā gōng sī shàng bān ?

你在哪家公司上班？

What company do you work for?

## *You're at a party...*

### #7

nǐ de lián yī qún zhēn piāo liàng !

你的连衣裙真漂亮！

Your dress is really nice!

### #8

nǐ shì shàng hǎi rén ma ?

你是上海人吗？

Are you Shanghainese?

## #9

nǐ shì zěnyàng rènshí xiǎozhāng de ?

你是怎样认识小张的？

How do you know Xiaozhang?

## #10

nǐ chī guò nà xiē jiǎozi ma ? wèidào hǎo jí le !

你吃过那些饺子吗？味道好极了！

Have you tried the dumplings? They're delicious!

## #11

zhè fú huà zhēn yǒu yì sī . nǐ jué de ne ?

这幅画真有意思。你觉得呢？

This is an interesting painting. What do you think of it?

## #12

zhè shǒu gē zhēn hǎo tīng , wǒ xǐ huān jué shì . nǐ ne ?

这首歌真好听，我喜欢爵士。你呢？

This is a great song – I like Jazz. How about you?

## #13

zhè lǐ de kāfēi zěnyàng ?

这里的咖啡怎么样？

How's the coffee here?



## #14

nǐ de nǚ ér zhēn kě ài ! tā duō dà le?

你的女儿真可爱！她多大了？

Your daughter is so lovely! How old is she?

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