**6 Tones of Cantonese**

Cantonese tones are notoriously difficult to learn. But this is actually no more than a myth. No matter what your native language is, with some practices everyone can master them. Besides, Cantonese does not have 13 or 9 tones, but only 6. And you already know the below 4 tones if you can speak English!

Try to say the word 'amazing' with a normal, falling intonation. To Cantonese ears, the three syllables roughly sound like T6 → T1 → T4. If we write the sound of "amazing" in Jyutping, treating it as a three-syllable Cantonese word, it will be like *aa6 mei1 sing4*. As for T2, it sounds just like a question intonation. When you ask a question by raising your intonation, e.g 'See?', 'Yes?', you are doing a T2 already.

As for T3 and T5, which we have not mentioned yet, T3 is halfway between Tone 1 and Tone 6, and T5 is like T2, but it doesn't rise up that high.

Jyutping uses numbers to represent tones on a syllable. The gestures and tone marks (diacritics) used in this picture are additional and supposed to help you get the tones right. They are adopted from <Cantonese for Everyone> and designed by the author Ms Chow Bun Ching.

Sometimes using the wrong tone for a word can cause embarrassing misunderstandings. But most of the time, even if you don't get all the tones right, you will still be understood. Also, people are unlikely to blame a brave Cantonese learner for making mistakes. So, keep calm and start speaking!

You may also find the below video helpful. There is even an interesting “tone song” that you can sing-along!