


Pronunciation Lesson 3

In this lesson, you will learn the following new sounds:

Initials	m, n, ng
Finals	aa, au, eu, iu, ou
Tones	Tone 4 (low falling)

1 ~ Tone 4 (Low Falling)

Tone 4 is the low falling tone. The pitch goes down from the low pitch to even lower.

Tone Number	Tone 4
Tone Name	Low falling
Diagram	High _____ Mid _____ Low _____ 

 **TIPS!** To remember Tone 4 is the falling tone, remember the number *four* sounds like *fall*.



Step 1

 **01** Listen to the syllable si in Tone 4. Pay attention to the pitch.

si4 – si4 – si4 – si4 – si4



Step 2

 **02** Practice saying Tone 4 with the syllable si. Listen and repeat.

si4 – si4 – si4 – si4 – si4

 **TIPS!**


The pitch of si4 is similar to the pitch of the second syllable in the word *juicy*.

 **03** Listen.

juicy cy si4 – juicy cy si4 – juicy cy si4



Practice

 **04** Practice saying Tone 4 with other syllables. Listen and repeat.


1. so4 – so4 – so4
2. ceoi4 – ceoi4 – ceoi4
3. fu4 – fu4 – fu4
4. ke4 – ke4 – ke4
5. pui4 – pui4 – pui4

2 ~ Tone 1 to Tone 4

We have learned the first four tones. Let's revise them together.

Tone Number	Tone 1	Tone 2	Tone 3	Tone 4
Tone Name	High level	Mid rising	Mid level	Low falling
Diagram				

Step 1

 05 Listen to the syllable si in Tone 1 to Tone 4 together. Pay attention to the pitch.

si1

si1 si2

si1 si2 si3

si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4

Step 2

 06 Practice saying the syllable si in Tone 1 to Tone 4. Listen and repeat.


si1

si1 si2

si1 si2 si3

si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4 – si1 si2 si3 si4

Practice

 07 Practice saying Tone 1 to Tone 4 with other syllables. Listen and repeat.

1. tai1 tai2 tai3 tai4 – tai1 tai2 tai3 tai4 – tai1 tai2 tai3 tai4



2. fu1 fu2 fu3 fu4 – fu1 fu2 fu3 fu4 – fu1 fu2 fu3 fu4

3. coi1 coi2 coi3 coi4 – coi1 coi2 coi3 coi4 – coi1 coi2 coi3 coi4

3 ~ The Initial m

 **Step 1**  08 Listen to the initial m.

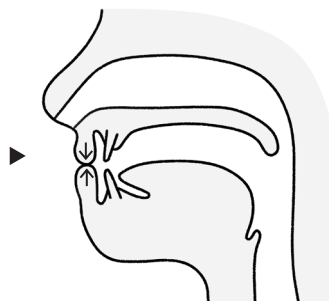
m - m - m - m - m

 **Step 2**  09 Listen and repeat.

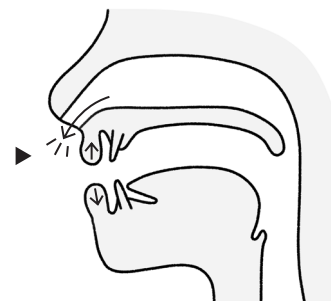
m - m - m - m - m




Open your mouth a little.



Move your two lips toward each other quickly until your mouth is completely closed.



Immediately open your mouth. The initial m is a nasal sound. Let air pass through your nose and come out. You will feel the sound be produced inside your nose.

 **Practice**  10 Practice saying the initial m with different finals. Listen and repeat.

1. m - o - mo4 - mo4 - mo4
2. m - aai - maai4 - maai4 - maai4
3. m - ai - mai4 - mai4 - mai4
4. m - ei - mei4 - mei4 - mei4
5. m - ui - mui4 - mui4 - mui4

 **TIPS!**

Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Initial m	[m]	m as in <i>met</i>

4 ~ The Initial n



Step 1

🔊 11 Listen to the initial n.

n - n - n - n - n



Step 2

🔊 12 Listen and repeat.

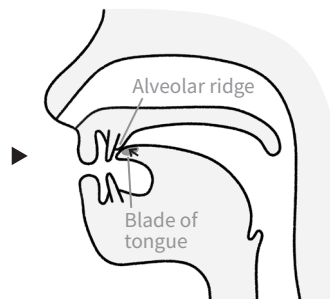
n - n - n - n - n

Blade of tongue
The flat part just behind your tongue tip

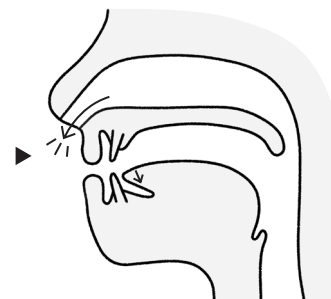
Alveolar ridge
The small ridge just behind your upper front teeth



Open your mouth a little.



Raise the blade of your tongue quickly to your alveolar ridge until they are in contact.



Immediately lower the blade of your tongue. The initial n is a nasal sound. Let air pass through your nose and come out. You will feel the sound be produced inside your nose.



Practice

🔊 13 Practice saying the initial n with different finals. Listen and repeat.

1. n - aa - naa4 - naa4 - naa4
2. n - ai - nai4 - nai4 - nai4
3. n - ei - nei4 - nei4 - nei4

💡 TIPS!

Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Initial n	[n]	n as in <u>net</u>

5 ~ The Initial ng



Step 1

🔊 14 Listen to the initial ng.

ng - ng - ng - ng - ng



Step 2

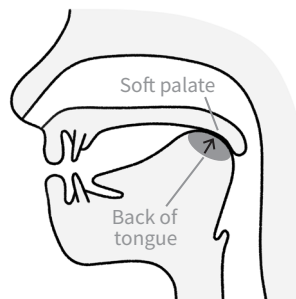
🔊 15 Listen and repeat.

ng - ng - ng - ng - ng

Soft palate
The back of the roof
of your mouth



Open your mouth a little.



Raise the back of your tongue to your soft palate quickly. You will feel your whole tongue move backward.



Immediately lower the back of your tongue by lowering your lower jaw a little. The initial ng is a nasal sound. Let air pass through your nose and come out. You will feel the sound be produced inside your nose.

🔊 TIPS!

If you find it difficult to produce the initial ng, try the following trick. First, say the initial g. Then, add some nasal sound to the initial g and you will get the initial ng.

🔊 16 Listen.

g ng - g ng - g ng



Practice 17 Practice saying the initial ng with different finals. Listen and repeat.

1. ng – aa – ngaa4 – ngaa4 – ngaa4
2. ng – o – ngo4 – ngo4 – ngo4
3. ng – aai – ngaai4 – ngaai4 – ngaai4
4. ng – ai – ngai4 – ngai4 – ngai4
5. ng – oi – ngoi4 – ngoi4 – ngoi4

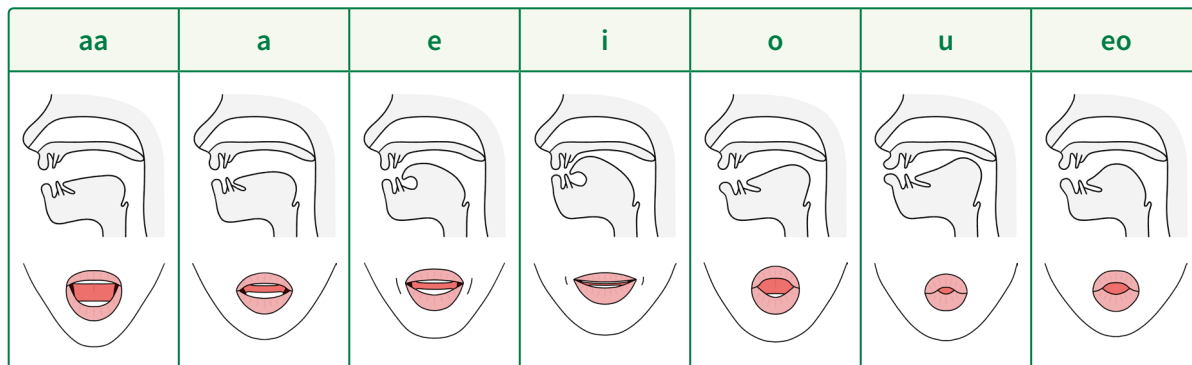
 TIPS!

Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Initial ng	[ŋ]	<i>ng</i> as in <i>si<u>ng</u></i>

6 ~ The Finals Ending with the Vowel u


In the last lesson, we learned that we can combine the vowels below with the vowel i or u to form other finals. Let's first revise the vowels.

 18 Listen and repeat.



In this lesson, we will focus on the finals ending with the vowel u.

Step 1

 19 Listen to the finals ending with the vowel u. Notice the smooth transition from the first vowel to the second vowel.

1. aa - u - aa+u - aau
2. a - u - a+u - au
3. e - u - e+u - eu
4. i - u - i+u - iu
5. o - u - o+u - ou

Step 2

 20 Listen and repeat.



1. aa - u - aa+u - aau
2. a - u - a+u - au
3. e - u - e+u - eu
4. i - u - i+u - iu
5. o - u - o+u - ou

7 ~ The Final aau

The final aau is formed by the vowels aa and u.

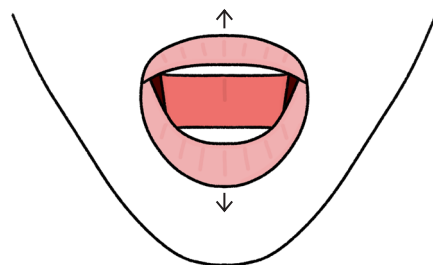
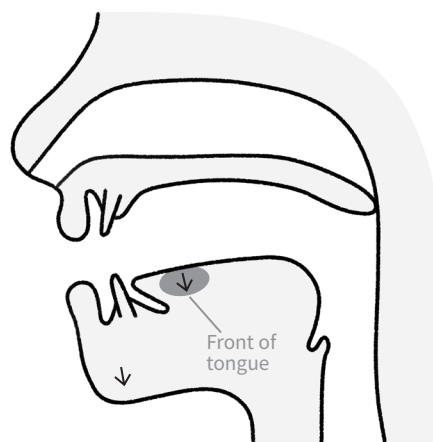
 **Step 1**  21 Listen to the final aau.

aau – aau – aau – aau – aau

 **Step 2**  22 Listen and repeat. Pay attention to your mouth shape. Use a mirror to check it if needed.

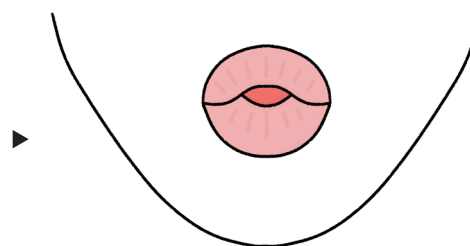
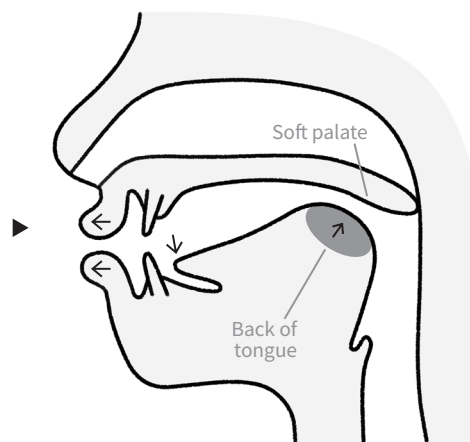
aau – aau – aau – aau – aau

Soft palate
The back of the roof
of your mouth



Tongue Position: Open your mouth widely by lowering your lower jaw. Lower the front of your tongue.

Lip Shape: Relax your lips. Avoid rounding or spreading them.



Tongue Position: Lower the tip of your tongue and raise the back of your tongue toward your soft palate. You will feel your whole tongue move backward.

Lip Shape: Round your lips tightly. Your lips will move forward.



Practice 23 Practice saying the syllables with the final aau. Listen and repeat.

1. p – aau – paau – paau1 paau2 paau3 paau4
2. s – aau – saau – saau1 saau2 saau3 saau4
3. c – aau – caau – caau1 caau2 caau3 caau4

 TIPS!



Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Final aau	[a:u]	ow as in <i>how</i>

8 ~ The Final au

The final au is formed by the vowels a and u.

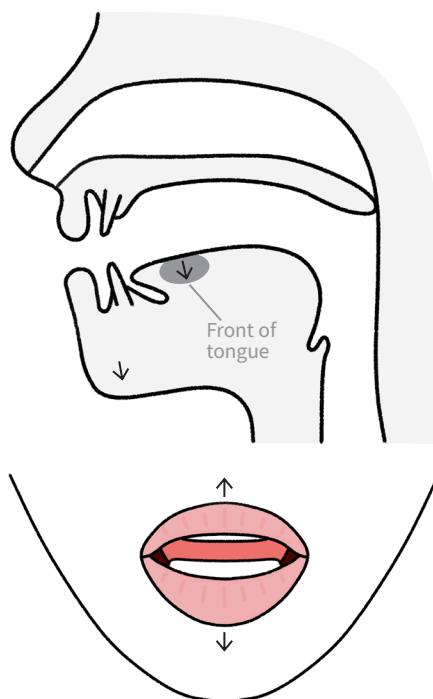
 **Step 1**  24 Listen to the final au.

au – au – au – au – au

 **Step 2**  25 Listen and repeat. Pay attention to your mouth shape. Use a mirror to check it if needed.

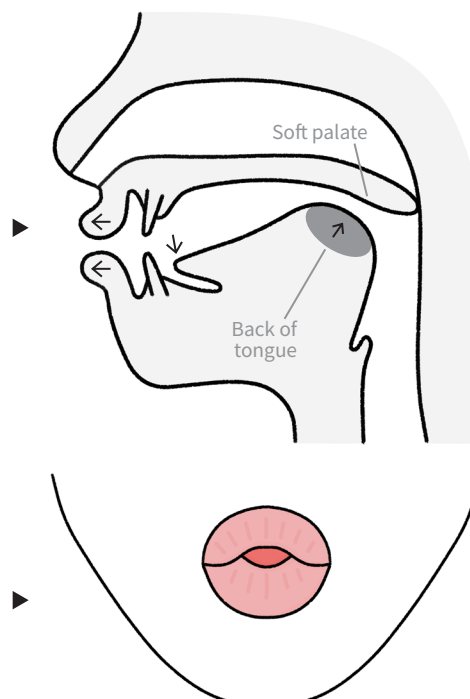
au – au – au – au – au

Soft palate
The back of the roof
of your mouth



Tongue Position: Open your mouth a little by lowering your lower jaw a little.

Lip Shape: Relax your lips. Avoid rounding or spreading them.



Tongue Position: Lower the tip of your tongue and raise the back of your tongue toward your soft palate. You will feel your whole tongue move backward.

Lip Shape: Round your lips tightly. Your lips will move forward.



Practice 26 Practice saying the syllables with the final au. Listen and repeat.

1. t – au – tau – tau1 tau2 tau3 tau4
2. s – au – sau – sau1 sau2 sau3 sau4
3. c – au – cau – cau1 cau2 cau3 cau4

 TIPS!



Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Final au	[əu]	There is no similar English sound for the final au.

9 ~ The Final eu

The final eu is formed by the vowels e and u. Note that the final eu only appears in very few words.

 **Step 1**  27 Listen to the final eu.

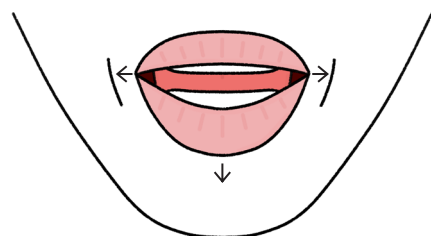
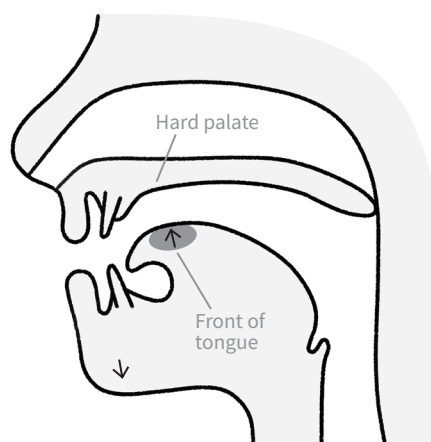
eu – eu – eu – eu – eu

 **Step 2**  28 Listen and repeat. Pay attention to your mouth shape. Use a mirror to check it if needed.

eu – eu – eu – eu – eu

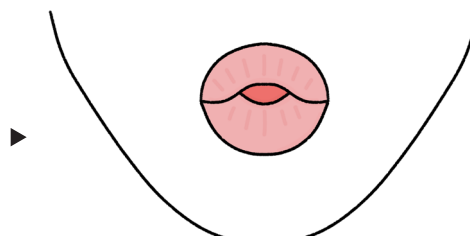
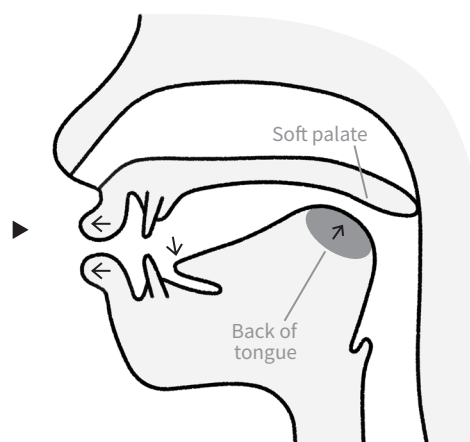
Hard palate
The part of your upper jaw just behind your alveolar ridge

Soft palate
The back of the roof of your mouth



Tongue Position: Open your mouth a little by lowering your lower jaw a little. Raise the front of your tongue toward your hard palate a little.

Lip Shape: Spread your lips a little.



Tongue Position: Lower the tip of your tongue and raise the back of your tongue toward your soft palate. You will feel your whole tongue move backward.

Lip Shape: Round your lips tightly. Your lips will move forward.



Practice

29

Practice saying the syllable with the final eu. Listen and repeat.

m – eu – meu1 – meu1 – meu1

 TIPS!



Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Final eu	[ɛ:u]	There is no similar English sound for the final eu.

10 ~ The Final iu

The final iu is formed by the vowels i and u.

 **Step 1**  30 Listen to the final iu.

iu – iu – iu – iu – iu

 **Step 2**  31 Listen and repeat. Pay attention to your mouth shape. Use a mirror to check it if needed.

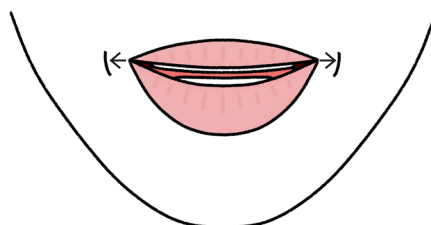
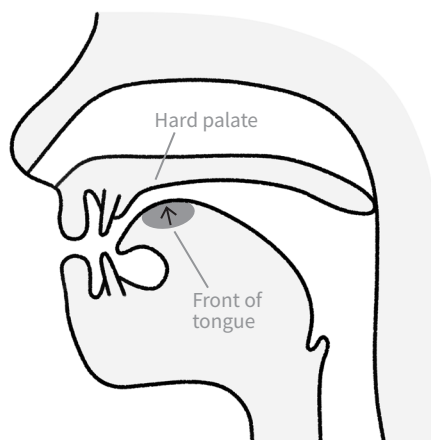
iu – iu – iu – iu – iu

Hard palate

The part of your upper jaw just behind your alveolar ridge

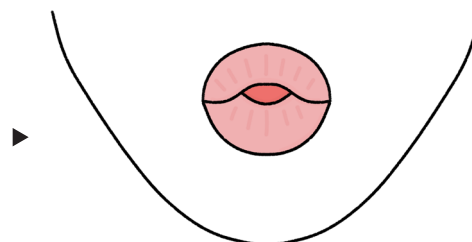
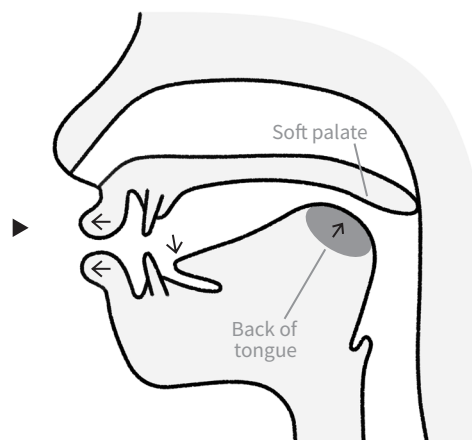
Soft palate

The back of the roof of your mouth



Tongue Position: Raise the front of your tongue toward your hard palate until they are almost in contact. You will feel the left and right sides of your tongue touch your upper teeth.

Lip Shape: Spread your lips.



Tongue Position: Lower the tip of your tongue and raise the back of your tongue toward your soft palate. You will feel your whole tongue move backward.

Lip Shape: Round your lips tightly. Your lips will move forward.



Practice

32

Practice saying the syllables with the final iu. Listen and repeat.

1. s – iu – siu – siu¹ siu² siu³ siu⁴
2. t – iu – tiu – tiu¹ tiu² tiu³ tiu⁴

TIPS!

Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Final iu	[i:u]	<i>u</i> as in <i>human</i>

11 ~ The Final ou

The final ou is formed by the vowels o and u.



Step 1

33 Listen to the final ou.

ou - ou - ou - ou - ou

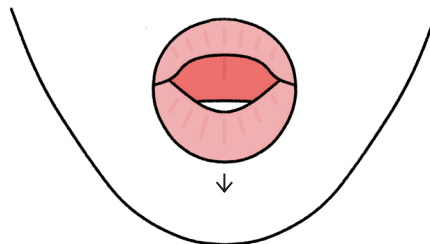
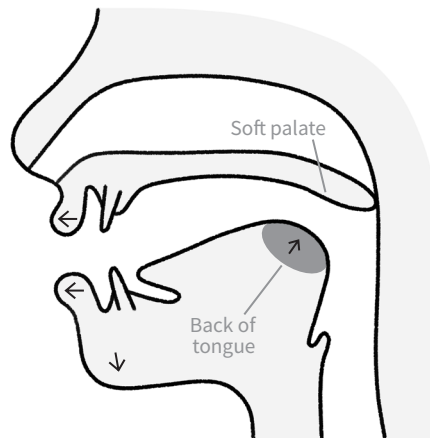


Step 2

34 Listen and repeat. Pay attention to your mouth shape. Use a mirror to check it if needed.

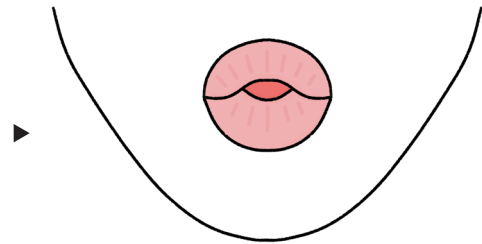
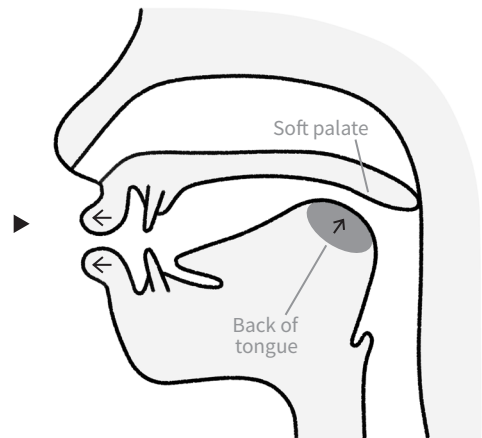
ou - ou - ou - ou - ou

Soft palate
The back of the roof
of your mouth



Tongue Position: Open your mouth a little by lowering your lower jaw a little. Raise the back of your tongue toward your soft palate a little. You will feel your whole tongue move backward a little.

Lip Shape: Round your lips a little. Your lips will move forward a little.



Tongue Position: Move the back of your tongue further toward your soft palate. You will feel your whole tongue move further backward.

Lip Shape: Round your lips tightly. Your lips will move further forward.



Practice 35 Practice saying the syllables with the final ou. Listen and repeat.

1. p – ou – pou – pou1 pou2 pou3 pou4
2. t – ou – tou – tou1 tou2 tou3 tou4
3. c – ou – cou – cou1 cou2 cou3 cou4

 TIPS!

Cantonese Sound	IPA	Similar English Sound
Final ou	[ou]	o as in <i>g<u>o</u></i>

12 ~ Revision Section A

- ① Recall the initials you have learned in this lesson. Write them below.

m	n	ng
---	---	----

- ② Recall the finals you have learned in this lesson. Add the finals ending with the vowel u to the table.

	aa	a	e	i	o	u	eo
-u	aa <u>u</u>	a <u>u</u>	e <u>u</u>	i <u>u</u>	o <u>u</u>		

- ③ Recall the tones you have learned so far. Write the tone numbers and tone names and draw the tones.

Tone Number	Tone 1	Tone 2	Tone 3	Tone 4
Tone Name	High level	Mid rising	Mid level	Low falling
Diagram				


Instructions for Questions ④ to ⑦

Follow the steps below to complete each question.

Step 1: Say the sound, syllable or word aloud yourself.

Step 2: Listen to the recording and compare your pronunciation to the recording.

Step 3: Follow the recording and say the sound, syllable or word again.

④  36 Say the sounds below.





Initials


1. b	2. p	3. d	4. t	5. g	6. k	7. f	8. s
9. z	10. c	11. m	12. n	13. ng			

Finals


	1. aa	2. a	3. e	4. i	5. o	6. u	7. eo
-i	8. aai	9. ai	10. ei		11. oi	12. ui	13. eoi
-u	14. aaU	15. au	16. eu	17. iu	18. ou		

⑤  37 Say the syllable si with the tones below.


Tone Number	Tone 1	Tone 2	Tone 3	Tone 4
Tone Name	High level	Mid rising	Mid level	Low falling
Diagram				

⑥  38 Say the syllables below.

- | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. pou2 | 2. faai3 | 3. meu1 | 4. teoi4 | 5. ga3 |
| 6. ngo4 | 7. ze3 | 8. kei4 | 9. mui2 | 10. biu1 |
| 11. gu3 | 12. ci4 | 13. nau1 | 14. zoi3 | 15. saa2 |
| 16. dai3 | 17. paau1 | | | |

 39 If you find this question challenging, practice with the additional recording. In the additional recording, you will hear:

Initial	Final	Syllable	Syllable in Tones	Answer
p	- ou	- pou	- pou1 pou2	- pou2
f	- aai	- faai	- faai1 faai2 faai3	- faai3

⑦  40 Say the words below.

1. 貓 *maau1 cat*
2. 狗 *gau2 dog*
3. 兔仔 *tou3 zai2 rabbit*
4. 橋 *kiu4 bridge*
5. 煲 *bou1 pot*
6. 提子 *tai4 zi2 grape*
7. 茶 *caa4 tea*
8. 啤酒 *be1 zau2 beer*

13 ~ Revision Section B

- ① Recall the initials you have learned in this lesson. Write them below.

m	n	ng
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- ② Recall the finals you have learned in this lesson. Add the finals ending with the vowel u to the table.

	aa	a	e	i	o	u	eo
-u	aa <u>u</u>	a <u>u</u>	e <u>u</u>	i <u>u</u>	o <u>u</u>		

- ③ Recall the tones you have learned so far. Write the tone numbers and tone names and draw the tones.

Tone Number	Tone 1	Tone 2	Tone 3	Tone 4
Tone Name	High level	Mid rising	Mid level	Low falling
Diagram				


Instructions for Questions ④ to ⑦

Follow the steps below to complete each question.

Step 1: Say the sound, syllable or word aloud yourself.

Step 2: Listen to the recording and compare your pronunciation to the recording.

Step 3: Follow the recording and say the sound, syllable or word again.

④  41 Say the sounds below.





Initials


1. b	2. p	3. d	4. t	5. g	6. k	7. f	8. s
9. z	10. c	11. m	12. n	13. ng			

Finals


	1. aa	2. a	3. e	4. i	5. o	6. u	7. eo
-i	8. aai	9. ai	10. ei		11. oi	12. ui	13. eoi
-u	14. aau	15. au	16. eu	17. iu	18. ou		

⑤  42 Say the syllable si with the tones below.


Tone Number	Tone 1	Tone 2	Tone 3	Tone 4
Tone Name	High level	Mid rising	Mid level	Low falling
Diagram				

⑥  43 Say the syllables below.

- 1. ngau4 2. seoi2 3. ziu1 4. gai3 5. meu1
- 6. pei4 7. baa4 8. ni1 9. fu4 10. za3
- 11. de1 12. so4 13. caau2 14. pui4 15. mou2
- 16. tai4 17. koi3

 44 If you find this question challenging, practice with the additional recording. In the additional recording, you will hear:

Initial	Final	Syllable	Syllable in Tones	Answer
ng	- au	- ngau	- ngau1 ngau2 ngau3 ngau4	- ngau4
s	- eoi	- seoi	- seoi1 seoi2	- seoi2

⑦  45 Say the words below.

1. 手 sau2 hand
2. 頭 tau4 head
3. 帽 mou2 hat
4. 刀 dou1 knife
5. 餃子 gaau2 zi2 dumpling
6. 牛扒 ngau4 paa2 steak
7. 泡菜 paau3 coi3 kimchi
8. 報紙 bou3 zi2 newspaper

⑧ Listen to the following song. Complete the syllables in green with the finals ending with the vowel u. Note that each ○ below represents one syllable.



掉進海的眼淚 deu6 zeon3 hoi2 dik1 ngaan5 lei6
程人富 cing4 jan4 fu3

0:14 ○ 無 m_ou_4 ○○○○○○

0:19 ○○○○○ 口 h_au_2 ○

0:23 ○○○○ ○○ ○○○

0:30 ○ ○潮 c_iu_4 ○○○ 走 z_au_2 ○

0:35 ○○○○○○

0:39 ○○○○○○ 了 l_iu_5

0:42 ○○○○

0:45 好 h_ou_2 ○○○○ 找 z_aau_2 ○○○○○○

0:52 ○○ ○○○○○○ ○○○○○○

1:00 ○○○○○○ ○○○○○○○○

1:06 ○○○○○○

1:08 ○○○○○○ 搜 s_au_2 ○○○○○○○○

1:14 ○○○○○○

1:17 掉 d_eu_6 ○○○○○○ ○○○○○○

1:24 ○○○○○○○○

1:27 ○○○○ ○○○○○○

The version above is a playful cover of the song. Listen to the original version of the song. Notice the word 掉 deu6 is pronounced as diu6 in the original version (1:18). The pronunciation diu6 is usually used in singing, whereas the pronunciation deu6 is more often heard in conversations only, which creates a special effect when deu6 is sung in the cover above.

