

中文

MANDARIN FOR SOCIAL LIFE

# Nightlife & Cultural Playbook

中文 · 夜生活

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Bars, KTV, cheers etiquette, and cold-approach with class. Plus a **one-page cheat sheet** for when the room is loud and your heart is loud-er.

LESSON 3 OF 6

## 01 Where the Night Happens 场所

Chinese nightlife is wonderfully varied — from neon club districts to belt-it-out KTV rooms. Knowing the venues helps you suggest the right vibe and sound like you know the city.

| CHINESE   | PINYIN (TONES)                | ENGLISH                 | NOTE  |
|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 酒吧        | <i>jiǔbā</i>                  | bar                     | Best for actual conversation                      |
| 夜店 / 夜总会  | <i>yèdiàn /<br/>yèzǒnghuì</i> | nightclub               | Loud, bottle-service, dance floor                 |
| KTV (唱歌)  | <i>KTV (chànggē)</i>          | karaoke rooms           | Private rooms — hugely popular for groups & dates |
| 三里屯       | <i>sānlǐtún</i>               | Sanlitun (Beijing)      | Beijing's famous bar & club district              |
| 外滩        | <i>wàitān</i>                 | the Bund (Shanghai)     | Riverside, upscale rooftop bars                   |
| Found 158 | <i>Found 158</i>              | Found 158<br>(Shanghai) | Sunken plaza of bars & clubs                      |
| 清吧        | <i>qīngbā</i>                 | quiet / chill bar       | Great when you actually want to talk              |

### CULTURAL NOTE — KTV IS A DATING GOLDMINE

Inviting a group (or her) to (KTV) is a classic, low-pressure move. Singing badly together breaks the ice fast, and the private room makes conversation easy. Being a good sport — picking a duet, cheering her song — earns serious charm points.

## 02 Drinking & Cheers Etiquette 敬酒

Toasting is an art form in China, loaded with respect and warmth. Know the difference between (bottoms up) and (as you like) and you'll navigate any table gracefully.

| CHINESE  | PINYIN (TONES)                | ENGLISH                  | NOTE   |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 干杯!  | <i>gānbēi!</i>                | Cheers! / Bottoms up!    | Literally "dry the glass" — empty it                 |
| 干 <i>gān</i> dry 杯 <i>bēi</i> cup  |                               |                          |  |
| 随意   | <i>suíyì</i>                  | as you like / sip freely | A gracious "no need to down it"                      |
| 我敬你一杯  | <i>wǒ jìng nǐ yì bēi</i>      | A toast to you           | Respectful — clink slightly lower than elders' glass |
| 我 <i>wǒ</i> I 敬 <i>jìng</i> toast 你 <i>nǐ</i> you 一杯 <i>yì bēi</i> one glass                   |                               |                          |  |
| 啤酒   | <i>píjiǔ</i>                  | beer                     | The easygoing default                                |
| 白酒   | <i>báijiǔ</i>                 | baijiu (strong liquor)   | <b>Very</b> strong — 40-60%! Sip with caution        |
| 我喝不了那么多  | <i>wǒ hē bù liǎo nàme duō</i> | I can't drink that much  | Polite way to pace yourself                          |
| 我 <i>wǒ</i> I 喝 <i>hē</i> drink 不了 <i>bù liǎo</i> cannot 那么 <i>nàme</i> that 多 <i>duō</i> much |                               |                          |  |
| 我开车,不能喝  | <i>wǒ kāichē, bù néng hē</i>  | I'm driving, can't drink | A respected, no-questions-asked excuse               |
| 我 <i>wǒ</i> I 开车 <i>kāichē</i> drive 不能 <i>bù néng</i> cannot 喝 <i>hē</i> drink                |                               |                          |  |

### WARN — RESPECT BÁIJIŪ, PACE YOURSELF

sneaks up on you — it's far stronger than it tastes. Saying with a smile is perfectly polite. Staying in control isn't just smart for you; a clear head means you can read consent properly and look after anyone who's had too much. A man who keeps his composure reads as confident, not boring.

## 03 Cold-Approach & Loud-Room Lines 搭讪

Cold-approach ( , dāshàn) is less common and more conservative in China than in the West — it can read as forward. Do it warmly, briefly, and gracefully accept disinterest. In a loud club, keep lines short and let your smile carry the warmth.

### Opening in a loud room 嘈杂

| CHINESE   | PINYIN (TONES)                           | ENGLISH                          | NOTE  |
|---|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 嗨!你也喜欢这首歌?  | <i>hāi! nǐ yě xǐhuan zhè shǒu gē?</i>    | Hey! You like this song too?     | Shared moment — easy & natural              |
| 嗨 <i>hāi</i> hey 你 <i>nǐ</i> you 也 <i>yě</i> also 喜欢 <i>xǐhuan</i> like 这 <i>zhè</i> this 首 <i>shǒu</i> (song) 歌 <i>gē</i> song                                 |  |                                  |   |
| 我请你喝一杯?   | <i>wǒ qǐng nǐ hē yì bēi?</i>             | Can I get you a drink?           | Friendly — accept "no thanks" gracefully    |
| 我 <i>wǒ</i> I 请 <i>qǐng</i> treat 你 <i>nǐ</i> you 喝 <i>hē</i> drink 一杯 <i>yì bēi</i> one glass  |  |                                  |   |
| 这里太吵了,出去聊?  | <i>zhèlǐ tài chǎo le, chūqù liáo?</i>    | It's so loud — chat outside?     | Only if she's clearly into it; never insist |
| 这里 <i>zhèlǐ</i> here 太 <i>tài</i> too 吵 <i>chǎo</i> noisy 了 <i>le</i> (particle) 出去 <i>chūqù</i> go out 聊 <i>liáo</i> chat                                      |  |                                  |   |
| 你们玩得开心吗?  | <i>nǐmen wán de kāixīn ma?</i>           | You all having a good night?     | Greet the whole group — never just one      |
| 你们 <i>nǐmen</i> you (plural) 玩 <i>wán</i> play / have fun 得 <i>de</i> (particle) 开心 <i>kāixīn</i> happy 吗 <i>ma</i> (question)                                  |  |                                  |   |
| 不打扰你们了,玩得开心!  | <i>bù dǎrǎo nǐmen le, wán de kāixīn!</i> | I'll leave you to it — have fun! | A graceful exit if there's no spark         |
| 不 <i>bù</i> not 打扰 <i>dǎrǎo</i> disturb 你们 <i>nǐmen</i> you (plural) 了 <i>le</i> (particle) 玩 <i>wán</i> have fun 得 <i>de</i> (particle) 开心 <i>kāixīn</i> happy |  |                                  |   |

### Do & Don't 注意

| DO ✓   | DON'T ✗                        |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Greet the whole group, not just the woman you like | Don't isolate or corner anyone |

| DO ✓  | DON'T ✗                                    |
|---|--|
| Keep it short; let her open the door wider  | Don't keep talking after clear disinterest |
| Offer a drink, accept "no" with a smile   | Don't buy drinks expecting anything back   |
| Mind <span style="background-color: #e0f2f1;">      </span> (miànze) — let everyone save face | Don't tease in a way that embarrasses      |
| Help anyone who's too drunk get home safe   | Don't pursue someone who's intoxicated     |

### CULTURAL NOTE — (FACE) & HOW PEOPLE MEET

Causing public embarrassment — to her or her friends — is the fastest way to kill your chances; protecting everyone's        makes you look classy. And know that most romance here begins through **friends and apps** (        Tantan, Soul,        ) rather than cold-approach. Being introduced or matching online is the norm, so building a social circle pays off more than working the room.

## 04 One-Page Cheat Sheet 速查表

The whole night in five moves: **Open, Connect, Flirt, Close, Respect**. Glance here when the music's loud and you need one good line.

### ① Open 开场

不好意思,可以问一下吗? *bù hǎoyìsi, kěyǐ wèn yíxià ma?* Excuse me, can I ask something?

不好意思 *bù hǎoyìsi* excuse me 可以 *kěyǐ* can 问 *wèn* ask 一下 *yíxià* a moment 吗 *ma* (question)

你也喜欢这首歌? *nǐ yě xǐhuan zhè shǒu gē?* You like this song too?

你 *nǐ* you 也 *yě* also 喜欢 *xǐhuan* like 这 *zhè* this 首 *shǒu* (song) 歌 *gē* song

### 😬 Disarm 破冰

我的中文还在努力中~ *wǒ de zhōngwén hái zài nǔlì zhōng~* My Chinese is still a work in progress~

我的 *wǒ de* my 中文 *zhōngwén* Chinese 还 *hái* still 在 *zài* in process 努力 *nǔlì* work hard 中 *zhōng* (ongoing)

教我一个中文词吧? *jiāo wǒ yí ge zhōngwén cí ba?* Teach me a Chinese word?

教 *jiāo* teach 我 *wǒ* me 一个 *yí ge* one 中文 *zhōngwén* Chinese 词 *cí* word 吧 *ba* (suggestion)

我喝点啤酒中文就变好了,哈哈 *wǒ hē diǎn pījiǔ zhōngwén jiù biàn hǎo le, hāhā* My Chinese gets better after a beer, lol

我 *wǒ* I 喝 *hē* drink 点 *diǎn* a little 啤酒 *pījiǔ* beer 中文 *zhōngwén* Chinese 就 *jiù* then 变好 *biàn hǎo* gets better 了 *le* (particle) 哈哈 *hāhā* haha

### ② Connect 交流

你平时喜欢做什么? *nǐ píngshí xǐhuan zuò shénme?* What do you like to do?

你 *nǐ* you 平时 *píngshí* usually 喜欢 *xǐhuan* like 做 *zuò* do 什么 *shénme* what

太有意思了! *tài yǒuyìsi le!* That's so interesting!

太 *tài* so / too 有意思 *yǒuyìsi* interesting 了 *le* (emphasis)

### ③ Flirt 撩

你笑起来很好看 *nǐ xiào qǐlái hěn hǎokàn* You have a lovely smile

你 *nǐ* you 笑 *xiào* smile 起来 *qǐlái* (when you do) 很 *hěn* very 好看 *hǎokàn* good-looking

你是不是在撩我? *nǐ shì bú shì zài liāo wǒ?* Are you flirting with me?

你 *nǐ* you 是不是 *shì bú shì* are (you) 在 *zài* (in the act of) 撩 *liāo* flirt 我 *wǒ* me

### ④ Close 结尾

加个微信吧? *jiā ge wēixìn ba?* Let's add WeChat?

加 *jiā* add 个 *ge* (a) 微信 *wēixìn* WeChat 吧 *ba* (suggestion)

改天一起吃饭? *gǎitiān yìqǐ chīfàn?* Grab a meal sometime?

改天 *gǎitiān* another day 一起 *yìqǐ* together 吃饭 *chīfàn* eat / have a meal

### ⑤ Respect 尊重

这样可以吗? *zhèyàng kěyǐ ma?* Is this okay?

这样 *zhèyàng* like this 可以 *kěyǐ* okay 吗 *ma* (question)

不打扰你了,玩得开心! *bù dǎrǎo nǐ le, wán de kāixīn!* I'll leave you be — have a great night!

不 *bù* not 打扰 *dǎrǎo* disturb 你 *nǐ* you 了 *le* (particle) 玩 *wán* have fun 得 *de* (particle)  
开心 *kāixīn* happy

#### TIP — EFFORT BEATS AGGRESSION

The man who has the best night is rarely the loudest. Warmth, a few genuine Mandarin lines, real listening, and the grace to walk away with a smile will out-charm pushiness every time. Respect **is** the move.