

# 橫行無忌

*heng2 xing2 wu2 ji4*

The people of Hong Kong love hairy crabs, but only as a delicacy and not for the connotation of their name.

Hairy crabs are called “大閘蟹” (*da4 zha2 xie4*). The poor crustaceans are tied up tightly for easy transportation. People who bought shares that have fallen greatly in value are called “大閘蟹” (*da4 zha2 xie4*) as they can't sell them without suffering painful losses hence their capital is tied up, like the crabs.

Hairy crabs are also not usually associated with beautiful women. But a hairy crab trader is organizing a beauty pageant to select a Miss Hairy Crab. Though the contestants are rather pretty, netizens just couldn't help poking fun at the unusual title. Some asked whether the winner can “打橫行” (*da3 heng2 xing2*) like a crab.

“打橫行” (*da3 heng2 xing2*) or simply “橫行” (*heng2 xing2*) means walking sideways. Normal people walk in a straight line. If you walk sideways on a

## Idiom by Lon Yan

busy street, you will bump into people. People who “打橫行” (*da3 heng2 xing2*) have no regard for others, so they are bullies.

The idiom that describes such obnoxious conduct is “橫行無忌” (*heng2 xing2 wu2 ji4*). “橫” (*heng2*) is “horizontal,” “across,” “行” (*xing2*) “walk,” “無” (*wu2*) “without,” “nil,” “none” and “忌” (*ji4*) “fear.” Literally, “橫行無忌” (*heng2 xing2 wu2 ji4*) is “walking sideways no fear.”

It means “to run amok,” “to run wild.” A similar idiom is “橫行霸道” (*heng2 xing2 ba4 dao4*), to “to ride roughshod,” “to tyrannize (over),” “to be domineering,” “to play the bully.”

### Terms containing the character “橫” (*heng2*) include:

橫樑 (*heng2 liang2*) – a cross beam

橫豎 (*heng2 shu4*) – any way; in any case

專橫 (*zhuan1 heng4*) – domineering

橫洲 (*heng2 zhou1*) – Wang Chau (a place in Yuen Long)