

The Pimsleur logo is a stylized heart shape composed of two overlapping teardrop-like forms. The left half is a dark blue, and the right half is a lighter blue. The word "Pimsleur" is written in white, sans-serif font across the center of the logo, with a registered trademark symbol (®) to the upper right of the 'r'.

Pimsleur®

A photograph of two young women sitting closely together, looking at a smartphone held by the woman on the left. The woman on the left has her hair in a braided bun and is wearing a dark blue and red plaid shirt. The woman on the right has long, wavy reddish-brown hair and is wearing a dark blue top. They are both smiling and appear to be engaged with the content on the phone. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# User's Guide

## PIMSLEUR® LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

**Y**ou have just purchased the most effective language program ever developed. As you probably know, learning a new language can be frustrating. Your first experience with a foreign language may have been in school. If the classes seemed difficult, or if your grades were poor, you probably believed you had no aptitude for languages. Even if you did well, you may have been surprised later to discover that what you learned was of little or no use when you tried to converse with native speakers.

Perhaps you waited until later in life and tried adult education classes, language schools, or home training programs. There too you may have found the information hard to retain, the lessons tedious, and your progress slow. Many language students give up early in these programs, convinced they lack the natural ability to understand and use what they read and hear.

The truth is that anyone can acquire a foreign language—with the right teaching system. With the Pimsleur® Method, you will benefit from the years of research and development that have helped create the world's most effective method for teaching foreign languages. The Pimsleur® Language Programs, developed by Dr. Paul Pimsleur, fill an urgent need for self-instructional materials in many languages.

## HOW TO USE THE PROGRAM

**T**o get the full benefit of each lesson, choose a quiet place where you can practice without interruption and a time of day when your mind is most alert and your body least fatigued.

The length of each lesson, an average 30 minutes, is the length recommended by teaching specialists for a concentrated learning task. Once you've started the program, simply follow the tutor's instructions. The most important instruction is to respond aloud when the tutor tells you to do so. There will be a pause after this instruction, giving you time to reply. It is essential to your progress that you speak out in a normal conversational voice when asked to respond. Your active participation in thinking and speaking is required for your success in mastering this course.

The simple test for mastery is whether you are able to respond quickly and accurately when your tutor asks a question. If you are responding correctly about eighty percent of the time, then you're ready to proceed to the next lesson. It is important to keep moving forward, and also not to set unreasonable standards of perfection that will keep you from progressing, which is why we recommend using the eighty percent figure as a guide.

You will notice that each lesson contains both new and familiar material, and just when you may be worrying about forgetting something, you will conveniently be reminded of it. Another helpful feature of the Pimsleur® Language Program is its rate of "saturation." You will be responding many times in the half-hour. This saturation enables you to make substantial progress within a short period of time.

## GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS

Complete the lesson units in strict consecutive order (don't skip around), doing no more than one lesson per day, although the lesson unit for the day may be repeated more than once. Daily contact with the language is critical to successful learning.

Listen carefully to each lesson unit. Always follow the directions of the instructor.

*Speak out loud* when directed by the tutor and answer questions within the pauses provided. It is not enough to just silently “think” of the answer to the question asked. You need to speak the answer out loud to set up a “circuit” of the language you are learning to speak so that it is heard and identified through your ears, to help to establish the “sounds” of the target language. Do this prior to hearing the confirmation, which is provided as reinforcement, as well as additional speech training.

Do all required activities according to the instructions, without reference to any outside persons, book, or course.

Do not have a paper and pen nearby during the lessons, and do not refer to dictionaries or other books. The Pimsleur® Method works with the language-learning portion of your brain, requiring language to be processed in its spoken form. Not only will you interrupt the learning process if you attempt to write the words that you hear, but you will also begin to speak the target language with an American accent. This is because the “sounds” represented by the American letters are different from the same-looking letters from the foreign language.

## DR. PAUL PIMSLEUR AND HIS UNIQUE METHOD

**D**r. Paul Pimsleur devoted his life to language teaching and testing and was one of the world's leading experts in applied linguistics. He was fluent in French, good in German, and had a working knowledge of Italian, Russian, Modern Greek, and Mandarin Chinese. After obtaining his Ph.D. in French and a Masters in Psychology from Columbia University, he taught French Phonetics and Linguistics at UCLA. He later became Professor of Romance Languages and Language Education, and Director of The Listening Center (a state-wide language lab) at Ohio State University; Professor of Education and Romance Languages at the State University of New York at Albany; and a Fulbright lecturer at the University of Heidelberg. He did research on the psychology of language learning and in 1969 was Section Head of Psychology of Second Language Learning at the International Congress of Applied Linguistics.

Dr. Pimsleur was a member of the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), American Educational Research Association (AERA), Modern Language Association (MLA), and a founding member of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

His many books and articles revolutionized theories of language learning and teaching. After years of experience and research, Dr. Pimsleur developed a new method (The Pimsleur Method) that is based on two key principles: the "Principle of Anticipation" and a scientific principle of memory training that he called "Graduated Interval Recall." This Method has been applied to the many levels and languages of the Pimsleur Programs.

## GRADUATED INTERVAL RECALL

The term, “Graduated Interval Recall” is a complex name for a very simple theory about memory. No aspect of learning a foreign language is more important than memory, yet before Dr. Pimsleur, no one had explored more effective ways for building language memory.

In his research, Dr. Pimsleur discovered how long students remembered new information and at what intervals they needed to be reminded of it. If reminded too soon or too late, they failed to retain the information. This discovery enabled him to create a schedule of exactly when and how the information should be reintroduced.

Suppose you have learned a new word. You tell yourself to remember it. However, after five minutes you’re unable to recall it. If you had been reminded of it after five seconds, you probably would have remembered it for maybe a minute, at which time you would have needed another reminder. Each time you are reminded, you remember the word longer than you did the time before. The intervals between reminders become longer and longer, until you eventually remember the word without being reminded at all.

This program is carefully designed to remind you of new information at the exact intervals where maximum retention takes place. Each time your memory begins to fade, you will be asked to recall the word.

## PRINCIPLE OF ANTICIPATION

The “Principle of Anticipation” requires you to *anticipate* a correct answer. Practically, what this means is that you must retrieve the answer from what you have learned earlier in the course. It works by posing a question, asking you to provide a new sentence, using information you’ve learned previously and putting it into a new combination. This provides novelty and excitement which accelerates learning.

A possible scenario:

**Speaker’s cue:** “Are you going to the movies today?”  
(PAUSE)

Drawing on information given previously, you respond  
(*in the target language*):

“No, I’m going tomorrow.”

**The instructor will then confirm your answer:**

“No, I’m going tomorrow.”

**The Narrator then may cue:**

“Is your sister going to Europe this year?” (PAUSE)

**Response:** “No, she went last year.”

Before Dr. Pimsleur created his teaching method, language courses were based on the principle of “mindless-repetition.” Teachers drummed words into the students’ minds over and over, as if there were grooves in the mind that could be worn deeper with repetition.

Neurophysiologists tell us, however, that on the contrary, simple and unchallenging repetition has a hypnotic, even dulling effect on the learning process. Eventually, the words being repeated will lose their meaning. Dr. Pimsleur discovered that learning accelerates when there is an “input/output” system of interaction, in which students receive information and then are asked to retrieve and use it.

While “Graduated Interval Recall” and the “Principle of Anticipation” are the foundation of the Pimsleur® Method, there are other aspects that contribute to its uniqueness and effectiveness. One involves vocabulary. We have all been intimidated, when approaching a new language, by the sheer immensity of the number of new words we must learn. But extensive research has shown that we actually need a comparatively limited number of words to be able to communicate effectively in any language.

Language can be divided into two distinct categories: grammatical structures (function words) and concrete vocabulary (content words). By focusing on the former category and enabling the student to comprehend and employ the structure of the new language, Dr. Pimsleur found that language learners were able to more readily put new knowledge to use. There are few content words that must be known and used every day. The essential “core” of a language involves function words, which tend to relate to human activities.

This course is designed to teach you to understand and to speak the essential elements of your new language in a relatively short time. During each half-hour lesson, you will actually converse with two native speakers, using an educated level of language as spoken in everyday business and social life. The program’s unique method of presenting dialogue in-situation relieves you of the most common learning problem, the problem of meaning.



The Pimsleur® Method centers on teaching functional mastery in understanding and speaking a language, in the most effective and efficient way possible. You will be working on your vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in an integrated manner, as you are learning specific phrases that have practical use in everyday activities.

There are several thousand languages in the world. Because fewer than five hundred of these languages have developed formal systems of writing, linguistic specialists accept that language is primarily speech. For this reason, it is also accepted that the human brain acquires language as speech. Therefore, when Dr. Pimsleur created his language programs, he began teaching with recorded materials, which enabled the learners to acquire the sounds, the rhythm, and the intonation of the target language. The learners did this more rapidly, more accurately, and with great enthusiasm because they found themselves capable of almost instant beginning communication skills.

Dr. Pimsleur called this “organic learning” because it involves learning on several fronts at the same time. His system enables the learner to acquire grammatical usage, vocabulary, and the “sounds” of the language in an integrated, exciting way. In short, the learner gains the language as a living, expressive form of human culture.

## COURSE CONTENT

When you have mastered a Pimsleur® Language Program, you will have a highly-practical, every-day vocabulary at your command. These basic words, phrases, and sentences have been carefully selected to be the most useful in everyday situations when you visit a foreign country. You will be able to handle social encounters graciously, converse with native speakers in travel situations, and use transportation systems with confidence. You'll be able to ask directions and to navigate your own way around the cities and countryside.

The language skills you learn will enable you to participate in casual conversations, express facts, give instructions, and describe current, past, and future activities. You will be able to deal with everyday survival topics and courtesy requirements. You will be intelligible to native speakers of the language—even to those who are not used to dealing with foreigners. What is equally important, you will know how to ask the kinds of questions that will further expand your knowledge of and facility with the language, because you will have been trained by the Pimsleur® open-ended questioning technique.

The Pimsleur® Method becomes a springboard for further learning and growth to take place—the ultimate purpose of any real educational system. This desire to learn will be apparent to the people with whom you speak. It will indicate sincere interest in and respect for their culture.

## A NOTE ON REGIONAL LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES

**I**n any large country, and even in many smaller countries, regional differences in language are common. In the United States, for example, a person from Maine can sound very different than someone from Texas. Pronunciations (“accents”) vary, and there are also minor differences in vocabulary. For example, what is called a “drinking fountain” in New York or Arizona is known as a “bubbler” in Wisconsin, and a “soft drink” in one part of America will be called a “soda” elsewhere. The differences in English are even more distinct between North Americans and Britons, or between Britons and Australians. But all are native speakers of English; all can communicate with spoken English, read the same newspapers, and watch the same television programs, essentially without difficulty.

Native speakers of a language can often tell where someone is from by listening to him or her speak. In addition to regional differences, there are social differences. Pimsleur® Language Programs use a standard “educated” speech, which will generally carry you throughout the country without difficulty.

## READING IN A PIMSLEUR PROGRAM

A phonetic alphabet, such as the Latin alphabet and the Greek alphabet, is a list of symbols (letters) that are used to represent the sounds of the language in writing. And given that language is primarily speech, the spoken sounds of the language necessarily precede learning how to decode the written form, i.e., learning how to “read” – just as a child first learns to speak and then eventually to read. This is the natural progression Dr. Pimsleur followed in his courses.

After an initial introduction to the spoken language, reading is then integrated into the program and the new alphabet is systematically introduced, associating each letter with the sounds of the new language. Initially, you are sounding out words, mastering the different sounds associated with the new alphabet. You are not, at first, reading for meaning, but rather for sound/symbol correlation. Eventually, when the sound system is mastered, you will be able to look at known vocabulary and “read for meaning.” By the end of the first 30 lessons, you will be reading at the same level as you are speaking.

Pimsleur covers the world of languages. You can choose from over 60 language programs, many with multiple levels, ranging from the most popular to the exotic. Become a Pimsleur learner and travel the world!

### **Programs available for these languages:**

- Albanian
- Arabic (Eastern)
- Arabic (Egyptian)
- Arabic (Modern Standard)
- Armenian (Eastern)
- Armenian (Western)
- Chinese (Cantonese)
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dari (Persian)
- Dutch
- Farsi (Persian)
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek (Modern)
- Haitian Creole
- Hebrew (Modern)
- Hindi
- Hungarian
- Icelandic
- Indonesian
- Irish
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Lithuanian
- Norwegian
- Ojibwe
- Pashto
- Polish
- Portuguese (Brazilian)
- Portuguese (European)
- Punjabi
- Romanian
- Russian
- Castilian Spanish
- Latin American Spanish
- Swahili
- Swedish
- Swiss German
- Tagalog
- Thai
- Turkish
- Twi
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Vietnamese

### **ESL (English as a Second Language):**

- Arabic
- Chinese (Cantonese)
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- French
- German
- Haitian Creole
- Hindi
- Italian
- Korean
- Persian
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Vietnamese



# Pimsleur®

Pimsleur® Language Programs are available  
in all of the commonly spoken languages.

Many other languages are also available.  
For more information, call 1-800-831-5497  
or visit us at [Pimsleur.com](https://www.pimsleur.com)

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"I have completed the entire **Pimsleur** Spanish series. I have always wanted to learn, but failed on numerous occasions. Shockingly, this method worked beautifully. "

*R. Rydzewsk (Burlington, NC)*

"The thing is, **Pimsleur** is PHENOMENALLY EFFICIENT at advancing your oral skills wherever you are, and you don't have to make an appointment or be at your computer or deal with other students. "

*Ellen Jovin (NY, NY)*

"I looked at a number of different online and self-taught courses before settling on the **Pimsleur** courses. I could not have made a better choice. "

*M. Jaffe (Mesa, AZ)*

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Travelers should always check with  
their nation's State Department for  
current advisories on local conditions  
before traveling abroad.

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*To learn a language is to have one more window  
from which to look at the world.* Chinese proverb

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## Mandarin

Mandarin Chinese, also known as Standard Chinese or Modern Standard Mandarin, is the sole official language of China and Taiwan, and one of the four official languages of Singapore. Although there are eight major Chinese dialects, Mandarin is native to approximately 70% of the population. Chinese who are educated through at least the primary grades speak Mandarin as well as the local dialects. However, due to the size of China and the ethnic diversity of its inhabitants, hundreds of other dialects are spoken in different areas. The dialects spoken today are based more on geography than on ethnicity. For instance, residents of Shanghai will speak *Wu*, and in some parts of China, particularly the central and southern areas, official business is transacted in the locally dominant language. Although people from different parts of China generally do not understand one another's spoken language, they all use Mandarin characters (*hanzi*) for writing.

Today's Mandarin is closely based on "northern speech" which was the *lingua franca* of the ruling class, spoken in Beijing, the capital during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. After the Nationalists overthrew the Qing Dynasty in 1912, government officials at first considered creating a new "national language" by adopting a mixture of dialects, but in the end it was decided to retain Mandarin as the "National Language." The Communists, who defeated the

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Nationalists in 1949, continued this policy, but they changed the name and coined the term *pu tong hua*, or "common speech," for "Mandarin." This is the word for Mandarin used throughout mainland China. In Hong Kong, however, as in Taiwan and most overseas communities, *guo yu*, the older term, continues to be used.

Pronunciation of the national language differs slightly geographically, and there are some significant regional vocabulary differences. The Nationalists, whose capital was the southern city of Nanjing, were influenced by southern dialects, primarily Cantonese. The Communists, whose capital is Beijing, were influenced by "northern speech."

## **Pictographs**

It is commonly thought that every Chinese character is a picture, or "pictograph," but only a few hundred of the several thousand characters are true pictographs. However, most of these are now written in such a way that it is difficult to immediately guess their meaning. There is also a very small group of characters called ideographs or ideograms, which represent ideas or objects directly. All other Chinese characters are combinations of these pictographs and basic ideographs.



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## **Traditional and Simplified Script**

In 1949 China's new government considered instituting an alphabet in place of the traditional characters, as a refutation of traditional or "feudal" culture. Instead, they decided to simplify the existing characters by reducing the number of strokes necessary to create them. By 1964, a list of 2,200 simplified characters was created for use as a modified script. Further simplification was briefly adopted, then abandoned, at the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1977.

Presently, simplified characters are used in mainland China and Singapore, although there is a movement for the restoration of traditional characters, especially in southern China. Hong Kong, Taiwan, and many overseas Chinese communities continue to use the traditional characters.

## **Pinyin Transliteration**

In this Introductory Reading Program you will learn to read Hanyu Pinyin – pinyin for short. It's the official phonetic system for transcribing pronunciations of the Chinese characters into a Latin alphabet, and will give you a way to "read" an approximation of the sounds in written form. In China it's often used in elementary schools as a first step toward learning to read. It is also used

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to alphabetically order dictionary entries, and it is used for entering Chinese text into computers as well as communicating via email and text messaging. In many large cities, street signs are often displayed in both Chinese characters and pinyin to aid foreign visitors.

## Readings

There are twenty Reading Lessons in all. Although the pinyin alphabet may appear similar to the Latin alphabet, the sounds of some letters in pinyin are quite different. You will learn to sound out the pinyin starting with individual letters, then letter combinations, words, then word combinations and short phrases, building in length until you will be sounding out complete sentences. Keep in mind that learning to read pinyin is not the same as learning to read the hanzi. These lessons are designed to give you an easy way to "read" the Chinese sounds, and the Simplified Chinese characters are displayed as well.

Feel free to repeat each Reading Lesson until you feel comfortable proceeding to the next. With a little effort, you will be astonished at how quickly you are able to sound out the Mandarin words. A pronunciation chart is included which is for reference

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only, however, as all the information you need to do the readings is contained in the audio.

Although translations are included, the meanings at this point are secondary, and we recommend that you look at them only after first attempting to sound out the phrases with Mandarin pronunciation. Each item has been selected especially to give you practice in the tones, the sounds, and the sound combinations. You should read aloud, as directed, which will help to lodge the sounds in your memory. Before long you will be reading pinyin aloud without an American accent.

## **Tonality**

Chinese is a tonal language. This means that in addition to the sounds of the consonants and vowels, the tone with which a syllable is pronounced helps to determine its meaning. The Chinese languages are almost exclusively made up of one-syllable words, composed of an initial consonant sound followed by the syllable's main vowel, sometimes in combination with another consonant or vowel. Longer words do exist, but almost all are compound words, formed by combining one-syllable words.

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The tone is determined by the pronunciation of the syllable's main vowel. Each tone has a name which describes the motion of the sound: falling, rising, or even. With the tones, several meanings can be assigned to any one syllable. For example, when pronounced using a falling-rising tone, the word *nar* means "where." However, when pronounced with just a falling tone, it means "there."

There are four main tones used in speaking Mandarin – high, rising, falling-rising, falling – and a fifth, referred to as a soft or neutral tone. This last tone is used for the second syllable in a set of doubled characters, as well as for the final syllable (or question word) at the end of a query. This neutral tone doesn't have a marker. For example, in the questions, *nǐ ne?* (How about you?) and *hǎo ma?* (OK?), the syllables *ne* and *ma* are pronounced using this soft, falling sound, as if the sound is fading away. Here is an example of one word with different meanings depending on the tone with which it is pronounced:

- |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| • 1st tone: high           | <i>shī</i> (poem)        |
| • 2nd tone: rising         | <i>shí</i> (ten or time) |
| • 3rd tone: falling-rising | <i>shǐ</i> (history)     |
| • 4th tone: falling        | <i>shì</i> (to be)       |

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There are tonal markers to indicate the tones of the vowels. In these lessons, we will include them for the four tones above the vowels they affect. Pay close attention to the markers because they can change the meaning of a word completely. It may take a while before you hear the differences, and we encourage you to repeat each lesson as often as necessary, in order to both familiarize yourself with the Mandarin sounds represented by the letters and to practice the tones.

All tonal markers are placed above the single vowels (a, o, e, i, u, ü). The chart that follows uses the vowel "a" as an example.

Tone #	English Name	Marker shown with "a"
1.	<b>High-level tone</b> – Starts with normal vocal range of the speaker and stays even.	ā
2.	<b>Rising tone</b> – Starts at normal vocal range, then rises up.	á
3.	<b>Falling-rising tone</b> – Starts at normal vocal range, then falls down and rises up.	ǎ
4.	<b>Falling tone</b> – Starts at normal vocal range, then falls down.	à

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In Mandarin the absence of a tonal marker above a vowel, as in "a," indicates a neutral tone. This neutral tone starts with a slightly soft sound and is shorter than the sounds of the tones listed above.

## **Tone Change or Tone Sandhi**

Although each Chinese syllable standing alone has a specific tone, in the flow of speech the tone of a syllable can change depending on the tone of the following syllable. In some Chinese dialects, tone change is common, and there are complex rules governing it. In contemporary Mandarin, however, it is less common than in other dialects, and there are only a few rules to remember. The first governs falling-rising or 3<sup>rd</sup> tones when they are spoken in sequence:

1. When two falling-rising or 3<sup>rd</sup> tones occur together, the first falling-rising tone becomes a rising, or 2<sup>nd</sup> tone. The second remains a falling-rising or 3<sup>rd</sup> tone. For example, "very" and "good" are both falling-rising, 3<sup>rd</sup> tones by themselves, but when spoken together as *hen hao*, the first word changes to a rising or 2<sup>nd</sup> tone, while the second keeps its original falling-rising, 3<sup>rd</sup> tone.

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2. When three falling-rising tones are spoken one after the other, the first two become rising or 2<sup>nd</sup> tones, while the third remains a falling-rising tone.
3. When four falling-rising tones occur one after the other, the first three change to rising or 2<sup>nd</sup> tones, while the fourth remains a falling-rising or 3<sup>rd</sup> tone.

In contemporary Mandarin, tone change is also associated with two specific characters. The first of these is *yi* (one).

1. When it is by itself or at the end of a word it is a high level or 1<sup>st</sup> tone.
2. When *yi* comes before a falling or 4<sup>th</sup> tone, it changes to a rising or 2<sup>nd</sup> tone, for example, *yi* (2<sup>nd</sup>) *yue* (4<sup>th</sup>) ("one month").
3. When *yi* comes before any of the three remaining tones (high, rising, or falling-rising), it changes to a falling or 4<sup>th</sup> tone.

The second character associated with tone change in contemporary Mandarin is *bu* (means "no" or "not").

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When *bu* stands alone, it is a falling or 4<sup>th</sup> tone.

4. It changes to a rising or 2<sup>nd</sup> tone only when it comes before another falling or 4<sup>th</sup> tone.
5. When combined with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tones, *bu* remains a falling tone.

The various tone changes occur in speech only. In writing, the original tone is retained. In time, these changes will become automatic and natural.

## Pinyin Pronunciation Chart

*(where no sound is indicated, the sound matches English)*

Letter	Sound
a	"a" in "father"
b	
c	"ts" in "boots"
ch	"ch" in "church"
d	
e	"ir" in "girl"
f	
g	"g" in "go"
h	



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Letter	Sound
i	"ee" as in "feet" but after "r" sounds like the "ir" in "shirt"
j	
k	
l	
m	
n	
o	"o" in "no"
p	
q	"ch" in "cheese"
r	"r" as in "war" or "run" (before an "i" it sounds somewhere between an "r" and "j" or the "s" in "leisure")
s	"s" as in "seed"
sh	"sh" as in "shine"
t	
u	"oo" as in "boot"
ü	similar to the "u" sound in "you"
x	the sound in between "s" and "sh"
w	
y	"y" as in "yes"
z	"ds" as in "lads"
zh	"j" as in "jam"

# Mandarin Chinese 1

Letter	Sound Combinations
ai	"eye"
ei	"ay" in "say"
ao	"ow" in "how"
ou	"o" in "dough"
ia	"ee-ya"
ie	"ee-yeah"
iu	"ee-oo"
ua	"wa" like the end of "aqua"
uo	"wo" in "won't"
üe	"u" in "you" followed by the sound "e" – "ee"
iao	like "meow"
iou (iu)	"eew"
uai	"why"
uei (ui)	"way"
an	"un" in "until"
en	"en" in "hen"
in	"een" in "seen"
ün	"une" in "tune"
ang	"ong" in "song"
eng	"ung" in "sung"
ing	"ing" in "sing"
ong	like "long," except with the "o" pronounced "oh"

# Mandarin Chinese 1

Letter	Sound Combinations
ian	"yan"
uan	"wan"
uen (un)	similar to "one"
üan	"u" in "you" plus "an"
iang	"young"
iong	"yong," with the "o" pronounced "oh"
uang	"wong"
ueng	like "wor" in "work," plus an "ng" at the end
er	sounds like "are," but is usually linked to the previous word to form an "er" sound



# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson One

- |             |    |
|-------------|----|
| 1. ā        | 阿  |
| 2. bā       | 八  |
| 3. pā       | 趴  |
| 4. ó        | 哦  |
| 5. pó       | 婆  |
| 6. à        | 啊  |
| 7. bà       | 爸  |
| 8. āo       | 熬  |
| 9. bāo      | 包  |
| 10. áo      | 熬  |
| 11. páo     | 袍  |
| 12. bō      | 波  |
| 13. pō      | 坡  |
| 14. bá      | 拔  |
| 15. bà ba   | 爸爸 |
| 16. pó po   | 婆婆 |
| 17. pá pō   | 爬坡 |
| 18. bāo bāo | 包包 |
| 19. bǎo bao | 宝宝 |
| 20. pǎo pao | 跑跑 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson One Translations

1. a sound of surprise, "Oh!"
2. the number eight
3. to lie on one's stomach
4. a sound of doubt or surprise, "Oh?"
5. mother-in-law / old woman
6. a sound of agreement, "Ah, ok."
7. dad
8. to boil
9. a bag
10. to cook on a slow fire
11. a traditional Chinese outfit
12. wave
13. hill
14. to pull up
15. daddy
16. a woman's mother-in-law / grandma
17. climb a hill
18. cute purse
19. baby
20. running

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Two

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. mō                    | 摸                      |
| 2. fó                    | 佛                      |
| 3. fǎ                    | 法                      |
| 4. mā ma                 | 妈妈                     |
| 5. ēi                    | 欸                      |
| 6. bēi                   | 杯                      |
| 7. fēi                   | 飞                      |
| 8. méi                   | 没                      |
| 9. bēi bāo               | 背包                     |
| 10. ī                    | (no Chinese character) |
| 11. pí pá                | 琵琶                     |
| 12. mǐ                   | 米                      |
| 13. péi                  | 陪                      |
| 14. piào                 | 漂                      |
| 15. māo                  | 猫                      |
| 16. māo pá pō.           | 猫爬坡。                   |
| 17. fēi biāo             | 飞镖                     |
| 18. mā ma fā bāo.        | 妈妈发包。                  |
| 19. péi pei              | 陪陪                     |
| 20. péi pei bà ba mā ma. | 陪陪爸爸妈妈。                |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Two Translations

1. to touch
2. Buddha
3. law
4. mother
5. hey
6. cup
7. to fly
8. not
9. backpack
10. letter "i"
11. pipa (Chinese lute)
12. rice
13. to keep company
14. handsome, beautiful
15. cat
16. The cat climbs a hill.
17. darts
18. Mama hands out bags.
19. to accompany
20. Keep dad and mom company.



# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Three

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. táo                 | 陶                      |
| 2. dà                  | 大                      |
| 3. dà mǐ               | 大米                     |
| 4. ū                   | (no Chinese character) |
| 5. dù                  | 肚                      |
| 6. mù                  | 木                      |
| 7. fú                  | 扶                      |
| 8. tú                  | 图                      |
| 9. dài                 | 带                      |
| 10. ná lái ba.         | 拿来吧。                   |
| 11. nǎi nai            | 奶奶                     |
| 12. mù bǎn             | 木板                     |
| 13. tài tǔ             | 太土                     |
| 14. é                  | 鹅                      |
| 15. dé                 | 得                      |
| 16. tè                 | 特                      |
| 17. tè dà              | 特大                     |
| 18. nà me              | 那么                     |
| 19. dà mǐ tè bái.      | 大米特白。                  |
| 20. nǎi nai tán pí pá. | 奶奶弹琵琶。                 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Three Translations

1. pottery
2. big
3. white rice
4. letter “u”
5. stomach
6. wood
7. to support
8. picture, drawing
9. belt
10. Bring it here.
11. nanna (endearing term for grandmother)
12. wooden board
13. too unsophisticated
14. goose
15. get / obtain
16. special
17. especially big
18. so
19. Rice is especially white.
20. Grandma plays the pipa.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Four

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. ān                  | 安                      |
| 2. dǎ léi              | 打雷                     |
| 3. ǔ                   | (no Chinese character) |
| 4. nǚ                  | 女                      |
| 5. nǚ / tǔ             | 女 / 土                  |
| 6. nán nǚ              | 男女                     |
| 7. lǚ                  | 侣                      |
| 8. bàn lǚ              | 伴侣                     |
| 9. péi běn le.         | 赔本了。                   |
| 10. tā lè le.          | 他乐了。                   |
| 11. nǐ hǎo ma?         | 你好吗?                   |
| 12. lǐ mào             | 礼貌                     |
| 13. tài nán le!        | 太难了!                   |
| 14. lāo miàn           | 捞面                     |
| 15. nǐ lái la!         | 你来啦!                   |
| 16. liú                | 留                      |
| 17. diū                | 丢                      |
| 18. pí bāo diū le.     | 皮包丢了。                  |
| 19. dì dì pǎo lái le.  | 弟弟跑来了。                 |
| 20. bā ba mā ma ài nǐ. | 爸爸妈妈爱你。                |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Four Translations

1. peaceful
2. thunder
3. letter "ü"
4. woman
5. woman / soil
6. males and females
7. companion
8. partner
9. sustain losses / lose money
10. He's happy.
11. How are you doing?
12. manners
13. It's too difficult!
14. noodles
15. You're here!
16. to stay
17. to lose
18. (I) lost (my) handbag.
19. Little brother ran over it.
20. Mom and Dad love you.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Five

- |                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| 1. gē                 | 哥      |
| 2. kè                 | 课      |
| 3. kěn                | 啃      |
| 4. áng                | 昂      |
| 5. gāng               | 钢      |
| 6. kēng               | 坑      |
| 7. dǐng               | 顶      |
| 8. gèng               | 更      |
| 9. bǐng               | 饼      |
| 10. lào bǐng          | 烙饼     |
| 11. tài bàng le!      | 太棒了！   |
| 12. kè táng           | 课堂     |
| 13. tài píng          | 太平     |
| 14. dēng pào          | 灯泡     |
| 15. mèi mei           | 妹妹     |
| 16. gē ge bāng máng.  | 哥哥帮忙。  |
| 17. kěn lào bǐng      | 啃烙饼    |
| 18. guō               | 锅      |
| 19. luó bo            | 萝卜     |
| 20. luó bo tè bié dà. | 萝卜特别大。 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Five Translations

1. older brother
2. class
3. to gnaw
4. to lift
5. steel
6. pit / hole
7. top
8. more
9. cake
10. pancake
11. Awesome!
12. classroom
13. peace
14. light bulb
15. younger sister
16. The older brother is helping.
17. to eat a pancake
18. pot
19. radish
20. The radish is very big.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Six

- |                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 1. hē                   | 喝      |
| 2. hǎo                  | 好      |
| 3. nǐn hǎo!             | 您好!    |
| 4. hē tāng              | 喝汤     |
| 5. jī                   | 机      |
| 6. jǐ gè                | 几个     |
| 7. lǐ jiě               | 理解     |
| 8. jiě jie              | 姐姐     |
| 9. huá                  | 华      |
| 10. jì huà              | 计划     |
| 11. jì lǚ               | 纪律     |
| 12. mǎ hu               | 马虎     |
| 13. dà jiā hǎo!         | 大家好!   |
| 14. hé jiā huān         | 合家欢    |
| 15. jīn tiān            | 今天     |
| 16. jiě jie guǎn dì dì. | 姐姐管弟弟。 |
| 17. pí bāo hěn hǎo kàn. | 皮包很好看。 |
| 18. nǐ hěn néng gàn.    | 你很能干。  |
| 19. tā āi jī jiàn.      | 她爱击剑。  |
| 20. bā ba tài bàng le!  | 爸爸太棒了! |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Six Translations

1. to drink
2. good
3. Hello! (polite)
4. to drink soup
5. machine
6. a few
7. to understand
8. older sister
9. magnificent
10. plan
11. discipline
12. careless
13. Hello everyone!
14. happy family
15. today
16. Older sister is taking care of younger brother.
17. The handbag looks very nice.
18. You are very capable.
19. She loves fencing.
20. Dad's great!



# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Seven

- |     |                         |         |
|-----|-------------------------|---------|
| 1.  | dì di hěn bàng!         | 弟弟很棒!   |
| 2.  | qī                      | 七       |
| 3.  | qǐ                      | 起       |
| 4.  | qǐ lái                  | 起来      |
| 5.  | xí                      | 习       |
| 6.  | xīn                     | 新       |
| 7.  | xià                     | 下       |
| 8.  | xī guā                  | 西瓜      |
| 9.  | dàn gāo                 | 蛋糕      |
| 10. | qù                      | 去       |
| 11. | qián                    | 钱       |
| 12. | péi qián                | 赔钱      |
| 13. | lǚ xíng                 | 旅行      |
| 14. | jiān qiáng              | 坚强      |
| 15. | fú qì                   | 福气      |
| 16. | xià kè le.              | 下课了。    |
| 17. | qiē dàn gāo             | 切蛋糕     |
| 18. | tāng tài xī le.         | 汤太稀了。   |
| 19. | tā qù běi jīng le.      | 他去北京了。  |
| 20. | jiě jie qiē le dàn gāo. | 姐姐切了蛋糕。 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Seven Translations

1. The younger brother's great!
2. seven
3. to rise
4. get up
5. habit
6. new
7. down
8. watermelon
9. cake
10. to go
11. money
12. to lose money
13. to travel
14. strong
15. lucky
16. Class is over.
17. to cut a cake
18. The soup is too thin.
19. He went to Beijing.
20. The older sister cuts the cake.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Eight

- |                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| 1. zǔ guó                | 祖国     |
| 2. zài nǎ lǐ?            | 在哪里?   |
| 3. zì                    | 自      |
| 4. zì jǐ                 | 自己     |
| 5. zū fáng zi            | 租房子    |
| 6. cí                    | 瓷      |
| 7. cí qì                 | 瓷器     |
| 8. zuò cāo               | 做操     |
| 9. cān jiā               | 参加     |
| 10. sūn zi               | 孙子     |
| 11. gào sù               | 告诉     |
| 12. sī                   | 丝      |
| 13. sī jīn               | 丝巾     |
| 14. zǐ xì                | 仔细     |
| 15. mā ma de sī jīn      | 妈妈的丝巾  |
| 16. zuò zǎo cāo          | 做早操    |
| 17. cān jiā zuò zǎo cāo  | 参加做早操  |
| 18. zā qǐ lái            | 扎起来    |
| 19. bǎ biàn zi zā qǐ lái | 把辫子扎起来 |
| 20. qǐng nǐ gào sù tā.   | 请你告诉她。 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Eight Translations

1. homeland
2. Where is it?
3. self
4. oneself
5. rent a house
6. porcelain (clay)
7. porcelain (container)
8. to do exercises
9. to participate
10. grandson
11. to tell
12. silk
13. silk scarf
14. very careful
15. Mom's silk scarf
16. to do morning exercises
17. to participate in morning exercises
18. to tie up
19. braids tied up
20. Please tell her.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Nine

- |                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| 1. chéng jì                   | 成绩      |
| 2. zhǎng dà                   | 长大      |
| 3. zhōng guó                  | 中国      |
| 4. zhī                        | 知       |
| 5. zhī dào                    | 知道      |
| 6. chī fàn                    | 吃饭      |
| 7. shuì jiào                  | 睡觉      |
| 8. shuǐ jiǎo                  | 水饺      |
| 9. zāi shù                    | 栽树      |
| 10. shì qing                  | 事情      |
| 11. nǐ zhī dào le ma?         | 你知道了吗?  |
| 12. nǐ chī fàn le ma?         | 你吃饭了吗?  |
| 13. jǐ diǎn zhōng?            | 几点钟?    |
| 14. xiān sheng                | 先生      |
| 15. xiān sheng shēng bìng le. | 先生生病了。  |
| 16. bú shì tài guì            | 不是太贵    |
| 17. xī guā hěn hǎo chī.       | 西瓜很好吃。  |
| 18. sī jīn zhēn hǎo kàn.      | 丝巾真好看。  |
| 19. xiǎo māo zhēn kě ài.      | 小猫真可爱。  |
| 20. xiǎo dì dì zhǎng gāo le.  | 小弟弟长高了。 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Nine Translations

1. achievement, grades
2. to grow up
3. China
4. to know
5. known
6. to eat (in general)
7. to go to bed / to sleep
8. dumplings
9. to plant a tree
10. affair, thing
11. Do you know?
12. Did you eat yet?
13. What time is it?
14. Mr. or Mister
15. The man is sick.
16. not too expensive
17. Watermelon tastes very good.
18. Scarves (are) really nice.
19. The little cat is very cute.
20. The little boy grew very tall.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Ten

- |                        |        |
|------------------------|--------|
| 1. xī ān               | 西安     |
| 2. nóng cūn            | 农村     |
| 3. gōng fu             | 功夫     |
| 4. rù                  | 入      |
| 5. chū rù              | 出入     |
| 6. rú guǒ              | 如果     |
| 7. ruì                 | 瑞      |
| 8. nèi róng            | 内容     |
| 9. rì                  | 日      |
| 10. rì zi              | 日子     |
| 11. shēng rì           | 生日     |
| 12. rén mín bì         | 人民币    |
| 13. rén shān rén hǎi   | 人山人海   |
| 14. ěr duo             | 耳朵     |
| 15. èr shí sān         | 二十三    |
| 16. qián tú            | 前途     |
| 17. xī ān shì gǔ dū.   | 西安是古都。 |
| 18. chū rù píng ān     | 出入平安   |
| 19. zūn zhòng lǎo rén. | 尊重老人。  |
| 20. shuí shì nǐ mā ma? | 谁是你妈妈? |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Ten Translations

1. Xi'an (the capital of Shaanxi province)
2. countryside
3. kung fu
4. to enter
5. to leave and come back
6. if
7. lucky
8. content
9. sun
10. day
11. birthday
12. Chinese currency
13. a huge crowd
14. ear
15. twenty-three
16. prospects, future outlook
17. Xi'an is an ancient capital.
18. peace wherever you go
19. Respect your elders.
20. Who is your mother?



# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Eleven

- |                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| 1. wú xī                        | 无锡       |
| 2. wú liàng                     | 无量       |
| 3. wǒ de                        | 我的       |
| 4. wáng                         | 王        |
| 5. wén zhāng                    | 文章       |
| 6. wǔ shù                       | 武术       |
| 7. tiào wǔ                      | 跳舞       |
| 8. dǎ suàn                      | 打算       |
| 9. dà wáng                      | 大王       |
| 10. shuài jí le                 | 帅极了      |
| 11. wǒ shì měi guó rén.         | 我是美国人。   |
| 12. kuài pǎo                    | 快跑       |
| 13. wo de biàn zi               | 我的辫子     |
| 14. nǚ hái tiào wǔ              | 女孩跳舞     |
| 15. nán hái xǐ huan wǔ shù.     | 男孩喜欢武术。  |
| 16. sūn wù kōng shì dà wáng.    | 孙悟空是大王。  |
| 17. nǐ dǎ suàn zěn me zuò?      | 你打算怎么做?  |
| 18. xiǎo māo hěn hǎo wánr.      | 小猫很好玩儿。  |
| 19. nǐ de wén zhāng xiě de hǎo. | 你的文章写得好。 |
| 20. wǒ ài wǒ de zǔ guó.         | 我爱我的祖国。  |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Eleven Translations

1. Wuxi (a city in Jiangsu province)
2. immeasurable
3. mine
4. family name / king
5. article
6. martial arts
7. dance
8. intend / plan
9. a powerful king
10. very handsome
11. I am American.
12. run
13. my braid
14. girl dancing
15. Boys like martial arts.
16. The Monkey King is the king.
17. What do you plan to do?
18. The little cat is fun to play with.
19. Your article is very well written.
20. I love my homeland.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Twelve

- |                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| 1. huī                          | 灰        |
| 2. wēi lì                       | 威力       |
| 3. wěi dà                       | 伟大       |
| 4. méi gui                      | 玫瑰       |
| 5. zhuī                         | 追        |
| 6. tài guì le                   | 太贵了      |
| 7. chī kuī le                   | 吃亏了      |
| 8. kāi huì                      | 开会       |
| 9. chuī fēng                    | 吹风       |
| 10. wèi le                      | 为了       |
| 11. wēi xiào                    | 微笑       |
| 12. guǐ dào                     | 轨道       |
| 13. guī lái                     | 归来       |
| 14. pái duì                     | 排队       |
| 15. xiǎo tuǐ                    | 小腿       |
| 16. wǒ huí lái la!              | 我回来啦！    |
| 17. wéi hù                      | 维护       |
| 18. zhè tiáo sī jīn             | 这条丝巾     |
| 19. zhè tiáo sī jīn tài guì le! | 这条丝巾太贵了！ |
| 20. xiàn zài wǒ men kāi huì.    | 现在我们开会。  |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Twelve Translations

1. ash
2. power
3. great (exceptional)
4. rose
5. to chase
6. too expensive
7. lost
8. a meeting
9. wind blowing
10. in order to
11. slight smile
12. railway line
13. to come back
14. to wait in line / line up
15. lower leg, calf
16. I'm back!
17. to defend, to protect
18. this silk scarf
19. This silk scarf is too expensive!
20. We will start the meeting now.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Thirteen

- |                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| 1. duō                         | 多        |
| 2. dōu                         | 都        |
| 3. tóu                         | 头        |
| 4. tóu qiú                     | 投球       |
| 5. zhōu qī                     | 周期       |
| 6. sī chóu                     | 丝绸       |
| 7. luò tuo                     | 骆驼       |
| 8. qí luò tuo                  | 骑骆驼      |
| 9. bāo kuò                     | 包括       |
| 10. huā duǒ                    | 花朵       |
| 11. gāo lóu                    | 高楼       |
| 12. gāo lóu dà shà             | 高楼大厦     |
| 13. bō luó                     | 菠萝       |
| 14. shuǐ guǒ                   | 水果       |
| 15. fù mǔ dōu hǎo.             | 父母都好。    |
| 16. duó dé jīn pái             | 夺得金牌     |
| 17. bō luó shì shuǐ guǒ.       | 菠萝是水果。   |
| 18. wǒ xǐ huan chī píng guǒ.   | 我喜欢吃苹果。  |
| 19. sī jīn shì sī chóu zuò de. | 丝巾是丝绸做的。 |
| 20. dà jiā dōu lái le ma?      | 大家都来了吗?  |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Thirteen Translations

1. many
2. all
3. head
4. to throw a ball
5. period, cycle
6. silk
7. camel
8. to ride a camel
9. include
10. flower
11. high building
12. high-rise buildings
13. pineapple
14. fruit(s)
15. My parents are fine.
16. to win a gold medal
17. Pineapples are fruit.
18. I like to eat apples.
19. Silk scarves are made from silk cloth.
20. Is everyone here?

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Fourteen

- |                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| 1. wēn shuǐ                     | 温水      |
| 2. huáng hé                     | 黄河      |
| 3. huáng sè de píng guǒ         | 黄色的苹果   |
| 4. shuāng                       | 双       |
| 5. zhuāng                       | 庄       |
| 6. cūn zhuāng                   | 村庄      |
| 7. wāng yáng dà hǎi             | 汪洋大海    |
| 8. jué dìng                     | 决定      |
| 9. chuāng hù                    | 窗户      |
| 10. lǎo wēng                    | 老翁      |
| 11. wǎng luò                    | 网络      |
| 12. shuāng shǒu                 | 双手      |
| 13. guǎng chǎng                 | 广场      |
| 14. wǒ kùn le.                  | 我困了。    |
| 15. qíng kuàng                  | 情况      |
| 16. jīn huáng sè                | 金黄色     |
| 17. shàng wǎng chá xún          | 上网查询    |
| 18. huáng hé de shuǐ hěn huáng. | 黄河的水很黄。 |
| 19. shén me qíng kuàng?         | 什么情况?   |
| 20. tā jué dìng qù běi jīng.    | 她决定去北京。 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Fourteen Translations

1. warm water
2. the Yellow River
3. yellow apple
4. a pair
5. a manor or an upscale shop
6. a countryside village
7. a large sea
8. to decide
9. window
10. old man
11. internet
12. pair of hands
13. square / plaza
14. I'm sleepy.
15. situation
16. gold colored
17. to search online
18. The water in the Yellow River is very yellow.
19. What is happening?
20. She decided to go to Beijing.



# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Fifteen

- |                                   |         |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 1. míng bai                       | 明白      |
| 2. yī fu                          | 衣服      |
| 3. yīn                            | 阴       |
| 4. yīn tiān                       | 阴天      |
| 5. yì shuāng xié                  | 一双鞋     |
| 6. yìn                            | 印       |
| 7. dǎ yìn                         | 打印      |
| 8. yé ye                          | 爷爷      |
| 9. yì bēi                         | 一杯      |
| 10. yāo qiú                       | 要求      |
| 11. yín háng                      | 银行      |
| 12. yīng gāi                      | 应该      |
| 13. yīn shuǐ                      | 饮水      |
| 14. dà qiáo                       | 大桥      |
| 15. dà tīng                       | 大厅      |
| 16. dǎ tīng                       | 打听      |
| 17. bō luó hěn yìng.              | 菠萝很硬。   |
| 18. yī fu shàng yìn le huā        | 衣服上印了花  |
| 19. yé ye ài nǚ nai.              | 爷爷爱奶奶。  |
| 20. xiàn shàng yì duǒ méi guì huā | 献上一朵玫瑰花 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Fifteen Translations

1. to understand
2. clothes
3. cloudy
4. cloudy weather
5. a pair of shoes
6. to print (in general)
7. print / type
8. grandpa
9. a cup / glass
10. to request
11. bank
12. should / must
13. drinking water
14. big bridge
15. hall
16. to ask about
17. Pineapples are very hard.
18. floral-patterned clothes
19. Grandpa loves grandma.
20. give a rose

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Sixteen

- |                                    |           |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. yǒu                             | 有         |
| 2. yòng                            | 用         |
| 3. yǒu yòng                        | 有用        |
| 4. yóu yǒng                        | 游泳        |
| 5. péng you                        | 朋友        |
| 6. liàng                           | 亮         |
| 7. yǒng gǎn                        | 勇敢        |
| 8. xióng                           | 熊         |
| 9. běi jí xióng                    | 北极熊       |
| 10. kào yòu biān                   | 靠右边       |
| 11. cháng jiāng                    | 长江        |
| 12. cháng jiāng dà qiáo            | 长江大桥      |
| 13. cài hěn xiāng.                 | 菜很香。      |
| 14. tiān liàng le.                 | 天亮了。      |
| 15. xiàng nán zǒu                  | 向南走       |
| 16. wǒ jiā yǒu huā yuán.           | 我家有花园。    |
| 17. chūn tiān yòu kāi huā le.      | 春天又开花了。   |
| 18. nǐ yǒu shū bāo ma?             | 你有书包吗?    |
| 19. xué zhōng wén yǒu yòng.        | 学中文有用。    |
| 20. tā hé péng yǒu yì qǐ yóu yǒng. | 他和朋友一起游泳。 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Sixteen Translations

1. to have
2. to use
3. useful
4. to swim
5. friend
6. bright
7. brave
8. bear
9. polar bear
10. keep right
11. the Yangtze River
12. Yangtze River Bridge
13. The food smells good.
14. It's morning.
15. heading south
16. My house has a garden.
17. Spring is blooming again.
18. Do you have a backpack?
19. Learning Chinese is useful.
20. He is swimming with friends.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Seventeen

- |     |                              |          |
|-----|------------------------------|----------|
| 1.  | chūn tiān                    | 春天       |
| 2.  | yūe                          | 约        |
| 3.  | yùe dú                       | 阅读       |
| 4.  | yè zi                        | 叶子       |
| 5.  | yuè liang                    | 月亮       |
| 6.  | yú                           | 鱼        |
| 7.  | dà yàn                       | 大雁       |
| 8.  | yuàn yì                      | 愿意       |
| 9.  | yě                           | 也        |
| 10. | yáo yuǎn                     | 遥远       |
| 11. | bái yún                      | 白云       |
| 12. | lán tiān bái yún             | 蓝天白云     |
| 13. | yùe dú bào zhǐ               | 阅读报纸     |
| 14. | wǒ yě qù.                    | 我也去。     |
| 15. | jīn wǎn yuè liang zhēn yuán. | 今晚月亮真圆。  |
| 16. | nín yuàn yì qù ma?           | 您愿意去吗?   |
| 17. | yáo yuǎn de dōng fāng        | 遥远的东方    |
| 18. | dà yàn fēi huí běi fāng.     | 大雁飞回北方。  |
| 19. | yú zài shuǐ lǐ ...           | 鱼在水里 ... |
| 20. | yóu lái yóu qù.              | 游来游去。    |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Seventeen Translations

1. spring
2. to make an appointment
3. to read
4. leaf
5. the moon
6. fish
7. wild geese
8. to be willing
9. also
10. distant
11. white clouds
12. blue sky with white clouds
13. reading a newspaper
14. I'll go too.
15. The moon is very round tonight.
16. Would you (polite) be willing to go?
17. the distant East
18. Wild geese fly back to the north.
19. Fish in the water ...
20. are swimming.

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Eighteen

- |                                     |         |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. shàng hǎi                        | 上海      |
| 2. guǎng zhōu                       | 广州      |
| 3. cóng                             | 从       |
| 4. cóng shàng hǎi dào<br>guǎng zhōu | 从上海到广州  |
| 5. lǚ yóu                           | 旅游      |
| 6. cháng chéng                      | 长城      |
| 7. gù gōng                          | 故宫      |
| 8. měi guó                          | 美国      |
| 9. cóng měi guó dào<br>zhōng guó    | 从美国到中国  |
| 10. hěn yuǎn                        | 很远      |
| 11. chéng fēi jī                    | 乘飞机     |
| 12. shí jǐ gè xiǎo shí              | 十几个小时   |
| 13. jiù jīn shān                    | 旧金山     |
| 14. nǚ yuē                          | 纽约      |
| 15. luò shān jī                     | 洛杉矶     |
| 16. huá shèng dùn                   | 华盛顿     |
| 17. bō shì dùn                      | 波士顿     |
| 18. hěn dà                          | 很大      |
| 19. hěn piào liang                  | 很漂亮     |
| 20. wǒ hěn xǐ huān nǚ yuē.          | 我很喜欢纽约。 |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Eighteen Translations

1. Shanghai
2. Guangzhou (a city in Guangdong province)
3. from
4. from Shanghai to Guangzhou
5. tourism, to travel
6. the Great Wall of China
7. the Forbidden City
8. America / United States
9. from the US to China
10. very far
11. to take an airplane
12. more than ten hours
13. San Francisco
14. New York
15. Los Angeles
16. Washington, D.C.
17. Boston
18. very big
19. very pretty
20. I really like New York.



# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Nineteen

- |                               |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| 1. zǎo cān                    | 早餐       |
| 2. wǔ cān                     | 午餐       |
| 3. wǎn cān                    | 晚餐       |
| 4. nǐ chī zǎo cān le ma?      | 你吃早餐了吗?  |
| 5. wǎn cān chī shén me?       | 晚餐吃什么?   |
| 6. wǎn cān yǒu yú hé shū cài. | 晚餐有鱼和蔬菜。 |
| 7. yǐn liào                   | 饮料       |
| 8. yào hē yǐn liào ma?        | 要喝饮料吗?   |
| 9. chá                        | 茶        |
| 10. lǜ chá                    | 绿茶       |
| 11. lóng jǐng chá             | 龙井茶      |
| 12. kā fēi                    | 咖啡       |
| 13. jiā nǎi de kā fēi         | 加奶的咖啡    |
| 14. sù róng kā fēi            | 速溶咖啡     |
| 15. jiǎo zi                   | 饺子       |
| 16. mǐ fàn                    | 米饭       |
| 17. qīng cài                  | 青菜       |
| 18. ròu                       | 肉        |
| 19. niú ròu                   | 牛肉       |
| 20. zhū ròu                   | 猪肉       |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Nineteen Translations

1. breakfast
2. lunch
3. dinner
4. Have you had breakfast yet?
5. What are we eating for dinner?
6. We have fish and vegetables for dinner.
7. beverage
8. Would you like something to drink?
9. tea
10. green tea
11. Longjing tea
12. coffee
13. coffee with milk
14. instant coffee
15. dumplings
16. cooked rice
17. vegetables
18. meat
19. beef
20. pork

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Twenty

- |                                    |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. dào běi jīng lǚ yóu             | 到北京旅游    |
| 2. cān guǎn                        | 餐馆       |
| 3. nǎ jiā cān guǎn hǎo chī?        | 哪家餐馆好吃?  |
| 4. yí dìng                         | 一定       |
| 5. yào qù                          | 要去       |
| 6. kǎo yā diàn                     | 烤鸭店      |
| 7. quán jù dé                      | 全聚德      |
| 8. quán jù dé kǎo yā diàn          | 全聚德烤鸭店   |
| 9. zhōng cān guǎn                  | 中餐馆      |
| 10. xī cān tīng                    | 西餐厅      |
| 11. měi guó de dà chéng shì        | 美国的大城市   |
| 12. yǒu zhōng guó chéng            | 有中国城     |
| 13. yǒu xǔ duō zhōng cān guǎn.     | 有许多中餐馆。  |
| 14. wǒ xǐ huan zhōng cān.          | 我喜欢中餐。   |
| 15. wǒ yě xǐ huan xī cān.          | 我也喜欢西餐。  |
| 16. nǐ xiǎng yào shén me yǐn liào? | 你想要什么饮料? |
| 17. wǒ xiǎng yào yì bēi chá.       | 我想要一杯茶。  |
| 18. nǐ xiǎng diǎn shén me cài?     | 你想点什么菜?  |
| 19. wǒ yào yì zhī kǎo yā.          | 我要一只烤鸭。  |
| 20. kǎo yā hěn hǎo chī.            | 烤鸭很好吃。   |

# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Lesson Twenty Translations

1. touring Beijing
2. restaurant
3. Which restaurants are good?
4. must
5. to go
6. a restaurant that makes roast duck
7. Quanjude
8. Quanjude, a famous Chinese restaurant
9. Chinese restaurant
10. Western restaurant
11. major cities in the US
12. has a Chinatown
13. There are many Chinese restaurants.
14. I like Chinese food.
15. I also like Western-style food.
16. What would you like to drink?
17. I would like to order a cup of tea.
18. What do you want to order?
19. I want to order a roast duck.
20. Roast duck tastes very good.

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### Culture Notes

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.....  
: *Travelers should always check with* :  
: *their nation's State Department for* :  
: *current advisories on local conditions* :  
: *before traveling abroad.* :  
.....

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# Mandarin Chinese 1

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# Mandarin Chinese 1

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# Mandarin Chinese 1

## Introduction

Learning any language is enhanced by some knowledge of the cultural customs and beliefs of its native speakers. Developing an awareness of and a sensitivity to a language's subtleties are inherent to acquiring true fluency. The following "Notes" for Pimsleur's *Mandarin 1* are meant to provide you with an introduction as to how the language and the culture are intertwined.

## Mandarin

Mandarin is standard spoken Chinese, used by the government, in the schools, and on radio and TV broadcasts. Although there are eight major Chinese dialects, Mandarin is native to approximately seventy percent of the population and is the only dialect that has a corresponding written form of the language. Chinese who are educated through at least the primary grades speak Mandarin as well as local dialects. However, due to the size of China and the ethnic diversity of its inhabitants, hundreds of other dialects are spoken in different areas. The dialects spoken today are based more on geography than on ethnicity. For instance, residents of Shanghai will speak *wu*. In some parts of China, particularly the central and southern areas, education and official business are transacted in the locally dominant language. Although people from different parts of

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China may not understand one another's spoken language, they use the same basic set of characters for writing.

Today's Mandarin is closely based on "northern speech" which was the lingua franca of the ruling class, spoken in Beijing, the capital during the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties. After the Qing Dynasty collapsed in 1912, the new Republic government decided to retain Mandarin as the "National Language," *guo yu* in Chinese. The Communists, who defeated the Nationalists in 1949, continued this policy, but they changed the name and coined the term *pu tong hua* or "common speech" for "Mandarin." This is the word for Mandarin used throughout mainland China. In Hong Kong, however, as in Taiwan and most overseas communities, *guo yu*, the older term, continues to be used.

## Chinese Characters

Traditionally, Chinese characters are divided into six different categories. It is commonly thought that every Chinese character is a picture, or "pictograph," but only a few hundred of the several thousand characters are true pictographs. However, most of these are now written in such a way that it is difficult to immediately guess their meaning. There is also a very small group of characters called "ideographs"

# Mandarin Chinese 1

or "ideograms," which represent ideas or objects directly. An example would be the character for blade. It is based on the pictograph for knife with the addition of an extra stroke marking the blade.

Ideograms and pictographs can be combined to form associative compounds, for instance, doubling the pictograph for tree to mean woods. A fourth category is comprised of phonetic loan characters. There is also a fifth category with a very small number of modified cognates, characters that have taken on different forms through orthographic and semantic changes. However, by far the most significant category is the so-called phono-semantic compounds, meaning the characters combine phonetic as well as semantic clues. These represent about 90% of the characters in use today.

## **Traditional & Simplified Script**

In the 1950s, in order to promote literacy, the Chinese government decided to "simplify" the existing characters by reducing the number of strokes necessary to create them. By 1964, a list of 2,238 simplified characters was created. Further simplification was briefly adopted, then quickly abandoned in the 1970s.

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Presently, simplified characters are used in mainland China and Singapore. Hong Kong, Taiwan, and most overseas Chinese communities continue to use the traditional characters.

## Tonality

Chinese is a monosyllabic language with an abundance of homonyms. The tone with which a syllable is pronounced helps to determine its meaning. Each tone has a name which describes the relative pitch of the main vowel. In this way, several meanings can be assigned to any one syllable, depending on the tone with which it is pronounced. For example, when pronounced using a falling-rising tone, the word *nar* means "where." However, when this word is pronounced with just a falling tone, *nar*, it means "there."

There are four basic tones in Mandarin: high level, rising, falling-rising, and falling. In addition, there is a "soft" sound which is used for the second syllable of certain compound words, as well as particles, words that convey grammatical and other meanings. The soft tone is also known as the neutral tone since its pitch contour is determined by the preceding tone.

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Here is an example of one sound with several possible meanings, depending on the tone with which it is pronounced:

**1<sup>st</sup> tone (High)**

*shi* – "poem"

**2<sup>nd</sup> tone (Rising)**

*shi* – "ten"

**3<sup>rd</sup> tone (Falling-rising)**

*shi* – "history"

**4<sup>th</sup> tone (Falling)**

*shi* – all the forms of "to be"

Remember that Chinese is rich in homonyms, which means a single syllable can take many different written forms and convey different meanings.

## Tone Change in Mandarin

Although each Chinese syllable standing alone has a specific tone, in the flow of speech the tone of a syllable can change depending on the tone of the following syllable. In some Chinese dialects, tone change is common, and there are complex rules governing it. In contemporary Mandarin, however, it is less common than in other dialects, and there are only a few rules regarding tone change to remember. The first rule governs falling-rising (3<sup>rd</sup>) tones when they are spoken in sequence:

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1. When two falling-rising (3<sup>rd</sup>) tones occur together, the first falling-rising tone becomes a rising (2<sup>nd</sup>) tone. The second remains a falling-rising (3<sup>rd</sup>) tone.

For example, *hen* ("very") and *hao* ("good") are both falling-rising (3<sup>rd</sup>) tones by themselves, but when spoken together as *hen hao*, the first word changes to a rising (2<sup>nd</sup>) tone, while the second keeps its original falling-rising (3<sup>rd</sup>) tone.

2. When three falling-rising tones are spoken one after the other, the first two become rising (2<sup>nd</sup>) tones, while the third remains a falling-rising tone.
3. When four falling-rising tones occur one after the other, the first three change from falling-rising tones to rising (2<sup>nd</sup>) tones, while the fourth remains a falling-rising (3<sup>rd</sup>) tone.

In contemporary Mandarin, tone change is also associated with two specific characters. The first of these is *yi* or "one."

1. The character *yi* is a high level (1<sup>st</sup>) tone when it is by itself or at the end of a word.
2. When *yi* comes before a falling (4<sup>th</sup>) tone, it changes to a rising (2<sup>nd</sup>) tone, for example, *yi* (2<sup>nd</sup>) *yue* (4<sup>th</sup>) ("one month").



# Mandarin Chinese 1

3. When *yi* comes before any of the three remaining tones (high, rising, or falling-rising), it changes to a falling (4<sup>th</sup>) tone.

The second character associated with tone change in contemporary Mandarin is *bu* ("no" or "not").

1. When *bu* stands alone, it is a falling (4<sup>th</sup>) tone.
2. The character *bu* changes tone in only one combination. When it comes before another falling (4<sup>th</sup>) tone, it changes to a rising (2<sup>nd</sup>) tone.
3. When combined with all the other tones, *bu* remains a falling 4<sup>th</sup> tone.

## Traditional Language Beliefs

Just as the number thirteen is traditionally regarded as unlucky in the West, the Chinese number four, *si*, is seen as ominous, because it is very similar to the pronunciation of the word for "death." For this reason, you may not find a fourth floor in some Chinese-speaking communities. The only difference in this case is that "four," *si*, is pronounced with a falling tone, while the word for "death," *si*, is pronounced with a tone that falls and rises again.

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Conversely, the number eight, *ba*, is regarded as lucky, since it shares the same ending sound with the character meaning "to prosper," *fa*.

The number nine, *jiu*, carries a positive meaning as this word sounds exactly like the Chinese word meaning "long-lasting," *jiu*. These two words are represented in writing by two different characters, but when spoken, the distinction is made only through context.

## Color Symbolism

Colors tend to be associated with different meanings in different cultures. It's often useful to be aware of these different connotations.

In Chinese culture, the color red traditionally implies good fortune or good cheer. It is customary to use this color when decorating for such traditional occasions as the celebration of a wedding or a birth. For this reason, brides wear red, babies are clad in red, and red is used most often when decorating for the annual festivals. However, in today's China, many people are adopting more typically Western styles of dress. For instance, many brides are combining Eastern and Western traditions, choosing to wear a white gown to the wedding ceremony, and then changing into a traditional red gown for the wedding banquet.

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In the West, the prevalent color seen at a funeral is black, but the main color seen at funerals in China is white, the Chinese traditional color of mourning.

## Names and Titles

As in many other Asian cultures, in China the society or group is valued more highly than the individual. Your importance is measured by your value to the group, rather than by those qualities which distinguish you from others.

This can be seen in the way a person is named in Chinese. The most important element of the person's name is thought to be the family of which he or she is a member, and so the family name is spoken first. The given name, which sets the person apart even from others within the same family, is the final element. For example, in the name *Wang Zhuo Hua*, *Wang* is the family name, or surname, and *Zhuo Hua* the given name. Some surnames have a specific meaning: *Wang*, a very common Chinese surname, means "king."

The given name is represented by either one or two one-syllable characters. A child's given name is usually chosen very carefully, to represent the parents' hopes for and expectations of the child. In the given name *Zhuo Hua*, *Zhuo* means "outstanding" or "remarkable," while *Hua* can mean "magnificent" or "extravagant."

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Westerners are usually referred to by a phonetic representation of their names. Japanese and Korean names are pronounced according to their corresponding forms in Chinese characters.

Children usually take their fathers' family names; on rare occasions the mother's family name may also be used. Most family names are written using single characters. There are a few two-character last names in use: among these, *Situ* and *Ouyoung* are two of the most common.

## **The Concept of *mian zi* — "Face"**

Language is not an isolated phenomenon, but a vibrant, flexible form of communication loaded with social and cultural information. Chinese culture is structured around such values as honor, loyalty, and respect. In fact, the respect with which a person's community regards him or her can serve as an important part of that person's identity. In Mandarin, this is often referred to as *mian zi*, or "face." Here are some common phrases illustrating this concept:

*you mian zi*, "to have face," means to be shown respect in a certain social situation. For example, when attending a banquet, those seated near the host at the head of the table can be said "to have face," *you mian zi*.

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Similarly, *gei mian zi*, "to give face," means to show someone the respect due him or her. When you attend a formal dinner, the host and hostess might greet you by saying, "Thank you for giving face," which is equivalent to saying, "Thank you for coming."

*diu lian*," "to lose face," means "to lose dignity." For example, you are thought to lose face if you are the only one of a certain group who is passed over for a promotion or who fails to receive an invitation to a sought-after event.

## Compliments

Modesty is seen as an essential virtue in Chinese culture. This humility is shown by some typical responses a Chinese person will give when complimented. For example, a woman who is told *ni zhen piao liang* ("You are really very beautiful") could answer, *na li?* This literally means, "Where is it?" Used in this way, it is the same as saying, "Where do you get that?"

Another common response to a compliment might be, *kua jiang le!* This means something like, "Excessive praise!" and it's used to say, "You're exaggerating," or "You're flattering me." Either of these can be used as a polite, modest response to almost any compliment. Some more Westernized

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people may also answer simply, *xie xie ni* or "thank you" when complimented, but this is less common.

## Chinese Cuisine and Tea

A traditional Chinese saying, "Food is the first necessity of the people," is reflected in the great variety of Chinese food and its importance in traditional celebrations. There are eight schools of cuisine, each associated with a particular geographic region: *Beijing, Guangdong, Sichuan, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hunan, Anhui, and Fujian.*

The staple of a Chinese meal is *fan* or cooked rice. In the agricultural south, the *fan* may be rice or rice products. In Northern China, noodles, dumplings, and other staples made from wheat flour are the basis of the daily diet. The meat and / or vegetables that accompany the *fan* are called *cai*, or accompanying dishes.

The custom of drinking tea is also an important part of Chinese culture. The Chinese were the first to discover the tea leaf. A proverb states that it is "better to be deprived of food for three days, than tea for one." When a guest arrives, it is traditional that a cup of tea will be brewed for him or her. The preparation of tea is regarded as an art form; the method of brewing it and the utensils used are very important.

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People throughout the country drink tea daily, often in a local tea house, where one may meet informally with friends or associates, or hold a banquet or reception.

## Chinese Zodiac

The Chinese have a system of astrology dating back thousands of years. The Chinese zodiac differs from the Western in that each sign represents an entire year, rather than one month.

According to ancient Chinese legend, Buddha summoned all the animals. He honored those who came by naming a year for them. Thereafter, the characteristics of each animal were given to people born in its year.

The twelve year cycle begins with the Year of the Rat, *shu*; followed in succession by the Year of the Ox, *niu*; Tiger, *hu*; Rabbit, *tu*; Dragon, *long*; Snake, *she*; Horse, *ma*; Goat, *yang*; Monkey, *hou*; Rooster, *ji*; Dog, *gou*; and Boar, *zhu*.

Here is the list of animals associated with each year, along with a list of the qualities traditionally associated with each.

Anyone born during the Year of the **Rat** is expected to be imaginative, charming and generous,

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with a tendency to be quick-tempered and somewhat critical. Recent Years of the Rat have been 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, and 2008. The next one will be in 2020. Among famous people born in the year of the Rat are William Shakespeare and George Washington.

The Year of the **Ox** follows. Someone born during an Ox year is both intelligent and perceptive, as well as one who inspires confidence. Napoleon and Vincent Van Gogh were born in the year of the Ox.

A person born in the Year of the **Tiger** is traditionally courageous and considerate of others, as well as stubborn and emotional. Marco Polo and Mary, Queen of Scots were born in the Year of the Tiger.

If a person is born in the Year of the **Rabbit**, he or she will be affectionate and obliging, successful in the business world despite being shy. Some well-known people born in this year were Confucius, Albert Einstein, and Rudolph Nureyev.

A **Dragon** is a perfectionist who is full of vitality and enthusiasm. Pearl Buck, Joan of Arc, and Sigmund Freud were all born in the Year of the Dragon.



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Someone born in the Year of the **Snake** is wise and beautiful, with a good sense of humor. Famous Snakes were Charles Darwin, Abraham Lincoln, and Edgar Allan Poe.

If you were born in the Year of the **Horse**, you will be intelligent, hard-working, and very independent. Some famous Horses were Rembrandt, Chopin, and Teddy Roosevelt.

Someone born in the Year of the **Goat** will be charming and artistic, but be relatively uncomfortable in a leadership role. Among famous people born in this year were Michelangelo and Mark Twain.

A person born in the Year of the **Monkey** is clever and witty, with a gift for detail. Famous people born in this year were Julius Caesar, Leonardo da Vinci, and Harry Truman.

A **Rooster** is shrewd and outspoken, as well as extravagant. Rudyard Kipling, Enrico Caruso, and Groucho Marx were all born in this year.

Someone born in the Year of the **Dog** is loyal and honest, although demanding of those around him or her. Famous Dogs were Benjamin Franklin and George Gershwin.

A person born in the Year of the **Boar** is sincere, tolerant, and honest, with an ability to carry out

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difficult goals. Albert Schweitzer and Ernest Hemingway were born in this year.

## Hospitality

During your travels, you may find yourself invited to dinner in a Chinese home. Here are some customs which relate to hospitality and correct behavior as a dinner guest.

It is both appropriate and polite to bring a small gift such as a bottle of wine or a tea set. However, it's best not to bring four of anything, as the number four, *si*, is considered unlucky because it is similar to the word meaning death, *si*. Also, a timepiece of any kind would be inappropriate since the words *song zhong*, meaning "give clock," are very similar to the words meaning "attend someone's funeral."

When greeting your host or hostess, you can say *ni hao*, a greeting which means "you (are) good," or "you (are) well." A Chinese "hello," therefore, is a well-wishing hello. *ni hao ma*, or "How are you?" is used by relatives, friends, or acquaintances as an expression of concern, and not as a casual greeting.

As in the West, it's considered rude to immediately begin eating when served. Rather, it's polite to wait until everyone has been seated and all of the dishes have been served. Once this has been

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done, it's customary for the host or hostess to say, *qing*. This is similar to the American expression, "Please start."

At a more formal dinner party, a toast is frequently offered before the food is served. The person offering the toast could say, *gan bei* or "dry the cup." Another common toast is *zhu ni jian kang*, meaning, "I wish you health."

If you have finished while others are still eating, you should say *qing man yong* ("Please, slowly eat") meaning, "Take your time, enjoy your dinner." After this you can leave the table.

When you are leaving the home of your host and hostess, they may say to you, *man zou!* This literally means, "Slowly walk!" and in this situation, it's like saying, "Have a safe trip home!"

## Chinese New Year

Chinese festivals are based on the traditional lunar calendar. The Chinese New Year, known as the Spring Festival or *chun jie*, is the most important festival of the year and usually occurs between January 21<sup>st</sup> and February 19<sup>th</sup>, according to the Western solar calendar. The entire family is present and a great deal of preparation is involved in cooking special foods which have a symbolic value. Dumplings, *jiao zi*, are

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considered lucky because they resemble traditional Chinese gold ingots and will be a part of the northern Chinese meal, while a southern household will have a multi-course banquet with more meat served than usual. The New Year celebration ends with the Lantern Festival on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the new year. Colorful paper lanterns are lit, some with riddles on them. People eat sweet dumplings made from sticky rice.

On the eve of the Chinese New Year, the family stays up through the night to watch fireworks which will scare away demons and bad luck. In rural China, or in a traditional household, an elaborate meal will be laid on the family altar table and offered to the family's forbearers accompanied by incense, paper money, and fruit. People will also kowtow to the ancestors for blessing the family throughout the year.

## Pure and Bright Day

Another important festival is *qing ming*, or "Pure and Bright Day," which is celebrated around April 5<sup>th</sup>. Families visit cemeteries to honor their ancestors and beautify their graves. As this festival occurs in spring, it is also a day for sporting contests, kite flying, and other outdoor activities.

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## Dragon Boat Festival

The festival of *duan wu* is celebrated between late May and early June. The legend connected with this day has to do with the great ancient poet Qu Yuan, who lived more than 2000 years ago in the Kingdom of Chu in southern China. As legend has it, the poet was deeply patriotic. However, maligned by jealous courtiers, Qu Yuan was banished from Chu. Upon learning that Chu had fallen to a rival army, he threw himself into the Miluo River in present-day Hunan province. The people of Chu rushed to the river to try to save him, but it was too late. They threw bamboo shafts filled with rice as a sacrifice to him, so that the fish would eat the rice and not the poet's body. So on this day, people throw rice dumplings into a river to recreate the sacrifice. It is also customary to eat these dumplings called *zong zi*, which are made from glutinous rice, red beans, or pork and even salted duck egg yolks and wrapped in reed leaves.

Today, the celebration also includes dragon-boat races to commemorate the "people's poet." Dragons are regarded as supernatural creatures and symbols of good luck. The dragon-shaped boats are similar to canoes. Teams then race the "dragons" to mark the festival of *duan wu*.

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## Mid-Autumn Day

Mid-Autumn Day, *zhong qiu*, is the most important holiday after the Chinese New Year. It is celebrated on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the eighth month on the lunar calendar. In Chinese culture, the full moon symbolizes "completeness, perfection, reunion." On this day, people eat round "moon cakes" and fruits with a round shape, such as watermelons, oranges, or grapefruits. Traditionally, a person exchanges moon cakes with his or her friends, as well as other gifts. The gift of a moon cake has a ritual significance to the Chinese which is similar to the exchange of Christmas gifts in the West.

## Proverbs

"The sky is high, the emperor is far away." – *shan gao huang di yuan*. The Chinese routinely include such sayings in their everyday conversation and have done so since ancient times. This proverb means that a powerful figure is far away, and one can relax and enjoy a measure of freedom.

Many of these sayings are four to eight characters long. Often they contain literary allusions. As such, they may be difficult to understand for the uneducated, and can be nearly incomprehensible to a foreigner.

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Many can be traced to Chinese classics and are didactic in nature. They are often called set expressions. The following is simply a small selection of the many examples of Chinese set expressions:

**Proverb:** *yi ren de dao, ji quan sheng tian.*

"When one man finds the way to success, even his chickens and dogs ascend to heaven."

**Meaning:** When a man is promoted to a position of authority, all his friends and relatives benefit.

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**Proverb:** *guo he tan shi.*

"Feeling stones while crossing a river."

**Meaning:** Feeling out the situation as one goes.

**Proverb:** *gua tian li xia.*

"Never pull on your shoes in a melon patch; never adjust your cap under a plum tree."

**Meaning:** Don't act suspiciously if you want to avoid being suspected.

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**Proverb:** *yi bu deng tian.*

"One step, ascend heaven."

**Meaning:** This is said of someone who has a meteoric rise in fame or fortune.

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**Proverb:** *lai er bu wang fei li ye.*

"Come and not go not polite."

**Meaning:** It is impolite not to reciprocate.

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**Proverb:** *sheng bai nai bing jia chang shi.*

"Victories, defeats, are a general's ordinary things."

**Meaning:** Another victory or defeat doesn't mean much, it's only one part of a whole; par for the course.

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**Proverb:** *zuo chi shan kong.*

"Sit, eat, mountain empty."

**Meaning:** Sit idle and eat, and in time your whole fortune will be used up.

**Proverb:** *yi luan ji shi.*

"Use egg to strike rock."

**Meaning:** To grossly overestimate one's own strength.

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**Proverb:** *tu qiong bi xian.*

"Map unrolled, dagger revealed."

**Meaning:** Someone's real intention is revealed in the end.

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**Proverb:** *Zhang guan Li dai.*

"Zhang's cap on Li's head."

**Meaning:** To confuse one thing with another.

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**Proverb:** *hu jia hu wei.*

"A fox assumes a tiger's prowess."

**Meaning:** To bully others by flaunting one's power-ful connections.

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**Proverb:** *lu si shei shou.*

"You never know at whose hand a deer will die."

**Meaning:** There is no way to predict who will prevail in the end.

## Questions

In Mandarin, there are three ways to ask yes / no questions: by using *ma*, a spoken question word, at the end of the question, or by using a verb / negative form of the verb combination. *ma* is more often used, especially in conversation, as it is perceived as a faster way to pose a question. For example, you can ask either *ni xiang he cha ma?* – meaning, "Would you like to drink tea?" – or *ni xiang bu xiang he cha?* – "You would / wouldn't like to drink tea?" Either form is equally correct. The simplest

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way, however, is to just raise the tone of your sentence. Usually, this is done to express surprise: "You want to drink tea?"

## Currency

Currency in China is called *renminbi*, or the "people's currency," the *yuan* being the standard unit of *renminbi*. Only in recent years has the government allowed *renminbi* to be taken out of the country and exchanged for foreign currency.

## Transportation

For most of the Chinese, travel is done on bikes, buses, trains, or on foot, although increasingly more and more people own cars. In fact, China has overtaken the United States as the world's largest automobile market. The government has created a network of highways that will eventually link the major cities. Domestic air travel is also increasingly becoming available. To attract customers airlines often offer steeply discounted airfares.

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## **Communication**

Communication systems exist in the major cities and in some less urban areas. All TV channels are operated by the government; local stations as well as radio stations must have official approval. The telephone system is also government owned and operated and continues to expand. Computers, fax machines, electronic mail, and other modern forms of communication are commonplace. Text messaging is far more popular in China than in the United States.

## **Education**

In 1978, China adopted an education policy that mandates compulsory education for nine years. This policy requires students to finish primary school and middle school. Each family is charged a fee per term to send a child to school. Thereafter, students who wish to pursue further education must pass rigorous exams for the high school level and beyond. Entrance to a national university or college requires passing an exam which takes place every July. Due to the exam's difficulty and the harsh weather in that month, students have nicknamed it "Black July." Most of the students who complete a higher education are trained as specialists in fields such as engineering and the sciences in order to further China's development.

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