

LET'S BREAK LINGUISTIC BOUNDARIES TOGETHER!

By Kanika Arora





汉语

Overview

We've meticulously designed it to be your friendly guide. Beginning with an overview of tones and characters, progressing to essential phrases and cultural nuances.

This isn't merely learning a language. It's about empowering yourself to communicate with a fifth of the world's population, understanding their perspective, their story. Ready to embark on an exciting linguistic journey?

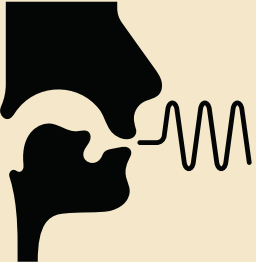
Turn the first page of our "Introduction to Mandarin"



Mandarin is a language with dancing tones and Pinyin system of Phonetics.



What are tones? - Mandarin is characterized by its tonal nature, with four main tones -- kind of like music added to the words that someone says. You can consider like saying four entirely different things with the **SAME** sound but different tones.



Tonal Structure:

Beijing Dialect has four basic tones, usually numbered as 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th tones. When a syllable is pronounced in different tones, it has different meanings,

eg. -

yī (一 one) & yì (亿 - hundred million)

- The first is when you say a syllable with a high pitch, towards the higher end of your vocal range, almost like you might do when you are singing.
(yī)
 - The second tone is where a syllable starts in the mid-high point in your vocal range and then goes up in pitch (yí)
 - The third is where your pitch starts lower then falls in pitch and then rises again,
(yǐ)
 - And the fourth tone is where your pitch starts high and falls.
(yì)
-

变调规则 (biàndiào guīzé)

There are certain circumstances under which a Chinese word or character's normal tone will regularly change to a specific different tone. These tone changes must be learned to pronounce Chinese correctly.

There are three main tone change rules that every learner needs to know:

Tone Change Rule for — (yī)

When followed by a 4th tone, — (yī) changes to 2nd tone (yí).

When followed by any other tone, — (yī) changes to 4th tone (yì).

Examples of the 1 → 2 Tone Change

— 个 yī gè will be changed to yí gè means one of something

Examples of the 1 → 4 Tone Change

— 起 yīqǐ will be changed to yìqǐ means together.

Tones & Pronunciation

Mandarin Chinese is a tonal language, meaning that the intonation & modulation of a syllable can change its meaning. There are four main tones (flat, rising, falling-rising, and falling) plus a neutral tone. Pay close attention to tone patterns and practice distinguishing between them.

As mentioned earlier, tones are used to determine which Mandarin Chinese word is being implied. For example, the meaning of mǎ (horse) is very different from mā (mother).

Thus when learning new vocabulary, it is really important to practice both the pronunciation of the word and its tone. The wrong tones can change the meaning of your sentences.

Practice pronouncing each tone accurately. Listen to native speakers and mimic their intonation patterns. Consistent practice is essential for mastering tones in Mandarin Chinese.

Pronunciation in Mandarin Chinese can be challenging for English speakers due to its tonal nature and different phonetic inventory.

Follow the below pronunciation tips:

1. **Pinyin:** Familiarize yourself with Pinyin, the official Romanization system for Mandarin Chinese. This will help you learn the pronunciation of Chinese characters using the Latin alphabet. Pay attention to the pronunciation of consonants and vowels in Pinyin.
2. **Initials and Finals:** Mandarin Chinese syllables consist of initials (consonants) and finals (vowels or vowel-consonant combinations). Pay attention to the pronunciation of initials and finals, as they can vary from English.
3. **Retroflex Consonants:** Mandarin Chinese includes retroflex consonants, such as "zh," "ch," "sh," and "r." These sounds involve curling or tapping the tongue against the roof of the mouth. Practice producing these sounds accurately.
4. **Nasal Finals:** Mandarin Chinese includes nasal finals, such as "an," "en," "in," "un," and "üan." Pay attention to nasalization when pronouncing these finals.

Overview of Pinyin

The second essential skill you will need to master linguistic skill in Mandarin is your mastery of the Pinyin system of Phonetics.

Initial	Final	Tone	Syllable
n	+ i	+ ˊ	= nǐ
h	+ ao	+ ˋ	= hào
t	+ a	+ ˊ	= tā

Initial: n, Final: i, Tone: ˊ, Syllable: nǐ, Chinese Character: 你

mā **má** **mǎ** **mà** ma
妈 麻 马 骂 吗
mother fibre horse curse question mark

Chinese is a pictophonetic language, it does not have alphabets, instead, characters are used as pictures to describe an idea or thought.

The character is then given a sound like a picture and this is why PinYin is important.

Please Note

INITIAL + FINAL = ONE SOUND IN CHINESE
FINALS ARE LIKE VOWELS

PinYin Chart

Finals		
a “ah” as in a-hah!	o “aw” as in awful (mouth forms half long o sound)	e “ugh” (the sound you make when something is really gross!)
i “ee” as glee	u “oo” as in spoon	ü *** (see below)

Finals (Continued)		
ai “ai” as in aisle	ei “ei” as in eight	ui “wei” as in weight
ou “oa” as in boat	iu “you” as in you	ie “ye” as in yet

Finals (Continued)

ue “you+e” as in you + “e” as in egg	er “ar” as in art	un “won” as in wonderful
ün “you+in” as in you + “in” as in inside	an “on” as in on	en “un” as in under

Finals (Continued)

in “een” as in seen	ang* “ong” as in song *(nasal)	eng* “ung” as in sung *(nasal)
ing* “eing” as in seing *(nasal)	ong* “own” as in owner *(nasal)	

Essential Phrases:

Greetings:

- 你好 (Nǐ hǎo) - Hello
- 再见 (Zàijiàn) - Goodbye
- 早上好 (Zǎoshang hǎo) - Good morning
- 晚上好 (Wǎnshang hǎo) - Good evening

Polite Expressions:

- 谢谢 (Xièxiè) - Thank you
- 不客气 (Bù kèqì) - You're welcome
- 对不起 (Duìbuqǐ) - I'm sorry
- 没关系 (Méiguānxi) - It's okay

Basic Conversation:

- 你叫什么名字? (Nǐ jiào shénme míngzì?) - What's your name?
- 我叫... (Wǒ jiào...) - My name is...
- 你会说英语吗? (Nǐ huì shuō Yīngyǔ ma?) - Do you speak English?
- 我听不懂 (Wǒ tīng bù dǒng) - I don't understand

Congratulations

On successfully completing the e book.

I hope I have added some value to
your Basic
Conceptual understanding of
Mandarin Chinese



You
did
great!

KEEP
LEARNING!