



LESSON A.3 - PART 1

CHINESE CHARACTERS

汉字 HÀNZÌ



LESSON A.2 REVISION



Construct words/phrases from the below characters:

早上
zǎoshàng

问
wèn

明
míng

吃了
chīle

慢
màn

熊
xióng

没有?
méiyǒu

好
hǎo

天
tiān

见
jiàn

候
hòu

猫
māo

走
zǒu

TWO STYLES



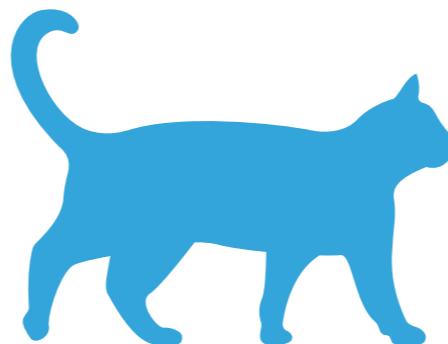
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- There are two forms of written Chinese:

1. **Traditional** characters - used in most Chinese-speaking countries outside mainland China, e.g. Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau
2. **Simplified** characters - predominantly used in mainland China

Traditional

貓



Simplified

貓

FOUR TYPES

- There is no really easy way to learn characters. Each one needs to be memorised. However, you can try to picture it.



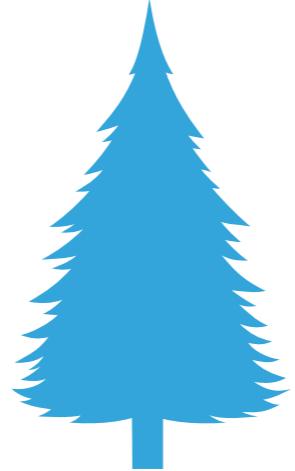
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Pictograph

木

The character mimics the real object

wood/tree



Ideograph



two

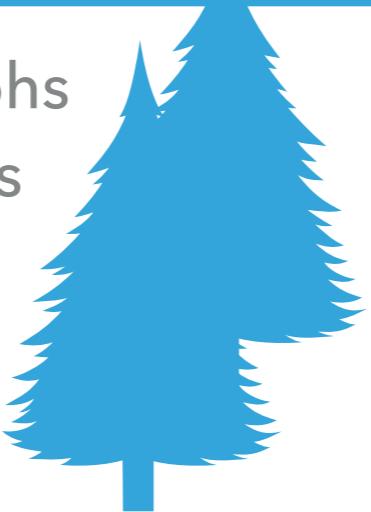
The character is a portrait of an idea



Combination

林

Put pictographs or ideographs together to create new character



forest

Phonograph

Combine sound and meaning

sound **meaning** **new character**

元

yuán

+

辵

to walk quickly

远

far

元

yuán

+

囗

enclosure

园

garden

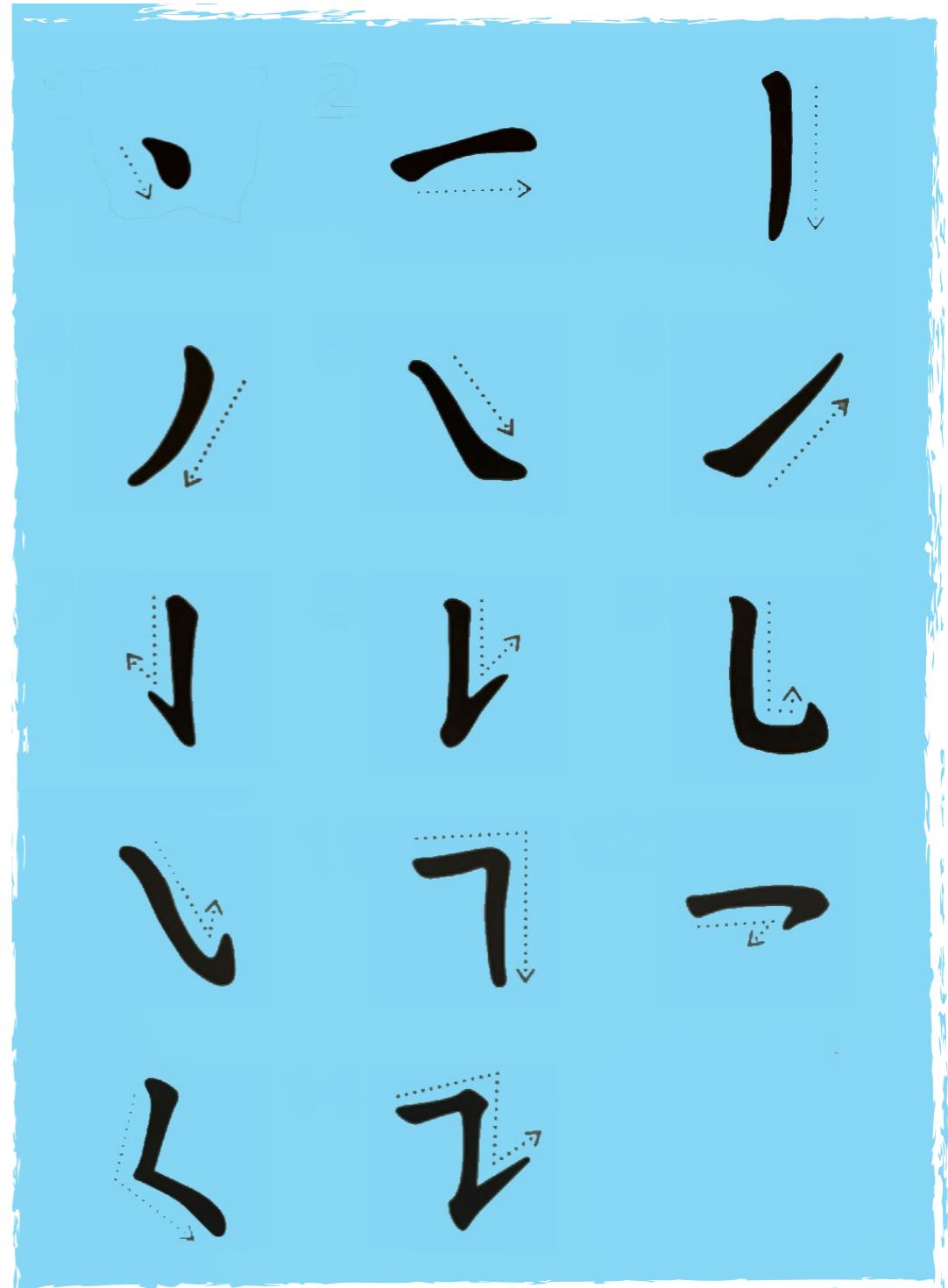
BASIC STROKES



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- Each character is made up of a set of strokes.
- These strokes are always written in the **same manner**
- Following the **rule** of where to start and where to end would make it easier in learning new characters.

Practice makes perfect!



STROKE ORDER

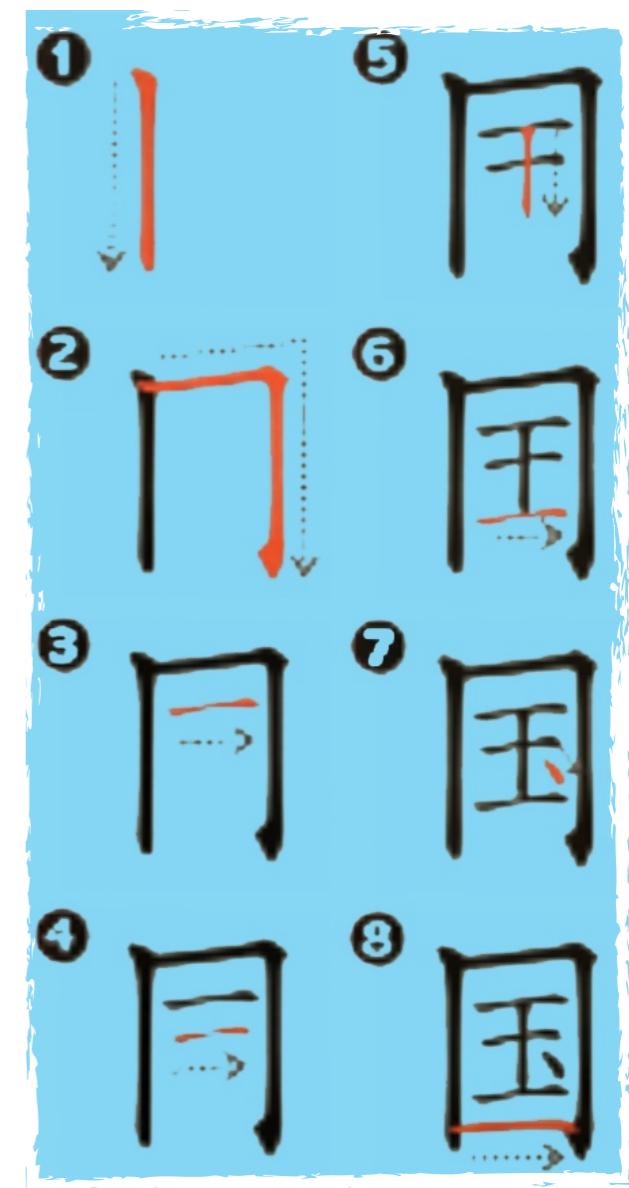


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- Chinese writing emphasizes on a **smooth** movement.
- There are guidelines to help users but they are **not fail-safe**. It all depends on what looks best or which order minimises blobbing when scholars are using brushes and ink to write.

General rules:

- From top to bottom
- From left to right
- From outside to inside
- From middle to sides





LESSON A.3 - PART 2

ESSENTIAL CONVERSATION

基本对话 JÍBĚN DUIHUÀ

FEW ESSENTIAL WORDS



我

wǒ

me/I

叫

jiào

call

高兴

gāoxìng

happy

认识

rènshì

meet

INTRODUCING YOURSELF



您叫什么?

nín jiào shénme

What's your name?
(Lit. you call what)

我叫.....

wǒ jiào

I'm called...

很高兴认识您。

hěn gāoxìng rènshì nín

Very pleased to meet
you.

我也是。

wǒ yěshì

Me too.



对不起

duìbùqǐ

Sorry

我不明白

wǒ bù míngbái

I don't
understand

请重复

qǐng chóngfù

Please repeat

不用谢

bùyòng xiè*

You are
welcome
(no need for thanks)

Note: for 不 (bù), change the tone to 2nd tone when preceding 4th tone.



怎么样?

zěnme yàng

不错

bùcuò*

马马虎虎

mǎmǎhūhū *

真棒!

zhēn bàng

How's it going?

(Lit. How is it like)

Not bad

So-so

(Lit. horse horse tiger tiger)

Awesome!

Note: for 不 (bù), change the tone to 2nd tone when preceding 4th tone.
For a series of 3rd tones, change all the former ones to 2nd



你会说英语吗?

nǐ huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?

我可以。

wǒ kěyǐ *

你会说普通话吗?

nǐ huì shuō pǔtōnghuà ma?

一点儿

yídiǎn er *

Can you speak English?

I can.

Can you speak Mandarin?

A little.

*Note: for a series of 3rd tones, change all the former ones to 2nd tone.
For 一 (yī), change the tone to fourth tone when preceding a 3rd tone*

FEW COMMON WORDS

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To be 是 (shì)

- In English, "to be" change forms with the subject, i.e. "I am", "we are", "he is" etc. In Chinese 是 (shì) does not change with the subject.
- It is skipped in front of an adjective.
- It also means "yes".
- Negative: add not 不 (bù) in the front.
- Example: He is Chinese 他是中国人 (tā shì zhōngguó rén)



To have 有

- An informal and straightforward way to talk about possession is to use the expression 有, meaning **have** or **has**.
- Negative: add not 没 méi in the front.
- Example: He has money 他有钱 (tā yǒu qián)



Of 的

- A common possessive particle is 的, meaning **of** or **'s**.
- It can be skipped sometimes to simplify the sentence.
- When this is put at the end, it becomes an adverb, meaning **truly** or **really**.
- Example: My home 我的家 (wǒ de jiā)
- Example: Really delicious! 很好吃的! (hěn hào chī de)





Why Mandarin?

- China has the biggest population in the world - **1.3 billion** people.
- It is home to a multitude of languages and dialects - over 200!
- There are 3 major languages spoken in China:

Mandarin, Shanghaiese, and Cantonese

- Mandarin has more native speakers than any other language in the world.
- Chinese people learn Mandarin too. It is studied like a foreign language class, to use for speaking with non-locals in China.
- Mandarin is easier than Cantonese which has at least **8 tones!**



Zhōngwén 中文 "The Chinese Language"

- There are several ways to refer to the Chinese language:
 1. **Zhōngwén** 中文 - originally referred to the written Chinese language but now generally also includes spoken Chinese
 2. **Hànyǔ** 汉语 - a more precise term which covers both the spoken and the written Chinese
 3. **Zhōngguóhuà** 中国话 - a colloquial term for spoken Chinese
 4. **Guóyǔ** 国语 - national spoken Chinese designated by the government in 1919. Taiwan has continued to use this till today
 5. **Pǔtōnghuà** 普通话 - the official name for "**Mandarin**" since the establishment of the People's Republic of China PRC in 1949

COLLOQUIAL - HORSE

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- There are many ways to use "horse" as a colloquial expression in Mandarin.
- Quite often there is a sense of urgency.

I'll be right there!

我马上到!

wǒ mǎshàng dào*

I'll do it right away!

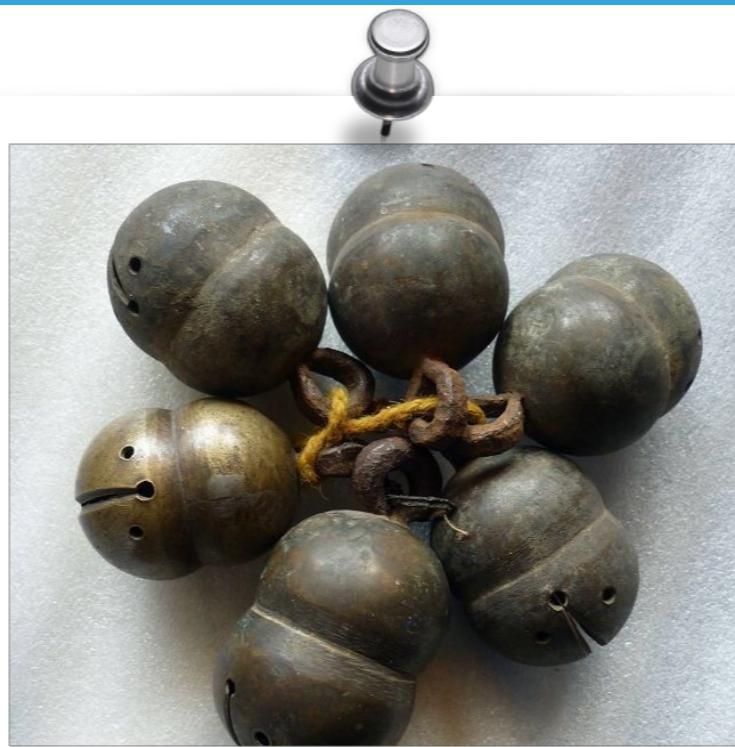
我马上做!

wǒ mǎshàng zuò!*

SO-SO (horse horse tiger tiger)

马马虎虎
mǎmǎhūhū *

- The above idiom has two meanings: 1. very careless; do not do things seriously. 2. just passable.



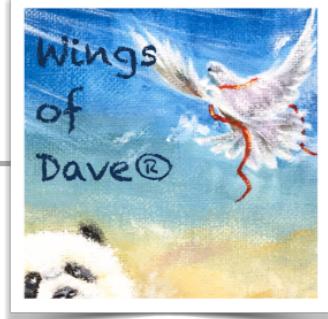
- The shape of a potato looks like a horse bell and thenceforth the Chinese name was adopted.

potato

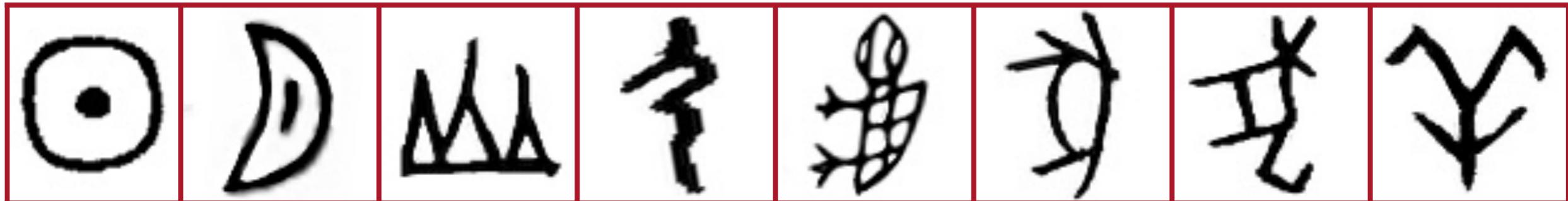
马铃薯
mǎlíngshǔ

Note: for a series of 3rd tones, change all the former ones to 2nd tone.

CLASSROOM EXERCISE A.3 – CHINESE CHARACTER



Can you guess the modern Chinese character from the oracle bone drawing:



人	日	山	犬	月	羊	豕	龟
<i>rén</i>	<i>rì</i>	<i>shān</i>	<i>quǎn</i>	<i>yuè</i>	<i>yáng</i>	<i>shǐ</i>	<i>guī</i>
person/ human	sun/day	hill/ mountain	dog	moon/ month	sheep	hog/ swine/ pig	turtle/ turtoise