



LESSON A.4

NUMBERS

数字 SHÙZÌ



LESSON A.3 REVISION



2

Construct words/phrases from the below characters:

马马
mǎmǎ

真
zhēn

中
zhōng

高
gāo

对
duì

不
bù

一
yī

怎么
zěnmē

不起
bùqǐ

虎虎
hūhū

点儿
diǎn er

棒!
bàng

样?
yàng

兴
xìng

明白
míngbái

文
wén

0 TO 10



3

Zero

零

líng

- Learning numbers will enable you to learn months and days of the week too in Chinese.

One

一

yī

Two

二

èr

Three

三

sān

Four

四

sì

Five

五

wǔ

Six

六

liù

Seven

七

qī

Eight

八

bā

Nine

九

jiǔ

Ten

十

shí



Two simple rules

1. For 10 to 20, add the numbers after "ten" 十. Apply the same for 20 to 30, 30 to 40 etc.
2. For 10x increments, insert the number before "ten" 十.

Arabic	Chinese	Pinyin	Method
11	十一	<i>shíyī</i>	add 一 after 十, i.e. 10 + 1
12	十二	<i>shí'èr</i>	add 二 after 十, i.e. 10 + 2
13	十三	<i>shísān</i>	add 三 after 十, i.e. 10 + 3
19	十九	<i>shíjiǔ</i>	add 九 after 十, i.e. 10 + 9
20	二十	<i>èrshí</i>	insert 二 before 十, i.e. 2 x 10
25	二十五	<i>èrshíwǔ</i>	insert 二 before 十, add 五 after 十, i.e. 2 x 10 + 5
99	九十九	<i>jiǔshíjiǔ</i>	insert 九 before 十, add 九 after 十, i.e. 9 x 10 + 9

100 PLUS



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- Same rules apply here...

100	1,000	10,000	1,000,000	100,000,000	1,000,000,000
百 <i>bǎi</i>	千 <i>qiān</i>	万 <i>wàn</i>	百万 <i>bǎiwàn</i>	亿 <i>yì</i>	十亿 <i>shí yì</i>

Arabic	Chinese	Pinyin	Method
150	一百五十	<i>yībǎi wǔshí</i>	insert 一 before 百, insert 五 before 十, i.e. $1 \times 100 + 5 \times 10$
5,500	五千五百	<i>wǔqiān wǔbǎi</i>	insert 五 before 千, insert 五 before 百, i.e. $5 \times 1,000 + 5 \times 100$
55,000	五万五千	<i>wǔwàn wǔqiān</i>	insert 五 before 万, insert 五 before 千, i.e. $5 \times 10,000 + 5 \times 1,000$
3,500,000	三百五十万	<i>sānbǎi wǔshí wàn</i>	insert 三 before 百万, insert 五十 between 百 and 万, i.e. $3 \times 1,000,000 + 50 \times 10,000$
40,200,000	四千二十万	<i>sìqiān èrshí wàn</i>	insert 四 before 千万, insert 二十 between 千 and 万, i.e. $4 \times 10,000,000 + 20 \times 10,000$
43,000,000	四千三百万	<i>sìqiān sānbǎi wàn</i>	insert 四 before 千万, insert 三百 between 千 and 万, i.e. $4 \times 10,000,000 + 300 \times 10,000$
1,300,000,000	十三亿	<i>shísān yì</i>	insert 十三 before 亿, i.e. $13 \times 100,000,000$

SPEAK LIKE THE LOCAL



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One

—
yī or yāo

One

- The original pronunciation of the number "one" is "yī"
- Generally, when three or more numbers are arranged **in a series**, "one" can be pronounced as "yāo".

Examples: Phone number 911 *jiǔyāoyāo*

Vehicle registration number KO118 *KO yāoyāobā*

Hotel room number 110 *yāoyāolíng*

Area & Zip Code 755. 518000 *qīwǔwǔ wǔyāobālínglínglíng*

- However, if it is money, year or ID no, we are accustomed to pronouncing "yī"

Two

两
liǎng

Two

- Number 2 is 二, but is quite often replaced by 两 *liǎng* when saying "two of something".

Example: two guests 两位嘉宾 *liǎng wèi jiābīn*

- However, in counting, 二 is used instead.

Example: 二十二 *èrshíèr*

Twenty

廿
èrshí

Thirty

卅
sānshí

Twenty and thirty

- Number 20 is 二十, but it is quite often replaced by 廿 in writing only.
- The character resembles two 十 together. It is still pronounced as 二十 *èrshí*.
- Similar token for 30 卅 which resembles three 十 together.



你多大了?

nǐ duōdàle

How old are you?
(informal)

我十八岁了。

wǒ shíbā suìle

I'm (already) 18 years
old.

你爸爸几岁?

nǐ bàba jǐ suì

What is your father's
age? (formal)

他今年三十五岁。

ta jīnnián sānshíwǔ suì

He is 35 years old this
year.



Tone Change for One

- **Yī** as first tone

- when used in isolation, e.g. *yī* (one)
- at the end of a word or phrase e.g. *shí'yī* (eleven)

- **Yí** as second tone

- when preceding fourth tone, e.g. *yí liàng chē* (one car)

- **Yì** as fourth tone

- when preceding all the other 3 tones, e.g. *yìběn shū* (one book), *yìtóu niú* (one cow)

- **if unsure, simply use first tone**



Ranking/Position

- In English, one adds suffix such as "th" to the number to express ranking or position. In Chinese, simply add 第 in front of the numbers.

No.	- No. 1 or "First" - No. 2 or "Second" - No. 3 or "Third" - No. 9 or "Ninth" "Last"	<i>dì yī</i> <i>dì èr</i> <i>dì sān</i> <i>dì jiǔ</i> zuìhòu	- 第一 - 第二 - 第三 - 第九 - 最后 (literally very last)
第 <i>dì</i>			

- Colloquial alternatives for first and last:

"Head" *tóu* 头 versus "Tail" *wěi* 尾

"Front" *qián* 前 versus "Last" *hòu* 后

CULTURE – SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT CERTAIN NUMBERS



10



- 4 is a bad omen as its pronunciation (**sì**) is similar to **sǐ** 死 which is death.



- 8 is lucky as its pronunciation (**bā**) resembles **fā** 发 which means becoming rich.



By chance

万一

wàn yī

- 万 (*wàn*) is 10,000, a common benchmark unit in Chinese numbers.
- 万一 (*wàn yī*) is often used to convey "just in case" or "by chance".
- For example 例如 (*lìrú*), 万一我有不幸,让我给你这张彩票吧! (*wàn yī wǒ yǒu bùxìng, ràng wǒ gěi nǐ zhè zhāng cǎipiào ba!*) In case I have ill fate, let me give you this lotto ticket.



Halloween

万圣节

wànshèngjié

- Halloween is known as 万圣节 (*wànshèngjié*) (literally 10,000 saints' festival, aka all saints). Pumpkin 南瓜 (*nánguā*) takes the centre stage of celebration.
- Alternatively, many Chinese observe the **Hungry Ghost Festival** 盂兰节 (*yú lán jié*) or 中元节 (*zhōng yuán jié*) which falls on the 15th July per lunar calendar. On that day, the deceased/zombie 僵尸 (*jiāngshī*) are believed to visit the living.



CLASSROOM EXERCISE A.4 – PHONE NUMBER



12

- Work with the person next to you, ask and give phone number:

Telephone number

电话号码

diànhuà hàomǎ

Mobile number

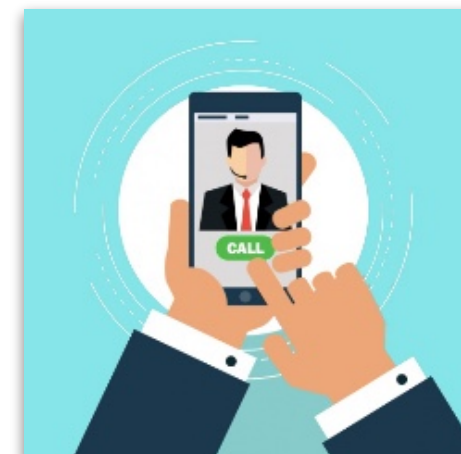
手机号码

shǒujī hàomǎ

A. What's your phone number?

您的电话号码是什么?

nín de diànhuà hàomǎ shì shénme?



B. My mobile number is.....

我的手机号码是_____

wǒ de shǒujī hàomǎ shì _____