

Pīn yīn Hànyǔ

# SOUND MANDARIN for English Speakers

读拼音 学汉语

Chief editors Liu Huaixi Han Chusen

外语教学与研究出版社  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS



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## Chief editors

Liu Huaixi

Han Chusen

## English proofreading

Bruce Julian (新西兰)

Matt Drew (英国)

Gong Yunfeng

## Chinese proofreading

Wang Yunshi

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# Foreword

The book *Sound Mandarin for English Speakers* is designed for non-native beginners to study Chinese through mastering Pinyin so as to enable them to communicate in Chinese within a short period of time. The book consists of twenty units, with a brief introduction to the Pinyin system of Mandarin before the first unit. The vocabulary index, grammar outline, keys and audio scripts of exercises are also included in the book. These materials will help you pronounce and construct basic sentences. At the end of the book, there is a mini-dictionary providing a large amount of frequently used vocabulary in Chinese daily life. The book is not only for learners in class, it is also ideal for self-learners.

The book has the following features:

- \* The use of Chinese Pinyin is primary, and the use of Chinese characters is secondary. For every sentence we have provided English translation to help you grasp its meaning.
- \* We have put main vocabularies at the beginning of almost every unit, and also pictures to match up with them. You can speak by looking at the pictures.
- \* Each unit shows the comparative forms of Chinese and English, concisely and clearly laid out to give you a better understanding of the structural differences between the two languages.
- \* Speaking and listening exercises have been designed for each unit. These exercises are interesting and close to everyday use, such as listening to a story, matching pictures with words, listening to words then drawing a picture, and so on.
- \* The book is full of the atmosphere of Chinese culture. Chinese ancient poems and stories are included in the book and we have given their English translations. They are consistent with the substance of some units.
- \* An MP3 with the book is to help you to improve speaking and listening skills.
- \* The mini-dictionary is a collection of necessary words for living and traveling in China, including clothing (yī 衣), eating (shí 食), living (zhù 住) and going out (xíng 行).

In short, the book is for you to learn easily and be happy with your progress.

We would like to thank the following people for their support and assistance in writing this book: Troy Collings, Trin Lilananda, David Christian, Shen Lijiang (沈丽江), Qian Zhongxuan (钱钟选), Ying Jian (应坚), Liu Jianrong (刘剑戎), Dai Wentong (戴文潼) and Zheng Min (郑敏).

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Vocabulary	Function	Cultural tip
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Countries and nationalities	1) Introducing yourself 2) Asking about and giving information about nationality	How happy we are, to meet friends from afar!
Family members	1) Talking about family members 2) Asking about and giving information about work	Chinese families
1) Stationery and books 2) Demonstrative pronouns	Talking about personal possession	The four treasures of study
1) Cardinal numbers 2) Ordinal numbers	1) Telling people where you live and your telephone number 2) Talking about means of transportation	Addresses
1) Items of fruit 2) Polite expressions (2)	1) Visiting a friend 2) Entertaining guests	Dropping in



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Vocabulary	Function	Cultural tip
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Vocabulary	Function	Cultural tip
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Sports	1) Talking about sports 2) Talking about your activities on the weekend	Physical exercise in early mornings and evenings
1) Items of tableware 2) Some staple food, dishes and beverages 3) Adjectives to describe senses of tastes 4) Adverbs to describe degrees	1) Asking and answering questions about different dishes 2) Ordering at a restaurant	Table manners
1) Main parts of the body 2) Symptoms of illness	1) Asking about symptoms 2) Describing symptoms 3) Understanding instructions for taking medicine	Going to see a doctor



**Pīnyīn**

PINYIN SYSTEM OF MANDARIN

**拼 音**



## I Initials and finals

The Pinyin System of Mandarin (Chinese phonetics) is a tool for learning characters and speaking Mandarin. If you want to learn Mandarin quickly, first of all you will need to know the Pinyin System well. The Pinyin System of Mandarin contains initials, finals and tones.

### 1. The 21 initials

Table of initials					
Unaspirated	Aspirated	Nasal	Voiceless fricative	Voiced fricative	Lateral
b	p	m	f		
d	t	n			l
g	k		h		
j	q		x		
zh	ch		sh	r	
z	c		s		

12 initials have almost the same pronunciation in English, 9 others have similar pronunciations in English.

Chinese initials	English equivalents	Chinese initials	English similarities
b	"b" in "black"	j	"jee" in "jeep"
p	"p" in "pen"	q	"chee" in "cheese"
m	"m" in "mother"	x	"sea"
f	"f" in "father"	zh	"ge" in "large"
d	"d" in "day"	ch	"ch" in "lunch"
t	"t" in "time"	sh	"sh" in "ship"
n	"n" in "now"	r	"r" in "raw"
l	"l" in "light"	z	"ds" in "words"
g	"g" in "go"	c	"ts" in "hats"
k	"k" in "desk"		
h	"h" in "high"		
s	"s" in "steel"		

## 2. The 36 finals

Table of finals				
Singular finals		i	u	ü
	a	ia	ua	
	o		uo	
	e	ie		üe
Plural finals	ai		uai	
	ei		uei(-ui)	
	ao	iao		
	ou	iou(-iu)		
Nasal finals	an	ian	uan	üan
	en	in	uen(-un)	ün
	ang	iang	uang	
	eng	ing	ueng	
	ong	iong		
Special final	er			

The finals include singular, plural, nasal and special finals. Below is a table of intuitive pronunciation system.

Chinese finals	English similarities	Chinese finals	English similarities
a	“ar” in “arm”	ao	“ow” in “how”
o	“o” in “box”	ou	“o” in “go”
e	“ear” in “earth”	ia	“yar” in “yard”
i	“ea” in “eat”	ie	“ye” in “yes”
u	“wo” in “two”	iao	“ea” in “eat” + “ow” in “how”
ü			
ai	“i” in “high”	iou(-iu)	“ew” in “new”
ei	“a” in “age”	ua	“wa” in “waft”

Chinese finals	English similarities	Chinese finals	English similarities
uo	"war"	ing	"ing" in "learning"
uai	"why"	iong	"ea" in "eat" + "ong" in "long"
uei(-ui)	"wei" in "weight"		
üe	"ü" + "ye" in "yes"	uan	"wo" in "two" + "an" in "ant"
an	"an" in "ant"		
en	"en" in "men"	uen(-un)	"wen" in "went"
ang	"oung" in "young"	uang	"wo" in "two" + "oung" in "young"
eng			
ong	"ong" in "long"	ueng	
ian	"ea" in "eat" + "an" in "ant"	üan	"ü" + "an" in "ant"
		ün	"ü" + "en" in "men"
in	"in"	er	"er" in "younger"
iang	"young"		

### Notes

How to pronounce "ü" :

When pronouncing "ü", lips are rounded and protruded. Extend the tip of the tongue to the front to touch the lower teeth, then aspirate.

## II Combinations of initials and finals

### 1. The basic structure of Mandarin syllables

A Mandarin syllable usually consists of an initial, a final and a tone. Some syllables consist of only a final and a tone. (see "III Tones" , p9 )

The initial and the final are conjoined, for example:

b+a → ba

m+a → ma

sh+u → shu

h+ei → hei



g+uo → guo

j+ie → jie

x+ian → xian

ch+uang → chuang

Notice: The final “i” in “zhi”, “chi”, “shi” and “ri” is pronounced as [ɿ]. The final “i” in “zi”, “ci” and “si” is pronounced as [ɪ].

When the final section is “iou”, “uei” or “uen”, it is written as “iu”, “ui” or “un”, for example:

diu

gui

kun

liu

hui

chun

When the final “ü” is combined with the initials “j”, “q” or “x”, they are written as “ju”, “qu” or “xu”. When combined with the initials “n” or “l”, they are written as “nü” or “lǚ”.

## 2. Syllables can be without initials

Notice:

(1) When the finals “i”, “u” and “ü” serve as syllables without an initial before, they are written as:

yi wu yu

(2) When the finals begin with “i”, “i” is written as “y” or “yi”:

ya ye yao you yan yin yang ying yong

(3) When the finals begin with “u”, “u” is written as “w”:

wa wo wai wei wan wen wang weng

(4) When the finals begin with “ü”, “ü” is written as “yu”:

yue yuan yun

(5) The special final “er” and nasal final “ueng” cannot be conjoined with any initials.

# Addendum: Table of the Combinations of Initials and Finals (1)

	Singular finals							Special final	Plural finals					
	a	o	e	i (-i)	u	ü	er		ai	ei	ao	ou	ia	ie
	a	o	e	yi	wu	yu	er		ai	ei	ao	ou	ya	ye
b	ba	bo		bi		bu			bai	bei	bao			bie
p	pa	po		pi		pu			pai	pei	pao	pou		pie
m	ma	mo	me	mi		mu			mai	mei	mao	mou		mie
f	fa	fo				fu				fei		fou		
d	da		de	di		du			dai	dei	dao	dou		die
t	ta		te	ti		tu			tai		tao	tou		tie
n	na		ne	ni		nu	nü		nai	nei	nao	nou		nie
l	la		le	li		lu	lǔ		lai	lei	lao	lou	lia	lie
g	ga		ge			gu			gai	gei	gao	gou		
k	ka		ke			ku			kai	kei	kao	kou		
h	ha		he			hu			hai	hei	hao	hou		
j				ji		ju							jia	jie
q				qi		qu							qia	qie
x				xi		xu							xia	xie
zh	zha		zhe		zhi	zhu			zhai	zhei	zhao	zhou		
ch	cha		che		chi	chu			chai		chao	chou		
sh	sha		she		shi	shu			shai	shei	shao	shou		
r			re		ri	ru					rao	rou		
z	za		ze		zi	zu			zai	zei	zao	zou		
c	ca		ce		ci	cu			cai		cao	cou		
s	sa		se		si	su			sai		sao	sou		

# Addendum: Table of the Combinations of Initials and Finals (2)

	Plural finals							Nasal finals				
	iao	iou (-iu)	ua	uo	uai	uei (-ui)	üe	an	en	ian	in	uan
	yao	you	wa	wo	wai	wei	yue	an	en	yan	yin	wan
b	biao							ban	ben	bian	bin	
p	piao							pan	pen	pian	pin	
m	miao	miu						man	men	mian	min	
f								fan	fen			
d	diao	diu		duo		dui		dan	den	dian		duan
t	tiao			tuo		tui		tan		tian		tuan
n	niao	niu		nuo			nüe	nan	nen	nian	nin	nuan
l	liao	liu		luo			lüe	lan		lian	lin	luan
g			gua	guo	guai	gui		gan	gen			guan
k			kua	kuo	kuai	kui		kan	ken			kuan
h			hua	huo	huai	hui		han	hen			huan
j	jiào	jiu					jue			jian	jin	
q	qiào	qiu					que			qian	qin	
x	xiao	xiu					xue			xian	xin	
zh			zhua	zhuo	zhuai	zhui		zhan	zhen			zhan
ch			chua	chuo	chuai	chui		chan	chen			chuan
sh			shua	shuo	shuai	shui		shan	shen			shuan
r			rua	ruo		rui		ran	ren			ruan
z				zuo		zui		zan	zen			zuan
c				cuo		cui		can	cen			cuan
s				suo		sui		san	sen			suan