

Index to Foundation Mandarin Chinese

Note about transliteration

The Mandarin words are transliterated using the *pin-yin* method of romanization. In this method the tones are represented by marks on the vowels that look like the hand movements that we're using:

- flat tone (green thumb out)
- ˊ rising tone (blue finger up)
- ˋ falling and rising tone (red 'V' for victory)
- ˇ falling tone (black finger down)

In addition, two dots are used above the letter 'u' (*ü*). This indicates that the 'u' should be pronounced like the 'oo' in 'moon', but while you say 'oo', shape your lips towards the 'i' sound in 'sit'.

Mandarin Chinese–English glossary

This glossary contains vocabulary from Michel Thomas Method *Foundation* and *Intermediate Mandarin Chinese* as well as the *Mandarin Chinese Vocabulary Course*.

ba indicates suggestion of agreement

bā 'eight'

bǎi 'hundred'

bǎi wàn 'million'

bàn 'half'

bàn 'to solve a problem'

bàn fǎ 'method, way of doing something'

bāng to do something 'to help to do something'

bāng someone *máng* 'to help someone out'

bào 'newspaper'

bēi 'cup'

běi 'north'

bié de 'other, different'

bú kè qǐ 'don't be polite', 'don't mention it'

bú xiè 'don't thank me'

bú yào qián 'free'

bù yí yàng 'different'

cài 'food, dish'

cān guǎn 'restaurant'

cì 'times' (one time, two times, the first time, an occasion)

chá 'tea'

chà bù dūo 'about the same'

chē 'vehicle'

chī fàn 'to eat'

chuáng 'bed'

cóng 'from'

dǎ 'hit'

dà jiā 'everyone, all'

dà jiā hǎo 'Hello, everyone.'

(a way to say 'Hello' to or begin speaking to any group)

dào 'to, toward'

dān wèi 'company, workgroup', 'workpace'

dāng rán 'of course'

děng 'to wait'

diǎn 'o'clock'

diàn huà 'telephone (electrical speech)'

diàn tī 'lift, elevator = electric stairs'

dōng 'east'

dǒng 'to comprehend, understand'

duì bu qǐ 'sorry'

duō 'more'

dòu fu 'tofu'

duō jiǔ le 'how long have...?'

duō shǎo 'how much?, how many?' (referring to any number, especially a larger number)

è 'hungry'

èr 'two'

fān diàn 'hotel'

fáng jiān 'room'

fēi jī 'airplane = fly machine'

fēi jī chǎng 'airport'

fù qián 'to pay money'

gào sù 'to tell, inform, let know'
gěi 'to give'
gěi somebody kàn 'to show
to somebody'
gōng gōng qì chē 'bus = shared
vapour vehicle'
guì 'expensive'
guò 'cross, pass time'

hái shì 'or' (used in question
sentences)
hái zi 'children'
hǎo 'OK'
hào 'number' (telephone number)
hǎo bu hǎo 'OK?, is that OK?'
hǎo chī 'delicious, tasty (good eat)'
hǎo kàn 'pretty (good look)'
hé someone shuō huà 'to speak
with someone'
hē 'to drink'
hù zhào 'passport'
huà 'spoken language'
huài 'broken, bad'
huǒ chē 'train = fire vehicle'
huò zhě 'or' (in positive sentence)

jǐ 'how many?' (referring to a
relatively small quantity)
jiào 'to be called'
jiǔ 'nine'
jiǔ 'wine'
jiǔ 'passage of time, a long time
passed'
jué de 'to feel, think'

kā fēi 'coffee'
kā fēi guǎn 'coffee shop'
kāi chē 'to drive a car'
kàn de dǒng 'to understand
by seeing'

kě xī 'it's a pity'
kě yǐ 'may'
kǎng pà 'afraid that..., perhaps...'
kuài 'about to, almost'
kuài 'unit of currency'
(colloquial term)
kuài 'fast'

lǎo 'elder'
lǎo bǎn 'boss, person in charge'
le sentence + le represents
something changes
lèi 'tired'
lǐ mian 'inside'
liǎng 'pair of'
líng 'zero'
liù 'six'

mài 'to sell'
mǎi dōng xi 'to buy something
(go shopping)'
màn 'slow'
méi shén me 'don't worry,
it's nothing'
méi (yǒu) bàn fǎ 'there's nothing
to be done about it'
méi yǒu rén 'no one'
méi guān xi 'never mind,
does not matter'
méi wèn tí 'no problem'
méi yǒu 'did not (do something
in the past)'
míng tiān 'tomorrow'
míng zi 'name'

ná 'to take something'
nǎ 'which?'
nǎ ge 'which one?'
nǎ li response to a compliment to
express politeness

nǎ xiē 'which of these?'
nán 'south'
nán hái zi 'boy = male child'
nián 'year'
niǔ yuē 'NewYork'
nǚ hái zi 'girl = female child'

pí jiǔ 'beer'
piào 'ticket'

qī 'seven'
qì chē 'car = vapour vehicle'
qián 'money'
qiān 'thousand'
qǐng 'please'

rán hòu 'then' (after some time
has passed)
rì 'sun'

sān 'three'
shàng ge 'last'
shàng wǔ 'a.m., morning'
shǎo 'few, less'
shéi de 'whose?'
shén me de 'so on, etc.'
shén me dōu 'everything'
(non-specific)
shén me something dōu
'every specific thing'
shén me shí hòu 'when?,
what time?'
shén me yàng de
'what kind of...?'
shí 'ten'
shí hòu 'time'
shī fū 'mate, buddy'

shuì (jiào) 'to sleep'
sì 'four' (unlucky number: same
sound as sǐ 'death',
different tone)

tǐng de dǒng 'to understand
from hearing'
tīng shuō 'heard'

wài 'out'
wài guó 'foreign'
wài mian 'outside'
wǎn 'late'
wàn 'ten thousand'
wǎn fān 'evening food, supper'
wǎn shàng 'evening'
wèn tí 'problem, question'
wú 'five'

xī 'west'
xǐ huan 'to like to do something'
xià ge 'next'
xià wǔ 'afternoon, p.m.'
xiāng gǎng 'Hong Kong'
xiǎo 'little'
xiǎo shí 'hour'
xiē plural marker instead of ge (zhè
xiē rén 'these men')
xīng qī 'week'
xīng qī èr 'Tuesday'
xīng qī liù 'Saturday'
xīng qī rì/tiān 'Sunday'
xīng qī sān 'Wednesday'
xīng qī sì 'Thursday'
xīng qī yī 'Monday'
xīng qī wú 'Friday'
xiū xi 'to rest'
xué xí 'to study, learn'

yào 'will, shall'
yào bù rán 'otherwise'
yì bēi chá 'a cup of tea'
yí dìng 'definitely, certainly'
yǐ hòu 'after, behind'
yǐ jīng 'already'
yǐ qián 'before'
yí yàng 'the same, just like'
yín háng 'bank (silver money firm)'
yīng gāi 'should'
yǒu méi yǒu 'is there...?',
do you have...?'
yǒu qián 'rich'
yǒu yì sī 'interesting'
yǒu yòng 'useful'
yòng 'to use'
yú 'fish'
yuè 'month'

zěn me 'how?'
zěn me bàn? 'what's to be done?'
zěn me yàng 'how is it going?,
what do you think of...?,
how about...?'
zhàn 'stop, station'
zhǎo 'to seek, look for'
zhǐ 'only'
zì 'word'
zǒu 'to walk, go, depart'
zuì 'most'
zuì hǎo 'very best'
zuò 'to do'
zuò 'by means of' (different
character from zuò 'to do')
zuó tiān 'yesterday'
zù 'to sit down'

Learning the tones using hand movements

Mandarin has four tones, plus a neutral non-tone, which are critical for communication. While there is considerable leeway for differences in pronunciation (many Chinese learn Mandarin as a second language) there is very little for tones. If your tone is off you won't be understood. Tones, when made user-friendly, are actually quite simple to grasp and integrate into your learning.

The method for learning the tones* which you will experience in this course is specifically designed to address all styles of language learning. It will permit your central nervous system to permanently create pathways that reflect your personal learning style (visual, kinaesthetic, auditory, etc.) and support you in effortless recall and usage of the correct tone at the proper moment in your communication. It works on a subconscious level. You will very quickly find that you are using the movements as a natural part of your learning. These movements work. They have been tested and refined on students without any previous knowledge of Mandarin from many different backgrounds and age levels (teens to the elderly). I encourage you to allow your hands to move with the movements. For some of you that will be essential. For others, this will be less essential. Trust whatever helps you. It will work for you as you permit it to do so.

In this method of teaching tones, each movement is linked to a tone and colour. Romanized Mandarin (pin-yin) is written with four distinct tones, which are shown with marks over the affected vowel. These marks are shown in brackets below. The tones are generally listed in the following order when taught and when words are listed in a dictionary.

*patent pending

First tone: (ˉ) long, steady tone.

Colour: Green.

Movement: Thumb out to side with closed fist.

Example: *zhōng* ('middle').



Second tone: (ˊ) rising tone.

Colour: Blue.

Movement: Index finger pointing up.

Example: *rén* ('person').



Third tone: (ˇ) falling–rising tone. This tone actually resembles a tick mark (UK) or check mark (US) (✓). It starts rather low, goes down a bit and then rises up to the level of the green tone.

Please pay close attention to the Chinese native speaker's demonstration of this tone.

Colour: Red.

Movement: Closed fist with index and middle fingers forming a V and pointing up.

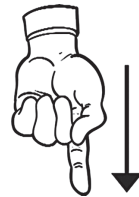
Example: *wǒ* ('I, me').



Fourth tone: (ˋ) falling tone. **Colour:** Black.

Movement: Index finger pointing down.

Example: *shì* ('to be, am, is, are').



Neutral non-tone: toneless.

Colour: None.

Movement: Closed fist.

Example: *ma* (question marker).

