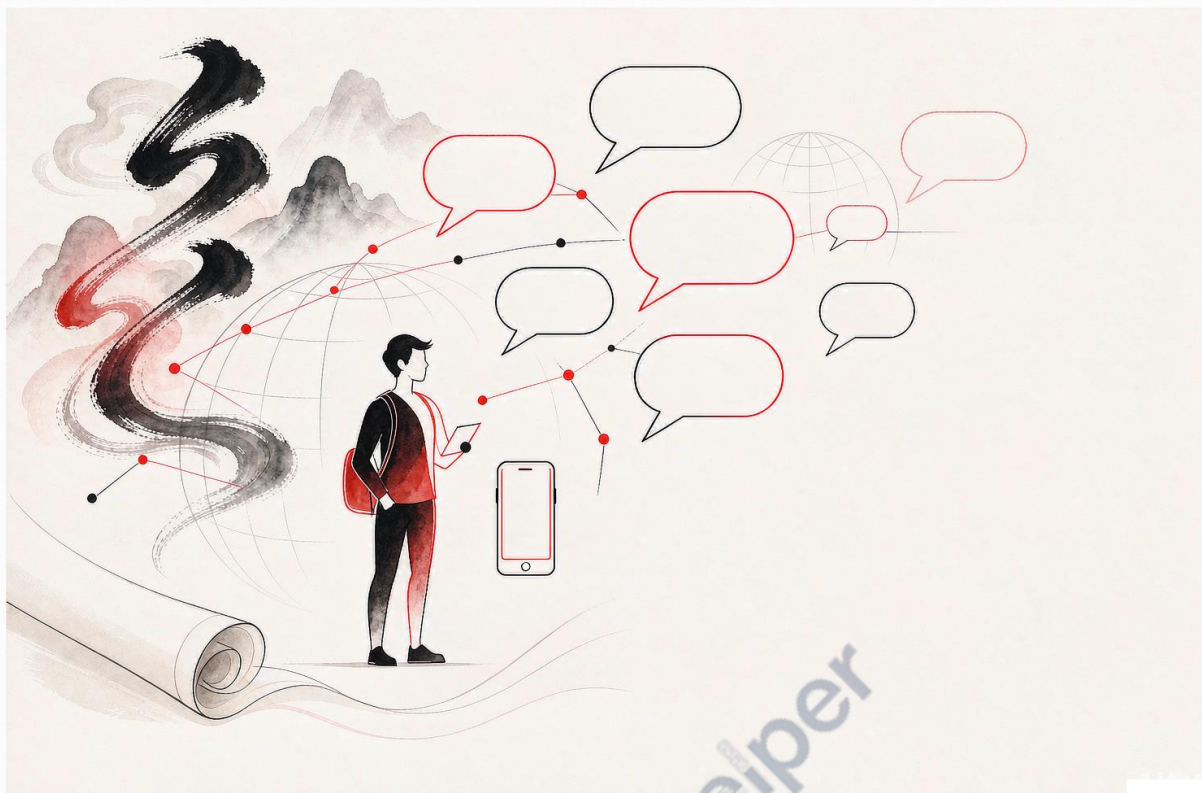




THE CHINA HELPER • FREE STUDENT RESOURCE

50 Essential Chinese Phrases

Every International Student Should Know in China

A Practical Chinese Survival Guide for Daily Communication

Free Chinese Learning Resource by The China Helper

Welcome to Chinese Communication

Welcome to Chinese Communication

Learning Chinese does not require you to master complicated grammar at the very beginning. When you first live in China, the most important skills are simple, practical oral expressions for real-world scenarios: - Greet other people - Express your basic needs - Ask for directions - Solve everyday small-scale problems

These phrases are designed for real situations you may experience in China. You do not need perfect pronunciation to communicate; local people will appreciate your effort to speak Chinese.

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How This Guide Works

How This Guide Works

Every entry in this guide includes 4 parts:

Chinese— Original Chinese characters

Pinyin— Phonetic spelling for pronunciation

Meaning— English translation

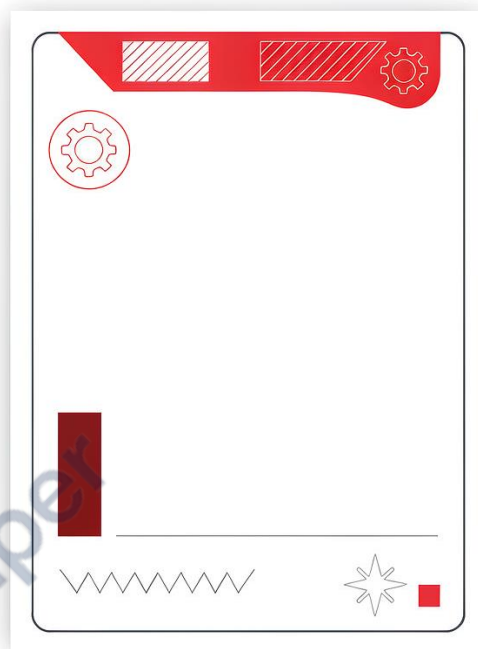
When to Use— Real-life scenario explanation

你好 (EXAMPLE)

Nǐ hǎo

Hello

When to use: *When meeting someone for the first time or greeting people.*



Extra Tip: You can screenshot or print these pages and save them on your phone. You do not have to memorize everything in one day; learn phrases little by little as you encounter new situations.



PART 1

Basic Greetings & Social Communication

Target: Communicate with Chinese classmates, teachers and new friends.

01 你好

Nǐ hǎo

Hello

When to use: General greeting for meeting anyone, teachers, classmates, shop keepers.

02 谢谢

Xièxie

Thank you

When to use: After receiving help, receiving food, getting service.

03 不客气

Bú kèqi

You're welcome

When to use: Reply when other people say "xièxie" to you.

04 不好意思

Bù hǎoyìsi

Sorry / Excuse me

When to use: Apologize for small mistakes, get people's attention in crowded places.

05 请问

Qǐngwèn

Excuse me / May I ask

When to use: Before asking strangers questions (polite opening for all questions).

06 很高兴认识你

Hěn gāoxìng rènshi nǐ

Nice to meet you

When to use: When you meet new friends for the first time.

07 再见

Zài jiàn

Goodbye

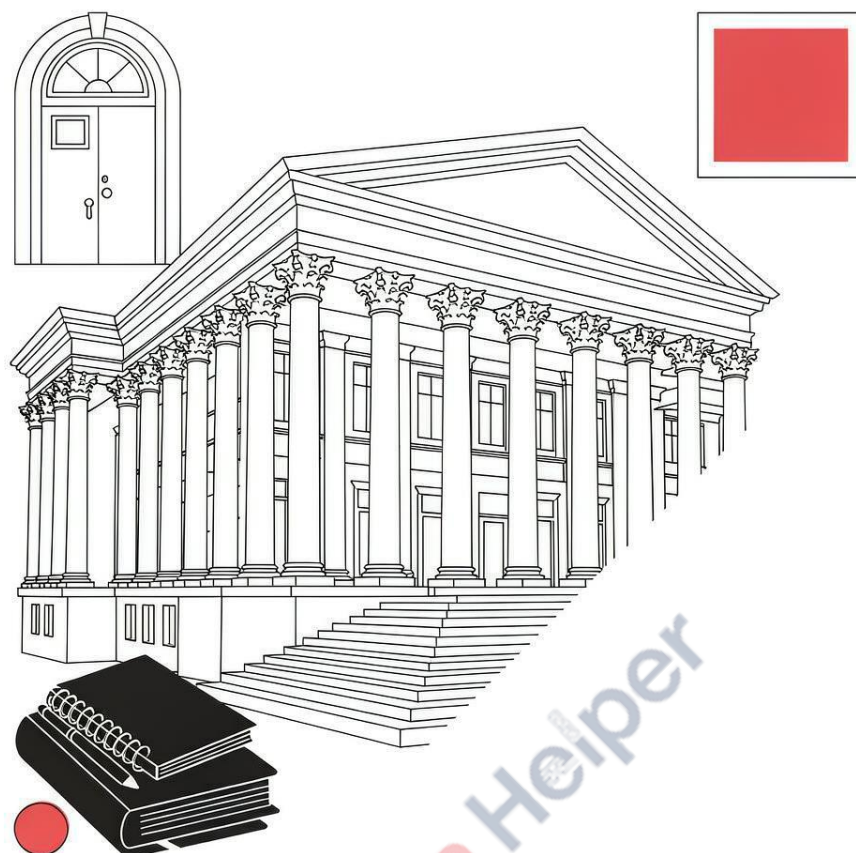
When to use: Say goodbye when you leave.

08 没关系

Méi guānxi

It's okay / No problem

When to use: Reply when someone says sorry to you.



PART 2

Campus & University Life

Target: For international students on university campus, talking with teachers & campus staff

09 教室在哪里？

Jiàoshì zài nǎlǐ?

Where is the classroom?

When to use: *Finding your lecture room for class.*

10 我是留学生

Wǒ shì liúxuéshēng

I am an international student

When to use: *Explain your identity to university staff.*

11 国际学生办公室在哪里？

Guójì xuéshēng bàngōngshì zài nǎlǐ?

Where is the international office?

When to use: *When you need help from student-affairs office.*

12 我不明白

Wǒ bù míngbái

I don't understand

When to use: *You cannot follow what other people are saying.*

13 请说慢一点

Qǐng shuō màn yìdiǎn

Please speak slowly

When to use: *Native speakers talk too fast for you to catch.*

14 可以写下来吗?

Kěyǐ xiě xiàlái ma?

Can you write it down?

When to use: *You cannot understand spoken words, want to read Chinese text.*

15 请问几点上课?

Qǐngwèn jǐ diǎn shàngkè?

What time does class start?

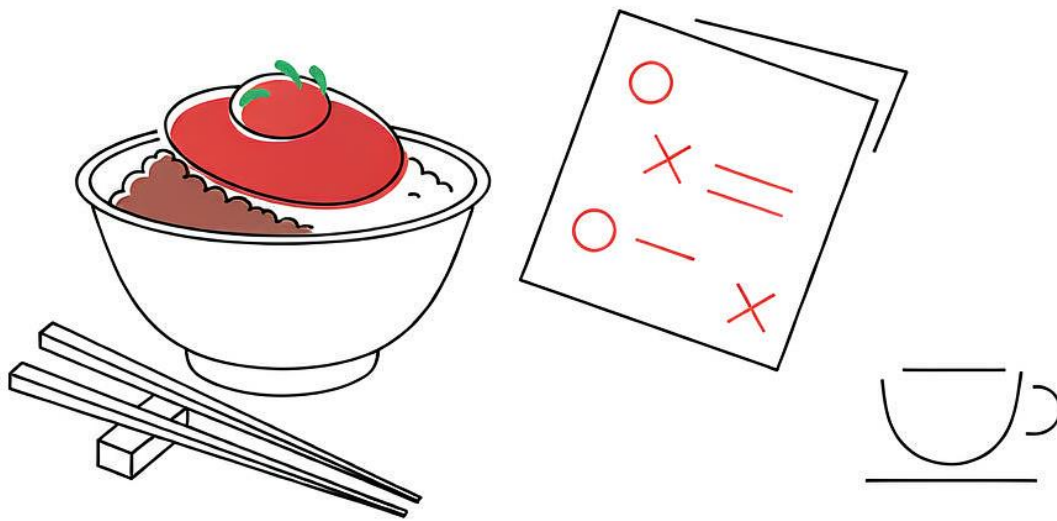
When to use: *Ask class starting time.*

16 我听不懂中文

Wǒ tīng bù dǒng Zhōngwén

I cannot understand Chinese

When to use: *For situations your listening ability is limited.*



PART 3

Food & Restaurants

High -frequency scenario for foreign students: restaurants, canteens, food stalls

17 我想点这个

Wǒ xiǎng diǎn zhège

I want this one

When to use: Order food by pointing at menu or dishes.

18 不要辣

Bú yào là

No spicy

When to use: You cannot eat spicy food at all.

19 少一点辣

Shǎo yìdiǎn là

Less spicy

When to use: You can accept small amount of chili.

20 这个多少钱?

Zhège duōshao qián?

How much is this?

When to use: Ask price for dishes or snacks.

21 可以打包吗?

Kěyǐ dǎbāo ma?

Can I take it away?

When to use: *You want to take leftover food to -go.*

22 我不吃猪肉

Wǒ bù chī zhūròu

I do not eat pork

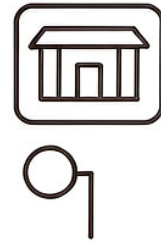
When to use: *Religious / personal dietary requirement.*

23 谢谢，很好吃

Xièxie, hěn hǎo chī

Thank you, it is delicious

When to use: *Compliment food after eating.*



PART 4

Shopping & Daily Life

Scenarios: Supermarkets, convenience stores, small local shops

24 多少钱?

Duōshao qián?

How much?

When to use: Ask price for goods.

25 太贵了

Tài guì le

Too expensive

When to use: You think the price is too high.

26 有没有?

Yǒu méiyǒu?

Do you have ...?

When to use: Ask whether the shop sells a certain item.

27 我想买这个

Wǒ xiǎng mǎi zhège

I want to buy this

When to use: Point at product you want to purchase.

28 可以便宜一点吗?

Kěyǐ piányi yìdiǎn ma?

Can you make it cheaper?

When to use: Bargain in small local street shops (Note: Not for supermarkets or big-chain stores).

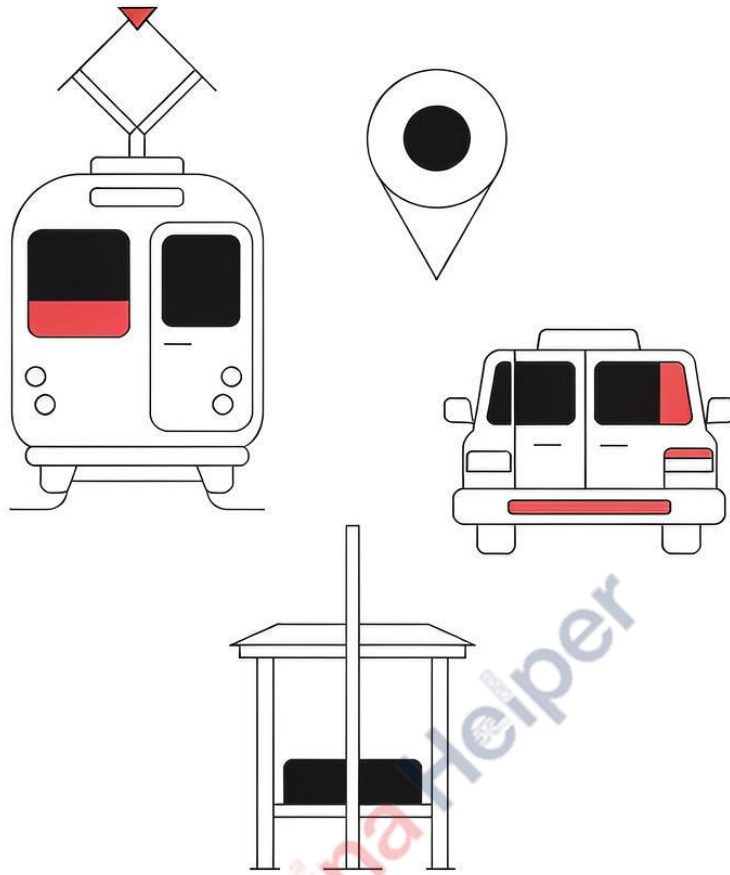
29 我看一看

Wǒ kàn yī kàn

I'm just looking

When to use: Shop assistant offers help but you are only browsing.

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PART 5

Transportation

Scenarios: Subway, taxi, ride-hailing, bus

30 地铁站在哪里?

Dìtiě zhàn zài nǎlǐ?

Where is the subway station?

When to use: *Look for metro entrance.*

31 请带我去这里

Qǐng dài wǒ qù zhèlǐ

Please take me here

When to use: *Show address / map screenshot to taxi driver.*

32 需要多久?

Xūyào duō jiǔ?

How long does it take?

When to use: *Ask estimated travel time.*

33 我在这里下车

Wǒ zài zhèlǐ xià chē

I want to get off here

When to use: *Tell taxi / bus driver your stop.*

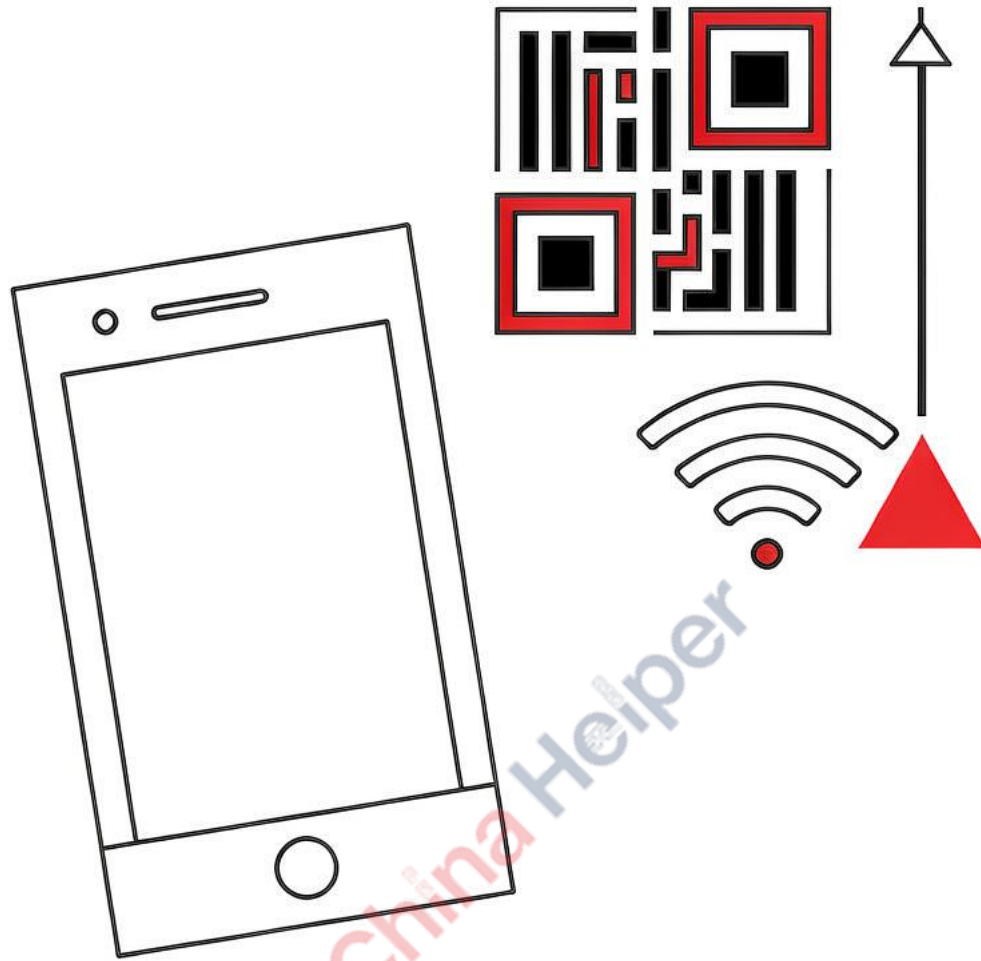
34 请问这路公交车到吗?

Qǐngwèn zhè lù gōngjiāo chē dào ma?

Does this bus go there?

When to use: *Check bus route.*

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PART 6

Mobile Payment & Technology

China -specific daily -life scenarios: QR -code scan, mobile payment, phone & internet issues

35 可以用支付宝吗?

Kěyǐ yòng Zhīfùbǎo ma?

Can I pay by Alipay?

When to use: Ask shops whether they accept Alipay.

36 我扫不了二维码

Wǒ sǎo bù liǎo èr wéi mǎ

I cannot scan the QR code

When to use: Your phone fails to scan merchant QR payment code.

37 我的手机号不能用

Wǒ de shǒujī hào bù néng yòng

My phone number doesn't work

When to use: SIM-card / mobile service failure.

38 可以用微信支付吗?

Kěyǐ yòng Wēixìn zhīfù ma?

Can I pay with WeChat Pay?

When to use: Check WeChat Pay acceptance.

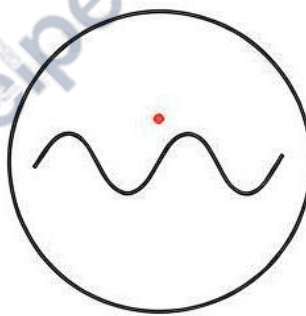
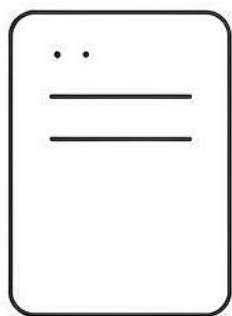
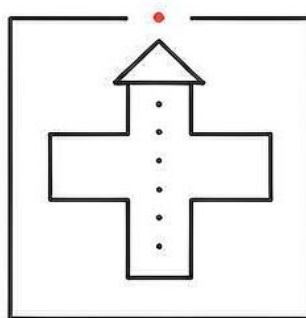
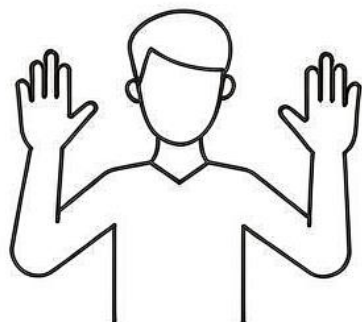
39 没有网络

Méiyǒu wǎngluò

No internet / No Wi-Fi

When to use: *Mobile data or Wi-Fi connection fails.*

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PART 7

Emergency & Important Situations

Critical vocabulary: hospital, police, lost documents, asking for urgent help

40 我需要帮助

Wǒ xūyào bāngzhù

I need help

When to use: General emergency situation.

41 我的护照丢了

Wǒ de hùzhào diū le

I lost my passport

When to use: Your passport is missing, contact police or consulate.

42 医院在哪里？

Yīyuàn zài nǎlǐ?

Where is the hospital?

When to use: Medical emergency, need to find clinic / hospital.

43 请报警

Qǐng bào jǐng

Please call the police

When to use: Serious safety-related emergency.

44 我不舒服

Wǒ bù shūfu

I am feeling sick /unwell

When to use: *Physical discomfort, seek medical help.*

45 我想要去领事馆

Wǒ xiǎng yào qù lǐngshìguǎn

I want to go to the consulate

When to use: *When your passport is lost or you need consular assistance.*

46 我听不懂，请找会英语的人

Wǒ tīng bù dǒng, qǐng zhǎo huì Yīngyǔ de rén

I cannot understand, please find someone who speaks English

When to use: *Hospital / police / office when no English-speaking staff nearby.*

47 我的钱包不见了

Wǒ de qiánbāo bù jiàn le

My wallet is missing

When to use: *Lost cash or physical wallet.*

48 可以帮我叫救护车吗？

Kěyǐ bāng wǒ jiào jiùhùchē ma?

Can you call an ambulance for me?

When to use: *Serious medical emergency.*

49 我迷路了

Wǒ mílù le

I am lost

When to use: *Cannot find your destination location.*

50 请慢一点，我有点紧张

Qǐng màn yìdiǎn, wǒ yǒu diǎn jǐnzhāng

Please slow down, I am a little nervous

When to use: *Stressful official / emergency situations.*

Quick Reference Sheet

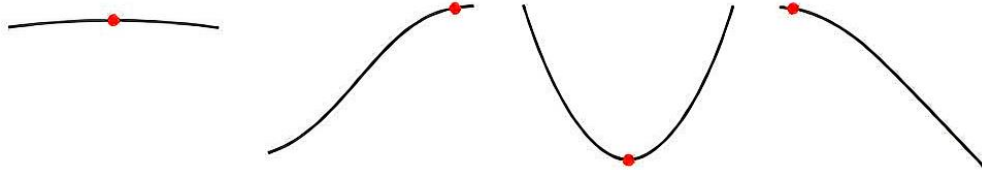
Top 20 Most Useful Phrases — save on your phone or print out.

Top 20 Most Useful Phrases (For saving on your mobile phone screen or print out.)

Chinese	Pinyin	English Meaning
你好	Nǐ hǎo	Hello
谢谢	Xièxie	Thank you
多少钱?	Duōshao qián?	How much?
在哪里?	Zài nǎlǐ?	Where is it?
我不知道	Wǒ bù zhīdào	I don't know
请帮帮我	Qǐng bāngbang wǒ	Please help me
不好意思	Bù hǎoyìsi	Sorry / Excuse me
请问	Qǐngwèn	May I ask
请说慢一点	Qǐng shuō màn yídiǎn	Please speak slowly
我不明白	Wǒ bù míngbái	I don't understand
不要辣	Bú yào là	No spicy
可以打包吗?	Kěyǐ dǎbāo ma?	Can I take-away?
地铁站在哪里?	Dìtiě zhàn zài nǎlǐ?	Where is subway station?
可以用支付宝吗?	Kěyǐ yòng Zhīfùbǎo ma?	Can I use Alipay?
没有网络	Méiyǒu wǎngluò	No internet
我需要帮助	Wǒ xūyào bāngzhù	I need help
我的护照丢了	Wǒ de hùzhào diū le	I lost my passport
医院在哪里?	Yīyuàn zài nǎlǐ?	Where is hospital?
再见	Zài jiàn	Goodbye
没关系	Méi guānxi	It's okay

Chinese Pronunciation Tips

Simple introduction to the Four Tones. You don't need perfect tones to communicate.



Chinese Pronunciation Tips

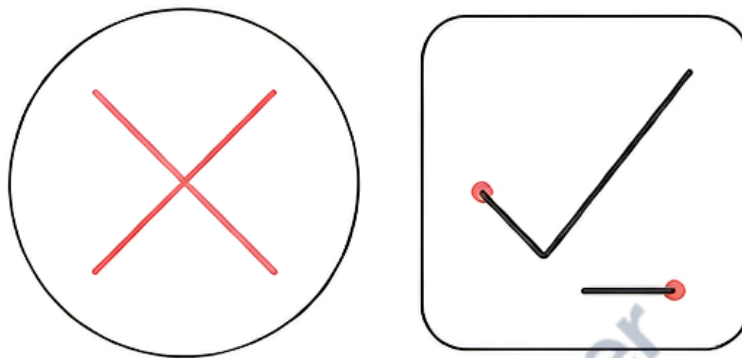
Simple introduction to Four Tones. You don't need perfect tones to communicate.

Chinese Pinyin has four main tones: - 第一声 (Flat) : ¯ example: mā - 第二声 (Rising) : ´ example: má - 第三声 (Falling-Rising) : ˇ example: mǎ - 第四声 (Sharp falling) : ` example: mà



Important tip: Do not get stuck on perfect pronunciation. Even if your tones are not 100% correct, Chinese people can still understand you from context. Speaking is far more important than perfection.

Avoid These Mistakes



Avoid These Mistakes

✗ Mistake 1: Saying “你好吗? (Nǐ hǎo ma?)” every-time you meet people

Note: In daily-life Chinese, local people rarely use 你好吗 for casual greeting. Just use simple 你好。你好吗 is reserved for asking “how are you” when someone looks unwell.

✗ Mistake 2: Speaking too fast

Note: Take your time. Speak slowly and clearly. Slow simple Chinese is easier for local people to understand.

✦ Bonus tip: Pointing with your hand together with simple phrases is totally acceptable when you struggle with Chinese. Gestures help communication a-lot.



Continue Learning Chinese

More Free Resources from The China Helper:

- ✓ Chinese Characters Guide
- ✓ Pinyin Guide
- ✓ HSK Preparation

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