



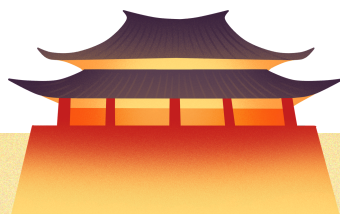
for beginners

MANDARIN CHINESE

***Learn Chinese From
the BASICS***

LESSON 1

✦ <https://pntmandarin.com>



by PnT Mandarin

LESSON 1



To ease your learning Chinese process, it is crucial to learn the essential tools of the language. They are Phonetics and Characters.

PHONETIC | 语音

1. Pinyin

Pinyin is the most widely used Romanization system to learn the pronunciation of Chinese Characters.



e.g. 1

Tā shì yīshēng. → Pinyin

他是医生。 → Character

He is a doctor.

2. Basic Structure of the Chinese Syllable

A typical Chinese syllable is composed of three parts. An initial, a final and a tone.



It's important to know that not all syllables have an initial, but every syllable must have a final and a tone.



2.1. Initials (A)

There are 21 initials total in Chinese.

b	p	m	f
d	t	n	l
g	k	h	
j	q	x	



2.2. Finals (A)

There are 39 initials in Chinese, but for the sake of economy, some vowels are omitted in pinyin orthography.

i	u	ü	er
a	ia	ua	
o	uo		
e	ie	üe	
ai	uai		
ei	uei(ui)		
ao	iao		

3. Tones

Tones are the pitch of a syllable. The main function of the tones is to distinguish the sounds and consequently the meanings of the characters.

Look at the example below. Their initials and finals are the same, but with different tones, the pronunciation and meanings are different.

Shuǐjiào








to sleep
睡觉

shuǐjiǎo



dumplings
水饺

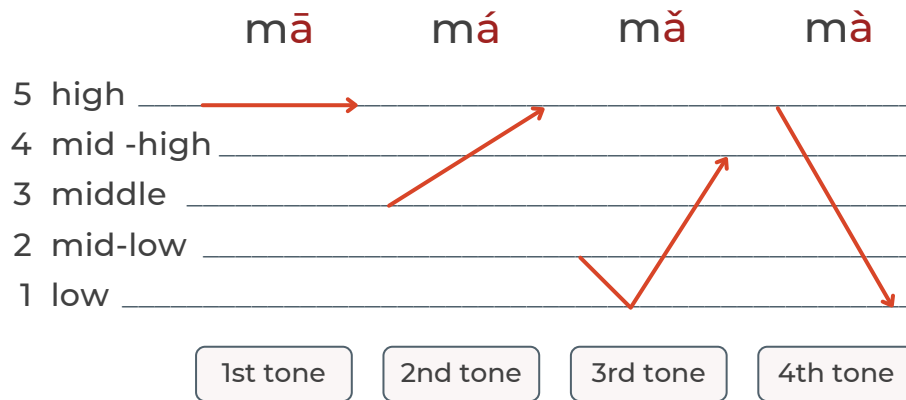
Chinese has four basic tones and a neutral tone, as seen below:

Basic tones				Neutral tone
1st	2nd	3rd	4th	
 mā n. mother	 má n. hemp	 mǎ n. horse	 mà v. to scold	 māma n. mother



3.1. Tonal value of the basic tones

The pitches of the four tones are illustrated in the diagram below.



- The 1st tone is a high, level tone. It is a steady, high pitch and is the highest of the four tones. Remember to maintain the high level pitch from the beginning to the end of the syllable.
- The 2nd tone is a high, rising tone. It begins at about the middle of the voice range and rises rapidly to the top. Remember to raise your tone voice as if you're asking a question.
- The 3rd tone is a low, dipping tone. It starts quite low, then goes even lower, and quickly rises up. It is maintained a little longer than the other tones. Remember to start your tone at a low enough level.
- The 4th tone starts high and goes down sharply and quickly. This tone is held less time than any of the others. Remember to make your voice go down as quickly as possible.

4. Read the syllables aloud and pay attention to the tones.

ā	á	ǎ	à
ō	ó	ǒ	ò
ē	é	ě	è
ī	í	ǐ	ì
ū	ú	ǔ	ù
ǖ	ǘ	ǚ	ǜ





PRACTICE 1

1. Read the monosyllabic words aloud.

mā	má	mǎ	mà	xuē	xué	xuě	xuè
bā	bá	bǎ	bà	tiāo	tiáo	tiǎo	tiào
fēi	fēi	fěi	fèi	huō	huó	huǒ	huò
qiē	qié	qiě	qiè	māo	máo	mǎo	mào

2. Read the disyllabic words aloud.

xiàyǔ	xiàwǔ	tèbié	dìyǐ	yěxǔ
pǎobù	huídá	tiàowǔ	yìqǐ	kuàilè
qítā	biǎodá	lǐwù	jīhuì	líkāi
fùxí	dìtú	dìtiě	àihào	jiēdào

3. Read and guess: Match the pictures with the words.



2.1



2.2



2.3



2.4



2.5

a)
dìtú

b)
fēijī

c)
máobǐ

d)
huǒguō

e)
kělè

