

Language

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The official language of the PRC is the dialect spoken in Běijīng. It is usually referred to in the west as 'Mandarin', but the Chinese call it *Putonghua* (common speech). Putonghua is referred to in the Southwest as *hànyǔ* (the Han language), but most of the region's minorities speak their own language and understand Chinese only as a second or even third language.

THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Dialects

Discounting ethnic minority languages, China has eight principal dialect groups. The predominant dialect in the Southwest is Sichuanese, though the differences from Putonghua are as much a reflection of regional accent as significant differences in vocabulary. Deng Xiaoping gave most of his speeches in a thick Sichuanese accent. Changes are slight but enough to throw you off course; *hùzhào* (passport) is pronounced 'fuzhao', *méi yǒu* (no; don't have) becomes 'mo de'.

Cantonese is spoken in Hong Kong, Macau, Guangdong and parts of Guangxi.

It differs from Mandarin as much as French differs from Spanish. Speakers of both dialects can read Chinese characters, but a Cantonese speaker will pronounce words very differently. Cantonese also has a more complex tone system than Mandarin, boasting at least seven tones compared with Mandarin's four.

THE WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Chinese is often referred to as a language of pictographs. Many of the basic Chinese characters are in fact highly stylised pictures of what they represent, but most (around 90%) are compounds of a 'meaning' element and a 'sound' element.

So just how many Chinese characters are there? It's possible to verify the existence of some 56,000 characters, but the vast majority of these are archaic. It is commonly felt that a well-educated, contemporary Chinese person might know and use between 6000 and 8000 characters. To read a Chinese newspaper you will need to know 2000 to 3000 characters, but 1200 to 1500 would be enough to get the gist.

Writing systems usually alter people's perception of a language, and this is certainly true of Chinese. Each Chinese character represents a spoken syllable, leading many people to declare that Chinese is a 'monosyllabic language'. Actually, it's more a case of having a monosyllabic writing system. While the building block of the Chinese language is indeed the monosyllabic Chinese character, Chinese words are usually a combination of two or more characters. You could think of Chinese words as being compounds. The Chinese word for 'east' is composed of a single character (*dōng*), but must be combined with the character for 'west' (*xī*) to form the word for 'thing' (*dōngxī*). English has many compound words too, examples being 'white-wash' and 'backslide'.

Theoretically, all Chinese dialects share the same written system. In practice, Cantonese adds about 3000 specialised characters of its own and many of the dialects don't have a written form at all.

CHINESE SAYINGS

Chinese is an extremely rich idiomatic language. Many sayings are four-character phrases that combine a great balance of rhythm and tone with a clever play on the multiple meanings of similar-sounding characters. Perhaps most interesting is how many phrases have direct English equivalents.

缘木求鱼 (*yuánmù qiúyú*)

Like climbing a tree to catch fish (a waste of time)

问道于盲 (*wèndào yú máng*)

Like asking a blind man for directions (another waste of time)

新瓶装旧酒 (*xīnpíng zhuāng jiùjiǔ*)

A new bottle filled with old wine (a superficial change)

坐井观天 (*zuòjǐng guāntiān*)

Like looking at the sky from the bottom of a well (not seeing the whole picture)

水落石出 (*shuǐluò shíchū*)

When the tide goes out the rocks are revealed (the truth will come out)

守株待兔 (*shǒuzhū dàitù*)

Like a hunter waiting for a rabbit to kill itself by running into a tree (trusting to dumb luck)

临阵磨枪 (*línzhèn móqiāng*)

To not sharpen your weapons until the battle is upon you (to do things at the last minute)

热锅上的蚂蚁 (*règuōshàng de mǎyǐ*)

Like ants on top of a hot stove (full of worries)

殊途同归 (*shūtú tóngguī*)

Different roads all reach the same end

同床异梦 (*tóngchuáng yìmèng*)

To sleep in the same bed but have different dreams (different strokes for different folks)

削足适履 (*xiāozú shìlǚ*)

Like trimming the foot to fit the shoe

种瓜得瓜 (*zhòngguā déguā*)

If a man plants melons, so will he reap melons

酒肉朋友 (*jiǔròu péngyou*)

An eating and drinking friend (fair-weather friend)

晴天霹雳 (*qíngtiān pīlǐ*)

Like thunder from a blue sky (a bolt from the blue)

沐猴而冠 (*mù hóu ér guān*)

A monkey dressed in a tall hat (a petty official)

燃眉之急 (*ránméi zhījī*)

A fire that is burning one's eyebrows (extremely urgent)

sentence like 'I (subject) love (verb) you (object)' is constructed in exactly the same way in Chinese. The catch with Mandarin is mastering the tones.

MANDARIN

PINYIN

In 1958 the Chinese adopted a system of writing their language using the Roman alphabet. It's known as *pinyin* (usually written in English as 'Pinyin'). The original idea was to eventually do away with characters. However, tradition dies hard, and the idea has been abandoned.

Pinyin is often used on shop fronts, street signs and advertising billboards. Don't expect Chinese people to be able to use Pinyin, however. There are indications that the use of the Pinyin system is diminishing.

In the countryside and the smaller towns you may not see a single Pinyin sign anywhere, so unless you speak Chinese you'll need a phrasebook with Chinese characters.

PRONUNCIATION

Vowels

a	as in 'father'
ai	as in 'aisle'
ao	as the 'ow' in 'cow'
e	as in 'her', with no 'r' sound
ei	as in 'weigh'
i	as the 'ee' in 'meet' (or like the 'oo' in 'book' after c, ch, r, s, sh, z or zh)
ian	as the word 'yen'
ie	as the English word 'yeah'
o	as in 'or', with no 'r' sound
ou	as the 'oa' in 'boat'
u	as in 'flute'
ui	as the word 'way'
uo	like a 'w' followed by 'o'
yu/ü	like 'ee' with lips pursed

Consonants

c	as the 'ts' in 'bits'
ch	as in 'chop', but with the tongue curled up and back
h	as in 'hay', but articulated from further back in the throat
q	as the 'ch' in 'cheese'
r	as the 's' in 'pleasure'
sh	as in 'ship', but with the tongue curled up and back
x	as in 'ship'
z	as the 'dz' in 'suds'
zh	as the 'j' in 'judge' but with the tongue curled up and back

The only consonants that occur at the end of a syllable are **n**, **ng** and **r**.

In Pinyin, apostrophes are occasionally used to separate syllables in order to prevent ambiguity, eg the word *píng'ān* can be written with an apostrophe after the 'g' to prevent it being pronounced as *pín'gān*.

Tones

Chinese is a language with a large number of words with the same pronunciation but a different meaning; what distinguishes these 'homophones' is their 'tonal' quality – the raising and lowering of pitch on certain syllables. Mandarin has four tones – high, rising, falling-rising and falling, plus a fifth 'neutral' tone, which you can all but ignore. A good illustration of the importance of getting tones right can be seen with the word *ma*, which has four different meanings according to tone:

high tone	<i>mā</i> (mother)
rising tone	<i>má</i> (hemp, numb)
falling-rising tone	<i>mǎ</i> (horse)
falling tone	<i>mà</i> (scold, swear)

Mastering tones is tricky for newcomers to Mandarin, but with a little practice it can be done.

GESTURES

Hand signs are frequently used in China. The 'thumbs-up' sign has a long tradition as an indication of excellence. Another way to indicate excellence is to gently pull your earlobe between your thumb and index finger.

PHRASEBOOKS

Phrasebooks are invaluable, but sometimes seeking help by showing a phrase to someone can result in them wanting to read every page! Reading place names or street signs isn't difficult, since the Chinese name is usually accompanied by the Pinyin form; if not, you'll soon learn lots of characters just by repeated exposure. A small dictionary that includes English, Pinyin and Chinese characters is also useful for picking up a few words.

Lonely Planet's *Mandarin Phrasebook* has script throughout and loads of useful phrases – it's also a very useful learning tool.

ACCOMMODATION

I'm looking for a ...

<i>Wǒ yào zhǎo ...</i>	我要找...
camping ground	露营地
<i>lùyíngdì</i>	
guesthouse	宾馆
<i>bīnguǎn</i>	
hotel	旅馆
<i>lǚguǎn</i>	
tourist hotel	宾馆/饭店/酒店
<i>bīnguǎn/fàndiàn/jiǔdiàn</i>	
hostel	招待所/旅社
<i>zhāodàisù/ lǚshè</i>	
youth hostel	青年旅舍
<i>qīngnián lǚshè</i>	

Where is a cheap hotel?

Nǎr yǒu piányi de lǚguǎn?

哪儿有便宜的旅馆?

What is the address?

Dìzhǐ zài nǎr?

地址在哪儿?

Could you write the address, please?

Néngbùnénqǐng nǐ bǎ dìzhǐ xiě xiàlái?
能不能请你把地址写下来?

Do you have a room available?

Nimen yǒu fángjiān ma?
你们有房间吗?

I'd like (a) ...

Wǒ xiǎng yào ... bed yī ge chuángwèi single room yījiān dānrénfáng double room yījiān shuāngrénfáng bed for two shuāngrén chuáng room with two beds shuāngrénfáng economy room (no bath) pǔtōngfáng (méiyǒu yùshì) room with a bathroom yǒu yùshìde fángjiān standard room biāozhǔn fángjiān deluxe suite háohuá tàofáng to share a dorm zhù sùshè	我想要... 一个床位 一间单人房 一间双人房 双人床 双人房 普通房 (没有浴室) 有浴室的房间 标准房间 豪华套房 住宿舍
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How much is it ...?

... duōshǎo qián per night yī ge wǎnshàng per person mèigerén	... 多少钱? 一个晚上 每个人
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May I see the room?

Wǒ néng kànkan fángjiān ma?
我能看看房间吗?

Where is the bathroom?

Yùshì zài nǎr?
浴室在哪儿?

Where is the toilet?

Cèsuǒ zài nǎr?
厕所 在哪儿?

I don't like this room.

Wǒ bù xǐhuan zhèjiān fángjiān.
我不喜欢这间房间

Are there any messages for me?

Yǒu méiyǒu rén gěi wǒ liú huà?
有没有人给我留话?

May I have a hotel namecard?

Yǒu méiyǒu lǚquǎn de míngpiàn?
有没有旅馆的名片?

Could I have these clothes washed, please?

Qǐng bǎ zhèxiē yīfú xǐ gānjìng, hǎo ma?
请把这些衣服洗干净, 好吗?

I'm/We're leaving today.

Wǒ/Wǒmen jīntiān líkāi.
我/我们今天离开。

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

Hello.	Nǐ hǎo. Nín hǎo. (pol)	你好 您好
Goodbye.	Zàijiàn.	再见
Please.	Qǐng.	请
Thank you.	Xièxie.	谢谢
Many thanks.	Duōxiè.	多谢
You're welcome.	Bùkèqì.	不客气
Excuse me, ...	Qǐng wèn, ...	请问, ...

(When asking a question it is polite to start with the phrase *qǐng wèn* – literally, 'may I ask?' – this expression is only used at the beginning of a sentence, never at the end.)

I'm sorry.

Duìbuqǐ.
对不起

May I ask your name?

Nin guìxìng?
您 贵姓?

My (sur)name is ...

Wǒ xìng ...
我 姓 ...

Where are you from?

Nǐ shì cóng nǎr lái de?
你是从哪儿来的?

I'm from ...

Wǒ shì cóng ... lái de.
我是从... 来的

I like ...

Wǒ xǐhuan ...
我喜欢... .

I don't like ...

Wǒ bù xǐhuan ...
我不喜欢... .

Wait a moment.

Dèng yíxià.
等一下

Yes & No

There are no specific words in Mandarin that specifically mean 'yes' and 'no' when used in isolation. When a question is asked, the verb is repeated to indicate the affirmative. A response in the negative is formed by using the word 不 *bù* (meaning 'no') before the verb. When *bù* (falling tone) occurs before another word with a falling tone, it is pronounced with a rising tone.

Are you going to Guilin?

Nǐ qù Guìlín ma?
你去桂林吗?

Yes.

Qù. ('go')
去

No.

Bù qù. ('no go')
不去

No.

Méi yǒu. ('not have')
没有

No.

Bùshì. ('not so')
不是

DIRECTIONS**Where is (the) ...?**

... zài nǎr?
... 在哪儿?

Go straight ahead.

Yízhí zǒu.
一直走

Turn left.

Zuǒ zhuǎn.
左转

Turn right.

Yòu zhuǎn.
右转

at the next corner

zài xià yíge gōujiǎo
在下一个拐角

at the traffic lights

zài hónglǜdēng
在红绿灯

map

dìtú
地图

Could you show me (on the map)?

Nǐ néng bùnéng (zài dìtú shàng) zhǐ gěi wǒ kàn?
你能不能(在地图上)指给我看?

SIGNS

入口	Rùkǒu	Entrance
出口	Chūkǒu	Exit
问讯处	Wènxūnchù	Information
开	Kāi	Open
关	Guān	Closed
禁止	Jìnzhǐ	Prohibited
有空房	Yǒu Kòngfáng	Rooms Available
客满	Kèmǎn	No Vacancies
警察	Jǐngchá	Police
警察局	Jǐngchájú	Police Station
厕所	Cèsuǒ	Toilets
男	Nán	Men
女	Nǚ	Women

behind

hòubianr

后边儿

in front of

qiánbianr

前边儿

near

jìn

近

far

yuǎn

远

opposite

duìmiàn

对面儿

beach

hǎitān

海滩

bridge

qiáoliáng

桥梁

island

dǎoyǔ

岛屿

main square

guǎngchǎng

广场

market

shìchǎng

市场

old city

lǎochéng

老城

palace

gōngdiàn

宫殿

sea

hǎiyáng

海洋

EMERGENCIES**Help!**

Jiùmìng a!
救命啊!

emergency

jǐnjí qíngkuàng
紧急情况

There's been an accident!

Chūshìle!
出事了!

I'm lost.

Wǒ mílùle.
我迷路了

Go away!

Zǒu kāi!
走开!

Leave me alone!

Bié fán wǒ!
别烦我!

Could you help me please?

Nǐ néng bùnéng bāng
wǒ ge máng?
你能不能帮我个忙?

Call ...!

Qǐng jiào ...!
请叫...!

a doctor

yīshēng
医生

the police

jǐngchá
警察

HEALTH**I'm sick.**

Wǒ bīngle.
我病了.

It hurts here.

Zhèr téng.
这儿疼.

I need a doctor.

Wǒ děi kàn yīshēng.
我得看医生.

Is there a doctor here who speaks English?

Zhèr yǒu huì jiǎng
yīngyǔ de dàifu ma?
这儿有会讲英语的大夫吗?

I'm ...

Wǒ yǒu ...
我有...

asthmatic

xiàochuǎnbìng
哮喘病

diabetic

tánngniàobìng
糖尿病

epileptic

diānxiǎnbìng
癫痫病

I'm allergic to ...

Wǒ duì ... guòmǐn.
我对... 过敏.

antibiotics

kàngjūnsù
抗菌素

aspirin

āsīpīlín
阿司匹林

bee stings

mìfēng zhēchì
蜜蜂蜇刺

nuts	果仁
<i>guǒrén</i>	
penicillin	青霉素
<i>qīngméisù</i>	
antidiarrhoea medicine	止泻药
<i>zhǐxièyào</i>	
antiseptic cream	消毒膏
<i>xiāodúgāo</i>	
condoms	避孕套
<i>bìyùn tào</i>	
contraceptive	避孕药
<i>bìyùnyào</i>	
diarrhoea	拉肚子
<i>lā dùzi</i>	
headache	头疼
<i>tóuténg</i>	
medicine	药
<i>yào</i>	
sanitary napkins (Kotex)	妇女卫生巾
<i>fūnǚ wèishēngjīn</i>	
sunscreen (UV) lotion	防晒油
<i>fángshài yóu</i>	
tampons	月经棉塞
<i>yuèjīng miánsāi</i>	

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

Do you speak English?

Nǐ huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?

你会说英语吗?

Does anyone here speak English?

Zhèr yòu rén huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?

这儿有人会说英语吗?

How do you say ... in Mandarin?

... zhōngwén zěnmē shuō?

... 中文怎么说?

What does ... mean?

... shì shénme yìsì?

... 是什么意思?

I understand.

Wǒ tīngdédǒng.

我听得懂

I don't understand.

Wǒ tīngbùdǒng.

我听不懂

Please write it down.

Qǐng xiěxiàlái.

请写下来

NUMBERS

0	<i>líng</i>	零
1	<i>yī, yāo</i>	一, 幺
2	<i>èr, liǎng</i>	二, 两
3	<i>sān</i>	三

4	<i>sì</i>	四
5	<i>wǔ</i>	五
6	<i>liù</i>	六
7	<i>qī</i>	七
8	<i>bā</i>	八
9	<i>jiǔ</i>	九
10	<i>shí</i>	十
11	<i>shíyī</i>	十一
12	<i>shíèr</i>	十二
20	<i>èrshí</i>	二十
21	<i>èrshíyī</i>	二十一
22	<i>èrshíèr</i>	二十二
30	<i>sānshí</i>	三十
40	<i>sìshí</i>	四十
50	<i>wǔshí</i>	五十
60	<i>liùshí</i>	六十
70	<i>qīshí</i>	七十
80	<i>bāshí</i>	八十
90	<i>jiǔshí</i>	九十
100	<i>yībǎi</i>	一百
1000	<i>yīqiān</i>	一千
2000	<i>liǎngqiān</i>	两千

PAPERWORK

name	姓名
<i>xìngmíng</i>	
nationality	国籍
<i>guójí</i>	
date of birth	出生日期
<i>chūshēng rìqī</i>	
place of birth	出生地点
<i>chūshēng dìdiǎn</i>	
sex (gender)	性别
<i>xìngbié</i>	
passport	护照
<i>hùzhào</i>	
passport number	护照号码
<i>hùzhào hàomǎ</i>	
visa	签证
<i>qiānzhèng</i>	
extension	延长
<i>yáncháng</i>	
Public Security Bureau (PSB)	公安局
<i>gōngānjú</i>	
Foreign Affairs Branch	外事科
<i>wàishìkē</i>	

QUESTION WORDS

Who?	谁?
<i>Shuí?</i>	
What?	什么?
<i>Shénme?</i>	
What is it?	是什么?
<i>Shì shénme?</i>	

When?	什么时候?
<i>Shénme shíhòu?</i>	
Where?	在哪儿?
<i>Zài nǎr?</i>	
Which?	哪个?
<i>Nǎge?</i>	
Why?	为什么?
<i>Wèishénme?</i>	
How?	怎么?
<i>Zěnmē?</i>	

SHOPPING & SERVICES

I'd like to buy ...	我想买...
<i>Wǒ xiǎng mǎi ...</i>	
I'm just looking.	我只是看看
<i>Wǒ zhǐshì kànkan.</i>	
How much is it?	多少钱?
<i>Duōshǎo qián?</i>	
I don't like it.	我不喜欢
<i>Wǒ bù xǐhuan.</i>	
Can I see it?	能看看吗?
<i>Néng kànkan ma?</i>	
I'll take it.	我就买这个
<i>Wǒ jiù mǎi zhège.</i>	
It's cheap.	这不贵
<i>Zhè bùguì.</i>	
That's too expensive.	太贵了
<i>Tài guìle.</i>	
Is there anything cheaper?	有便宜一点的吗?
<i>Yǒu piányi yídiǎn de ma?</i>	
Can I pay by travellers cheque?	可以付旅行支票吗?
<i>Kéyǐ fù lǚxíng zhīpiào ma?</i>	
Do you accept ...?	... 收不收?
<i>... shōu bùshōu?</i>	
credit cards	信用卡
<i>xìnyòngkǎ</i>	
travellers cheques	旅行支票
<i>lǚxíng zhīpiào</i>	

more	多
<i>duō</i>	
less	少
<i>shǎo</i>	
smaller	更小
<i>gèng xiǎo</i>	
bigger	更大
<i>gèng dà</i>	
too much/many	太多
<i>tài duō</i>	

Excuse me, where's the nearest ...?

Qǐng wèn, zuìjìn de ... zài nǎr?
请问, 最近的... 在哪儿?

I'm looking for a/the ...	我在找...
<i>Wǒ zài zhǎo ...</i>	
automatic teller machine	自动柜员机
<i>zìdòng guìyuánjī</i>	
bank	银行
<i>yínháng</i>	
Bank of China	中国银行
<i>zhōngguó yínháng</i>	
chemist/pharmacy	药店
<i>yàodiàn</i>	
city centre	市中心
<i>shìzhōngxīn</i>	
... embassy	... 大使馆
<i>... dàshìguǎn</i>	
foreign affairs police	外事警察
<i>wàishì jǐngchá</i>	
foreign exchange office/currency exchange	外汇兑换处
<i>wàihuì duìhuànchù</i>	
hospital	医院
<i>yīyuàn</i>	
hotel	宾馆/饭店/旅馆
<i>bīnguǎn/ fàndiàn/ lǚguǎn</i>	
market	市场
<i>shìchǎng</i>	
museum	博物馆
<i>bówùguǎn</i>	
police	警察
<i>jǐngchá</i>	
post office	邮局
<i>yóujú</i>	
public toilet	公共厕所
<i>gōnggòng cèsuǒ</i>	
telephone	电话
<i>diànhuà</i>	
telephone office	电讯大楼
<i>diànxùn dàlóu</i>	
the tourist office	旅游局
<i>lǚyóujú</i>	

change money	换钱
<i>huàn qián</i>	
telephone card	电话卡
<i>diànhuà kǎ</i>	
international call	国际长途电话
<i>guójí chángtú diànhuà</i>	
collect call	对方付费电话
<i>duìfāng fùfèi diànhuà</i>	
direct-dial call	直拨电话
<i>zhíbō diànhuà</i>	
fax	传真
<i>chuánzhēn</i>	
computer	电脑
<i>diànnǎo</i>	

email (often simply called 'email')	
<i>diànzǐyóujiàn</i>	电子邮件
internet	
<i>yīntèwǎng</i>	因特网
<i>hùliánwǎng</i>	互联网 (more formal)
online	
<i>shàngwǎng</i>	上网

Where can I get online?

Wǒ zài nǎr kěyǐ shàngwǎng?
我在哪儿可以上网?

Can I check my email account?

Wǒ chá yíxià zìjǐ de email, hǎo ma?
我查一下自己的email, 好吗?

TIME & DATES**What's the time?**

<i>Jǐdiǎn zhōng?</i>	几点钟?
... hour ... minute	
<i>... diǎn ... fēn</i>	... 点... 分

3.05	三点零五分
-------------	-------

When?	什么时候?
<i>Shénme shíhòu?</i>	

now	现在
<i>xiànzài</i>	
today	今天
<i>jīntiān</i>	
tomorrow	明天
<i>míngtiān</i>	
yesterday	昨天
<i>zuótiān</i>	
in the morning	早上
<i>zǎoshang</i>	
in the afternoon	下午
<i>xiàwǔ</i>	
in the evening	晚上
<i>wǎnshang</i>	
weekend	周末
<i>zhōumò</i>	

Monday	星期一
<i>xīngqīyī</i>	
Tuesday	星期二
<i>xīngqī'èr</i>	
Wednesday	星期三
<i>xīngqīsān</i>	
Thursday	星期四
<i>xīngqīsì</i>	
Friday	星期五
<i>xīngqīwǔ</i>	
Saturday	星期六
<i>xīngqīliù</i>	
Sunday	星期天
<i>xīngqītiān</i>	

January	一月
<i>yīyuè</i>	
February	二月
<i>èryuè</i>	
March	三月
<i>sānyuè</i>	
April	四月
<i>sìyuè</i>	
May	五月
<i>wǔyuè</i>	
June	六月
<i>liùyuè</i>	
July	七月
<i>qīyuè</i>	
August	八月
<i>bāyuè</i>	
September	九月
<i>jiǔyuè</i>	
October	十月
<i>shíyuè</i>	
November	十一月
<i>shíyīyuè</i>	
December	十二月
<i>shí'èryuè</i>	

TRANSPORT

Public Transport	
airport	飞机场
<i>fēijīchǎng</i>	
long-distance bus station	长途汽车站
<i>chángtú qìchē zhàn</i>	
subway (underground)	地铁
<i>dìtiě</i>	
subway station	地铁站
<i>dìtiě zhàn</i>	
train station	火车站
<i>huǒchē zhàn</i>	

What time does ... leave/arrive?	... 几点开/到?
<i>... jǐdiǎn kāi/dào?</i>	

boat	船
<i>chuán</i>	
intercity bus/coach	长途汽车
<i>chángtú qìchē</i>	
local/city bus	公共汽车
<i>gōnggòng qìchē</i>	
minibus	小公共汽车
<i>xiǎo gōnggòng qìchē</i>	
microbus taxi	面包车, 面的
<i>miànbǎochē, miàndī</i>	
plane	飞机
<i>fēijī</i>	
train	火车
<i>huǒchē</i>	

I'd like a ...	我要一个...
<i>Wǒ yào yíge ...</i>	
one way ticket	单程票
<i>dānchéng piào</i>	
return ticket	来回票
<i>lái huí piào</i>	
platform ticket	站台票
<i>zhàntái piào</i>	
1st class ticket	头等舱
<i>tóuděngcāng</i>	
2nd class ticket	二等舱
<i>èrděngcāng</i>	
hard-seat	硬席/硬座
<i>yìngxí/yìngzuò</i>	
soft-seat	软席/软座
<i>ruǎnxí/ruǎnzuò</i>	
hard-sleeper	硬卧
<i>yìngwò</i>	
soft-sleeper	软卧
<i>ruǎnwò</i>	

When's the ... bus?

... bānchē shénme shíhòu lái?
... 班车什么时候来?

first	头
<i>tóu</i>	
last	末
<i>mò</i>	
next	下
<i>xià</i>	

I want to go to ...

Wǒ yào qù ...
我要去...

The train has been delayed/cancelled.

Huǒchē wǎndiǎn le/qǔxiāo le.
火车晚点了/取消了

CAAC ticket office	中国民航售票处
<i>zhōngguó mínháng shòupiào chù</i>	



Also available from Lonely Planet:
Mandarin Phrasebook

boarding pass	登机卡
<i>dēngjī kǎ</i>	
left-luggage room	寄存处
<i>jīcún chù</i>	
platform number	站台号
<i>zhàntái hào</i>	
ticket office	售票处
<i>shòupiào chù</i>	
timetable	时刻表
<i>shíkèbiǎo</i>	

Private Transport

I'd like to hire a ...	我要租一辆...
<i>Wǒ yào zū yíliàng ...</i>	
car	汽车
<i>qìchē</i>	
4WD	4轮驱动
<i>sìlún qūdòng</i>	
motorbike	摩托车
<i>mótuōchē</i>	
bicycle	自行车
<i>zìxíngchē</i>	

How much is it per day?

yītiān duōshǎo qián? 一天多少钱?

How much is it per hour?

yíge xiǎoshí duōshǎo qián? 一个小时多少钱?

How much is the deposit?

yājīn duōshǎo qián? 押金多少钱?

Does this road lead to ...?

Zhè tiáo lù dào ...? 这条路到...?

road	路
<i>lù</i>	
section	段
<i>duàn</i>	
street	街/大街
<i>jiē/dàjiē</i>	
No 21	21号
<i>21 hào</i>	

Glossary

(C) Cantonese; (T) Tibetan

arhat – Buddhist, especially a monk who has achieved enlightenment and passes to nirvana at death; see also *luóhàn*

bābǎo chá – eight-treasures tea

báifàn – rice

báijiǔ – literally ‘white alcohol’, a type of face-numbing rice wine served at banquets and get-togethers

bāozi – steamed savoury buns with tasty meat filling

bēi – north; the other points of the compass are *nán* (south), *dōng* (east) and *xī* (west)

bīnguǎn – tourist hotel

bixi – mythical, tortoiselike dragon

Bodhisattva – one worthy of nirvana but who remains on earth to help others attain enlightenment

Bön – the pre-Buddhist indigenous faith of Tibet, pockets of which survive in western Sichuān

bówùguǎn – museum

CAAC – Civil Aviation Administration of China

cāntīng – restaurant

cǎoyuán – grasslands

catty – unit of weight, one *catty* (*jīn*) equals 0.6kg

CCP – Chinese Communist Party, founded in Shànghǎi in 1921

cháguǎn – teahouse

chang (T) – a Tibetan brew made from fermented barley

Chángchéng – the Great Wall

chí – lake, pool

chop – see *name chop*

chörten – Tibetan *stupa*, see *stupa*

chuba (T) – cloak

chūzú qíchē – taxi

CITS – China International Travel Service; deals with China’s foreign tourists

CTS – China Travel Service; originally set up to handle tourists from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and overseas Chinese

cūn – village

cūnluò – villages

dàdào – boulevard

dàfāndiàn – large hotel

dàjiē – avenue

dàjiùdiàn – large hotel

dǎo – island

dàpùbù – large waterfall

dàshà – hotel, building

dàxué – university

ditiē – subway

dōng – east; the other points of the compass are *bēi* (north), *nán* (south) and *xī* (west)

dòng – cave

dòngwùyuán – zoo

dòufu – tofu; beancurd

dzong – Tibetan fort

értóng – children

fāndiàn – a hotel or restaurant

fēng – peak

fēng shuǐ – geomancy, literally ‘wind and water’; the art of using ancient principles to maximise the flow of *qi*, or universal energy

fēngjǐngqū – scenic area

fó – a Buddha

gǎng – harbour

gé – pavilion, temple

gompa (T) – monastery

gōng – palace

gōngānjú – Public Security Bureau, police

gōngyuán – park

gōu – gorge, valley

gǔ – valley

guān – pass

gùjū – former house, home, residence

gwailo (C) – a foreigner; literally meaning a ‘ghost person’ and is interpreted as ‘foreign devil’

hǎi – sea; also used to mean lake

Hakka – a Chinese ethnic group

Han – China’s main ethnic group

hé – river

hú – lake

huājiāo – wild pepper, used in Sichuān cuisine

Huí – ethnic Chinese Muslims

huǒ chēzhàn – train station

huóguō – hotpot

hǎi – sea; also used to mean lake

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huóguō – hotpot

IC kǎ – IC card (phone card)

IP kǎ – IP card (phone card)

jiāng – river

jiǎo – see *máo*

jiàotáng – church

jiǎozi – stuffed dumpling

jiǎng – airport

jiē – street

jié – festival

jīn – see *catty*

jǐ’niànbēi – memorial

jǐpiào – air ticket

jiùdiàn – hotel

jùchǎng – theatre

jùn – prefecture

kǎoyādiàn – roast duck restaurant

karst – denotes the characteristically eroded landscape of limestone regions, such as the whimsical scenery of Gullín and Yángshuò

KCR – Kowloon–Canton Railway

Kham – traditional name for eastern Tibet, encompassing western Sichuān

Khamba – person from Kham

kōngtiáo – air-con, heating

kora (T) – pilgrim circuit

kuài – colloquial term for the currency, *yuán*

kuàizi – chopsticks

Kuomintang – Chiang Kaishek’s Nationalist Party, now one of Taiwan’s major political parties

lama – a Buddhist priest of the Tantric or Lamaist school; a title bestowed on monks of particularly high spiritual attainment

lǎobāixíng – common people, the masses

lǎowài – foreigners

liǎng – see *tael*

lín – forest

líng – tomb

lóu – tower

lù – road

lǚguǎn – hotel

luóhàn – Buddhist, especially a monk who has achieved enlightenment and passes to nirvana at death; see also *arhat*

lúshèng – a reed pipe that features in many festivals in Guizhōu

mah jong – popular Chinese game for four people, played with engraved tiles

máo – colloquial term for *jiǎo*, 10 of which equal one *kuài*

mǎtòu – dock

méiyǒu – ‘No’, ‘There isn’t any’, ‘We don’t have’

mén – gate

Miao – ethnic group living in Guizhōu

miào – temple

momos – Tibetan dumplings

motor tricycle – an enclosed three-wheeled vehicle with a small motorbike engine, a driver at the front and with seats for two passengers in the back

MTR – Mass Transit Railway, in Hong Kong

mù – tomb

name chop – a carved name seal that acts as a signature

nán – south; the other points of the compass are *bēi* (north), *dōng* (east) and *xī* (west)

palatar – Burmese crepe

pedicab – pedal-powered tricycle with a seat to carry passengers

Pinyin – the official system for transliterating Chinese script into roman characters

pípa – a plucked string instrument

PLA – People’s Liberation Army

Politburo – the 25-member supreme policy-making authority of the CCP

PRC – People’s Republic of China

prefecture – political subdivision, between a province and a county in size

PSB – Public Security Bureau/Police; the arm of the police force set up to deal with foreigners; see also *gōngānjú*

pùbù – waterfall

Pǔtōnghuà – the standard form of the Chinese language used since the beginning of this century, based on the dialect of Běijīng

qi – vital energy (life force) or cosmic currents manipulated in acupuncture and massage

qiáo – bridge

qíchēzhàn – bus station

qígōng – exercise that channels *qi*

qīngzhēnsī – mosque

rán miàn – ‘burning noodles’ that are served with onions, chillies, peanuts, chives and a side serving of sauce

rénmín – people, people’s

Renminbi – literally ‘people’s money’, the formal name for the currency of China; shortened to RMB

sānlún mótuōchē – motor tricycle

sānlúncā – pedal-powered tricycle

sēnlín – forest

shāgūofēn – a noodle and seafood, meat or vegetable combination put in a casserole pot and fired over a flame of rocket-launch proportion

shān – mountain

shāokǎo – barbecues; skewers of meat wrapped in banana leaves and grilled over wood fires

shěng – province, provincial

shì – city

shí – rock

shíchāng – market

shíkū – grotto

shòupìàochù – ticket office

shuǐjiǎo – a form of steamed *jiǎozi*

shuǐkù – reservoir

sì – temple, monastery

sihéyuàn – traditional courtyard house

stele (stelae) – a stone slab or column decorated with figures or inscriptions

stupa – usually used as reliquaries for the cremated remains of important *lamas*; always walk around stupas clockwise

tǎ – pagoda

tael – unit of weight; one *tael (liǎng)* equals 37.5g; there are 16 *tael* to the *catty*

taichi – the graceful, flowing exercise that has its roots in China's martial arts; also known as *tàijiquán*

tán – pool

thugpa (T) – noodles

tíng – pavilion

tsampa (T) – roasted barley flour (Tibetan)

wǎngbā – internet café

wēnquán – hot springs

xī – west; the other points of the compass are *běi* (north), *nán* (south) and *dōng* (east)

xī – small stream or brook

xiá – gorge

xiàn – county

xiàng – statue

xuěshān – snow mountain

yán – rock or crag

yóujú – post office

yuán – the Chinese unit of currency; also referred to as *Renminbi* or RMB

yuán – garden

zhāodàisuǒ – basic lodgings, a hotel or guesthouse

zhékòu – discount, eg off room price

zhíwùyuán – botanic gardens

zhōng – central

Zhōngguó – China

zìrán bǎohùqū – nature reserve

The Authors



DAMIAN HARPER Coordinating author, *Guǎngxī, Cruising the Yangzi*

A growing penchant for *taichi* and a meandering career in book-selling (London, Dublin, Paris) persuaded Damian to opt for a four-year degree in Chinese at London's School of Oriental and African Studies. A year of study in Běijīng and employment in Hong Kong further honed his irrepressible tendencies for wandering, inclinations that have led Damian to contribute to over a dozen guidebooks for Lonely Planet, including *Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, China, and Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei*. Married with two children, Damian and his family divide their time between Honor Oak Park in southeast London and China.

MY FAVOURITE TRIP

From Kūnmíng (p220), I'll first tour the towns and villages of the provincial north, and not just the drawcard sights of Dàlǐ (p257) and Lǐjiāng (p265), but the lesser-known settlements of Shāxī (p277), Shítóuchéng (p278) and Nuòdèng (p248) before falling for the Yuanyang Rice Terraces (p323) in the southeast of Yúnnán. I'll fly to Guǐlín to spend four days exploring the countryside around Yángshuò (p166) before village-hopping to Kǎilǐ (p126) in Guǐzhōu via Sǎnjiāng (p184). After flying to Chéngdū from Guǐyáng to climb Éméi Shān (p378), I'll visit the ancient village of Huánglóng Xī (p372). Chóngqīng needs to be visited for an authentic hotpot and a chance to see the ancient walled village of Láitān (p456), before contemplating a cruise through the Three Gorges (p458).



LONELY PLANET AUTHORS

Why is our travel information the best in the world? It's simple: our authors are independent, dedicated travellers. They don't research using just the internet or phone, and they don't take freebies in exchange for positive coverage. They travel widely, to all the popular spots and off the beaten track. They personally visit thousands of hotels, restaurants, cafés, bars, galleries, palaces, museums and more – and they take pride in getting all the details right, and telling it how it is. Think you can do it? Find out how at lonelyplanet.com.



TIENLON HO

Chóngqing

Despite growing up speaking Chinese and packing *mǎntóu* in her lunchbox, Tienlon Ho first visited China at the ripe age of 21. But Chóngqing was always in her blood. Her father came there as a child with his mother amid the chaos of bombs. Her mother arrived with her father, an airforce officer called to defend the capital city. In their stories, Chóngqing was almost mythical. So when she finally saw it herself, Tienlon brought her parents with her. Together they wandered the precipitous staircases and the cavernous bomb shelters of her parents' memories, and she was captivated by the city's history and its people's resilience. Tienlon has travelled extensively throughout China, worked as a lawyer in Hong Kong, and covered food and travel for publications including *GQ* and *Time Out*.



EILÍS QUINN

Guizhōu & Sìchuān

Eilís Quinn grew up in Vancouver, Canada where visits to that city's massive Chinatown developed a lifelong interest in China and foreign languages. A degree in Chinese studies from Montreal's McGill University finally got her to the Middle Kingdom for real. When she first landed in Southwest China to study at Sichuan Normal University, Chéngdū's airport was a shack and it took two hours on a rickety bus just to get into the centre of town. Back in Canada with degrees in German, Russian and Chinese, she resisted the pull of yet another language degree, opting for journalism instead, and went on to toil in newsrooms across Canada and in New York City. She's now a freelance travel writer based in Montréal and previously authored the Yúnnán, Chóngqing, Guizhōu and Guǎngxī chapters for Lonely Planet's *China* guidebook.



KORINA MILLER

History, The Culture, Minority Cultures, Environment, Food & Drink

Korina grew up on Vancouver Island and was lucky enough to have parents who carted her around North America on a number of occasions, leaving her with a well-developed sense of wanderlust. At 18 she left home with her backpack and has been roaming the world ever since. Along the way, she picked up a degree in Communications from Vancouver's SFU and an MA in Migration Studies from Sussex University. She first ventured into China more than a decade ago, researching cooperatives and ecotourism in Shànghǎi and Lǐjiāng. Her travels in China have since taken her from the Manchurian border in the north to the Tibetan Plateau in the Southwest. She has written or contributed to more than a dozen LP books, over half of which have been China guides.

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

David Eimer first came to China in 1988 on a break from studying law in London. A freelance journalist for a variety of newspapers and magazines in the UK and Australia, he has lived in Běijīng since March 2005. He is the co-author of Lonely Planet's *Beijing City Guide*.

Steve Fallon studied Chinese at Georgetown University in Washington DC and soon found his way to Hong Kong, where he lived for over a dozen years, working for a variety of media and running his own travel bookshop. Steve is now based in London and gets back to Hong Kong annually. He has written or contributed to more than two dozen Lonely Planet titles, including *Hong Kong & Macau* and *China*.

Christopher Pitts studied Chinese in Colorado, Kūnmíng and Tǎinán, offsetting his years abroad by working in a Chinese bookstore in San Francisco and as an editor in Berkeley. A chance meeting in a Taiwanese elevator wound up letting him off in Paris, where he currently lives with his family, Perrine, Elliot and Céleste. He has written for the Lonely Planet guidebooks *China* and *Shanghai*.

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