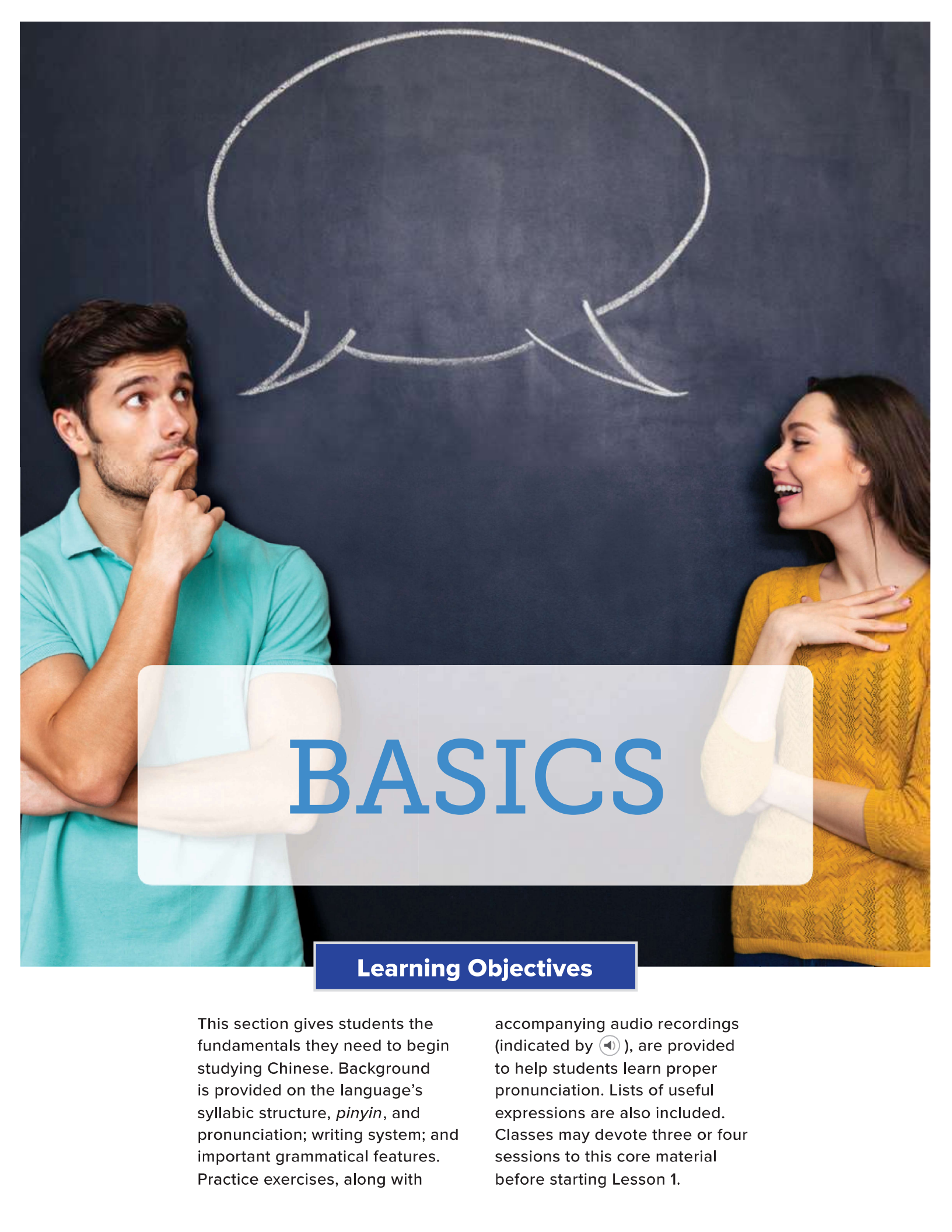




BASICS

Learning Objectives

This section gives students the fundamentals they need to begin studying Chinese. Background is provided on the language's syllabic structure, *pinyin*, and pronunciation; writing system; and important grammatical features. Practice exercises, along with

accompanying audio recordings (indicated by 🎧), are provided to help students learn proper pronunciation. Lists of useful expressions are also included. Classes may devote three or four sessions to this core material before starting Lesson 1.

Mandarin and Dialects

China is roughly the same size as the United States. There are numerous regional dialects of Chinese. These dialects, most of which are mutually unintelligible, are often divided into eight groups: Mandarin, Wu, Hakka, Southern Min, Northern Min, Cantonese, Xiang, and Gan.

Conventional terms for Modern Standard Chinese include *Putonghua* (“common language”) in Mainland China; *Guoyu* (“national language”) in Taiwan; and *Huayu* (“language spoken by ethnic Chinese people”) in other Chinese-speaking communities, such as those in Singapore and Malaysia. It is the *lingua franca* of intra-ethnic (among different Chinese dialect speakers) as well as inter-ethnic (among Han Chinese and non-Han minority groups) communication in China. Its grammar is codified from the modern Chinese literary canon, while its pronunciation is based on the Beijing dialect. Modern Standard Chinese is usually referred to as Mandarin in English.

China officially recognizes fifty-six ethnic groups. The Han, the largest group, accounts for over 90% of China's population. Many of the other fifty-five ethnic groups speak their own distinct languages.

Syllabic Structure, Pinyin, and Pronunciation

A Modern Standard Chinese syllable typically has three parts: an initial consonant, a final consisting of a vowel or a vowel and the ending consonant *-n* or *-ng*, and a tone. The tone is superimposed on the entire syllable. A syllable may also have no initial consonant.



In this book, Chinese sounds are represented by *Hanyu Pinyin*, or *pinyin* for short. The *pinyin* system uses twenty-five of the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet. Although *pinyin* symbols are thus the same as English letters, the actual sounds they represent can vary widely from their English counterparts. This section is designed to raise your awareness of these distinctions. Over time, you will acquire a more nuanced understanding of Chinese pronunciation and improve your skills through listening and practice.

A

Simple Finals

There are six simple finals in *pinyin*: *a*, *o*, *e*, *i*, *u*, *ü*

a is a central vowel when pronounced by itself. Keep your tongue in a relaxed position to pronounce it. *a* sounds similar to the “a” in “fa la la.”

o is a rounded semi-high back vowel. Round your lips when pronouncing it. *o* seldom appears as a syllable by itself. Usually it compounds with the initials *b*, *p*, *m*, and *f*, and should be practiced with them. Because of the bilabial or labiodental nature of *b*, *p*, *m*, and *f*, *o* sounds almost like a diphthong or the double vowel *uo*. It glides from a brief *u* to *o*.

e is an unrounded semi-high back vowel. To pronounce it, first position your tongue as if you are about to pronounce *o*, then unround your mouth. At the same time, spread your lips apart as if you were smiling. This vowel is different from “e” in English, which is pronounced with the tongue raised slightly forward.

i is an unrounded high front vowel. To pronounce it, smile tightly and pull the corners of your mouth straight back. It is similar to the long vowel in “sheep.” When pronouncing it, however, you raise your tongue higher.

u is a rounded high back vowel. Pucker up your lips when pronouncing it. *u* is similar to the long vowel in “coop,” but, when pronouncing it, you raise your tongue higher and retract it more.

ü is a rounded high front vowel. To produce this vowel, first position your tongue as if you are about to pronounce *i*, then round your lips.

In the *pinyin* system, *i* represents two special vowels in addition to the high front vowel. One is a front apical vowel, the other a back apical vowel—that is to say, they are articulated with the front and back part of the tongue, respectively. Both of these vowels are homorganic with the very limited sets of initials with which they can co-occur (see *z, c, s* and *zh, ch, sh, r*). In other words, they are pronounced in the same area of the vocal tract as those consonants. You will learn how to pronounce *i* simply by prolonging the sounds of these two groups of consonants.

B

Initials

There are twenty-one initial consonants in *pinyin*. They are grouped as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>b p m f</i> | 4. <i>j q x</i> |
| 2. <i>d t n l</i> | 5. <i>z c s</i> |
| 3. <i>g k h</i> | 6. <i>zh ch sh r</i> |

B.1 *b, p, m, f*

b is different from its English counterpart. It is not voiced, as the vocal cords do not vibrate upon its pronunciation, and sounds more like the “p” in “speak.”

p is aspirated. In other words, there is a strong puff of breath when this consonant is pronounced. It is also voiceless, and sounds like the “p” in “pork.”

m is produced in the same manner as the English “m.” It is voiced.

Pronounce *f* as you would in English.

Only the simple finals *a, o, i*, and *u* and compound finals that start with *a, o, i*, or *u* can be combined with *b, p*, and *m*; only the simple finals *a, o*, and *u* and compound finals that start with *a, o*, or *u* can be combined with *f*. When these initials are combined with *o*, there is actually a short *u* sound in between. For instance, the syllable *bo* actually includes a very short *u* sound between *b* and *o*: it is pronounced *b(u)o*.

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

B.1.a	(Initial-Final Combinations)		
<i>ba</i>	<i>bi</i>	<i>bu</i>	<i>bo</i>
<i>pa</i>	<i>pi</i>	<i>pu</i>	<i>po</i>
<i>ma</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>mu</i>	<i>mo</i>
<i>fa</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fo</i>	
B.1.b	<i>b vs. p</i>		
<i>ba</i>	<i>pa</i>	<i>bu</i>	<i>pu</i>
<i>po</i>	<i>bo</i>	<i>pi</i>	<i>bi</i>

B.1.c	<i>m vs. f</i>		
<i>ma</i>	<i>fa</i>	<i>mu</i>	<i>fu</i>
B.1.d	<i>b, p, m, f</i>		
<i>bo</i>	<i>po</i>	<i>mo</i>	<i>fo</i>
<i>fu</i>	<i>mu</i>	<i>pu</i>	<i>bu</i>

B.2

d, t, n, l

When pronouncing *d*, *t*, and *n*, touch your upper gum with the tip of your tongue. The tongue is raised more to the back than it would be to pronounce their English counterparts. *d* and *t* are voiceless. Roughly, *d* sounds like the “t” in “stand,” and *t* sounds like the “t” in “tea.” When pronouncing *l*, touch your palate with the tip of your tongue. *n* is nasal.

Only the simple finals *a*, *i*, *e*, and *u* and compound finals that start with *a*, *i*, *e*, or *u* can be combined with *d*, *t*, *n*, and *l*. *n* and *l* can also be combined with *ü* and the compound finals that start with *ü*.

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

B.2.a (Initial-Final Combinations)

<i>da</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>de</i>	
<i>ta</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>tu</i>	<i>te</i>	
<i>na</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>ne</i>	<i>nü</i>
<i>la</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>lu</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>lū</i>

B.2.b *d* vs. *t*

<i>da</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>ti</i>
<i>du</i>	<i>tu</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>te</i>

B.2.c *l* vs. *n*

<i>lu</i>	<i>lū</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>nū</i>
<i>lu</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>lū</i>	<i>nū</i>

B.2.d *d, t, n, l*

<i>le</i>	<i>ne</i>	<i>te</i>	<i>de</i>
<i>du</i>	<i>tu</i>	<i>lu</i>	<i>nu</i>

B.3

g, k, h

g is unaspirated and voiceless, whereas *k* is aspirated and voiceless. When pronouncing *g* and *k*, raise the back of your tongue against your soft palate. Roughly, *g* sounds like the “k” in “sky,” and *k* sounds like the “k” in “kite.”

h is voiceless. When pronouncing *h*, raise the back of your tongue towards your soft palate. Unlike the pronunciation of its English counterpart, the friction is noticeable.

Only the simple finals *a*, *e*, and *u* and the compound finals that start with *a*, *e*, or *u* can be combined with *g*, *k*, and *h*.

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

B.3.a (Initial-Final Combinations)

<i>gu</i>	<i>ge</i>	<i>ga</i>
<i>ku</i>	<i>ke</i>	<i>ka</i>
<i>hu</i>	<i>he</i>	<i>ha</i>

B.3.b *g* vs. *k*

<i>gu</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>ge</i>	<i>ke</i>
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B.3.c *g* vs. *h*

<i>gu</i>	<i>hu</i>	<i>ge</i>	<i>he</i>
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

B.3.d *k* vs. *h*

<i>ke</i>	<i>he</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>hu</i>
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

B.3.e *g, k, h*

<i>gu</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>hu</i>
<i>he</i>	<i>ke</i>	<i>ge</i>

B.4

j, q, x

To make the *j* sound, first raise the flat center of your tongue to the roof of your mouth and position the tip of your tongue against the back of your bottom teeth; then loosen your tongue and let the air squeeze out through the channel you've made. It is unaspirated and the vocal cords do not vibrate. The *pinyin j* is similar to the “j” in “jeep,” but it is unvoiced and articulated with the tip of the tongue resting behind the lower incisors. You also need to pull the corners of your mouth straight back to pronounce it.

q is pronounced in the same manner as *j*, but it is aspirated. The *pinyin q* is similar to the “ch” in “cheese,” except that it is articulated with the tip of the tongue resting behind the lower incisors. When pronouncing *q*, don't forget to pull the corners of your mouth straight back.

To make the *x* sound, first raise the flat center of your tongue toward (but not touching) the hard palate and then let the air squeeze out. The vocal cords do not vibrate. *x*, like *j* and *q*, is articulated with the tip of the tongue resting behind the lower incisors. To pronounce *x* correctly, you also need to pull the corners of your mouth straight back, as if making a tight smile.

The finals that can be combined with *j*, *q*, and *x* are limited to *i* and *ü* and compound finals that start with *i* or *ü*. When *j*, *q*, and *x* are combined with *ü* or a compound final starting with *ü*, the umlaut is omitted and the *ü* appears as *u*.

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

B.4.a (Initial-Final Combinations)

<i>ji</i>	<i>ju</i>
<i>qi</i>	<i>qu</i>
<i>xi</i>	<i>xu</i>

B.4.b j vs. q

<i>ji</i>	<i>qi</i>	<i>ju</i>	<i>qu</i>
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B.4.c q vs. x

<i>qi</i>	<i>xi</i>	<i>qu</i>	<i>xu</i>
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

B.4.d j vs. x

<i>ji</i>	<i>xi</i>	<i>ju</i>	<i>xu</i>
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

B.4.e j, q, x

<i>ji</i>	<i>qi</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>ju</i>	<i>qu</i>	<i>xu</i>

B.5

z, c, s

z is similar to the English “ds” sound, as in “lids.”

c is similar to the English “ts” sound, as in “students.” It is aspirated.

s is similar to the English “s” sound.

To pronounce these sounds, touch the back of your upper teeth with your tongue.

The simple finals that can be combined with *z*, *c*, and *s* are *a*, *e*, *u*, and the front apical vowel *i* (not the regular palatal high front vowel *í*).

When pronouncing the syllables *zi*, *ci*, and *si*, hold your tongue in the same position; relax it slightly as the articulation moves from the voiceless initial consonant to the voiced vowel.

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

B.5.a (Initial-Final Combinations)

<i>za</i>	<i>zu</i>	<i>ze</i>	<i>zi</i>
<i>ca</i>	<i>cu</i>	<i>ce</i>	<i>ci</i>
<i>sa</i>	<i>su</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>si</i>

B.5.b s vs. z

<i>sa</i>	<i>za</i>	<i>su</i>	<i>zu</i>
<i>se</i>	<i>ze</i>	<i>si</i>	<i>zi</i>

B.5.c	z vs. c		
za	ca	zi	ci
ze	ce	zu	cu

B.5.d	s vs. c		
sa	ca	si	ci
su	cu	se	ce

B.5.e	z, c, s	
sa	za	ca
su	zu	cu
se	ze	ce
si	zi	ci
za	cu	se
ci	sa	zu
su	zi	ce

B.6

zh, ch, sh, r

To make the *zh* sound, first curl up the tip of your tongue against your hard palate, then loosen it and let the air squeeze out through the channel you've made. It is unaspirated and the vocal cords do not vibrate. *zh* sounds rather like the first sound in "jerk," but it is unvoiced.

ch is pronounced like *zh*, but *ch* is aspirated. *ch* sounds rather like the "ch" in "chirp."

To make the *sh* sound, turn the tip of your tongue up toward (but not touching) the hard palate and then let the air squeeze out. The vocal cords do not vibrate. *sh* sounds rather like the "sh" in "shirt" and "Shirley."

r is pronounced in the same manner as *sh*, but it is voiced; therefore, the vocal cords vibrate. Pronounce it simply by prolonging *sh*, making sure your lips are not rounded.

The finals that can be combined with *zh*, *ch*, *sh*, and *r* are *a*, *e*, *u*, and the back apical vowel *i*, as well as compound finals that start with *a*, *e*, or *u*. When pronouncing the syllables *zhi*, *chi*, *shi*, and *ri*, hold your tongue in the same position; relax it slightly as the articulation moves from the initial consonant to the vowel.

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

B.6.a	(Initial-Final Combinations)		
zha	zhu	zhe	zhi
cha	chu	che	chi
sha	shu	she	shi
ru	re	ri	

B.6.b	zh vs. sh		
sha	zha	shu	zhu

B.6.c	zh vs. ch		
zha	cha	zhu	chu

B.6.d	ch vs. sh		
chu	shu	sha	cha

B.6.e	zh, ch, sh		
shi	zhi	chi	shi
she	zhe	che	she

B.6.f	sh vs. r		
shu	ru	shi	ri

B.6.g	r vs. l		
lu	ru	li	ri

B.6.h	sh, r, l		
she	re	le	re

B.6.i	zh, ch, r		
zhe	re	che	re

B.6.j	zh, ch, sh, r		
sha	cha	zha	
shu	zhu	chu	ru
zhi	chi	shi	ri
che	zhe	she	re

Reference Chart for Initials

Manner of Articulation Place of Articulation	Stop		Affricative		Fricative	Nasal	Lateral	Approximant
	Unaspirated	Aspirated	Unaspirated	Aspirated				
Bilabial	<i>b</i>	<i>p</i>				<i>m</i>		
Labiodentals					<i>f</i>			
Apical-toothback			<i>z</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>s</i>			
Apical-alveolar	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>				<i>n</i>	<i>l</i>	
Apical-postalveolar			<i>zh</i>	<i>ch</i>	<i>sh</i>			<i>r</i>
Alveolo-palatal			<i>j</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>x</i>			
Velar	<i>g</i>	<i>k</i>			<i>h</i>			

C

Compound Finals

Consonant finals in *pinyin* are grouped as follows:

1. *ai ei ao ou*
2. *an en ang eng ong*
3. *ia iao ie iu* ian in iang ing iong*
4. *ua uo uai ui** uan un*** uang ueng*
5. *üe üan ün*
6. *er*

* The main vowel *o* is omitted in the spelling of the final *iu* (*iu* = *iou*). Therefore, *iu* represents the sound *iou*. The *o* is especially conspicuous in third- and fourth-tone syllables.

** The main vowel *e* is omitted in the final *ui* (*ui* = *uei*). Like *iu* above, it is quite conspicuous in third- and fourth- tone syllables.

*** The main vowel *e* is omitted in *un* (*un* = *uen*).

In *pinyin*, compound finals are composed of a main vowel and one or two secondary vowels, or a main vowel and one secondary vowel followed by the nasal ending *-n* or *-ng*. When the initial vowels are *a*, *e*, or *o*, they are stressed. The vowels following are soft and brief. When the initial vowels are *i*, *u*, or *ü*, the main vowels come after them. *i*, *u*, and *ü* are transitional sounds. If there are vowels or nasal consonants after the main vowels, they should be unstressed as well. In a compound final, the main vowel can be affected by the phonemes before and after it. For instance, the *a* in *ian* is pronounced with a lower degree of aperture and a higher position of the tongue than the *a* in *ma*; and to pronounce the *a* in *ang*, the tongue has to be positioned more to the back of the mouth than is usually the case with *a*.

When pronouncing the *e* in *ei*, the tongue must be positioned a bit toward the front and a bit higher than it would be if pronouncing the simple vowel *e* alone. The *e* in *ie* is pronounced with a lower position of the tongue than the *e* in *ei*. When pronouncing the *e* in *en* and the *e* in a neutral tone like the second syllable of *gēge*, you should position your tongue in the center of your mouth, as with the pronunciation of the “e” in “the.”

As noted above, in *pinyin* orthography some vowels are omitted for the sake of economy, e.g., *i(o)u*, *u(e)i*. However, when pronouncing such sounds, these vowels must not be omitted.

Pinyin spelling rules are as follows:

1. If there is no initial consonant before *i*, *i* is written as a semi-vowel, *y*. Thus *ia*, *ie*, *iao*, *iu*, *ian*, and *iang* become *ya*, *ye*, *yao*, *you* (note that the *o* cannot be omitted here), *yan*, and *yang*. Before *in* and *ing*, add *y*, e.g., *yin* and *ying*.
2. If there is no initial consonant before *ü*, add a *y* and drop the umlaut: *yu*, *yuan*, *yue*, *yun*.
3. *u* becomes *w* if it is not preceded by an initial, e.g., *wa*, *wai*, *wan*, *wang*, *wei*, *wen*, *weng*, *wo*. *u* by itself becomes *wu*.
4. *ueng* is written as *ong* if preceded by an initial, e.g., *tong*, *dong*, *nong*, *long*. Without an initial, it is *weng*.
5. To avoid confusion, an apostrophe is used to separate two syllables with connecting vowels, e.g., *nǚ'ér* (daughter) and the city *Xī'ān* (*nǚ* and *ér*, *Xī* and *ān* are separate syllables). Sometimes an apostrophe is also needed even if the two syllables are not connected by vowels, e.g., *fāng'ài* (to hinder) and *fāng'àn* (plan, scheme).

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

C.1

ai ei ao ou

pai	lei	dao	gou
cai	mei	sao	shou

C.2

an en ang eng ong

C.2.a an vs. ang			
tan	tang	chan	chang
zan	zhang	gan	gang

C.2.b en vs. eng			
sen	seng	shen	sheng
zhen	zheng	fen	feng

C.2.c eng vs. ong			
cheng	chong	deng	dong
zheng	zhong	keng	kong

C.3

ia iao ie iu ian in iang ing iong

C.3.a ia vs. ie			
jia	jie	qia	qie
xia	xie	ya	ye

C.3.b

ian vs. iang

xian	xiang	qian	qiang
jian	jiang	yan	yang

C.3.c

in vs. ing

bin	bing	pin	ping
jīn	jīng	yīn	yīng

C.3.d

iu vs. iong

xiu	xiong	you	yong
-----	-------	-----	------

C.3.e

ao vs. iao

zhao	jiao	shao	xiao
chao	qiao	ao	yao

C.3.f

an vs. ian

chan	qian	shan	xian
zhan	jian	an	yan

C.3.g

ang vs. iang

zhang	jiang	shang	xiang
chang	qiang	ang	yang

C.4

ua uo uai ui uan un uang

C.4.a *ua vs. uai*

shua shuai wa wai

C.4.b *uan vs. uang*

shuan shuang chuan chuang

zhuan zhuang wan wang

C.4.c *un vs. uan*

dun duan kun kuan

zhun zhuan wen wan

C.4.d *uo vs. ou*

duo dou zhuo zhou

suo sou wo ou

C.4.e *ui vs. un*

tui tun zhui zhun

dui dun wei wen

C.5

üe üan ün

C.5.a *ün vs. un*

jun zhun yun wen

C.5.b *üan vs. uan*

xuan shuan juan zhuan

quan chuan yuan wan

C.5.c *üe*

yue que jue

C.6

er

ger (*er* with a first tone does not exist in Mandarin, but the word “*ger*” [*ge* with the *r* ending] contains the final *er* in first tone. See D.1 Practice III for more examples.)

D

Tones

Every Chinese syllable has a tone.

D.1

Four Tones and Neutral Tone

There are four tones in Modern Standard Chinese.

The first tone is a high-level tone with a pitch value of 55 (see chart below); its tone mark is “ˊ”.

The second tone is a rising tone with a pitch value of 35; its tone mark is “ˊ”.

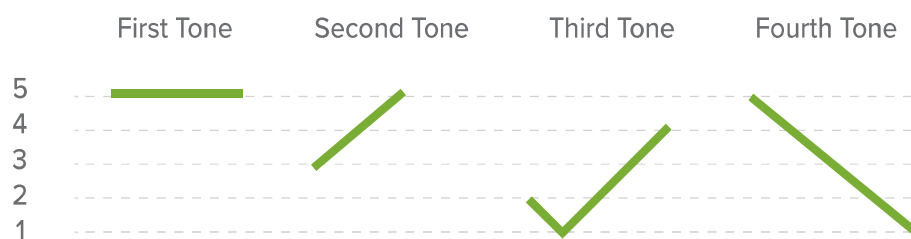
The citation form of the third tone has a pitch value of 214. However, in normal speech it almost always occurs as a “half third tone” with a pitch value of 21. Its tone mark is “ˇ”. Please see D.2. Tone Sandhi for a discussion of how to pronounce third-tone syllables in succession.

The fourth tone is a falling tone with a pitch value of 51; its tone mark is “ˋ”.

In addition to the four tones, there is also a neutral tone in Modern Standard Chinese. Neutral tone words include those that do not have fundamental tones (e.g., the question particle *ma*), and those which do have tones when pronounced individually, but are not stressed in certain compounds (e.g., the second *ba* in *bàba*, “father”). There are no tone marks for neutral tone syllables. A neutral tone syllable is pronounced briefly and softly, and its pitch value is determined by the stressed

syllable immediately before it. A neutral tone following a first-tone syllable, as in *māma* (mother), carries a pitch tone of 2. When it follows a second-tone syllable, a third-tone syllable, or a fourth-tone syllable, its pitch tone will be 3, 4, and 1 respectively.

Tones are crucial in Chinese. The same initial-final combination with different tones may have different meanings. For instance, *mā* is “mother,” *mǎ* is “hemp,” *mǎ* is “horse,” *mā* is “to scold,” and *ma* is an interrogative particle. The four tones can be diagrammed as follows:



Tone marks are written above the main vowel of a syllable. The main vowel can be identified according to the following sequence: *a-o-e-i-u-ü*. For instance, in *ao* the main vowel is *a*. In *ei* the main vowel is *e*. There is one exception: when *i* and *u* are combined into a syllable, the tone mark is written on the second vowel: *iù, uì*.

D.1

Practice I: Monosyllabic Words

1.a	Four Tones			
<i>bī</i>	<i>bí</i>	<i>bǐ</i>	<i>bì</i>	
<i>pū</i>	<i>pú</i>	<i>pǔ</i>	<i>pù</i>	
<i>dà</i>	<i>dǎ</i>	<i>dá</i>	<i>dā</i>	
<i>shè</i>	<i>shě</i>	<i>shé</i>	<i>shē</i>	
<i>tí</i>	<i>tī</i>	<i>tǐ</i>	<i>tì</i>	
<i>kè</i>	<i>kě</i>	<i>kē</i>	<i>ké</i>	
<i>jǐ</i>	<i>jí</i>	<i>jǐ</i>	<i>jī</i>	
<i>gú</i>	<i>gù</i>	<i>gū</i>	<i>gǔ</i>	

1.b	1st vs. 2nd			
<i>zā</i>	<i>zá</i>	<i>hē</i>	<i>hé</i>	
<i>chū</i>	<i>chú</i>	<i>shī</i>	<i>shí</i>	

1.c	1st vs. 3rd			
<i>tū</i>	<i>tǔ</i>	<i>xī</i>	<i>xǐ</i>	
<i>mō</i>	<i>mǒ</i>	<i>shā</i>	<i>shǎ</i>	

1.d	1st vs. 4th			
<i>fā</i>	<i>fà</i>	<i>qū</i>	<i>qù</i>	
<i>dī</i>	<i>dì</i>	<i>kē</i>	<i>kè</i>	

1.e	2nd vs. 1st			
<i>hú</i>	<i>hū</i>	<i>zhé</i>	<i>zhē</i>	
<i>xí</i>	<i>xī</i>	<i>pó</i>	<i>pō</i>	

1.f	2nd vs. 3rd			
<i>gé</i>	<i>gě</i>	<i>jú</i>	<i>jǔ</i>	
<i>tí</i>	<i>tǐ</i>	<i>rú</i>	<i>rǔ</i>	

1.g	2nd vs. 4th			
<i>lú</i>	<i>lù</i>	<i>cí</i>	<i>cì</i>	
<i>mó</i>	<i>mò</i>	<i>zhé</i>	<i>zhè</i>	

1.h	3rd vs. 1st			
<i>tǎ</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>gǔ</i>	<i>gū</i>	
<i>mǐ</i>	<i>mī</i>	<i>chě</i>	<i>chē</i>	

1.i	3rd vs. 2nd			
<i>chǔ</i>	<i>chú</i>	<i>xǐ</i>	<i>xí</i>	
<i>kě</i>	<i>ké</i>	<i>qǔ</i>	<i>qú</i>	

1.j	3rd vs. 4th			
<i>bǒ</i>	<i>bò</i>	<i>chǔ</i>	<i>chù</i>	
<i>nǐ</i>	<i>nì</i>	<i>rě</i>	<i>rè</i>	

1.k	4th vs. 1st			
<i>jì</i>	<i>jī</i>	<i>sù</i>	<i>sū</i>	
<i>là</i>	<i>lā</i>	<i>hè</i>	<i>hē</i>	

1.l	4th vs. 2nd			
<i>nà</i>	<i>ná</i>	<i>jù</i>	<i>jú</i>	
<i>zè</i>	<i>zé</i>	<i>lù</i>	<i>lú</i>	

1.m	4th vs. 3rd			
<i>sà</i>	<i>sǎ</i>	<i>kù</i>	<i>kǔ</i>	
<i>zì</i>	<i>zǐ</i>	<i>zhè</i>	<i>zhě</i>	

D.1

Practice II: Bisyllabic Words

	Tones	Examples		
2.a	1st+1st:	<i>chūzū</i>	<i>tūchū</i>	<i>chūfā</i>
2.b	1st+2nd:	<i>chātú</i>	<i>xīqí</i>	<i>chūxí</i>
2.c	1st+3rd:	<i>shēchǐ</i>	<i>gēqǔ</i>	<i>chūbǎn</i>
2.d	1st+4th:	<i>chūsè</i>	<i>hūshì</i>	<i>jīlǜ</i>
2.e	2nd+1st:	<i>shíshī</i>	<i>qījī</i>	<i>shíchā</i>
2.f	2nd+2nd:	<i>jīhé</i>	<i>shépi</i>	<i>pígé</i>
2.g	2nd+3rd:	<i>jītǐ</i>	<i>bóqǔ</i>	<i>zhělǐ</i>
2.h	2nd+4th:	<i>qítè</i>	<i>fúlì</i>	<i>chíxù</i>
2.i	3rd+1st:	<i>zǔzhī</i>	<i>zhǔjī</i>	<i>lǐkē</i>
2.j	3rd+2nd:	<i>pǔjī</i>	<i>zhǔxí</i>	<i>chǔfā</i>
2.k	3rd+4th:	<i>lǔkè</i>	<i>gǔlì</i>	<i>tǐzhì</i>
2.l	4th+1st:	<i>zìsī</i>	<i>qìchē</i>	<i>lùshī</i>
2.m	4th+2nd:	<i>fūzá</i>	<i>dītú</i>	<i>shìshí</i>
2.n	4th+3rd:	<i>zǐjī</i>	<i>bìhǔ</i>	<i>dīzhǐ</i>
2.o	4th+4th:	<i>mùdì</i>	<i>xùmù</i>	<i>dàdì</i>

D.1

Practice III: Words with “er” sound

3.a	<i>érzi</i>	<i>érqiě</i>
3.b	<i>ěrdùo</i>	<i>mù'ěr</i>
3.c	<i>shǐ'ěr</i>	<i>èrshí</i>

D.2

Tone Sandhi

If two third-tone syllables are spoken in succession, the first third tone becomes second tone (a tone change that linguists call tone sandhi), e.g.:

<i>xǐlǐ</i>	➔	<i>xílǐ</i>	(baptism)
<i>chǐrǔ</i>	➔	<i>chírǔ</i>	(shame)
<i>qǔshě</i>	➔	<i>qúshě</i>	(accept or reject)

Note: Following standard *pinyin* practice, we do not change the tone marks from third to second tone. Initially, the student has to consciously remember to pronounce the first syllable in the second tone; but through practice and imitation, it will soon become habit.

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

<i>chǔlǐ</i>	➡	<i>chúli</i>	<i>jǔzhǐ</i>	➡	<i>júzhǐ</i>
<i>gǔpǔ</i>	➡	<i>gúpǔ</i>	<i>zǐnǚ</i>	➡	<i>zínǚ</i>
<i>bǐnǐ</i>	➡	<i>bínǐ</i>	<i>zhǐshǐ</i>	➡	<i>zhíshǐ</i>

D.3

Neutral Tone

The neutral tone occurs in unstressed syllables, typically following a syllable with one of the four tones. It is unmarked, e.g.:

chēzi (car), *māma* (mom), *chúzi* (cook), *shūshu* (uncle), *lǐzi* (plum), *shìzi* (persimmon)

Practice your pronunciation with the audio exercises below:

1st+neutral	<i>māma</i>	<i>gēge</i>	<i>shīfu</i>	<i>chūqu</i>
2nd+neutral	<i>dízi</i>	<i>bóbo</i>	<i>bízi</i>	<i>chúle</i>
3rd+neutral	<i>lǐzi</i>	<i>qǐzi</i>	<i>dǐzi</i>	<i>fúshang</i>
4th+neutral	<i>bàba</i>	<i>dìdi</i>	<i>kèqi</i>	<i>kùzi</i>

E

Combination Exercises

1.

<i>shān</i>	<i>xiān</i>	<i>sān</i>
<i>cháng</i>	<i>qiáng</i>	<i>cáng</i>
<i>zhǐ</i>	<i>jǐ</i>	<i>zǐ</i>
<i>liùè</i>	<i>niùè</i>	<i>yuè</i>
<i>kè</i>	<i>lè</i>	<i>rè</i>

2.

<i>Zhōngguó</i>	<i>xīngqī</i>	<i>lùshī</i>	<i>zhàopiàn</i>
<i>zàijiàn</i>	<i>tóngxué</i>	<i>xǐhuan</i>	<i>diànshì</i>
<i>yīnyuè</i>	<i>kělè</i>	<i>yǎnlèi</i>	<i>shàngwǔ</i>
<i>cèsuǒ</i>	<i>chūntiān</i>	<i>xiàwǔ</i>	<i>bànyè</i>
<i>gōngkè</i>	<i>kāishǐ</i>	<i>rìjì</i>	<i>cāntīng</i>
<i>zuìjìn</i>	<i>xīwàng</i>	<i>yīsheng</i>	<i>chūzū</i>
<i>zhōumò</i>	<i>guānxi</i>	<i>dòufu</i>	<i>jiēhūn</i>
<i>liúxué</i>	<i>nǚ’ér</i>	<i>shénme</i>	<i>suīrán</i>
<i>wǎngqiú</i>	<i>xǐzǎo</i>	<i>niánjǐ</i>	<i>yóuyǒng</i>