Chinese FOR DUMMIES

by Wendy Abraham
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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the memory of my Nadymama and Papa, Julia and Joseph Abraham, whose incredible love and time spent with their grandchildren left a lasting imprint on our lives and has been a great source of strength throughout the years.

Their nicknames for me when I was just a child (“Monkey” and “China Doll”) can only be attributed to some long-lost Hungarian Jewish gypsy roots in our family, for how else could they have known so long ago that I was, indeed, born in the Year of the Monkey, and that my life would be so deeply connected to all things Chinese.

Author’s Acknowledgments

It all started with dinner at Woo Fong Restaurant in Bayside, Queens, where I grew up. Although the place no longer exists, it’s the first distinct memory I have of falling in love with China—more specifically, with spring rolls and the little old proprietress in her golden qipão who took me under her wing when I was barely 4 years old. It was the beginning of a love affair with the Chinese culture, and later with the Chinese language, which has yet to end.

My first order of thanks, therefore, goes to my mother and father for introducing me to my first Chinese meal. To my father, George, for inspiring me with his own great love of language learning (currently centered on Egyptian hieroglyphics) and for always pushing me to study, study, study.

To my mother, Marilyn, for her unwavering support through thick and thin and for her reminders to relax and enjoy life in between all the studying. (No surprise then that her choice of foreign language in high school was Italian.)

To my sorella, Susan, for her amazing courage and strength and for her incredible talent as a sculptor, which I can only aspire to in another lifetime.

To my father’s wife, Rhoda, for her immense wisdom, great help in emergencies of every kind, and plain old common sense.

To Michael and Daisy Fogarty, for their loyalty to the Abrahams and for the fun they bring wherever they go.

I would also like to thank my entire extended family for reaching out to me this past year in ways I couldn’t have imagined and will not soon forget. Special thanks go to my aunt, Maxine Cooper, and cousin, Michael Ian, for being there with both humor and love.
Right up there with Woo Fong Restaurant was *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness* — that 1958 classic that had Ingrid Bergman, the missionary, saving all those orphans in northern China during the Sino-Japanese War. Acknowledgments to those who played a part in my early childhood exposure to all things Chinese can’t be made until that film’s name has been solemnly uttered. In addition to clinching my passion for China, it made me want to adopt a hundred orphans from Xi’an, and it began my great love affair with the movies.

First in line for childhood recognition is my beloved aunt, Carol Rothenstein, who regularly schlepped a gaggle of us cousins down to New York City’s Chinatown and plied us with all manner of colorful Chinese knick-knacks to take home.

To my childhood friend, Cynthia Sargent, who went with me on jaunts to visit our elementary school buddy Wanda Chin at her family’s Laundry (Chin’s) on Springfield Boulevard, where the back room doubled as home for the family of four. I can still smell the freshly starched shirts and see the swirls of steam wafting up from the ironing boards as we passed by on our way to the back.

From my days at Hunter College, where I distinguished myself by being the only Jewish kid to try to join the Chinese Students Association, I’m proud to have hung out with the likes of Jon Ho, Winnie Chin, Mon Lan Jee, Nora Lee, Karen Lee, and our classmate Conmay, whose untimely death while we were all undergrads bonded us for one brief but memorable moment. Jon and Winnie in particular have remained good, loyal friends, and I’m grateful for their fun (Jon) and calming (Winnie) presence this past year. Mention of Hunter College in the ‘70s wouldn’t be complete if it didn’t also include a serious note of thanks to my very first Chinese language teacher, professor Yu-shih Chen, whom we all loved.

From my Georgetown days, I would like to especially thank my best friend of nearly three decades now, Pei Dalin, for being his wonderful self. Thanks also to his wife, Mian, and my little talented Godchildren, Julia and Christopher. Dalin also helped immensely with the “cultural” editing of this book; he was on call at all hours as emergency questions popped up.

To my dear friend Wen Yang, for all his help as technical editor of this project and for our great years at Georgetown together. Some things really do come full circle.

I would also like to mention places of particular importance in my study of the Chinese language. To Middlebury College, for an incredible summer intensive language program, and to National Chengchi University in Taiwan, for giving me the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to study oracle bones from the Shang dynasty for one whole glorious year. And especially to my former language teacher from Nankai University in Tianjin, Professor Pang Bingjun — poet-laureate and scholar-gentleman — who spent countless hours helping me transcribe my taped oral histories of the Chinese Jewish descendants of Kaifeng.
To all the Chinese Jewish descendants of Kaifeng, whose lives have so deeply touched my own and whose regional dialect I can never hope to master.

At Stanford, I’d like to thank Carl Bielefeldt, Director of the Stanford Center for Buddhist Studies, for his compassion, patience, and understanding these last few months and, as always, for his signature Zen sense of humor. To Rabbi Dov Greenberg of Stanford Chabad, for his amazing ability to listen for the spoken as well as the unspoken, for his wise counsel and keen intellect, and most of all for his humorous common sense. To Carol Zimbelman, for her dedication and innate decency. And to all my new friends in Palo Alto, who keep showing me why not to give up just five minutes before the miracle happens.

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Finally, words can’t quite express my deep gratitude to Christine Huo, Kristina Smith, and F. Marland Chancellor III for ensuring that this book would be only the first of many to come.

About the Author

**Wendy Abraham** is the Associate Director of the Stanford Center for Buddhist Studies and the Asian Religions & Cultures Initiative. She has taught courses on Chinese language, Chinese literature, and Asian cultures at Hunter College, Georgetown University, New York University, and Stanford University, where she’s currently pursuing her second doctorate in modern Chinese literature. She spent a year researching Shang Dynasty oracle bones in Taiwan, which sparked her deep interest in the development of China’s written language. Wendy has directed Chinese language programs for American students in Beijing and Shanghai and has interpreted for high-level arts delegations from China. Her first doctoral dissertation from Teachers College (Columbia University) was on the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng, a subject about which she has written widely and continues to lecture frequently throughout the United States. She also created Jewish Historical Tours of China, bringing people to visit Shanghai and Kaifeng on educational trips. Her interest in all things Chinese continues unabated.
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We’re proud of this book; please send us your comments through our Dummies online registration form located at www.dummies.com/register/.

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Contents at a Glance

Introduction ................................................................. 1

Part I: Getting Started .................................................. 7
Chapter 1: Getting to Know a Little Chinese................................................................. 9
Chapter 2: The Nitty Gritty: Basic Chinese Grammar and Numbers ......................... 25
Chapter 3: Introductions and Greetings: Nǐ Hǎo!.......................................................... 51

Part II: Chinese in Action ............................................ 65
Chapter 4: Getting to Know You: Making Small Talk.................................................... 67
Chapter 5: Eating and Drinking: Gānbēi!........................................................................ 79
Chapter 6: Shopping Made Easy................................................................................... 109
Chapter 7: Exploring the Town ..................................................................................... 129
Chapter 8: Enjoying Yourself: Recreation and Sports................................................ 153
Chapter 9: Talking on the Phone .................................................................................. 165
Chapter 10: At the Office and Around the House....................................................... 177

Part III: Chinese on the Go ........................................ 197
Chapter 11: Money, Money, Money .............................................................................. 199
Chapter 12: Taking the Road Less Traveled: Asking for (and Giving) Directions ......................................................... 215
Chapter 13: Staying at a Hotel....................................................................................... 231
Chapter 14: Transportation .......................................................................................... 245
Chapter 15: Traveling Abroad....................................................................................... 265
Chapter 16: Handling Emergencies.............................................................................. 279

Part IV: The Part of Tens ........................................... 297
Chapter 17: Ten Ways to Pick Up Chinese Quickly.................................................... 299
Chapter 18: Ten Things Never to Do in China ............................................................ 303
Chapter 19: Ten Favorite Chinese Expressions .......................................................... 307
Chapter 20: Ten Phrases That Make You Sound Chinese.......................................... 311

Part V: Appendixes ................................................... 315
Appendix A: Chinese Verbs .......................................................................................... 317
Appendix B: Chinese-English Mini-Dictionary ............................................................ 321
Appendix C: Answer Key ............................................................................................... 339
Appendix D: About the CD ............................................................................................ 343
Index ....................................................................... 345
# Table of Contents

**Introduction** ............................................................................................................. 1  
  About This Book ........................................................................................................ 1  
  Conventions Used in This Book .............................................................................. 2  
  Foolish Assumptions .............................................................................................. 3  
  How This Book Is Organized .................................................................................. 3  
    Part I: Getting Started ...................................................................................... 4  
    Part II: Chinese in Action .............................................................................. 4  
    Part III: Chinese on the Go .......................................................................... 4  
    Part IV: The Part of Tens .............................................................................. 4  
    Part V: Appendixes ....................................................................................... 5  
  Icons Used in This Book ...................................................................................... 5  
  Where to Go from Here .......................................................................................... 6  

**Part I: Getting Started** .............................................................................................. 7  

**Chapter 1: Getting to Know a Little Chinese** ......................................................... 9  
  Grasping Chinese Dialects ................................................................................... 10  
  The Written Word: Yikes! No Alphabet! .............................................................. 11  
  Pinyin Spelling: Beijing, Not Peking .................................................................. 13  
  Sounding Off: Basic Chinese Sounds .................................................................. 14  
    Starting off with initials .................................................................................. 15  
    Ending with finals ........................................................................................... 16  
    Perfect pitch: Presenting . . . the four tones .............................................. 18  
  Adding Idioms and Popular Expressions to Your Repertoire ......................... 19  
  Mastering Basic Phrases ...................................................................................... 21  

**Chapter 2: The Nitty Gritty: Basic Chinese Grammar and Numbers** .................. 25  
  The Basics of Chinese Parts of Speech ............................................................... 26  
  Nouns ................................................................................................................... 27  
  Definite versus indefinite articles ...................................................................... 30  
  Adjectives ............................................................................................................ 31  
  Verbs ................................................................................................................... 32  
  Adverbs ............................................................................................................... 37  
  Bù and méiyǒu: Total negation ......................................................................... 38  
  Getting possessive with the particle de ............................................................ 40
Getting to Know Chinese Cuisines ...............................................................85
Dining Out .......................................................................................................86
Understanding what’s on the menu ...................................................88
Placing an order and chatting with the wait staff ............................94
Dipping into some dim sum ................................................................98
Finding the restrooms..........................................................................99
Finishing your meal and paying the bill ............................................99
All the Tea in China......................................................................................100
Taking Your Chinese to Go..........................................................................102
Sizing up weights and measures.......................................................103
Making comparisons..........................................................................104
How much is that thousand-year-old egg?.................................104

Chapter 6: Shopping Made Easy .................................................................109
Going to Stores .............................................................................................109
Just browsing......................................................................................112
Asking for help....................................................................................113
Shopping for Clothes ...................................................................................115
What’s your size?................................................................................115
Comparing quality: Good, better, best.............................................118
Comparing two items.........................................................................119
What are you wearing? Chuān versus dài .......................................121
Asking about the color ......................................................................122
Shopping for Other Items............................................................................123
Hunting for antiques ..........................................................................124
Buying high-tech and electronic things...........................................125
Getting a Good Price and Paying................................................................126
Negotiating prices at the night market............................................126
Paying for your purchase (or demanding a refund) ......................127

Chapter 7: Exploring the Town .................................................................129
Knowing the Time and Day .......................................................................129
Telling time in Chinese......................................................................135
Attending a Performance ............................................................................138
Exploring Museums and Galleries..............................................................143
Visiting Historical Sites .............................................................................145
Going to the Movies .................................................................................146
Listening to a Concert .............................................................................148
Hopping Around Bars and Clubs..............................................................150
Chapter 8: Enjoying Yourself: Recreation and Sports ..............153
 Naming Your Hobbies.................................................................154
 Exploring Nature .........................................................................156
 Tapping into Your Artistic Side ...................................................159
 Striking Up the Band ................................................................159
 Playing on a Team .......................................................................161

Chapter 9: Talking on the Phone ..............................................165
 Using a Telephone..........................................................................165
 Going Mobile with a Cell Phone ..................................................166
 Making a Phone Call......................................................................167
 Calling your friends ......................................................................168
 Ringing hotels and places of business .........................................169
 Phoning a client ............................................................................170
 Using a calling card ......................................................................172
 Sorry, I’m Not Home Right Now ..................................................172
 Listening to messages that people leave you .............................172
 Understanding other people’s greeting messages .....................173
 Leaving messages .......................................................................173

Chapter 10: At the Office and Around the House .......................177
 Your Office Digs...........................................................................177
 Conducting a Meeting .................................................................180
 Scheduling and planning a meeting ............................................180
 Making the initial greeting..........................................................181
 Starting the meeting ....................................................................182
 Making a presentation ..................................................................183
 Ending the meeting .....................................................................183
 Discussing Business and Industry ................................................185
 Using the Internet ........................................................................187
 Checking Your E-Mail .................................................................189
 Hunting for an Apartment ............................................................190
 Furnishing Your New Digs ............................................................193

Part III: Chinese on the Go..........................................................197

Chapter 11: Money, Money, Money .............................................199
 Staying Current with Chinese Currency ......................................199
 Rénmínbì (RMB) in the PRC .........................................................200
 Xīn Táibì in the ROC .....................................................................201
 Hong Kong dollars .......................................................................201
 Singapore dollars ........................................................................202
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 12: Taking the Road Less Traveled: Asking for (and Giving) Directions</th>
<th>215</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding 20 Questions: Just Ask “Where”</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different strokes for different folks: nàr versus nǎlǐ</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting direction about directions</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answering “where” questions</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving Directions</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing Distances (Time and Space) with Lí</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovering Ordinal Numbers</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specifying Cardinal Points with Directional Coverbs</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 13: Staying at a Hotel</th>
<th>231</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making a Room Reservation</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking In Before You Hit the Pool</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Advantage of Hotel Service</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking Out Before Heading Out</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 14: Transportation</th>
<th>245</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flying Around the Airport</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making it past the check-in counter</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding your flight</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going through customs</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating Around Town</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hailing a cab</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopping on the bus</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding the rails</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 15: Traveling Abroad</th>
<th>265</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When Do You Want to Travel?</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrating the Chinese Holidays</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where Do You Want to Travel?</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packing for Your Trip</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlisting the Help of a Travel Agency</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 16: Handling Emergencies ................................................................. 279
  Calling for Help in Times of Need ............................................................. 279
  Receiving Medical Care ........................................................................... 280
    Finding a doctor ....................................................................................... 282
    Describing what ails you ........................................................................ 283
    Discussing your medical history ............................................................ 287
    Making a diagnosis .................................................................................. 288
    Treating yourself to better health .......................................................... 290
  Calling the Police ....................................................................................... 293
  Acquiring Legal Help ............................................................................... 294

Part IV: The Part of Tens ........................................................................... 297

Chapter 17: Ten Ways to Pick Up Chinese Quickly ........................................ 299
  Listen to Chinese-Language Tapes, CDs, and CD-ROMs ......................... 299
  Attend a Peking Opera Performance ....................................................... 300
  Cook with a Wok ....................................................................................... 300
  Shop for Food in Chinatown ..................................................................... 300
  Surf the Net ............................................................................................... 301
  Watch Kung-Fu Flicks .............................................................................. 301
  Exchange Language Lessons .................................................................. 301
  Make Chinese Friends ............................................................................. 302
  Study Chinese Calligraphy ...................................................................... 302
  Be Curious and Creative ........................................................................... 302

Chapter 18: Ten Things Never to Do in China .............................................. 303
  Never Accept a Compliment Graciously ................................................ 303
  Never Make Someone Lose Face ............................................................ 303
  Never Get Angry in Public ....................................................................... 304
  Never Address People by Their First Names First .................................. 304
  Never Take Food with the Wrong End of Your Chopsticks .................... 304
  Never Drink Alcohol Without First Offering a Toast .............................. 305
  Never Let Someone Else Pay the Bill Without Fighting for It .................. 305
  Never Show Up Empty Handed ................................................................ 305
  Never Accept Food, Drinks, or Gifts Without First Refusing a Few Times . 306
  Never Take the First “No, Thank You” Literally ....................................... 306

Chapter 19: Ten Favorite Chinese Expressions ............................................ 307
  Gōngxì Gōngxì .......................................................................................... 307
  Yí Lù Píng’ān ............................................................................................ 308
  Yī Yán Nán Jìn ......................................................................................... 308
  Māmā Hūhū ............................................................................................. 308
  Kāi Wān Xiāo ............................................................................................ 308
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Chinese Phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>Máfan Nǐ ................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>Zěnme Yáng? ..................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>Qīng Wèn ................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310</td>
<td>Zìjǐ Lái ................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310</td>
<td>Āiyá! ....................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>311</td>
<td>Chapter 20: Ten Phrases That Make You Sound Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>311</td>
<td>Huānyíng Huānyíng! ..........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>311</td>
<td>Bícì Bícì ................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>Jiūyāng Jiūyāng .............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>Mān Mān Chī! ...................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>Wǒ Qīng Kè .....................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>Yǒu Kǒng Lái Wán .............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>313</td>
<td>Láojià Láojià ..................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>313</td>
<td>Zhù Nǐ Zǎo Rì Kāng Fú .......................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>313</td>
<td>Búkèqí ..............................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>Hǎo Jiù Méi Jiàn ................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part V: Appendixes** .......................................................... 315

- Appendix A: Chinese Verbs .................................................. 317
- Appendix B: Chinese-English Mini-Dictionary ..................... 321
- Appendix C: Answer Key ...................................................... 339
- Appendix D: About the CD ................................................... 343

**Index** .............................................................................. 345
Globalization has made familiarity with other people, cultures, and languages not only preferable in the 21st century, but also essential. With the help of the Internet, reaching out and touching someone on the other side of the earth has become as easy as the click of a mouse. And yet, nothing quite beats the excitement of a face-to-face encounter with someone who hails from the other side of the globe in his or her own language. Communication in cyberspace doesn’t even come close.

Whether you’re an inveterate traveler, going overseas for business, about to study overseas, interested in frequenting Chinatown, befriending a Chinese-speaking classmate or coworker, or just plain curious about China, Chinese For Dummies can help you get acquainted with enough Chinese to carry on a decent conversation on any number of topics. You won’t become fluent instantly, of course, but this book helps you greet a stranger, buy a plane ticket, and order some food. This book also gives you some invaluable cultural tips so that you can not only rattle off those newly acquired words and phrases, but also back them up with the right behavior at the right time.

I designed this book to help guide you toward the successful use of one of the most difficult languages on earth. Chinese should also just be plain fun to learn.

About This Book

The good news is that you can use Chinese For Dummies anytime, anywhere. No mandatory class sessions, no exams, and no homework assignments to dread. Need to get to a new city for a business meeting? Just turn to the chapter on travel to find out how to haggle for a plane ticket, determine the price, and get to the airport on time. Have to make a sudden trip to the doctor? Turn to the chapter on your health and figure out in advance how to tell your caregivers exactly what ails you.

The beauty of this book is that it can be all things to all people. You don’t have to memorize Chapter 5 before moving on to Chapter 6, if what Chapter 6 deals with is what you really need. Each chapter provides you with different bits of information about the Chinese language and highlights different parts
of Chinese grammar. Read as much or as little as you want, as quickly or as slowly as you like. Whatever interests you is what you should focus on. And remember: You’re discovering a language that simultaneously represents one of the world’s oldest civilizations and one of its fastest growing economies in the 21st century.

**Conventions Used in This Book**

Pay attention to a couple of conventions that can help you navigate this book’s contents:

- Chinese terms are set in **boldface** to make them stand out.
- Pronunciations and meanings appear in parentheses immediately after the Chinese terms. The pronunciations are in *italics*.

This book uses the *pīnyīn* (literally: spelling the way it sounds) romanization system of Chinese words. What does that mean? Well, if you go to China, you see signs in Chinese characters all around, but if you look for something in English, you may be hard pressed to find it. Whatever signs you see in roman letters will be of *pīnyīn*, the romanization system developed by the Communists in the 1950s, so seeing *pīnyīn* in this book is good practice for you.

Another thing you should keep in mind as you begin to understand Chinese is that many of the English translations you see in this book aren’t exactly literal. It’s more important to know the gist of what you hear or see instead of what individual words in any given phrase mean. For example, if you translate “horse horse tiger tiger” literally into Chinese, you have the phrase meaning “so so.” You’re not actually talking about animals. Whenever I give a literal translation, I preface it with “literally” in italics.

The following elements you find in *Chinese For Dummies* help to reinforce the new terms and phrases you’re studying:

- **Talkin’ the Talk dialogues**: Nothing beats seeing and hearing an actual conversation to learn Chinese, so I intersperse dialogues throughout this book. They come under the heading “Talkin’ the Talk.” They show you the Chinese words, the pronunciations, and the English translations, and I often put cultural dos and don’ts into context, which should come in handy.
Dialogues with a CD icon beside them appear on the CD that comes with this book so you can practice the sentences after you hear how they should sound. With the tonal nature of the Chinese language, this feature is indispensable as you learn Chinese.

✓ **Words to Know blackboards:** Memorizing key words and phrases is very useful in language learning. The words and phrases on the blackboard-like boxes are the ones I think are most important in the preceding section or sections, so they appear on a chalkboard with the heading “Words to Know.”

✓ **Fun & Games activities:** Working through word games can be a fun way to review the words and phrases you encounter in each chapter. This element of *Chinese For Dummies* is a great way to gauge your progress and tease your brain at the same time. Look for these activities at the end of each chapter.

### Foolish Assumptions

Some of the foolish assumptions I made about you while writing *Chinese For Dummies* are:

✓ You don’t know any Chinese, except for maybe a couple of words you picked up from a good kung-fu movie or the word “tofu,” which you picked up while grocery shopping.

✓ Your goal in life isn’t to become an interpreter of Chinese at the U.N.; you just want to pick up some useful words, phrases, and sentence constructions to make yourself understood in a Chinese-speaking environment.

✓ You have no intention of spending hours and hours memorizing Chinese vocabulary and grammar patterns.

✓ You basically want to have fun while speaking a little Chinese.

### How This Book Is Organized

This book is divided by topic into parts, chapters, and appendixes. Each part focuses on one aspect of the Chinese language, and the chapters cover different useful topics, such as how to dine at a restaurant, how to handle emergencies, or how to plan a vacation. The following sections tell you what types of information you can expect to find in each part.
Part I: Getting Started

This part familiarizes you with some basics of Chinese: how to pronounce words, how to create the proper pitch (also known as tone) for each word, and so on. Because Chinese is a tonal language, if you pronounce a word with an incorrect tone, you may say a whole different word. Sometimes the only way to know whether you’ve said something you didn’t intend is by the look on the listener’s face, so you should pay particular attention to the tones as you speak.

Part II: Chinese in Action

In this part, you really begin to use Chinese. Instead of focusing strictly on grammar, this part helps guide you through everyday situations that you encounter while meeting people, eating at restaurants, going shopping, or yakking on the phone.

Part III: Chinese on the Go

This part of the book gives you the tools you need to use Chinese in any number of practical settings. You find out how to change money, how to ask for and give directions, how to book a room at a hotel, and how to tell a doctor what ails you. It covers all aspects of travel into Chinese-speaking parts of the world. Whether your travels take you all the way to Shanghai or just to your cubicle at work is up to you.

Part IV: The Part of Tens

Ever wish you could distill the Chinese culture into 10 simple rules of what to do and what not to do? Well, Part IV is a collection of simple phrases you can use, popular Chinese expressions, and reminders of what not to do in a Chinese setting that you should always keep in the back of your mind as you interact with the Chinese. You not only sound more like a native Chinese speaker when you open your mouth, but you also start internalizing some of the cardinal cultural rules and taboos for social settings that the average student of the Chinese language may never discover.
Part V: Appendixes

This part contains helpful references that you may want to refer to occasionally as you snoop through the rest of the chapters. Appendix A contains a useful verb table, which can help in any setting. Appendix B is a handy mini-dictionary of both Chinese to English and English to Chinese. Feel free to check this section when you encounter unfamiliar words on a need-to-know basis. Appendix C contains the answers to the Fun & Games exercises at the end of each chapter. Finally, Appendix D provides a list of the tracks that appear on the audio CD. This appendix comes in handy when you're ready to hear a selection of the Talkin' the Talk dialogues from the book.

Icons Used in This Book

Cute little icons appear in the left-hand margins, next to sidebars, and adjacent to some of the introductions to the Talkin’ the Talk sections throughout this book. These beacons shed light on what kind of information you’re looking at and can help you locate certain types of information in a hurry. The six icons used in this book are:

The bull’s-eye appears wherever I’ve highlighted a great idea to help make your study of Chinese easier.

This icon, appropriately showing a string around a finger, should serve as a reminder about particularly important information concerning Chinese.

The bomb should act as a stop sign in your mind. It warns you about things to avoid saying or doing so that you don’t make a fool of yourself overseas or with a new Chinese-speaking acquaintance.

This icon clues you in on fascinating bits of information about China and Chinese culture. Knowledge of a culture goes hand in hand with knowledge of a foreign language, so these icons help light the way as you embark on your journey.
This icon highlights various rules of grammar that may be out of the norm. Even though this book doesn’t focus primarily on grammar, your successful execution of the language can only be enhanced by paying attention to little grammatical rules as they pop up.

The audio CD that comes with this book gives you the chance to hear native Chinese speakers so you can better understand the way Chinese really sounds. This proves especially helpful because of all the tones you have to keep in mind. This icon indicates the basic sounds and Talkin’ the Talk dialogues you can find on the CD.

**Where to Go from Here**

Chinese is often considered one of the toughest languages in the world to master. Don’t worry. The good news is that you’re not trying to master it. All you want to do is be understandable when you open your mouth so that you don’t ask for the mens’ room when you really want the ladies’ room. All you have to do now is keep listening to and repeating the words and phrases you find in this book. Turn to whichever chapter piques your curiosity, listen to the accompanying audio CD at home or in your car, and keep practicing your favorite Chinese phrases when you’re with your family and friends in Chinatown.
"You mean, ‘wo’, ‘ta’, ‘baba’, and ‘mama’ are all words in the Mandarin dialect? My gosh, Alice, our baby’s been speaking Chinese the last few weeks!"
Part I warmly welcomes you to the Chinese language. I give you the lowdown on all the essentials of Chinese: how to pronounce Chinese sounds (and tones) like a native, how to string Chinese words together so that they make sense, how to count in Chinese, and how to communicate in Chinese with all the cultural trimmings. Wǒmen kāishì ba! (waw mun kye shir bah; Let’s begin!)
Chapter 1

Getting to Know a Little Chinese

In This Chapter
- Getting a handle on basic Chinese sounds
- Reading to communicate
- Sounding fluent
- Perfecting the four basic tones
- Practicing Chinese idioms
- Understanding basic Chinese phrases and gestures

Time to get your feet wet with the basics of Chinese. This chapter gives you guidelines that help you pronounce words in standard Mandarin (the official language of both the People’s Republic of China and Taiwan) like a native speaker and helps you get a handle on the four tones that distinguish Mandarin Chinese. After you have the basics down, I show you how to construct basic Chinese phrases.

But before you dive in, here’s a bit of advice: Don’t be intimidated by all the tones! The best thing you can do when learning a foreign language is to not worry about making mistakes the minute you open your mouth. Practice speaking Chinese first to your dog or cat, and then work your way up to a couple of goldfish or a niece or nephew under the age of 10. When you finally get the nerve to rattle off a few phrases to your local Chinatown grocer, you’ll know you’ve made it. And when you visit China for the first time, you discover how incredibly appreciative the Chinese are of anyone who even remotely attempts to speak their language. All the hours you spent yakking away with the family pet start to pay off, and you’ll be rewarded greatly. Still have doubts? You’ll be amazed at how much you can say after snooping through *Chinese For Dummies.*
Encountering the Chinese culture is just as important as exploring the Chinese language. In fact, you can’t quite master the language without absorbing a little of the culture by osmosis. Just making the effort to speak Chinese is an act of positive diplomacy. Don’t worry about how you sound when you open your mouth — you’re contributing to international friendship no matter what comes out.

Grasping Chinese Dialects

Give yourself a big pat on the back right now. Yup, right now — before you even begin to utter one iota of Chinese. If you don’t do it now, you may be too shocked later on when it sinks in that you’ve taken on a language that has hundreds (yes, hundreds) of dialects — each one mutually incomprehensible to speakers of the other ones. Practically every major town, and certainly every province, in China has its own regional dialect that folks grow up learning (see Table 1-1). Of the seven major dialects, Shanghainese, Taiwanese, and Cantonese are the ones you may have heard of before.

And then there’s Mandarin, dialect of the masses. Mandarin Chinese is spoken by more people on earth than any other language today. Pretty much a quarter of humanity uses it, given China’s immense population. So just why was this particular dialect chosen to become the official dialect taught in all schools throughout China, regardless of whatever additional dialects people speak at home or in their communities?

With only four tones, Guānhuà (gwan hwa⁴; Mandarin; literally: the language of the officials, who were also known as Mandarins) has served as the hybrid language of China since the 15th century, because it was based on the educated speech of the region around Beijing. Instead of referring to it as Guānhuà, mainlanders in China now call it Pǔtōnghuà (poo toong hwah; the common language). People in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and in overseas Chinese communities call it Guóyǔ (gwaw yew; the national language). You may also hear it referred to as Zhōngwén (joong one; the language of the Chinese people) and Hányǔ (hahn yew; the language of the Han people), because the Chinese have often referred to themselves as descendants of the Han dynasty (206 BCE to 220 CE), one of the golden eras of Chinese history. Because Chinese is the language of ethnic Chinese and China’s minority groups, the more all-encompassing term Zhōngwén is preferred.
### Table 1-1: Major Chinese Dialects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Region Where Spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pǔtōnghuà / Guóyǔ (Mandarin)</td>
<td>poo toong hwhah / gwaw yew</td>
<td>North of the Yangzi River, but taught in schools everywhere; official language of the People’s Republic of China and spoken all over Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǔ</td>
<td>woo</td>
<td>Shanghai, southeastern Anhui, and much of Zhejiang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiāng</td>
<td>shyahng</td>
<td>Hunan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gān</td>
<td>gahn</td>
<td>Jiangxi, southern Anhui, and southeastern Hubei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kējiã (Hakka)</td>
<td>kuh jyah</td>
<td>Scattered parts of eastern and southwestern Guangxi and in northern Guangdong (Canton)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuè (Cantonese)</td>
<td>yweh</td>
<td>Southeastern Guangxi, Guangdong (Canton), and Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mīn</td>
<td>meen</td>
<td>Fujian, southern Zhejiang, northeastern Guangdong, Hainan, and Taiwan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The term Pǔtōnghuà (*literally*: the common language) is used to refer to Mandarin in the People’s Republic of China, and the term Guóyǔ (*literally*: the national language) is the term used for Mandarin in Taiwan. If you simply say Hânyǔ (the language of the Han people), however, you can use it anywhere.

**The Written Word: Yiikes! No Alphabet!**

I bet you’re beginning to wonder just how the Chinese have managed to communicate with each other for the better part of five millennia if their spoken language comes in so many distinct forms and dialects. The answer lies in (drum roll) . . . the written word.
Say you see two Chinese people sitting next to each other on a train traveling from Canton to Shanghai. If the Cantonese speaker reads the newspaper out loud, the guy from Shanghai won’t have a clue what he’s saying. But if they both read the same newspaper article to themselves, they could understand what’s going on in the world. That’s because Chinese characters are uniform all across the country.

Chinese words are written in beautiful, often symbolic configurations called characters. Each character is a word in and of itself, and sometimes it’s a part of a compound word. It makes no difference if you write the characters from right to left, left to right, or top to bottom, because you can read and understand them in any order. If you see a Chinese movie in Chinatown, you can often choose between two types of subtitles: English, which you read from left to right, and Chinese characters on another line, which you read from right to left. (They can also go from left to right, so be careful.) You may go cross-eyed for a while trying to follow them both.

During the Han dynasty, a lexicographer named Xu Shen identified six ways in which Chinese characters reflected meanings and sounds. Of these, four were the most common:

- **Pictographs**: These characters are formed according to the shape of the objects themselves, such as the sun and the moon. They show the meaning of the character rather than the sound.

- **Ideographs**: These characters represent more abstract concepts. The characters for “above” and “below,” for example, each have a horizontal line representing the horizon and another stroke leading out above or below the horizon.

- **Complex ideographs**: Combinations of simpler characters.

- **Phonetic compounds**: Also called logographs, these compound characters are formed by two graphic elements — one hinting at the meaning of the word and the other providing a clue to the sound. Phonetic compounds account for over 80 percent of all Chinese characters.
No matter which type of characters you see, you won’t find any letters stringing them together like you see in English. So how in the world do Chinese people consult a Chinese dictionary? (How did you know I could read your mind?) In several different ways.

Because Chinese characters are composed of several (often many) strokes of the writing brush, one way to look up a character is by counting the number of strokes and then looking up the character under the portion of the dictionary that notes characters by strokes. But to do so, you have to know which radical to check under first. Chinese characters have 214 radicals — parts of the character that can help identify what the character may signify, such as three dots on the left hand side of the character representing water. Each radical is itself composed of a certain number of strokes, so you have to first look up the radical by the number of strokes it takes to write it, and after you locate that radical, you start looking once more under the number of strokes left in the character after that radical to locate the character you wanted to look up in the first place.

You can always just check under the pronunciation of the character (if you already know how to pronounce it), but you have to sift through every single character with the same pronunciation. You also have to look further under the various tones to see which one of all the words pronounced the same way comes with the first, second, third, or fourth tone you want to locate. And because there are so many homonyms in Chinese, this task isn’t as easy as it may sound (no pun intended).

I bet you feel really relieved that you’re only focusing on spoken Chinese and not the written language.

**Pinyin Spelling: Beijing, Not Peking**

To spell the way it sounds . . . that’s the literal meaning of pīnyīn. For decades, Chinese had been transliterated in any number of ways. Finally, in 1979, the People’s Republic of China officially adopted pīnyīn as its official romanization system. After the adoption, U.S. libraries and government agencies diligently changed all their prior records from other romanization systems into pīnyīn.

You should keep in mind the following quick facts about some of the initial sounds in Mandarin when you see them written in the relatively new pīnyīn system:

- **J:** Sounds like the “g” in “gee whiz.” An “i” often follows a “j.” “Jì kuài qián?” (jee kwyee chyan) means “How much money?”
- **Q:** Sounds like the “ch” in “cheek.” You never see it followed by a “u” like in English, but an “i” always follows it in Chinese, possibly before another vowel or a consonant. Qīngdāo (cheeng daow) beer used to be spelled “ch’ing tao” or “Tsingtao.”
X: The third letter that’s often followed by an “i.” It sounds like the “sh” in “she.” One famous Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping (dung shyaow peeng), boasted this letter in his name.

Zh: Unlike “j,” which often precedes a vowel to make it sound like you’re opening your mouth, “zh” is followed by vowels, which make it sound like your mouth is a bit more closed. Take Zhou Enlai (joe un lye), for example, the great statesman of 20th-century China. When you say his name, it should sound like Joe En-lye.

Z: Sounds like a “dz.” You see it in the name of the PRC’s first leader, Mao Zedong (maow dzuh doong), which used to be spelled Mao Tse-tung.

C: Pronounced like “ts” in such words as cai (tsye; food) or cisu (tsuh swaw; bathroom).

B, D, and G: In the past, the sounds made by these three letters were represented by P, T, and K, respectively. In the past, if the corresponding initial sounds were aspirated (had air coming out of the speaker, like in the words “pie,” “tie,” and “kite”), they would’ve been written as “p’,” “t’,” and “k’.” Today, the letters “P,” “T,” and “K” represent the aspirated sounds.

Sounding Off: Basic Chinese Sounds

Don’t worry about sounding like a native speaker the first time you utter a Chinese syllable — after all, who does? But the longer you procrastinate becoming familiar with the basic elements of Chinese words, the greater your fear of this unique language may become. After you begin to practice the sounds (and eventually the tones) out loud, you may wonder if you’ll ever come close to sounding like Bruce Lee in a kung-fu movie or even your local Chinatown grocer. Hearing Chinese spoken at a normal speed is definitely intimidating at the beginning, so you should enjoy taking plenty of baby steps and reveling in the praise from waiters who appreciate all your effort the next time you frequent a Chinese restaurant.

The main thing to remember about the Chinese language is that each morpheme (the smallest unit of meaning in a language) is represented by one syllable, which in turn consists of an initial sound and a final sound, topped off by a tone. This applies to each and every syllable. Without any one of these three components, your words may be incomprehensible to the average Chinese person. For example, the syllable “må” is comprised of the initial “m” and the final “a,” and you pronounce it with what’s called a first tone. Together, the parts mean “mother.” If you substitute the first tone for a third tone, which is written as “mã,” you say the word “horse.” So be careful not to call your mother a horse when you practice the initials, finals, and tones. The following sections break up the three parts and give each their due.
Before you can participate in sports or play games, you must become familiar with all the rules. The same goes for practicing a new language. Do your best to understand the basic rules of pronunciation, and keep practicing over and over to begin feeling comfortable speaking the language.

Starting off with initials

In Chinese, initials always consist of consonants. Table 1-2 lists the initials you encounter in the Chinese language.

Listen to these sounds on the CD as you practice pronouncing initials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Letter</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>English Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>baw</td>
<td>bore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>paw</td>
<td>paw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>maw</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>faw</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>duh</td>
<td>done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>tuh</td>
<td>ton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>nuh</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>luh</td>
<td>lull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>guh</td>
<td>gull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>kuh</td>
<td>come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>huh</td>
<td>hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>gee</td>
<td>gee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>chee</td>
<td>cheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>she</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>dzuh</td>
<td>“ds” in suds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>tsuh</td>
<td>“ts” in huts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>suh</td>
<td>sun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
The initials –n and -r in Table 1-2 can also appear as finals, so don’t be surprised if you see them there.

**Ending with finals**

Chinese boasts many more consonants than vowels. In fact, the language has only six vowels all together: a, o, e, i, u, and ü. If you pronounce the vowels in sequence, your mouth starts off very wide and your tongue starts off very low. Eventually, when you get to ü, your mouth becomes much more closed and your tongue ends pretty high. You can also combine the vowels in various ways to form compound vowels. Table 1-3 lists the vowels and some possible combinations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Vowel</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>English Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ah</td>
<td>hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ai</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ao</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>chow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an</td>
<td>ahn</td>
<td>on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ang</td>
<td>ahng</td>
<td>thong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>aw</td>
<td>straw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ong</td>
<td>oong</td>
<td>too + ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ou</td>
<td>oh</td>
<td>oh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Vowel</td>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>English Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>uh</td>
<td>bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei</td>
<td>ay</td>
<td>way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td>un</td>
<td>fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eng</td>
<td>ung</td>
<td>tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>er</td>
<td>ar</td>
<td>are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>ee</td>
<td>tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ia</td>
<td>ya</td>
<td>gotcha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iao</td>
<td>yaow</td>
<td>meow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ie</td>
<td>yeh</td>
<td>yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iu</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>leo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ian</td>
<td>yan</td>
<td>cheyenne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iang</td>
<td>yahng</td>
<td>y + angst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>een</td>
<td>seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ing</td>
<td>eeng</td>
<td>going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iong</td>
<td>yoong</td>
<td>you + ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>oo</td>
<td>too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ua</td>
<td>wa</td>
<td>suave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uo</td>
<td>waw</td>
<td>war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ui</td>
<td>way</td>
<td>way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uai</td>
<td>why</td>
<td>why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uan</td>
<td>wan</td>
<td>want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uang</td>
<td>wahng</td>
<td>wan + ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ueng</td>
<td>wung</td>
<td>one + ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ü</td>
<td>yew</td>
<td>ewe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>üe</td>
<td>yweh</td>
<td>you + eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>üan</td>
<td>ywan</td>
<td>you + wan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ün</td>
<td>yewnn</td>
<td>you + n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tone marks in pinyin always appear above the vowel, but if you see a couple of vowels in a row, the tone mark appears above the first vowel in that sequence. One exception is when you see the vowels iu and ui together. In that case, the tone mark falls on the second vowel.

Sometimes vowels appear without initial consonant accompaniment, but they still mean something. The word âi, meaning “short” (of stature), is one example.

**Perfect pitch: Presenting . . . the four tones**

Mee meeeee (cough cough)! Pardon me. I’m getting carried away with warming up before I get into the four tones. Just think of the tones this way: They can be your best friends when it comes to being understood in Chinese, and they’re the hip part of this ancient language.

If you combine all the possible initial sounds of Chinese with all the possible permutations of the final sounds, you come up with only about 400 sound combinations — not nearly enough to express all the ideas in your head. If you add the four basic tones of Mandarin to the mix, the number of possible permutations increases fourfold. Tones are also a great way to reduce the number of homophones in Chinese. Even so, any given syllable with a specific tone can often have more than one meaning. Sometimes the only way to decipher the intended meaning is to see the written word.

Mandarin has only four tones. The best way to imagine what each of the four tones sounds like is to visualize these short descriptions:

- **First tone**: High level. The first tone is supposed to be as high as your individual pitch range can be, without wavering. It appears like this above the letter a: ā.

- **Second tone**: Rising. The second tone sounds like you’re asking a question. It goes from the middle level of your voice to the top. It doesn’t automatically indicate that you’re asking a question, however — it just sounds like you are. It appears like this above the letter a: â.

- **Third tone**: Falling and then rising. The third tone starts in the middle level of your voice range and then falls deeply before slightly rising at the end. It looks like this above the letter a: ā.

- **Fourth tone**: Falling. The fourth tone sounds like you’re giving someone an order (unlike the more plaintive-sounding second tone). It falls from the high pitch level it starts at. Here’s how it looks above the letter a: à.
**One third tone after another**

Here’s something interesting about tones: When you have to say one third tone followed by another third tone out loud in consecutive fashion, the first one actually becomes a second tone. If you hear someone say “Tā hěn hǎo” (tah hun how; she’s very well), you may not realize that both “hěn” and “hǎo” individually are third tone syllables. It sounds like “hén” is a second tone and “hǎo” is a full third tone.

**Half-third tones**

Whenever a third tone is followed by any of the other tones — first, second, fourth, or even a neutral tone — it becomes a half-third tone. You only pronounce the first half of the tone — the falling half — before you pronounce the other syllables with the other tones. In fact, a half-third tone barely falls at all. It sounds more like a level, low tone (kind of the opposite of the high level first tone). Get it?

**Neutral tones**

A fifth tone exists that you can’t exactly count amongst the four basic tones, because it’s actually toneless, or neutral. You never see a tone mark over a fifth tone, and you say it only when you attach it to grammatical particles or the second character of repetitive syllables, such as bàba (bah bah; father) or māma (mah mah; mother).

**Tonal changes in yī and bù**

Just when you think you’re getting a handle on all the possible tones and tone changes in Chinese, I have one more aspect to report: The words yī (ee; one) and bù (boo; not or no) are truly unusual in Chinese, in that their tones may change automatically depending on what comes after them. You pronounce yī by itself with the first tone. However, when a first, second, or third tone follows it, yī instantly turns into a fourth tone, such as in yìzhāng zhī (ee jahng jir; a piece of paper). If a fourth tone follows yī, however, it automatically becomes a second tone, such as in the word yìyàng (ee yahng; the same). I know this all sounds very complicated, but when you get the hang of tones, pronunciation becomes second nature. Just keep listening to the accompanying CD. These concepts will sink in quicker than you expect.

**Adding Idioms and Popular Expressions to Your Repertoire**

Even though Chinese seems like it has absolutely nothing in common with English when you listen to it, especially in terms of pronunciation and tones, it uses distinctive idioms (groups of words whose collective meanings differ
from their individual parts) to express specific ideas or situations, just like in English. If you try to translate these idioms word for word, however, you won’t get very far.

For example, if you suddenly announced to your Chinese college roommate “Wǒ huì là yīge quán yègē” (waw huay lah ee guh chwan yeh guh; literally: I’m going to pull an all-nighter), he would be clueless and would begin to question what he was thinking when he agreed to room with a foreigner. Similarly, you’d be just as confused if he broke out with “Wǒ huì kāi yè chē.” (waw huay kye yeh chuh; literally: I’m going to ride the night train.) Both of you mean the same thing, of course, but he’d start imagining just how heavy something called an all-nighter is to actually pull, and you’d worry about which city he’s going to end up in the next morning. You may even be tempted to join him instead of studying for your exam.

The Chinese language has thousands of idiomatic expressions known as chéngyǔ (chung yew). Most of these chéngyǔ originated in anecdotes, fables, fairy tales, or ancient literary works, and some of the expressions are thousands of years old. The vast majority consist of four characters, succinctly expressing morals behind very long, ancient stories. Others are more than four characters. Either way, the Chinese pepper these pithy expressions throughout any given conversation.

Here are a few chéngyǔ you frequently hear in Chinese:

- **Mò míng qí miào.** (maw meeng chee meow; literally: No one can explain the wonder and mystery of it all.) This saying describes anything that’s tough to figure out, including unusual behavior.
- **Yī shēn zuò zé.** (ee shun dzwaw dzuh; To set a good example.)
- **Yī mó yí yàng.** (ee maw ee yahng; exactly alike)
- **Quán xīn quán yì.** (chwan sheen chwan ee; literally: entire heart, entire mind)
- **Àn bù jiù bān.** (ahn boo jyoe bahn; To take one step at a time.)
- **Hú shuō bā dào.** (hoo shwaw bah daow; literally: To talk nonsense in eight directions.) To talk nonsense.
- **Huǒ shàng jiā yóu.** (hwaw shahng jyah yo; To add fuel to the fire; to aggravate the problem.)
- **Yì zhēn jiàn xiē.** (ee jun jyan shyeh; To hit the nail on the head.)
- **Yì jū liǎng dé.** (ee jyw lyahng duh; To kill two birds with one stone.)
- **Rù xiāng suí sū.** (roo shyahng sway soo; When in Rome, do as the Romans do.)

Another fact you quickly become aware of when you start speaking with chéngyǔ is that the expressions are sometimes full of references to animals. Here are some of those:
Mastering Basic Phrases

If you make it a habit to use the following short Chinese phrases whenever you get the chance, you can master them in no time. You’ll also shock everyone around you — especially if they don’t speak Chinese. It doesn’t matter. You know what you’re saying, at least. So the next time you meet up with a Chinese waiter or take your clothes to a Chinese laundry down the block, you can impress the heck out of everyone. Try these phrases:

- **Nǐ hǎo!** (nee how; Hi; How are you?)
- **Xièxiè.** (shyeh shyeh; Thank you.)
- **Bú kèqi.** (boo kuh chee; You’re welcome; Don’t mention it.)
- **Méi shì.** (may shir; It’s nothing; Don’t mention it.)
- **Hǎo jíle.** (how jee luh; Great; Fantastic.)
- **Duì le.** (dway luh; That’s right.)
- **Gōngxī gōngxī!** (goong she goong she; Congratulations!) 
- **Duìbuqǐ.** (dway boo chee; Excuse me.)
- **Suàn le.** (swan luh; Forget it; Nevermind.)
- **Méiyǒu guānxi.** (mayo gwan she; It doesn’t matter.)
- **Děng yíxià.** (dung ee shyah; Wait a minute.)
Talkin’ the Talk

David and Rachel talk about practicing some Chinese expressions while they wait for a bus in Taipei.

David:  Rachel! Wǒ yǐjīng huì shuō Zhōngwén le.  
Rachel! Waw ee jeeng hway shwaw joong one lah.  
Rachel! I already know how to speak Chinese.

Rachel:  Dēng yǐxià. Nǐ yìdīng hú shuō bā dào. Nǐ zěnme huì Zhōngwén ne?  
Dung ee shyah. Nee ee deeng who shwaw bah daow.  
Nee dzummuh hway joong one nuh?  
Wait a minute. You’re definitely talking nonsense. How could you possibly speak Chinese?

David:  Dui le. Wǒ měige xīngqī chī Zhōngguó fàn de shìhòu, yìbiān chīfàn, yìbiān gēn fúwùyuán xuéxí Zhōngwén.  
Yǐjīng huì shuō hěn duō chéngyǔ le. Yì jū liàng dé.  
Dway luh. Waw may guh sheeng chee chir joong gwaw fahn duh shir ho, ee byan chir fahn, ee byan gun foo woo ywan shyweh she joong one. Ee jeeng hway shwaw hun dwaw chung yew luh. Ee jyew lyahng duh.  
That’s right. Every week when I eat Chinese food, on the one hand I eat, and on the other hand I study Chinese with the waiters. I already know lots of idioms. I kill two birds with one stone.

Rachel:  Nà, nǐ yī shēn zuò zé. Wǒ xiānggūi gēn nǐ yìqí qù chīfàn, hǎo bù hǎo?  
Nah, nee ee shun dzwaw zuh. Waw shyah guh sheeng chee gun nee ee chee chyew chir fahn, how boo how?  
Well, in that case you’re setting a good example. Next week I’ll go with you to eat, okay?

David:  Hǎo jíle.  
How jee luh.  
Great.
Communicating with body language

Ever think you know what certain couples are saying or thinking just by observing their gestures and body language? Well, people can make the same observations in China. Although the gestures are different, they contain important clues as to social status between people, their emotions, and so on. Observe Chinese people wherever you can to see if you notice any of the following gestures:

✔ **Pointing to one’s own nose:** You may find this hard to believe, but Chinese people often point to their own noses, often touching them, when they refer to themselves by saying the word “wō” (waw; I). The Chinese are probably just as curious as to why Westerners point to their hearts.

✔ **Nodding and bowing slightly:** When greeting older people, professors, or others in positions of power or prestige, people lower their heads slightly to acknowledge them and show respect. Unlike the Japanese, who bow deeply, the Chinese basically bow with their heads in a slight fashion.

✔ **Shaking hands:** People of vastly different status generally don’t give each other a handshake, but it’s common among friends and business colleagues.

✔ **Bowing with hands clasped:** If you see hand clasping and bowing going on at the same time, you know the participants have something to celebrate. It indicates conveying congratulations or greeting others during special festival occasions. Their hands are held at chest level and their heads are slightly bowed (and they often have big smiles on their faces).
Listen to the accompanying CD to see if you can imitate the following words, which are only distinguished by their tones. (Be on the lookout: Any given sound with the same accompanying tone may have several other meanings, distinguishable only by context or by seeing the appropriate written character.) Good luck!

- mà; mother
- má; hemp
- mà; horse
- mà; to scold
- fèi; to fly
- fèi; fat
- fèi; bandit
- fèi; lungs
- qīng; clear
- qǐng; affection
- qìng; please
- qìng; celebrate
- zhú; pig (or pearl)
- zhú; bamboo
- zhù; master
- zhù; to reside
Chapter 2

The Nitty Gritty: Basic Chinese Grammar and Numbers

In This Chapter

- Getting the hang of the parts of speech
- Discovering how to ask questions
- Focusing on numbers

Maybe you’re one of those people who cringe at the mere mention of the word grammar. Just the thought of all those rules on how to construct sentences can put you into a cold sweat.

Hey, don’t sweat it! This chapter could just as easily be called “Chinese without Tears.” It gives you some quick and easy shortcuts on how to combine the basic building blocks of Chinese (which, by the way, are the same components that make up English) — nouns to name things, adjectives to qualify the nouns, verbs to show action or passive states of being, and adverbs to describe the verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. After you know how to combine these parts of any given sentence, you’ll be able to express your ideas and interests spanning the past, present, and future.

When you speak English, I bet you don’t sit and analyze the word order before opening your mouth to say something. Well, the same can hold true when you begin speaking Chinese. You probably didn’t even know the word for grammar before someone taught you that it was the framework for analyzing the structure of a language. Instead of overwhelming you, this chapter makes understanding Chinese grammar as easy as punch.

If you be patient with yourself, have fun following the dialogues illustrating basic sentences, and listen to them on the accompanying CD, you’ll do just fine.
The Basics of Chinese Parts of Speech

Admit it. Most of us took the better part of our first two years of life to master the basics when it came to forming English sentences. With this book, you can whittle this same skill in Chinese down to just a few minutes. Just keep reading this chapter. I promise it will save you a lot of time in the long run.

The basic word order of Chinese is exactly the same as in English. Hard to imagine? Just think of it this way: When you say “I love spinach,” you’re using the subject (I), verb (love), object (spinach) sentence order. It’s the same in Chinese. Only in Beijing, it sounds more like Wô xiÎhuÎn bÎcÎ (waw she hwahn baw tsye).

And if that isn’t enough to endear you to Chinese already, maybe these tidbits of information will:

✔ You don’t need to conjugate verbs.
✔ You don’t need to master verb tenses. (Don’t you just love it already?)
✔ You don’t need to distinguish between singular and plural nouns.
✔ There’s no such thing as gender-specific nouns.
✔ The same word can be both the subject and the object.

How could such news not warm the hearts of all those who’ve had grammar-phobia since grade school? The way you can tell how one part of a Chinese sentence relates to another is generally by the use of particles and what form the word order takes. (Particles, for those of you presently scratching your heads, can be found at the beginning or end of sentences and serve mainly to distinguish different types of emphatic statements but can’t be translated in and of themselves.)

Some interesting characteristics of the Chinese language include the fact that there’s no such thing as first, second, or third person (for example, “I eat” versus “he eats”); no such thing as active or passive voices (for example, “hear” versus “be heard”); and no such thing as past or present (“I like him” versus “I liked him”). In addition, Chinese language has only two aspects — complete and continuous — whereas English has all sorts of different aspects: indefinite, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous, and so on. (Examples include ways of distinguishing between “I eat,” “I ate,” “I will eat,” “I said I would eat,” “I am eating,” and so on.) Aspects are what characterize the Chinese language in place of tenses. They refer to how a speaker views an event or state of being.
Nouns

Chinese is just chock-full of nouns:

- Common nouns that represent tangible things, such as háizi (hi dzuh; child) or yè (yeh; leaf)
- Proper nouns for such things as names of countries or people, like Fāguó (fah gwaw; France) and Zhāng Xiānshēng (jahng shyan shung; Mr. Zhang)
- Material nouns for such nondiscrete things as kāfei (kah lay; coffee) or jīn (jin; gold)
- Abstract nouns for such things as zhèngzhì (juhng jir; politics) or wénhuà (one hwah; culture)

Pronouns

Pronouns are easy to make plural in Chinese. Here’s what you need to know:

- Wǒ (waw; I/me) becomes wǒmen (waw mun; we/us).
- Nǐ (nee; you) becomes nǐmen (nee mun; you [plural]).
- Tā (tah; he/him, she/her, it) becomes tāmen (tah mun; they/them).

Sometimes instead of the term wǒmen for “us,” you hear the term zánmen (dzah mun). This word is used in very familiar settings when the speaker wants to include the listener in an action, like when you say Zánmen zǒu ba (dzah mun dzoeh bah; let’s go).

Classifiers

Classifiers are sometimes called measure words, even though they don’t really measure anything. They actually help classify particular nouns. For example, the classifier bēn (bun) can refer to books, magazines, dictionaries, and just about anything else that’s printed and bound like a book. You might hear Wǒ yào yībēn shū (waw yaow ee bun shoo; I want a book) just as easily as you hear Wǒ yào kān yībēn zázhì (waw yaow kahn ee bun dzah jir; I want to read a magazine).
Classifiers are found in between a number (or a demonstrative pronoun such as “this” or “that”) and a noun. They’re similar to English words such as “herd” (of elephants) or “school” (of fish). Although English doesn’t use classifiers too often, in Chinese you find them wherever a number is followed by a noun, or at least an implied noun (such as “I’ll have another one,” referring to a cup of coffee, for example).

Because you have so many potential classifiers to choose from in Chinese, the general rule of thumb is: When in doubt, use ge (guh). It’s the all-purpose classifier and the one used the most in the Chinese language. You usually can’t go wrong by using ge. If you’re tempted to leave a classifier out altogether because you’re not sure which one is the right one, don’t give in to the temptation! You may not be understood at all.

Chinese has lots of different classifiers because they’re each used to refer to different types of things. For example, Table 2-1 lists classifiers for natural objects. Here are some other examples:

- gēn (gun): Used for anything looking like a stick, such as a string or even a blade of grass
- zhāng (jahng): Used for anything with a flat surface, such as a newspaper, table, or bed
- kē (kuh): Used for anything round and tiny, such as a pearl

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2-1</th>
<th>Some Typical Classifiers for Natural Objects</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Classifier</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
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<td>duó</td>
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Whenever you have a pair of anything, you can use the classifier shuāng (shwahng). That goes for yi shuāng kuàizi (ee shwahng kwyeh dzuh; a pair of chopsticks) as well as for yi shuāng shōu (ee shwahng show; a pair of hands). Sometimes a pair is indicated by the classifier dui (dway), as in yí dui ērhuán (ee dway are hwahn; a pair of earrings).
Singular and plural: It’s a nonissue

Chinese makes no distinction between singular and plural. If you say the word shū (shoo), it could mean “book” just as easily as “books.” The only way you know whether it’s singular or plural is if a number followed by a classifier precedes the word shū, as in Wǒ yǒu sān běn shū (waw yo sahn bun shoo; I have three books).

One way to indicate plurality after personal pronouns wǒ (waw; I), nǐ (nee; you), and tā (tah; he, she, or it) and human nouns such as háizi (hi dzuh; child) or xuéshēng (shweh shuhng; student) is by adding the suffix -men at the end. It acts as the equivalent of adding an “s” to nouns in English.

Talkin’ the Talk

Susan and Michael are looking at a beautiful field.

Susan: Zhèr de fēngjīng zhēn piàoliàng!
Jar duh fung jeeng juhn pyaow lyahng.
This scenery is really beautiful!

Michael: Nǐ kàn! Nà zuò shān yǒu nàmme duō shū, nàmme duō huā.
Nee kahn! Nah dzwaw shahn yo nummuh dwaw shoo, nummuh dwaw hwah.
Look! That mountain has so many trees and flowers.

You’re right. That tree is particularly beautiful. And this flower is also really unique.

Michael: Nà kē shù shàng yě yǒu sān zhī niǎo.
Nah kuh shoe lee yeah yo sahn jir nyaow.
That tree also has three birds in it.

Tip

If a number and a measure word already appear in front of a pronoun or human noun, such as sān ge háizi (sahn guh hi dzuh; three children), don’t add the suffix -men after háizi because plurality is already understood.
Never attach the suffix -men to anything not human. People will think you’re nuts if you start referring to your two pet cats as wōde xiǎo māomen (waw duh shyaow maow mun). Just say Wōde xiǎo māo hěn hǎo, xiè xiè (waw duh shyaow maow hun how, shye shye; My cats are fine, thank you), and that should do the trick.

**Definite versus indefinite articles**

If you’re looking for those little words in Chinese you can’t seem to do without in English, such as “a,” “an,” and “the” — articles, as grammarians call them — you’ll find they simply don’t exist in Chinese. The only way you can tell if something is being referred to specifically (hence, considered definite) or just generally (and therefore, indefinite) is by the word order. Nouns that refer specifically to something are usually found at the beginning of the sentence, before the verb:

- Shū zài nàr. (shoo dzye nar; The book(s) are there.)
- Háizimen xīhuān tā. (hi dzuh mun she hwahn tah; The children like her.)
- Pánzi zài zhūōzhíshāng. (pahn dzuh dzye jwaw dzuh shahng; There’s a plate on the table.)

Nouns that refer to something more general (and are therefore “indefinite”) can more often be found at the end of the sentence, after the verb:

- Nār yǒu huā? (nar yo hwah; Where are some flowers; Where is there a flower?)
- Nār yǒu huā. (nar yo hwah; There are some flowers over there; There’s a flower over there.)
- Zhèige yǒu wèntí. (jay guh yo one tee; There’s a problem with this; There are some problems with this.)

There are some exceptions to these rules: If you find a noun at the beginning of a sentence, it may actually refer to something indefinite if the sentence makes a general comment (instead of telling a whole story), like when you see the verb shì (shir; to be) as part of the comment:

- Xióngmāo shì dòngwù. (shyoong maow shir doong woo; Pandas are animals.)

Same thing goes if an adjective comes after the noun, such as

- Pútáo hěn tián. (poo taow hun tyan; Grapes are very sweet.)
Or if there’s an auxiliary verb:

**Xiǎo māo huì zhua láoshú.** *(shyaow maow hway jwah laow shoo; Kittens can catch mice.)*

Or a verb indicating that the action occurs habitually:

**Niú chǐ cāo.** *(nyo chir tsaow; Cows eat grass.)*

Nouns that are preceded by a numeral and a classifier, especially when the word dōu *(doe; all)* exists in the same breath, are also considered definite:

**Sīge xuéshèng dōu hèn cóngmíng.** *(suh guh shweh shung doe hun tsoong meeng; The four students are all very smart.)*

If the word yǒu *(yo; to exist)* comes before the noun and is then followed by a verb, it can also mean the reference is indefinite:

**Yǒu shū zài zhūōzhìshàng.** *(yo shoo dzye jwaw dzuh shahng; There are books on top of the table.)*

If you see the word zhè *(juh; this)* or nà *(nah; that)*, plus a classifier used when a noun comes after the verb, it indicates a definite reference:

**Wǒ yào mǎi nà zhāng huà.** *(waw yaow my nah jahng hwah; I want to buy that painting.)*

**Adjectives**

As you learned in grade school *(you were paying close attention, weren’t you?)*, adjectives describe nouns. The question is where to put them. The general rule of thumb in Chinese is, if the adjective is pronounced with only one syllable, it appears immediately in front of the noun it qualifies:

- ✔ lǜ chá *(lyew chah; green tea)*
- ✔ cháng zhītiáo *(chahng jir tyaow; long stick)*

If the adjective has two syllables, though, the possessive particle de *(duh)* comes between it and whatever it qualifies:

- ✔ gānjìng de yīfu *(gahn jeeng duh ee foo; clean clothes)*
- ✔ cāozá de wānhuí *(tsaow dzah duh wahn hway; noisy party)*
And if a numeral is followed by a classifier, those should both go in front of the adjective and what it qualifies:

✓ yì jiàn xīn yīfu (ee jyan shin ee foo; a [piece of] new clothing)
✓ sān běn yǒuyìsì de shū (sahn bun yo ee suh duh shoo; three interesting books)

One unique thing about Chinese is that when an adjective is also the predicate, appearing at the end of a sentence, it follows the subject or the topic without needing the verb shì (shir; to be):

✓ Tā de fángzi hěn gānjìng. (tah duh fahng dzuh hun gahn jeeng; His house [is] very clean.)
✓ Nà jiàn yīfu tài jiù. (nah jyan ee foo tye jyoe; That piece of clothing [is] too old.)

**Verbs**

Good news! You never have to worry about conjugating a Chinese verb in your entire life! If you hear someone say Tāmen chī Yìdàlì fàn (tah men chir ee dah lee fahn), it could mean “They eat Italian food” just as easily as it could mean “They are eating Italian food.” Table 2-2 lists some common verbs.

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<th>Table 2-2</th>
<th>Common Chinese Verbs</th>
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<td><strong>Chinese</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
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<td>zuò fàn</td>
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To be or not to be: The verb shì

Does the Chinese verb shì (shir) really mean “to be”? Or is it not to be? It is indeed similar to English in usage because it’s often followed by a noun that defines the topic, such as Tā shì wǒde lǎobān (tah shir waw duh laow bahn; He’s my boss) or Nà shì yǐjǔ huái huà (nah shir ee guh hwye hwah; That’s a bad word).

Be careful not to put the verb shì in front of an adjective unless you really mean to make an emphatic statement. In the course of normal conversation, you might say Nà zhī bǐ tài guì (nah jir bee tye gway; That pen [is] too expensive). You wouldn’t say Nà zhī bǐ shì tài guì (nah jir bee shir tye gway) unless you really want to say “That pen IS too expensive!” in which case you’d emphasize the word shì when saying it.

To negate the verb shì, put the negative prefix bù in front of it. “Shì bù shì?” (shir boo shir; Is it or isn’t it?) “Zhè bù shì táng cù yú” (jay boo shir tahng tsoo yew; This isn’t sweet and sour fish).

Feeling tense? Le, guò, and other aspect markers

Okay, you can relax now. There’s nothing to get tense about with Chinese because verbs don’t indicate tenses all by themselves. That’s the job of aspect markers. Those are little syllables that indicate whether an action has been completed, is continuing, has just begun, and just about everything in between.

Take the syllable le (luh), for example. It can indicate an action has been completed if it’s used as a suffix to a verb:

✔ Nǐ mǎi le hěn duō shū. (nee my luh hun dwaw shoo; You bought many books.)
✔ Tā dài le tāde yūsān. (tah dye luh tah duh yew sahn; He brought his umbrella.)

And if you want to turn it into a question, just add méiyōu at the end. It automatically negates the action completed by le:

✔ Nǐ mǎi le hěn duō shū méiyōu? (nee my luh hun dwaw shoo mayo; Have you bought many books; Did you buy many books?)
✔ Tā dài le tāde yūsān méiyōu? (tah dye luh tah duh yew sahn mayo; Did he bring his umbrella?)

There’s also guò (gwaw). It basically means that something has been done at one point or another even though it’s not happening right now:

✔ Tā qù guò Měiguó. (ta chyew gwaw may gwaw; He has been to America.)
✔ Wōmen chǐ guò Fāguó cài. (waw mun chir gwaw fah gwaw tsey; We have eaten French food before.)
If an action is happening just as you speak, you use the aspect marker \(zài\) (dzye):

- **Wǒmen \(zài\) chīfàn.** (\textit{waw mun dzye chir fahn}; We are eating.)
- **Nǐ māmā \(zài\) zuòfàn.** (\textit{nee mah mah dzye dzwaw fahn}; Your mother is cooking.)

When using the aspect marker \(zài\), you can also add the word \(zhèng\) (juhng) in front of it to add emphasis. It can be translated as “to be right in the middle of” doing something.

If something is or was happening continually and resulted from something else you did, just add the syllable \(zhe\) (juh) to the end of the verb to say things like

- **Tā dài zhe yīge huáng màozi.** (\textit{tah dye juh ee guh hwahng maow dzuh}; He’s wearing a yellow hat.)
- **Nǐ chuān zhe yī jiàn piàoliàng de chènshān.** (\textit{nee chwan juh ee jyan pyaow lyahng duh ee foo}; You’re wearing a pretty shirt.)

Another way you can use \(zhe\) is when you want to indicate two actions occurring at the same time:

- **Tā zuò \(zhe\) chīfàn.** (\textit{tah dzwaw juh chir fahn}; She is/was sitting there eating.)

---

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Carol and Joe have fun people-watching on the streets of Shanghai.

**Carol:**  
Nǐ kàn! Nàge xiǎo háizi dài zhe yīge hěn qīguài de màozi, shì bú shì?  
\textit{Nee kahn! Nah guh shyaow hi dzuh dye juh ee guh hun chee gwye duh maow dzuh, shir boo shir?} Look! That little kid is wearing a really strange hat, isn’t she?

**Joe:**  
Duì le. Tā hái yībiān zǒu, yībiān chāng gē.  
\textit{Dway luh. Tah hi ee byan dzoe, ee byan chahng guh.} Yeah. She’s also singing while she walks.

**Carol:**  
Wǒ méi yǒu kàn guò nàmme kě’ài de xiǎo háizi.  
\textit{Waw mayo kahn gwaw nummuh kuh eye duh shyaow hi dzuh.} I’ve never seen such a cute child.
Joe: Zài Zhōngguó nǐ yījīng kàn le tài duō kě’ài de xiǎo háizi.
Dzye joong gwaw nee ee jeeng kahn luh tye dwaw kuh eye duh shyaow hi dzuh.
You've already seen too many adorable little kids in China.

Words to Know

| kě’ài | kuh eye | cute; adorable |
| shì bù shì? | shir boo shir | Isn’t that so? |
| qíguài | chee gwye | strange |
| chăng gē | chahng guh | to sing |

The special verb: Yōu (to have)
Do you yōu (yo) a computer? No?! Too bad. Everyone else seems to have one these days. How about a Ferrari? Do you yōu one of those? If not, welcome to the club. People who have lots of things use the word yōu pretty often. It means “to have”:

✔ Wǒ yōu yí wàn kuài qián. (waw yo ee wahn kwye chyan; I have $10,000.)
✔ Wǒ yōu sāngé fāngzi — yíge zài Ōuzhōu, yíge zài Yàzhōu, yíge zài Měiguó. (waw yo sahn guh fahng dzuh — ee guh dzye oh joe, ee guh dzye yah joe, ee guh dzye may gwaw; I have three homes — one in Europe, one in Asia, and one in America.)

Another way yōu can be translated is “there is” or “there are”:

✔ Yōu hěn duō háizi (yo hun dwaw hi dzuh; There are many children), as opposed to Wǒ yōu hěn duō háizi. (waw yo hun dwaw hi dzuh; I have many children.)
✔ Shūzhūòshàng yōu wǔ zhāng zhǐ. (shoo jwaw shahng yo woo jahng jir; There are five pieces of paper on the desk.)
To negate the verb yǒu, you can’t use the usual negative prefix bù. Instead, you must use another term indicating negation, méi:

✓ Méiyǒu hěn duō háizi. *(mayo hun dwaw hi dzuh; There aren’t many children.)*
✓ Shūzhuōshàng méiyǒu wǔ zhāng zhǐ. *(shoe jwaw shahng may yo woo jahng jir; There aren’t five pieces of paper on the desk.)*

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Ramona and Linda talk about each other’s families.

**Ramona:**  
Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu xiōngdì jiémèi?  
Nee yo mayo shyoong dee jyeh may?  
Do you have any brothers or sisters?

**Linda:**  
Wǒ yǒu liàngge méimei. Méiyǒu didi yě méiyǒu gège. Nǐ ne?  
Waw yo lyahng guh may may. Mayo dee dee yeah mayo guh guh. Nee nuh?  
I have two younger sisters. I don’t have any younger or older brothers. How about you?

**Ramona:**  
Waw mayo may may. Jir yo ee guh dee dee.  
I don’t have any younger sisters. Just one younger brother.

**Linda:**  
Yǒu háizi ma?  
Yo hi dzuh mah?  
Are there any children? (Do you have any children?)

**Ramona:**  
Yǒu. Yǒu sānge háizi.  
Yo. Yo sahn guh hi dzuh.  
Yes. I have three children.
Chapter 2: The Nitty Gritty: Basic Chinese Grammar and Numbers

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wǒ yǒu</td>
<td>waw yo</td>
<td>I have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nǐ méiyǒu</td>
<td>nee mayo</td>
<td>you don’t have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiōngdì jiěmèi</td>
<td>shyoong dee jyeh may</td>
<td>brothers and/or sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>háizi</td>
<td>hi dzuh</td>
<td>child/children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asking for what you want: The verb yào

Ever since the 7-foot-6-inch basketball superstar from China, Yao Ming, came on the scene, the verb yào has gotten some great advance publicity in the United States. The character for his name isn’t written quite the same as the verb “yào,” but at least everyone knows how to pronounce it already: you!

Yào is one of the coolest verbs in Chinese. When you say it, you usually get what you want. In fact, the mere mention of the word yào means that you want something:

✔️ Wǒ yào yí běi kāfēi. (waw yaow ee bay kah fay; I want a cup of coffee.)
✔️ Wǒ yào gèn nǐ yīqǐ qù diànyǐng. (waw yaow gun nee ee chee chyew kahn dyan yeeng; I want to go to the movies with you.)

You can also give someone an order with the verb yào, but only if it’s used with a second-person pronoun:

✔️ Nǐ yào xiǎoxīn! (nee yaow shyaow sheen; You should be careful!)
✔️ Nǐ yào xī shǒu. (nee yaow she show; You need to wash your hands.)

Adverbs

Adverbs serve to modify verbs or adjectives and always appear in front of them. The most common ones you find in Chinese are hěn (hun; very) and yē (yeah; also).
If you want to say that something is not just hǎo (*how; good*), but that it’s *very good*, you say it’s hén hǎo (*hun how; very good*). If your friend wants to put his two cents in and say that something else is also really good, he says “Zhèige yě hén hǎo” (*jay guh yeah hun how; This is also very good*) because yě always comes before hěn.

The adverb yě always comes not only before the adverb hěn but also before the negative prefix bù.

**Bù and méiyǒu: Total negation**

Boo! Scare you? Don’t worry. I’m just being negative in Chinese. That’s right, the word bù is pronounced the same way a ghost might say it (*boo*) and is often spoken with the same intensity.

Bù can negate something you’ve done in the past or the present (or at least indicate you don’t generally do it these days), and it can also help negate something in the future:

- Tā xiǎo de shíhou bù xīhuān chī shūcài. *(tah shaow duh shir ho boo she hwahn chir shoo tsye; When he was young he didn’t like to eat vegetables.)*
- Wǒ búyào chàng gé. *(waw boo yaow chahng guh; I don’t want to sing.)*
- Wǒ bú huà huàr. *(waw boo hwah hwar; I don’t paint.)*
- Diànyīngyuàn xíngqìliù bù kāimén. *(dyan yeeng ywan sheeng chee lyo boo kye mun; The movie theatre won’t be open on Saturday.)*

The negative prefix bù is usually spoken with a fourth (falling) tone. However, when it precedes a syllable with another fourth tone, it becomes a second (rising) tone instead, as in such words as búqù (*won’t/didn’t/doesn’t go*) and búyào (*don’t/didn’t/won’t want*). (For more about tones, see Chapter 1.)

Méiyǒu is another negative prefix that also goes before a verb. It refers only to the past, though, and means either something didn’t happen or at least didn’t happen on a particular occasion:

- Wǒ méiyǒu kàn nèi bù diànyīng. *(waw mayo kahn nay boo dyan yeeng; I didn’t see that movie.)*
- Zuōtiān méiyǒu xiàyǔ. *(dzaww tyan Mayo shyah yew; It didn’t rain yesterday.*
If the aspect marker guò is at the end of the verb méiyōu, it means it never happened (up until now) in the past. By the way, you’ll sometimes find that méiyōu is shortened just to méi:

✔ Wǒ méi qù Fāguó. (waw may chyew gwaw fah gwaw; I’ve never been to France.)
✔ Wǒ méi chī guò Yīndū cài. (wo may chir gwaw een doo tsye; I’ve never eaten Indian food.)

Talkin’ the Talk

Harvey, Stella, and Laurie discuss where to go for dinner.

Harvey: Nǐmen jīntiān wānshǎng yào bǔyào qù fànguǎn chīfān?
Nee mun jin tyan wahn shahng yaow boo yaow chyew fahn gwahn chir fahn?
Do you both want to go to a restaurant tonight?

Stella: Nà tài hǎole. Dāngrán yào.
Nah tye how luh. Dahng rahn yaow.
That’s a great idea. Of course I’d like to go.

Laurie: Wǒ bǔyào. Wǒ méiyōu qián.
Waw boo yaow. Waw mayo chyan.
I don’t want to. I have no money.

Harvey: Wǒ yè méiyōu qián, dānshī méiyōu guānxi. Wǒ zhīdào yīge hěn hào, hěn piányì de Zhòngguó fānguǎn.
Waw yeah mayo chyan, dahn shir mayo gwahn she.
Waw jir daow ee guh hun how, hun pyan yee duh joong gwaw fahn gwan.
I don’t have any money either, but it doesn’t matter. I know a great but very inexpensive Chinese restaurant.

Laurie: Hǎo ba. Zánmen zōu ba.
How bah. Dzah men dzoe bah.
Okay. Let’s go.
Getting possessive with the particle de

The particle de is ubiquitous in Chinese. Wherever you turn, there it is. Wǒ de tiān! (waw duh tyan; My goodness!) Oops . . . there it is again. It’s easy to use. All you have to do is attach it to the end of the pronoun, such as nǐ de chē (nee duh chuh; your car), or other modifier, such as tā gōngsī de jīnglǐ (tah goong suh duh jeeng lee; his company’s manager), and — voilà — it indicates possession.

The particle de acts as an apostrophe “s” (‘s) in English when it’s not attached to a pronoun. It also makes the process of modification exactly the opposite of the French possessive “de” or the English “of,” with which you may be tempted to compare it.

Talkin’ the Talk

Lorna asks Ali about her computer.

Lorna: Nǐde diànnǎo yǒu měiyǒu yǐntèwǎng?
Nee duh dyan now yo mayo een tuh wahng?
Does your computer have Internet?

Ali: Kèxi měiyǒu. Nǐde ne?
Kuh she mayo. Nee duh nuh?
Unfortunately not. How about yours?
Chapter 2: The Nitty Gritty: Basic Chinese Grammar and Numbers

Lorna: Dānrán yǒu.  
Dahng rahn yo. 
Definitely.  

Ali: Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu yīge shǒutíshi?  
Nee yo mayo ee guh show tee shir? 
Do you have a laptop?  

Lorna: Táishì, shǒutíshi, liǎngge dōu yǒu.  
Tye shir, show tee shir, lyahng guh doe yo.  
I have both a desktop and a laptop.  

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wǒ méiyǒu</td>
<td>waw mayo</td>
<td>I don't have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kěxi</td>
<td>kuh she</td>
<td>too bad; unfortunately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yīntèwǎng</td>
<td>een tuh wahng</td>
<td>Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>táishì</td>
<td>tye shir</td>
<td>desktop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shǒutíshi</td>
<td>show tee shir</td>
<td>laptop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asking Questions

There are a couple of easy ways to ask questions in Chinese. Hopefully you’re so curious about the world around you these days that you’re itching to ask lots of questions once you know how.

The question particle “ma”

By far the easiest way to ask a question is simply to end any given statement with a “ma.” That automatically makes it into a question. For example, Tā chīfàn (tah chir fahn; He’s eating/he eats) becomes Tā chīfàn ma? (tah chir fahn mah; Is he/does he eat?) Nǐ shuō Zhōngwén (nee shwaw joong one; You speak Chinese) becomes Nǐ shuō Zhōngwén ma? (nee shwaw joong one mah; Do you speak Chinese?)
Alternate choice questions using bù in between repeating verbs

The second way you can ask a question is to repeat the verb in its negative form. The English equivalent is to say something like “Do you eat, not eat?” This format can be used for only a yes or no question, though. For example:

晃 Ní shì bùshì Zhōngguórén? (nee shir boo shir joong gwaw run; Are you Chinese?)
晃 Tā yào búyào háizi? (tah yaow boo yaow hi duh; Does he want children?)
晃 Tāmen xīhuān bùxīhuān chī Zhōngguó cài? (tah men she hwahn boo she hwahn chir joong gwaw tsye; Do they like to eat Chinese food?)

Interrogative pronouns

The last way to ask questions in Chinese is to use interrogative pronouns. The following are pronouns that act as questions in Chinese:

晃 shéi (shay; who/whom)
晃 shéi de (shay duh; whose)
晃 shénme (shummuh; what)
晃 nã (nah + classifier; which)
晃 nãr (nar; where)
晃 shénme difâng (shummah dee fahng; where)

Don’t confuse nã with nãr. That one extra letter makes the difference between saying “which” (nã) and “where” (nãr).

Figuring out where such interrogative pronouns should go in any given sentence is easy. Just put them wherever the answer would be found. For example:

晃 Question: Ní shì shéi? (nee shir shay; Who are you?)
晃 Answer: Ní shì wǒ péngyǒu. (nee shir waw puhng yo; You are my friend.)
晃 Question: Tāde nǚpéngyǒu zài nãr? (tah duh nyew puhng yo dzye nar; Where is his girlfriend?)
晃 Answer: Tāde nǚpéngyǒu zài jìài. (tah duh nyew puhng yo dzye jyah lee; His girlfriend is at home.)
This also goes for the verb-бу-verb pattern. All you have to do to answer that type of question is omit either the positive verb or the negative prefix and the verb following it:

✔️ Question: Nǐ hǎo bù hǎo? (nee how boo how; How are you? Literally: Are you good or not good?)
✔️ Answer: Wǒ hǎo (waw how; I’m okay) or Wǒ bùhǎo (waw boo how; I’m not okay).

A way of asking “who” or “which person” without sounding rude or too familiar is to use the term nèi wèi: literally, “which person.” For example, Nǐ yéye shì nèi wèi? (nee yeh yeh shir nay way; Which one is your grandfather?)

You’ll often find interrogative pronouns at the beginning of sentences if they’re followed by the verb yǒu (yo; to exist), such as Shéi yǒu wǒde bǐ? (shay yo waw duh bee; Who has my pen?)

Talkin’ the Talk

Ruth asks Seymour what he thinks of her new car.

Ruth: Nǐ xīhuān bùxīhuān wǒde xīn qīchē?
Nee she hwahn boo she hwahn waw duh shin chee chuh?
Do you like my new car?

Seymour: Shéi bùxīhuān zhè liàng chē? Tā hēn piàoliàng!
Shay boo she hwahn jay lyahng chuh? Tah hun pyaow lyahng!
Who wouldn’t like this car? It’s really beautiful!

Ruth: Kēnéng yǒu yīxiē pénɡyǒu yīwéi tài gui.
Kuh nung yo ee shye puhng yo ee way tye gway.
Maybe some friends would think it’s too expensive.

Seymour: Nà yǒu shénme guānxí?
Nah yo shummuh gwahn she?
What difference does that make? (Who cares?)

Ruth: Dúi le. Nǎr yǒu gèng hǎo de qīchē?
Dway luh. Nar yo guhng how duh chee chuh?
You’re right. Where could you find a better car?

Seymour: Méiyǒu gèng hǎo de qīchē. Nǐde yùnqí búcuò!
Mayo guhng how duh chee chuh. Nee duh yewn chee boo tswaw!
There isn’t a better car around. You’re really lucky!
**Words to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xíhuān</td>
<td>she hwahn</td>
<td>to like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qìchē</td>
<td>chee chuh</td>
<td>car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>búcuò</td>
<td>boo tswaw</td>
<td>not bad; really good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yǒu shénme</td>
<td>yo shummuh</td>
<td>What difference does it make?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guānxi</td>
<td>gwahn she</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Counting in Chinese**

Figuring out things like how to specify the number of pounds of meat you want to buy at the market, how much money you want to change at the airport, or how much that cab ride from your hotel is really going to cost can be quite an ordeal if you don’t know the basic words for numbers.

**Numbers from 1 to 10**

Learning to count from 1 to 10 in Chinese is as easy as ắ (ee; one), ēr (are; two), sān (sahn; three). Table 2-3 lists numbers from 1 to 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>líng</td>
<td>leeng</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yī</td>
<td>ee</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ēr</td>
<td>are</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sān</td>
<td>sahn</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sì</td>
<td>suh</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wǔ</td>
<td>woo</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liù</td>
<td>lyo</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 2: The Nitty Gritty: Basic Chinese Grammar and Numbers

If the number two comes before a classifier (see the section “Classifiers” earlier in this chapter), use the word liăng rather than èr. So you would say that you have liăng bēn shū (lyahng bun shoo; two books) rather than èr bēn shū (are bun shoo).

Practice saying these numbers by listening to the accompanying CD at bedtime, and you’ll be counting sheep in Chinese in no time.

**Numbers from 11 to 99**

After the number 10, numbers are created by saying the word 10 followed by the single digit that, when added to it, will combine to create numbers 11 through 19. It’s real easy. For example, 11 is shíyī (shir ee) — literally, 10 plus 1. Same thing goes for 12, and so on through 19. Table 2-4 lists numbers from 11 to 19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>qī</td>
<td>chee</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bā</td>
<td>bah</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jǐū</td>
<td>jyoe</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shí</td>
<td>shir</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-4 Numbers from 11 to 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shíyī</td>
<td>shir ee</td>
<td>11 (literally 10 + 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shíèr</td>
<td>shir are</td>
<td>12 (literally 10 + 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shísān</td>
<td>shir sahn</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shísì</td>
<td>shir suh</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shíwǔ</td>
<td>shir woo</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shíliù</td>
<td>shir lyo</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shíqǐ</td>
<td>shir chee</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shíbā</td>
<td>shir bah</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shíjǔ</td>
<td>shir jyoe</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When you get to 20, you have to literally think “two 10s” — plus whatever single digit you want to add to that up until 9 for 21 through 29, as shown in Table 2-5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èrshí</td>
<td>are shir</td>
<td>20 (literally two 10s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshíyī</td>
<td>are shir ee</td>
<td>21 (two 10s + 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshíèr</td>
<td>are shir are</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshísān</td>
<td>are shir sahn</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshísi</td>
<td>are shir suh</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshíwū</td>
<td>are shir woo</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshíliū</td>
<td>are shir lyo</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshíqī</td>
<td>are shir chee</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshíbā</td>
<td>are shir bah</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>èrshíjiū</td>
<td>are shir jyoe</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same basic idea goes for sānshí (sahn shir; 30; literally: three 10s), sìshí (suh shir; 40), wūshí (woo shir; 50), liūshí (lyo shir; 60), qíshí (chee shir; 70), bāshí (bah shir; 80), and jiūshí (jyoe shir; 90). What could be easier?

**Numbers from 100 to 9,999**

After the number 99, you can no longer count by tens.

- 100 is yì bāi (ee bye).
- 1,000 is yì qiān (ee chyan).

Chinese people count all the way up to wàn (wahn; ten thousand) and then repeat up to yī (ee; a hundred million), unlike in English, where counting goes up to a thousand before being repeated all the way to a million.

Numbers are represented with the higher units of value first. So the number 387 is sān bāi bā shí qī (sahn bye bah shir chee). The number 15,492 is yì wàn wū qiān sì bāi jiū shí èr (ee wahn woo chyan suh bye jyoe shir are).
The number one (yī) changes its tone from the first (high) to the fourth (falling) tone when followed by a first (high) tone, as in yī qiān (ee chyan; 1,000), by a second (rising) tone, as in yī nián (ee nyan; one year), and by a third (low dipping) tone, as in yī bāi (ee bye; 100). And it changes to the second (rising) tone when followed by a fourth (falling) tone, as in yī wàn (ee wahn; 10,000). It remains its original first tone mark only when people count numbers: one, two, three, and so on.

**Numbers from 10,000 to 100,000 and beyond**

Here are the big numbers:

- 10,000 is yī wàn (ee wahn; literally: one unit of ten thousand).
- 100,000 is shí wàn (shir wahn; literally: ten units of ten thousand).
- 1,000,000 is yī bāi wàn (ee bye wahn: literally: one hundred units of ten thousand).
- 100,000,000 is yí yì (ee ee; one hundred million).

Numbers play an interesting role in everyday speech in China. Sometimes you’ll hear someone say emphatically Nǐ qiān wàn bù yào xīn tà de húa (nee chyan wahn boo yaow sheen tah dah hwah; No matter what, you’re not to believe what he says!). Qiān means one thousand, and wàn means ten thousand, but when you put those two words together in front of the negative prefix bù, you emphasize a point even more. Another phrase that has been heard often in the Chinese past is the partial phrase wàn sui! (wahn sway; long live). After that phrase, the person may add the name of someone in power, so you hear something like Máo zhǔ xì wàn sui! (maow joo she wahn sway: Long live Chairman Mao!). These days if you use this expression, you’re kind of parodying a phrase taken extremely seriously just a few short decades ago.

**How ’bout those halves?**

So what happens if you want to add a half to anything? You might be asking yourself this about now. Well, the word for half is bàn (bahn), and it can either come at the beginning, such as in bàn bēi kéle (bahn bay kuh luhr; a half a glass of cola), or after a number and classifier but before the object to mean “and a half,” such as in yí ge bàn xīngqī (ee guh bahn sheeng chee; a week and a half).
Ordinal numbers

If you want to indicate the order of something, add the word dì (dee) before the numeral:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dì yī</td>
<td>dee ee</td>
<td>first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì èr</td>
<td>dee are</td>
<td>second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì sān</td>
<td>dee sahn</td>
<td>third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì sì</td>
<td>dee suh</td>
<td>fourth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì wù</td>
<td>dee woo</td>
<td>fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì liù</td>
<td>dee lyo</td>
<td>sixth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì qī</td>
<td>dee chee</td>
<td>seventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì bā</td>
<td>dee bah</td>
<td>eighth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì jiǔ</td>
<td>dee jyoe</td>
<td>ninth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dì shí</td>
<td>dee shir</td>
<td>tenth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a noun follows the ordinal number, a classifier needs to go in between them, such as dì bā ge xuéshèng (dee bah guh shweh shuhng; the eighth student) or dì yī ge háizi (dee ee guy hi dzuh; the first child).

Asking how many or how much

There are two ways to ask how much something is or how many of something there are. You can either use the question word duōshāo (dwaw shaow), when referring to something for which the answer is probably more than 10, or jī (ge) (jee guh), when referring to something for which the answer is probably going to be less than 10:

✔ Nàge qīchè duōshāo qián? (nah guh chee chuh dwaw shaow chyan; How much is that car?)

✔ Nǐ xiǎo nǚ’ér jīnrì jī suǐ? (nee shaow nyew are jin nyan jee sway; How old is your little girl this year?)
Fun & Games

Count to 10 and then to 100 in multiples of 10 by filling in the blanks with the correct numbers. Turn to Appendix C for the answers.

yī
èr
sān
sì
____
liù
____
bā
jiǔ
____
èrshí
____
sìshí
wǔshí
____
qīshí
bāshí
____
yībāi
Chapter 3

Introductions and Greetings: Nǐ Hǎo!

In This Chapter

- Introducing yourself and others
- Greeting and chatting with family, friends, and colleagues

Nǐ hǎo! (nee how; Hello!; How are you?) Those are probably the two most important words you need to know to start a conversation with your Chinese neighbors, with your Chinese in-laws coming into town, with a Chinese classmate, or with airport personnel upon your arrival in China. When you say them, you take the first step in making new friends and establishing contact with just about anybody.

In this chapter, I show you how to start your new connection off with just the right words. The only other thing you have to do is smile. That’s something all people understand, no matter what country they’re from.

Making Introductions

Nothing beats making new friends at a wǎnhuì (wahn hway; party), a xīn gōngzuò (sheen goong dzwaw; new job), on the dìtiē (dee tye; subway), or just zài lùshàng (dzye loo shahng; on the street). You may meet someone right after reading this chapter who becomes a good friend for life. This section gives you a head start in making a good first impression. Go ahead and practice these greetings to get ready for anything.
Acquainting yourself

When you make Chinese acquaintances or travel abroad, you soon discover that a little knowledge of even a few key expressions in their native language goes a long way in creating good will between your two cultures. Chinese people in particular are very appreciative of anyone who takes the time to learn their intricate and difficult language, so your efforts will be rewarded many times over.

You have options other than nǐ hǎo (nee how; hi; how are you) when you first meet someone, such as Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ (hun gaow sheeng yyan daow nee; Glad to meet you) or Wǒ hěn róngxìng (waw hun roong sheeng; I’m honored to meet you). Go ahead and tell the person your míngzi (meeng dzuh; name) and take the conversation from there.

Don’t know what to say after the first nǐ hǎo? Here are a few examples of common opening lines to get you started:

- Qīng ràng wǒ jièshào wǒ zìjǐ. (cheeng rahng waw jye shaw waw dzuh jee; Please let me introduce myself.)
- Wǒ jiào _____. Nǐ ne? (waw jyaow ____ neuh; My name is ____. What’s yours?)
- Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi? (nee jyaow shummuh meeng dzuh; What’s your name?)
- Wǒ shi Měiguórén. (waw shir may gwaw run; I’m an American.)

Introducing your friends and family

You can help your friends make even more friends if you start introducing them to each other. All you have to do is say Qīng ràng wǒ jièshào wǒde péngyǒu, Carl. (cheeng rahng waw jye shaw waw duh puhng yo, Carl; Let me introduce my friend, Carl.) In addition to introducing your péngyǒu (puhng yo; friend), you can also introduce these important people:

- māma (mah mah; mother)
- bàba (bah bah; father)
- tāitāi (tye tye; wife)
- zhàngfu (jahng foo; husband)
- lǎoshī (laow shir; teacher)
When introducing two people to each other, always introduce the one with the lower social status and/or age to the person with the higher social status. The Chinese consider it polite.

### Asking people for their names

Many situations call for informal greetings like **Wō jiào Sarah. Nǐ ne?** (waw jyaow Sarah. nee nuh; My name is Sarah. And yours?) or **Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?** (nee jyaow shummuh meeng dzuh; What’s your name?), but you can show a greater level of politeness and respect by asking **Nín gui xìng?** (neeng gway sheeng; literally: What’s your honorable surname?) But if you’re asking this of someone who’s younger than you or lower in social status, you can easily just say **Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?** (nee jyaow shummah meeng dzuh; What’s your name?) Even though míngzi usually means “given name,” when you ask this question, it may elicit an answer of first and last name. Keep practicing these different opening lines to ask who people are and you’re bound to make friends quickly (or you’re bound to get to know a lot of Chinese names at least).

If someone asks **Nín gui xìng**, don’t use the honorific gui when you answer, referring to yourself. Your new acquaintance would consider you too boastful. Such a response is like saying “My esteemed family name is Smith.” The best way to answer is to say **Wō xìng Smith.** (waw sheeng Smith; My family name is Smith.)

If a guy tells you his name in Chinese, you can be sure the first syllable he utters will be his surname, not his given name. So if he says his name is **Lǐ Shìmín**, for example, his family name is Lǐ and his given name is Shìmín. You should keep referring to him as **Lǐ Shìmín** (rather than just Shìmín) until you become really good friends. If you want to address him as **Xiànshēng** (shyan shuhng; Mr.), or if you’re addressing a female as **Xiàojìe** (shyaow jyeh; Miss), you put that title after his or her last name and say **Lǐ Xiànshēng** or **Lǐ Xiàojìe**. Even though the Chinese language has words for Mr., Miss, and Mrs. (Tàitài; tye tye), it has no equivalent term for “Ms.” At least not yet.
**Talkin’ the Talk**

Sylvia introduces her friends, Irene and Mel, to each other.

**Sylvia:** Irene, qìng ràng wǒ jièshào wǒde péngyǒu Mel. Irene, cheeng rahng waw jye shaw waw duh puhng yo Mel. Irene, allow me to introduce my friend Mel.


**Mel:** Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ. Wǒ shì Sylvia de tóngxué. Hun gaow sheeng jyan daow nee. Waw shir Sylvia duh toong shweh. Good to meet you. I’m Sylvia’s classmate.

**Irene:** Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ. Hun gaow sheeng jyan daow nee. Nice to meet you.

**Mel:** Nǐmen zénme rènshì? Nee mun zummuh run shir? How do you happen to know each other?

**Irene:** Wǒmen shì tóngshi. Waw men shir toong shir. We’re co-workers.

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**Greeting and Chatting**

When you dā zhāohu (dah jaow who; extend greetings), you’re sure to maintain and possibly even improve your connections with others. This goes for starting the day right with your àirén (eye run; spouse), showing respect for your lāoshī (laow shir; teacher), keeping on the good side of your lāobān (laow bahn; boss), or paving the way for that deal with your new shēngyì hé lhuōl rén (shuhng yee huh hwaw run; business partner).

After the opening greeting, stick around to chat for a bit so you can get to know each other better. You can make new friends and find out more about each other through small conversations. This section gives you the important phrases to know.
Addressing new friends and strangers

In your hometown or home country, you may have plenty of lăo péngyōu (laow puhung yo; old friends), but in any other city or country, you need to get off on the right foot by addressing people the way they’re used to being addressed. You can get chummier as time goes by, but try to avoid sounding too friendly or presumptuous too soon.

It’s always safe to greet people in professional settings by announcing their last name followed by their title, such as Wáng Xiàozhāng (wahng shyaow jahng; President [of an educational institution] Wang) or Jīn Zhūrèn (jeen joo run; Director Jin). Here are some other examples of occupational titles:

- būzhāng (boo jahng; department head or minister)
- fūzhùrèn (foo joo run; assistant director)
- jiàoshòu (jyaow show; professor)
- jǐnglǐ (jeeng lee; manager)
- lăoshi (laow shir; teacher)

If you don’t know someone’s title, you can safely address the person by saying his or her family name and then either Xiānshēng (shyan shuhng; Mr.) or Xiăojiē (shyaow jyeh; Miss).

One of the perks of getting to know someone’s family in China is that the person often instructs his or her young children to address an older person as shūshū (shoo shoo; uncle) or āyí (ah yee; aunt). It makes you feel like you’re part of the family in a new country.

Sometimes people add the terms lăo (laow; old) or xiăo (shyaow; young) in front of the last name and omit the first name completely. It indicates a comfortable degree of familiarity and friendliness that can only develop over time. But make sure you know which one to use — lăo is for someone who’s older than you, and xiăo is for someone who’s younger than you. Sometimes these names can sound kind of funny to non-Chinese. If someone’s surname is pronounced Yáng (yahng), which sounds like the word for goat, you may end up sounding like you’re calling the person an old goat when you become good friends.

Conversing around the clock

You can always say ní hāo (nee how; hi; how are you) when you meet someone, but at certain times of the day, you can use specific ways to express your greetings.
A word about culturally acceptable behavior

The Chinese are very friendly people and sometimes don’t hesitate to come up to a foreigner on the street in order to practice their English. This can be a great chance to practice your Chinese as well. You have all sorts of cultural differences to get used to, however, so don’t be surprised if a person you meet for the first time starts asking you about your salary or the cost of that cute sweater you’re wearing. Subjects that are taboo as conversation pieces in the United States aren’t off limits in China. (Note: Try not to inquire about a person’s political views or love life unless you know the person really well, or you may hit a brick wall.)

In general, Chinese people are loath to show negative emotions in public. Anger and disappointment or disapproval are major no-nos. Try to do the same when you’re in a Chinese setting, because you may run the risk of insulting someone unintentionally. To do so means that you make them lose face — a cardinal sin if you want to get along in China. The last thing you want to do is insult, yell at, or otherwise embarrass anyone publicly, so keep a lid on any negative reactions you may have. You earn respect by controlling your emotions.

You may be surprised that many Chinese have no compunction about performing certain bodily functions in public. The Chinese don’t consider it rude, for example, to belch, spit, or even pass gas in front of others. And because there’s no such thing as a nonsmoking area, most smokers don’t even think to ask if you mind them lighting up near you. In addition to all these things that tend to offend foreigners, you may find people pointing or even staring at you — especially in smaller towns and villages, which rarely get foreign visitors. These behaviors are considered perfectly acceptable, so don’t let them get your dander up. Just go with the flow and offer a polite smile in return.

The Chinese have a different idea about keeping a certain polite physical distance when speaking to someone. It isn’t uncommon to find someone standing or sitting pretty close to you, no matter how much you keep trying to inch away. And if you find two friends of the same sex walking arm in arm or holding hands, don’t jump to any conclusions. It just means that they’re friends.

Note: Avoid slaps on the back to Chinese people you don’t know well, no matter how excited you are to meet them. And when dealing with members of the opposite sex, any physical contact with folks you don’t know too well will be misinterpreted, so try to avoid it.

In the morning when you meet family, friends, co-workers, or fellow students in class, you can say zāo (dzaow; good morning) or zāo ān (dzaow ahn; good morning; literally: early peace).

In the evening or before you go to sleep, you can say wān ān (wahn ahn; good night). Just as zāo means early, wān means late. So if someone says Nǐ lái de tài wān (nee lye duh tye wahn) or Nǐ lái de tài zāo (nee lye duh tye dzaow), he means “You came too late” or “You came too early.”
Talkin’ the Talk

Ricky and Norman are good friends who meet in front of school one morning. Norman introduces Ricky to a new student named Lî.

Norman: Zăo. Nî zênme yâng?
Dzaow. Nee dzummuh yahng?
Good morning. How’s it going?

Ricky: Hēn hăo, xièxiè. Nî ne?
Hun how, shyeh shyeh. Nee nuh?
Very well, thanks. And you?

Waw yeah hun how. Jay way shir waw mun duh sheen toong shweh.
I’m good, too. This is our new classmate.

Ricky: Nî hăo. Qīng wèn, nî xìng shénme?
Nee how. Cheeng one, nee sheeng shummuh?
Hi. What’s your (sur)name?

Lîly: Wô xìng Lî. Nî jiâo shènme míngzi?
Waw sheeng Lî. Nee jyaow shummuh meeng dzuh?
My last name is Lî. What’s your (first) name?

Ricky: Wô jiâo Ricky. Nî xué shènme?
Waw jyaow Ricky. Nee shweh shummuh?
My name is Ricky. What do you study?

Lîly: Wô xué lìshí. Nî ne?
Waw shweh lee shir. Nee nuh?
I study history. How about you?

Ricky: Wô xué kuâjì.
Waw shweh kwye jee.
I study accounting.
Part I: Getting Started

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>míngzi</th>
<th>meeng dzuh</th>
<th>first name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xìng</td>
<td>sheeng</td>
<td>last name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tóngxué</td>
<td>toong shweh</td>
<td>classmate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xué</td>
<td>shweh</td>
<td>to study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yǔyīnxué</td>
<td>yew een shweh</td>
<td>linguistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lǐshī</td>
<td>lee shir</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gōngchéng</td>
<td>goong chuhng</td>
<td>engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuàiji</td>
<td>kwye jee</td>
<td>accounting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talking about the weather

Talking about the tiānqì (tyan chee; weather) is always a safe topic in any conversation. In fact, it’s kind of the universal ice breaker. If the skies are blue and all seems right with the world, you can start by saying “Jīntīān de tiānqì zhěn hǎo, dui bú dui?” (jin tyan duh tyan chee juhn how, dway boo dway; The weather today is sure nice, isn’t it?) Here are some adjectives to describe temperature and humidity:

- lěng (lung; cold)
- liángkuài (lyahng kuwe; cool)
- měnrè (mun ruh; muggy)
- nuănhuó (nwan hwaw; warm)
- rè (ruh; hot)

If the weather is hot, you can use the word rè to describe it. But if your food is spicy, which you sometimes refer to as “hot” in English, you can’t use rè to describe it. You have to say it’s là (lah) instead. And if your food is too hot (in terms of temperature) to even put into your mouth, you say it’s tàng (tahng).
The sìjì (suh jee; four seasons) — dōngtiān (doong tyan; winter), chūntiān (chwun tyan; spring), xiàtiān (shyah tyan; summer), and qiūtiān (chyo tyan; fall) — all have their charms. They also all have their distinctive characteristics when it comes to the weather, which you can express with the following words in any conversation:

- bàofēngxuē (baow fuhng shweh; blizzard)
- dàfēng (dah fuhng; gusty winds)
- duōyún (dwaw yewn; cloudy)
- fēng hēn dà (fuhng hun dah; windy)
- léiyǔ (lay yew; thunderstorm)
- qínglǎng (cheeng lahng; sunny)
- qíngtiān (cheeng tyan; clear)
- xià máomáoyǔ (shyah maow maow yew; drizzle)
- xiàwù (shyah woo; fog)
- xiàxuē (shyah shweh; snow)
- xiàyǔ (shyah yew; rainy)
- yíntiān (ween tyan; overcast)

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Jean and Bill discuss the weather in Harbin, one of the coldest places in northern China.

Jean:  
Hā’ěrbīn dōngtiān hěn lěng. Chāngchāng xiàxuē.  
*Hah are been doong tyan hun lung. Chahng chahng shyah shweh.*  
Harbin is very cold in the winter. It snows often.

Bill:  
Zhēnde ma?  
*Jun duh mah?*  
Really?

Jean:  
Really. There are also blizzards. Summertime is okay, though. It’s relatively warm.
Finding out where people are from

It’s natural to wonder where people are from when you first meet them. Maybe they hail from your hometown. Maybe your new friend’s mother and your father went to the same high school way back when. Either way, whatever motivates you to pose the question, you ask it by saying “Nǐ shì nǎr de rén?” (nee shir nar duh run; Where are you from?)

To answer this question, you replace the word nǐ (nee; you) with wǒ (waw; I) and put the name of wherever you’re from where the word nār is.

People in Taiwan say náli (nah lee) rather than nār (nar) for the word “where.” Nār indicates a northern accent and is used primarily by people from mainland China.

Here’s a list of countries that may come up in conversation:

- Fāguó (fah gwaw; France)
- Mēiguó (may gwaw; America)
- Riběn (ir bun; Japan)
- Ruidiān (rway dyan; Sweden)
- Ruīshí (rway shir; Switzerland)
- Yīdālì (ee dah lee; Italy)
- Yuènán (yweh nahn; Vietnam)
- Zhōngguó (joong gwaw; China)
Talkin’ the Talk

Cynthia has just introduced herself to Adrienne at their mutual friend’s house. Cynthia asks Adrienne where she is from.

Cynthia: Adrienne, nǐ shì nár de rén? Adrienne, nee shir nar duh run? Adrienne, where are you from?


Adrienne: Nà tài hāole. Nah tye how luh. That’s great.

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jiāzhōu</th>
<th>jyah joe</th>
<th>California</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Měiguórén</td>
<td>may gwaw run</td>
<td>American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yingguó</td>
<td>eeng gwaw</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nà tài hāole</td>
<td>nah tye how luh</td>
<td>That’s great</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking (a.k.a. rejecting) compliments

Chinese people are always impressed whenever they meet a foreigner who has taken the time to learn their language. So when you speak Zhōngwén (joong one; Chinese) to a Zhōngguórén (joong gwaw run; Chinese person), he may very well say Nǐde Zhōngwén tài hāole. (nee duh joong one tye how luh; Your Chinese is fantastic.) Instead of patting yourself on the back, however, you should be slightly self-deprecating in your response (see Chapter 18 for more things you should never do). Don’t give in to the temptation to accept the compliment easily and say xiè xiè (shyeh shyeh; thanks), because that implies that you agree wholeheartedly with the complimentary assessment. Instead, try one of the following replies. Each of them can be roughly translated as “It’s nothing” or the equivalent of “No, no, I don’t deserve any praise”:

✔ guò jiāng guò jiāng (gwaw jyahng gwaw jyahng)
✔ nălī nălī (nah lee nah lee)
✔ nār de huā (nar duh hwah)

Saying goodbye

When it comes time to say goodbye, you can always say zài jiàn (dzye jyan; goodbye). If you’re just leaving for a little while and plan to be back soon, you can say yíhuīr jiàn (ee hwahr jyan; see you in a bit). And if you won’t see someone until the next day, you can say míngtiān jiàn (meeng tyan jyan; see you tomorrow). For a quick “see you later,” you can say huítōu jiàn (hway toe jyan). Here’s a list of other phrases you can use to say goodbye:

✔ huítōu jiàn (hway toe jyan; see you later)
✔ míngnián jiàn (meeng nyan jyan; see you next year)
✔ míngtiān jiàn (meeng tyan jyan; see you tomorrow)
✔ xiāge shuài bái jiàn (shyah guh lee bye jyan; see you next week)
✔ xīngqǐ’ěr jiàn (sheeng chee are jyan; see you on Tuesday)
✔ yíhuīr jiàn (ee hwahr jyan; see you soon)
✔ yìlù píng’ān (ee loo peeng ahn; have a good trip)
✔ zài jiàn (dzye jyan; goodbye)
The importance of the common good

In China, the collective always comes before the individual. The Chinese are certainly not as self-centered as Westerners and generally subordinate their individual desires in favor of the greatest common good, whether the “common good” refers to the good of the family, the class at school, or co-workers. You even see this mentality in the way envelopes are addressed — the country first, followed by the province, the city, the street address, and then, on the last line, the person’s name to whom it is addressed. And even on that last line, the person’s name is written with the family name first and the given name last. The same holds true for the way people refer to where they’re from — the larger unit always comes before the smaller. That’s why a person would say, for example, that he’s from Yingguo Lündūn (eeeng gwaw lwun dun; England, London) rather than London, England, as you say in English.

Christopher runs into his history professor in the morning after the conclusion of class.

Christopher: Lāoshī zāo. Laow shir dzaow. Good morning, Professor.


Christopher: Jintiān de tiānqì hěn hǎo, dui bútúi? Jin tyan duh tyan chee hun how, dway boo dway? The weather today is great, isn’t it?

Professor: Dui le. Hěn hǎo. Dway luh. Hun how. Yes, it is. It’s very nice.

Christopher: Nèmme, míngtiān shàngkè de shìhòu zài jiàn. Nummuh, meeng tyan shahng kuh duh shir ho dzye jyan. So, I’ll see you again in class tomorrow.

Fun & Games

Here’s a list of words that got loose. See if you can put them back where they belong in the following text and dialogue.

míngzi, bàofèngxué, jiàn, Déguórén, hào


The answers are in Appendix C.

Match the situation with the appropriate expression. You can find the answers in Appendix C.

1. You see someone again after a long time.
2. You see your friend in the evening.
3. You see your teacher in the morning.
4. Someone compliments you on your new hair style.
5. Someone introduces you to his brother.
6. Your best friend is about to board a plane for France.

a. Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ.
b. Yīlù píng’ān.
c. Hǎo jiù méi jiàn.
d. Wǎn ān.
e. Zǎo.
f. Nǎr de huà.
Part II

Chinese in Action

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant

“I’ll be screaming in Chinese throughout the ride. It helps me affect the proper inflections.”
In this part . . .

This part helps you jump right in to everyday activities: shooting the breeze with friends, eating, drinking, shopping 'til you drop, working at the office, hanging out at home, and just plain ol' enjoying your spare time. I cover it all so that you can do it in Chinese. Choose your favorite topic and start putting your Chinese into action!
Chapter 4
Getting to Know You: Making Small Talk

In This Chapter
- Exchanging friendly banter with someone you just met
- Yakking on the job
- Sharing information about your home

Small talk can really break the ice when you’re interacting with someone you’ve just met or barely know. It’s how you get to know someone, have a brief chat with the man on the plane sitting next to you, or get acquainted with the folks you’ll be working with. This chapter helps you master a few key phrases and questions you can use to establish a relationship.

Xiánliáo (shyan lyaow) means “small talk” in Chinese. Xiántán (shyan tahn) is “to chat”... either term does the trick.

Establishing a Connection

A surefire way of initiating a conversation is to ask someone a question. Here are some basic question words to keep in mind as you approach the moment of acquaintance:

- Shéi (shay; Who?)
- Shénme? (shummuh; What?)
- Zài nār? (dzye nar; Where?)
- Shénme shíhòu? (shummuh shir ho; When?)
- Wèishénme? (way shummuh; Why?)
- Zēnme? (dzummuh; How?)
- Duō jǐu? (dwaw jyoe; How long?)
Here are a few examples of how to use these question words in simple sentences — sometimes you can also use some of them on their own, just as in English:

✅ Tā shī shéi? (tah shir shay; Who is he/she?)
✅ Nǐ yào shénme? (nee yaow shummuh; What would you like?)
✅ Jī diǎn zhōng? (jee dyan joong; What time is it?)
✅ Cèsuō zài nār? (tsuh swaw dzye nar; Where’s the bathroom?)
✅ Nǐ shénme shíhòu chīfàn? (nee shummuh shir ho chir fahn; When do you eat?)
✅ Nǐ wéishénme yào qù Zhōngguó? (nee way shummuh yaow chyew joong gwaw; Why do you want to go to China?)
✅ Nǐ zēnmé yàng? (nee zummuh yahng; How’s it going?)
✅ Nǐ yǐjīng zài zhèr duō jiǔ le? (nee ee jeeng dzye jar dwaw jyoe luh; How long have you been here already?)
✅ Xiànzài jī diǎn zhōng? (shyan dzye jee dyan joong; What time is it now?)

You can also use the following responses to the questions in the preceding list if someone happens to approach you. These statements are the basics of small talk and really come in handy when you’re learning a foreign language:

✅ Wǒ bùdōng. (waw boo doong; I don’t understand.)
✅ Wǒ bùzhídào. (waw boo jir daow; I don’t know.)
✅ Wǒ bùrènshì tā. (waw boo run shir tah; I don’t know him/her.)
✅ Duìbúqǐ. (dway boo chee; Excuse me.)
✅ Hěn báoqiàn. (hun baow chyan; I’m so sorry.)

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Molly doesn’t have a watch and wants to know what time it is. She asks a man on the street.

Molly: **Duìbúqǐ. Qīngwèn, xiànzài jīdiǎn zhōng?**

_Dway boo chee. Cheeng one, shyan dzye jee dyan joong?_ Excuse me. May I ask, what time is it?

Man: **Xiànzài yīdiǎn bàn.**

_Shyan dzye ee dyan bahn._ It’s 1:30.
Molly:  
Hāo. Xièxiè nǐ.  
*How. Shyeh shyeh nee.*  
Great. Thank you.

Man:  
Bú kèqì.  
*Boo kuh chee.*  
You’re welcome.

Molly:  
Máfán nǐ, sì lù chēzhàn zài nár?  
*Mah fahn nee, suh loo chuh jahn dzye nar?*  
Sorry to trouble you again, but where’s the #4 bus stop?

Man:  
Chēzhàn jiù zài nár.  
*Chuh jahn jyoe dzye nar.*  
The bus stop is just over there.

Molly:  
Hāo. Xièxiè.  
*How. Shyeh shyeh.*  
Okay. Thanks.

Man:  
Méi wèntí.  
*May one tee.*  
No problem.

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**Words to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese characters</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xiànzài jǐ diǎn zhōng?</td>
<td>shyan dzye jee dyan joong</td>
<td>What time is it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chēzhàn</td>
<td>chuh jahn</td>
<td>bus stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>méi wèntí</td>
<td>may one tee</td>
<td>no problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Posing simple introductory questions**

The following is a list of simple questions you can use when you meet people.  
(To find out how to respond, or to talk about yourself, flip back to Chapter 3.)
Chatting about family

If you want to talk about your family when answering questions or making small talk, you need to know these common words:

- áirén (eye run; spouse — used mostly in mainland China [as opposed to Taiwan])
- tàitài (tye tye; wife — used mostly in Taiwan)
- qízi (chee dzuh; wife)
- zhàngfu (jahng foo; husband)
- fǔmǔ (foo moo; parents)
- xiōngdì jiěmèi (shyoong dee jyeh may; brothers and sisters)
- mǔqìn (moo cheen; mother)
- fǔqìn (foo cheen; father)
- háizi (hi dzuh; children)
- érzi (are dzuh; son)
- nǚ’ér (nyew are; daughter)
Lí Huá meets her daughter’s classmate, Beverly, and she asks about Beverly’s family.

Lí Huá: Beverly, nǐ yǒu méiyǒu xiōngdì jiémèi?
Beverly, nee yo mayo shyoong dee jyeh may?
Beverly, do you have any brothers or sisters?

I have an older sister. She’s 15. She’s two years older than me.

Lí Huá: Tā yě huì jiāng Zhōngwén ma?
Tah yeah hway jyahng joong one mah?
Can she also speak Chinese?

Beverly: Búhuì. Tā zhí huì Yīngyǔ.
Boo hway. Tah jir hway eeng yew.
No. She only speaks English.

Lí Huá: Nǐde fùmǔ zhù zài nǎr?
Nee duh foo moo joo dzye nar?
Where do your parents live?

We all live in Beijing. My father is a diplomat.

Lí Huá: Nà tài hǎo le.
Nah tye how luh.
That’s great.
Making Small Talk on the Job

The kind of job you have can say plenty about you. It can also be a great topic of conversation or spice up an otherwise dull exchange. To ask someone about his or her gōngzuò (goong dzwaw; work), you can say, “Nǐ zuò shénme gōngzuò?” (nee dzwaw shummuh goong dzwaw; What kind of work do you do?) You may even try to guess and say, for example, “Nǐ shì lǎoshī ma?” (nee shir laow shir mah; Are you a teacher?)

The following are some occupations you or the person you’re talking with may hold:

- lǎoshī (laow shir; teacher)
- jiàoshòu (jyaow show; professor)
- lūshī (lyew shir; lawyer)
- yīshēng (ee shung; doctor)
- hùshì (who shir; nurse)
- biānjī (byan jee; editor)
- kuàijī (kwye jee; accountant)
- shuīnuāngōng (shway nwan goong; plumber)
- diàngōng (dyan goong; electrician)
- yānyuán (yan ywan; actor)
- zhūguān (joo gwan; CEO)
feixingyuan (fay sheeng ywan; pilot)
chengwuuyuan (chuung woo ywan; flight attendant)
hai guanyuan (hi gwan gwan ywan; customs agent)
liechuyuan (lyeh chuh ywan; train conductor)
jiexiuyuan (yeh shyan ywan; telephone operator)
qiantai fuwuyuan (chyen tye foo woo ywan; receptionist)
kefang fuwuyuan (kuh tahng foo woo ywan; housekeeper)
chunayuan (choo nah ywan; bank teller)
youdiyuan (yo dee ywan; mail carrier)
cai feng (tsye fung; tailor)

The following are some useful job terms and job-related expressions:

ban ri gongzuo (bahn ir goong dzawaw; part-time work)
quan ri gongzuo (chwan ir goong dzawaw; full-time work)
shiyeh (shir yeh; unemployed)
mianshi (myan shir; interview)
jinglee (jeeng lee; manager)
guyuan (goo ywan; employee)
guzhu (goo joo; employer)

In China, your dawei (dahn way; work unit) is an important part of your life. (This term refers to your place of work, which can be anywhere in the country. Your dawei is the group that’s responsible for both taking care of you and being responsible for any missteps you happen to make.) In fact, when people ask you to identify yourself over the phone, they often say “Ni nahr?” (nee nar; literally: Where are you from?) to find out what dawei you belong to. Under Chairman Mao Zedong (the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, who founded the People’s Republic of China in 1949), people were assigned jobs right out of high school and didn’t even think of marrying until they knew the location of their assignment. They could’ve been given a job in the northern hinterlands of China, and their fiancées could’ve been sent south — only to see each other once a year during the Chinese New Year. The dawei continues to provide housing for its employees and also enforces government policies, such as the one-child-per-family policy. You need the unit’s permission to get married, have a child, or receive any government benefits.
Yáng and Xiǎo Liú discuss their respective professions, which are quite different from each other. Xiǎo Liú is a nurse in a city located in Henan Province, not far from the famed Shaolin Temple.

Xiǎo Liú: Yáng, nǐ zuò shénme gōngzuò?
Yáng, nee dzwaw shummuhz goong dzwaw?
Yang, what kind of work do you do?

Yáng: Wǒ shì lánqiú duìyuán.
Waw shir lahn chyo dway ywan.
I'm a basketball player.

Xiǎo Liú: Nà hēn yǒuyìsì.
Nah hun yo ee suh.
That's very interesting.

Yáng: Nǐ ne?
Nee nuh?
How about you?

Xiǎo Liú: Wǒ shì hūshí. Wǒ zài Kaifeng diyi yīyuàn gōngzuò.
Waw shir hoo shir. Waw dzye Kye fung dee ee ee ywan goong dzwaw.
I'm a nurse. I work at Kaifeng’s No. 1 Hospital.

Yáng: Nán bùnán?
Nahn boo nahn?
Is it difficult?

Xiǎo Liú: Bùnán. Wǒ hēn xǐhuān wǒde zhíyè.
Boo nahn. Waw hun she hwahn waw duh jir yeh.
It's not difficult. I really like my profession.
Chapter 4: Getting to Know You: Making Small Talk

Words to Know

zhīyè  jir yeh  profession
nán    nahn      difficult
xǐhuān  she hwahn  to like; to enjoy
yīyuàn  ee ywan   hospital
gōngzuò goong dzwaw  to work
hùshì  hoo shir  nurse

Talking About Where You Live

After folks get to know each other through small talk, they may exchange addresses and phone numbers to keep in touch. That introductory question covered earlier in this chapter, “Nǐ zhù zài nǎr?” (nee joo dzye nar; Where do you live?), may pop up. You may also want to ask a few of these questions:

✔ Nǐde dìzhī shì shénme? (nee duh dee jir shir shummuh; What’s your address?)

✔ Nǐde diànhuà hàom dūoshāo? (nee duh dyan hwah how mah dwaw shaow; What’s your phone number?)

✔ Nǐ shénme shíhòu zài jiā? (nee shummuh shir ho dzye jyah; When will you be at home?/When are you home?)

You may also talk about your home from time to time. These words and phrases can come in handy:

✔ Wōmen zhù de shì fāngzì. (waw mun joo duh shir fahng dzuh; We live in a house.)

✔ Tā zhù de shì gōngyù. (tah joo duh shir goong yew; She lives in an apartment.)

✔ Tāmen yǒu yīgé yuànzǐ. (tah mun yo ee guh ywan dzuh; They have a yard.)

✔ Nǐ yǒu yīgé huāyuán. (nee yo ee guh hwah ywan; You have a garden.)


In addition to your diànhuà hàomà (dyan hwaah how mah; phone number) and your dizhī (dee jir; address), most people also want to know your diànhuà yóuxiāng dizhī (dyan hwaah yo shyahng dee jir; e-mail address). And if you find yourself in a more formal situation, it may be appropriate to give someone your míngpiàn (meeng pyan; business card). (To find out how to pronounce numbers, see Chapter 2.)

Talkin’ the Talk

Beverly meets Alison at a conference in Wuhan and thinks she would be a great partner for her electronics project.

Jay shir waw duh meeng pyan. Yo dee jir, dyan hwaah how mah, huh dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir.
Here's my business card. It has my street address, phone number, and e-mail address.

Alison: Xièxiè.
Shyeh shyeh.
Thanks.

Beverly: Kèshì wǒ de diànhuà hàomǎ biàn le. Xiànzài shì (650) 721-0000.
Kuh shir waw duh dyan hwaah how mah byan luh.
Shyan dzye shir lyo woo leeng, chee are ee, leeng leeng leeng leeng.
But my telephone number has changed. It's now (650) 721-0000.

Alison: Hǎo. Xièxiè.
How. Shyeh shyeh.
Okay. Thanks.

Beverly: Yǒu kǒng, qǐng gěi wǒ dǎ diànhuà.
Yo koong, cheeng gay waw dah dyan hwaah.
When you have a chance, please give me a call.

Alison: Yídìng huì.
Ee deeng hway.
I certainly will.
## Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dǎ diànhuà</td>
<td>dā dyan hwah</td>
<td>to make a phone call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diànhuà hàomǎ</td>
<td>dyan hwah how mah</td>
<td>telephone number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gǎibiàn</td>
<td>gye byan</td>
<td>to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>míngpiàn</td>
<td>meeng pyan</td>
<td>business card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diànzǐ yóuxiāng</td>
<td>dyan dzuh yo shyahng</td>
<td>e-mail address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dìzhǐ</td>
<td>dee jir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Match these people with the words that identify their professions. Check out Appendix C for the answers.

yìshēng  soccer player
làoshi  doctor
fēixíngyuán  pilot
zúqiú duìyuán  teacher
Chapter 5
Eating and Drinking: Gānbēi!

In This Chapter
- Eating, Chinese style
- Ordering and conversing in restaurants
- Paying for your meal
- Shopping for groceries

You may think you already know what Chinese food is all about, but if you suddenly find yourself a guest in a Chinese friend’s home or the guest of honor at a banquet for your company’s new branch in Shanghai, you may want to keep reading. This chapter not only helps you communicate when you’re hungry or thirsty, go grocery shopping, and order food in a restaurant, but also gives you some useful tips on how to be both a wonderful guest and a gracious host when you have only one shot at making a good impression.

Feeling hungry yet? Allow me to whet your appetite by inviting you to take a closer look at world-renowned Chinese cuisine. No doubt you’re already familiar with a great many Chinese dishes, from chow mein and chop suey, to sweet and sour pork, to that delicious favorite of all Chinese fare, dim sum.

Exploring Chinese food and Chinese eating etiquette is a great way to discover Chinese culture. You can also use what you discover in this chapter to impress your date by ordering in Chinese the next time you eat out.

All About Meals

If you feel hungry when beginning this section, you should stop to chī (chir; eat) fàn (fahn; food). In fact, fàn always comes up when you talk about meals in China. Different meals throughout the day, for example, are called

- zāofān (dzaow fahn; breakfast)
- wūfān (woo fahn; lunch)
- wānfān (wahn fahn; dinner)
For centuries, Chinese people greeted each other not by saying “Nǐ hǎo ma?” (nee how ma; How are you?), but by saying “Nǐ chī fàn le méiyōu?” (nee chir fahn luh mayo; literally: “Have you eaten?”)

In China, fàn actually means some kind of grain or starch-based staple. You can have mì fàn (mee fahn; rice), which can be chāo fàn (chaow fahn; fried white rice) or bái mì fàn (bye mee fahn; boiled white rice); miàntiáo (myan tyaow; noodles); màntóu (mahn toe; steamed bread); bāozi (baow dzuh; steamed buns); or jiāozi (jaow dzuh; dumplings). As you can see, you have many types of fàn to choose from.

Satisfying your hunger

If you’re hungry, you can say wō hěn è (waw hun uh; I’m very hungry) and wait for a friend to invite you for a bite to eat. If you’re thirsty, just say wōde kǒu hěn kē (waw duh ko hun kuh; literally: my mouth is very dry) to hear offers for all sorts of drinks. You may not get a chance to even utter these words, however, because Chinese rules of hospitality dictate offering food and drink to guests right off the bat.

You have a couple of subtle ways to get across the idea that you’re hungry so you don’t appear too forward. You can say

✓ Nǐ è ma? (nee uh mah; Are you hungry?)
✓ Nǐ è bù è? (nee uh boo uh; Are you hungry?)
✓ Nǐ hái méi chī wānfàn ba. (nee hi may chir wahn fahn bah; I bet you haven’t had dinner yet.)

By checking to see if the other person is hungry first, you display the prized Chinese sensibility of consideration for others, and you give yourself a chance to gracefully get out of announcing that you, in fact, are really the one who’s dying for some Chinese food. If you want, you can always come right out and say that you’re the one who’s hungry by substituting wō (waw; I) for nǐ (nee; you).

If you hear the sound ba (bah) at the end of a sentence, you can probably interpret it as “I bet,” as in Nǐ hái méi chī wānfàn ba (nee hi may chir wahn fahn bah; I bet you haven’t had dinner yet), or as “let’s,” as in Wōmen qū chīfàn ba (waw men chyew chir fahn bah; Let’s go have dinner). One little utterance serves to soften the sound of making a request (or a command).

You can say something like Nǐ xiān hē jiǔ (nee shyan huh jyoe; Drink wine first), but you sound nicer and friendlier if you say Nǐ xiān hē jiǔ ba (nee shyan huh jyoe bah; Better drink some wine first; Why not have some wine first?)?
When an acquaintance invites you for dinner, he may ask, “Nǐ yào chī fàn háishi yào chī miàn?” (nee yaow chir fahn hi shir yaow chir myan; Do you want to eat rice or noodles?) Naturally, your host doesn’t just serve you a bowl of rice or noodles, because he wants to know what basic staple to prepare before he adds the actual cài (tsye; the various dishes that go with the rice or noodles).

The many varieties of cài have made China the envy of the culinary world. Centuries of subsistence-level existence have taught the Chinese not to waste one morsel of an animal, mineral, or vegetable when they can use the morsel as food. Chronic shortages of food at various points in Chinese history have lent credence to the saying “Necessity is the mother of invention.” The Chinese say it another way, however: They eat “anything with legs that’s not a table and anything with wings that’s not an airplane.” Either way, you get the idea.

**Sitting down to eat**

Once you’ve chosen what you’d like to order and it’s actually been served and sits staring you in the face on the table, you’ll probably want to know what utensils to use in order to eat the meal. Don’t be shy about asking for a good old fork and knife, even if you’re in a Chinese restaurant. It’s a myth that Chinese people all eat with chopsticks anyway. Table 5-1 presents a handy list of utensils you’ll want to know how to say at one point or another.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-1 Utensils and Eating Accoutrements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yáqiān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chāži</td>
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<tr>
<td>dāozi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiáogēng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bēizi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pánzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cānjínzhī</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even though Chinese food is so varied and great you could have it three meals a day forever, once in a while you might really find yourself hankering for a good old American hamburger or a stack of French fries. In fact, you may be surprised to find places like McDonald’s and Kentucky Fried Chicken in Asia when you least expect to. Table 5-2 lists some items you can order when you’re in need of some old fashioned comfort food, and Table 5-3 lists common beverages.

### Do you prefer meat háishì (hi shir; or) fish?

When you can choose between more than one item on a Chinese menu, you can use the alternative question structure for interrogative expressions by placing the word háishì (hi shir; or) between the two choices. If you use the term “or” in affirmative sentences, however — such as when you say she’s arriving either today or tomorrow — you should use the word huò (hwaw) or huò zhe (hwaw juh) instead.

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Even though Chinese food is so varied and great you could have it three meals a day forever, once in a while you might really find yourself hankering for a good old American hamburger or a stack of French fries. In fact, you may be surprised to find places like McDonald’s and Kentucky Fried Chicken in Asia when you least expect to. Table 5-2 lists some items you can order when you’re in need of some old fashioned comfort food, and Table 5-3 lists common beverages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-2</th>
<th>Western Food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word(s)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hànbāobāo</td>
<td>hahn baow baow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>règōu</td>
<td>ruh go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhá shūtiáo</td>
<td>jah shoo tyaow</td>
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<tr>
<td>zhá jī</td>
<td>jah jee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhá yángcōng quān</td>
<td>jah yahng tsoong chwan</td>
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<td>bīsā bīng</td>
<td>bee sah beeng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāo tūdòu</td>
<td>cow too doe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tūdòuní</td>
<td>too doe nee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yidài shí miàntiáo</td>
<td>ee dah lee shir myan tyaow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yáng pái</td>
<td>yahng pye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhū pái</td>
<td>joo pye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sānmíngzhī</td>
<td>sahn meeng jir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shālā zīzhūguì</td>
<td>shah lah dzuh joo gway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shālā jiàng</td>
<td>shah lah jyahng</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5-3  Beverages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word(s)</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jiūdān</td>
<td>jyoe dahn</td>
<td>wine list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>píjiū</td>
<td>pee jyoe</td>
<td>beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gān hóng pǔtáojiū</td>
<td>gahn hoong poo taow jyoe</td>
<td>dry red wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuāngquánshuī</td>
<td>kwahng chwan shway</td>
<td>mineral water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guōzhī</td>
<td>gwaw jir</td>
<td>fruit juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niúnăi</td>
<td>nyo jye</td>
<td>milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāfēi</td>
<td>kah fay</td>
<td>coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chá</td>
<td>chah</td>
<td>tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nǐngmén qishuī</td>
<td>neeng muhng chee shway</td>
<td>lemonade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kēlè</td>
<td>kuh luh</td>
<td>soda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Marilyn and Ramona have a hankering for some Western food during a trip to Beijing. They discuss what to eat among the types of food they’ve been missing while on their tour of China.

Marilyn:  
Ramona, wǒmen zhōngyú qū chí Xīcān la!  
*Ramona, waw mun joong yew chyew chir she tsahn lah!*  
Ramona, let’s go have some Western food finally!

Ramona:  
Nà shì yīge hǎo zhùyì.  
*Nah shir ee guh how joo ee.*  
That’s a great idea.

Marilyn:  
Yījīng yīge duō xīngqī wǒ méiyǒu chí yīge hàn bāo bāo le. Wǒ hěn xiāng Xīcān.  
*Ee jeeng ee guh dwaw sheeng chee waw mayo chir ee guh hahn baow baow lah. Waw hun shyahng she tsahn.*  
It’s already been over a week since I’ve had a hamburger. I really miss Western food.
Nee shyahng chir shummuh tsye? Fah gwaw tsye, ee dah lee tsye, maw she guh tsye hi shir een doo tsye? Jay joong fahn gwahn waw mun duh lyew gwahn doe yo.
What kind of food do you want to eat? French food, Italian food, Mexican food, or Indian food? Our hotel has all these kinds of restaurants.

You’re right. All these kinds of food beat eating a hamburger. Let’s go have Indian food then. But I don’t want to eat anything spicy.

Ramona: Hǎo. Wǒ tóngyì, wǒ yě búyào chī lāde cài. Zǒu ba, yǐjīng kuài liù diān le.
Fine. I agree, I also don’t like to eat spicy food. Let’s go, it’s already 6 o’clock.

The word xiǎng (shyahng) in Chinese can mean “to think” and “to miss.” So you may hear someone say, Wǒ xiǎng wǒ hěn xiǎng jiā. (waw shyahng waw hun shyahng jya; I think I really miss home.)

Practicing proper table manners

When you receive an invitation to someone’s home, always remember to bring a small gift and to toast others before you take a drink yourself during the meal (see Chapter 18 for a list of things never to do). The Chinese have no problem slurping their soup or belching during or after a meal, by the way, so don’t be surprised if you witness both at a perfectly formal gathering. And to remain polite and in good graces, you should always make an attempt to serve someone else before yourself when dining with others; otherwise, you run the risk of appearing rude and self-centered.
Don’t be hesitant to use some of these phrases at the table:

- **Màn chí** or **màn màn chí!** (mahn chir or mahn mahn chir; Bon appetite!) This phrase literally means “Eat slowly,” but it’s loosely translated as “Take your time and enjoy your food.”
- **Zìjī lái.** (dzuh jee lye; I’ll help myself.)
- **Gānbēi!** (gahn bay; Bottoms up!)
- **Duō chí yidiār ba!** (dwaw chir ee dyar bah; Have some more!)
- **Wō chībāo le.** (waw chir baow luh; I’m full.)

Whenever a dining partner begins to serve you food, as is the custom, you must always feign protest with a few mentions of **zìjī lái** (dzuh jee lye; I’ll help myself) so you don’t appear to assume that someone should be serving you. In the end, you should permit the person to follow proper etiquette by serving you portions from each dish if you’re the guest.

And whatever you do, don’t use a **yáqìān** (yah chyan; toothpick) without covering your mouth. One of the ultimate dining faux pas is to make your teeth visible during toothpick use.

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**Getting to Know Chinese Cuisines**

You may have already discovered that different regions of China specialize in different types of cuisine. Each province has its own specialties, cooking style, and favorite ingredients. Some corner the market on spicy food, and others showcase rather bland food. But no matter where you go, you’re sure to discover a new taste bud or two along the way.

Northern Chinese food, found in places like Beijing, is famous for all sorts of meat dishes. You find plenty of beef, lamb, and duck (remember Peking Duck?). To garnish the meat, garlic and scallions are added for good measure. Northern cooking is bland because of the lack of excessive condiments, so don’t expect anything overtly salty, sweet, or spicy.

Shanghai dining, as well as that of the neighboring Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, represents Eastern cuisine. Because these places are close to the sea and boast many lakes, you can find an infinite variety of seafood in this part of China. Fresh vegetables, different kinds of bamboo, and plenty of soy sauce and sugar are also hallmarks of this region’s cuisine.

Food from Sichuan and Hunan provinces is considered Western Chinese cuisine. Western food is common in Chinese restaurants in the United States.
Because this part of China is hot and humid, hot peppers and salt are commonly found here. Not only is the food considered fiery, but also some famous revolutionaries who’ve hailed from this part of China, such as Mao Zedong.

Southern Chinese cuisine hails from Guangdong (formerly known as Canton) province, as well as from Fujian and Taiwan. Like Shanghai cuisine, it offers plentiful amounts of seafood, fresh fruits, and vegetables. One of the most famous types of food from Guangdong that you’ve no doubt heard of is *dim sum* (*deem sum*), which in standard Mandarin is pronounced *diān xīn* (*dyan sheen*).

**Dining Out**

Whether you eat in a friend’s home or in a fancy Chinese restaurant, you need to know how to ask for some basic utensils and how to refer to items already on the table.

You ask for something politely by saying *Qǐng nǐ gěi wǒ . . .* (*cheeng nee gay waw; Would you mind please getting me a . . .*)

You can also say *Máfan nǐ gěi wǒ . . .* (*mah fahn nee gay waw; May I trouble you to please get me a . . .*)

Here are some items you commonly encounter or need to ask for when dining out:

- **yī ge wān** (*ee guh wahn*; a bowl)
- **yī ge pánzi** (*ee guh pahn dzuh*; a plate)
- **yī ge běizi** (*ee guh bay dzuh*; a glass)
- **yī ge tiáogēng** (*ee guh tyaow guhn*; a spoon)
- **yī ge dāozi** (*ee guh daow dzuh*; a knife)
- **yī ge chāizi** (*ee guh chah dzuh*; a fork)
- **yì zhāng càn jīn** (*ee jahng tsahn jeen*; a napkin)
- **yì gēn yáqiān** (*ee gun yah chyan*; a toothpick)
- **yī ge shī máojīn** (*ee guh shir maow jeen*; a wet towel)
- **yī ge rè máojīn** (*ee guh ruh maow jeen*; a hot towel)
- **yì shuāng kuài zi** (*ee shwahng kwye dzuh*; a pair of chopsticks)
When in doubt, use the measure word ge (guh) in front of the noun you want to modify by a numeral or a specifier, such as “this” (zhè; jay) or “that” (nà; nah). As you can see from the previous list, the word for “a” always begins with yī (ee), meaning the number 1 in Chinese. In between yī and the noun is the measure word. For chopsticks, it’s shuāng (shwahng), meaning pair; for napkin, it’s zhāng (jahng), used for anything with a flat surface (such as paper, a map, or even a bed); and a toothpick’s measuring word is gēn (gun), referring to anything resembling a stick, such as rope, a thread, or a blade of grass. Chinese has many different measure words, but ge (guh) is by far the most common.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Livia and Charlotte meet after work in New York and decide where to eat.

**Livia:** Charlotte, nǐ hǎo!
Charlotte, nee how!
Charlotte, hi!

**Charlotte:** Nǐ hǎo. Hǎo jiù méi jiàn.
Nee how. How jyoe may jyan.
Hi there. Long time no see.

**Livia:** Nǐ è bù è?
Nee uh boo uh?
Are you hungry?

**Charlotte:** Wǒ hěn è. Nǐ ne?
Waw hun uh. Nee nuh?
Yes, very hungry. How about you?

**Livia:** Wǒ yě hěn è.
Waw yeah hun uh.
I’m also pretty hungry.

**Charlotte:** Wǒmen qù Zhōngguóchéng chī Zhōngguó cài, hǎo bù hǎo?
Waw men chyew joong gwaw chuung chir joong gwaw tsey, how boo how?
Let’s go to Chinatown and have Chinese food, okay?
Livia:  
Hào. Nǐ zhídào Zhōngguóchéng nǎ jiā cānguǎn hào ma?  
How. Nee jir daow joong gwaw chuhng nah jya tsahn gwahn how ma?  
Okay. Do you know which restaurant in Chinatown is good?

Charlotte:  
Běijīng kǎo yā diàn hǎoxiàng bú cuò.  
Bay jeeng cow ya dyan how shyang boo tswaw.  
The Peking Duck place seems very good.

Livia:  
Hào jíle. Wǒmen zǒu ba.  
How jee luh. Waw men dzoe bah.  
Great. Let’s go.

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nǐ ě bú ě?</td>
<td>nee uh boo uh</td>
<td>Are you hungry?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōngguó cài</td>
<td>joong gwaw tsye</td>
<td>Chinese food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cānguǎn</td>
<td>tsahng gwahn</td>
<td>restaurant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nǐ hāo (nee how), which appears in the preceding Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, can be translated as either “hi,” “hello,” or “how are you?”

Understanding what’s on the menu

Are you a vegetarian? If so, you’ll want to order sùcài (sue tsye; vegetable dishes). If you’re a died-in-the-wool carnivor, however, you should definitely keep your eye on the kind of húncài (huwn tsye; meat or fish dishes) listed on the cài dān (tsye dahn; menu). Unlike the fàn (fahn; rice) or miàn (myan; noodles) you may order, which come in individual bowls for everyone at the table, the cài (tsye; dishes) you order arrive on large plates, which you’re expected to share with others.
You should become familiar with the basic types of food on the menu in case you have only Chinese characters and pinyin romanization to go on. Having the knowledge allows you to immediately know which section to focus on (or, likewise, to avoid).

Take meat, for example. In English, the words for “pork,” “beef,” and “mutton” have no hints of the words for the animals themselves, such as zhū (joo; pig), niú (nyoe; cow), or yáng (yahng; lamb). Chinese is much simpler. Just combine the word for the animal and the word ròu (row), meaning “meat,” after it, such as zhū ròu (joo row; pork), niú ròu (nyoe row; beef), or yáng ròu (yahng row; mutton). Voilà! You have the dish.

Table 5-4 shows the typical elements of a càidān (tsye dahn; Chinese menu).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-4</th>
<th>Typical Sections of a Chinese Menu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word(s)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāi wèicài</td>
<td>kye way tsye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ròu lèi</td>
<td>row lay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jī lèi</td>
<td>jee lay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hǎixiān</td>
<td>hi shyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sùcài</td>
<td>soo tsye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tāng</td>
<td>tahng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diăn xīn</td>
<td>dyan sheen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yīn liào</td>
<td>een lyaow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Gerry, Jean, and Leslie meet at a restaurant in Shanghai after work, and a host greets them on the way in.

Host: Jǐ wèi?  
      Jee way?  
How many are in your party?

Leslie: Sān wèi.  
       Sahn way.  
There are three of us.
The host shows them to their table. The three must now decide what to order for their meals.

Host: Qing zuò zhèr. Zhè shì càidān.
Cheeng dzwaw jar. Jay shir tsye dahn.
Please sit here. Here’s the menu.

Leslie: Nǐ yào chī fàn hǎishì yào chī miàn?
Nee yaow chir fahn hi shir yaow chir myan?
Do you want to eat rice or noodles?

Gerry: Liángge dōu kěyí.
Lyahng guh doe kuh yee.
Either one is fine.

Jean: Wǒ hěn xīhuān yāoguō jídīng. Nǐmen ne?
Waw hun she hwan yaow gwaw jee deeng. Nee men nuh?
I love diced chicken with cashew nuts. How about you guys?

Gerry: Duìbùqǐ, wǒ chī sù. Wǒmen néng bù néng diān yìdiār dòufu?
Dway boo chee, waw chir soo. Waw mun nung boo nung dyan ee dyar doe foo?
Sorry, I’m a vegetarian. Can we order some tofu?

Jean: Dāngrán kěyí.
Dahng rahn kuh yee.
Of course we can.

Leslie: Bù guǎn zěnmé yàng, wǒmen lái sān píng jiǔ, hǎo bù hǎo?
Boo gwahn dzummuh yahng, waw mun lye san peeng jyoe, how boo how?
No matter what, let’s get three bottles of beer, okay?

Gerry: Hěn hǎo!
Hun how!
Very good!
Vegetarian’s delight

If you’re a vegetarian, you may feel lost when looking at a menu filled with mostly pork (the staple meat of China), beef, and fish dishes. Not to worry. As long as you memorize a couple of the terms shown in Table 5-5, you won’t go hungry.

### Table 5-5 Vegetables Commonly Found in Chinese Dishes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word(s)</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>biàndòu</td>
<td>byan doe</td>
<td>string bean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bòcài</td>
<td>baw tsey</td>
<td>spinach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dòufu</td>
<td>doe foo</td>
<td>bean curd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fângqié</td>
<td>fahn chye</td>
<td>tomato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gâílán</td>
<td>gye lahn</td>
<td>Chinese broccoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mògû</td>
<td>maw goo</td>
<td>mushroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
When you have a good understanding of the vegetables that go into Chinese dishes, you, oh proud vegetarian, can start to order specialized vegetarian dishes at all your favorite restaurants. Table 5-6 shows some vegetarian dishes good for a night on the town or for preparing dinner for friends.

### Table 5-6 Vegetarian Dishes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Chinese Words</strong></th>
<th><strong>Pronunciation</strong></th>
<th><strong>English Words</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>danhuh täng</td>
<td>dahn hwah tahn</td>
<td>egg drop soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gânbiân sijidòu</td>
<td>gahn byan suh jee doe</td>
<td>sautéed string beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hòngshào dòufu</td>
<td>hoong shaow doe foo</td>
<td>braised bean curd in soy sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suân là täng</td>
<td>swan lah tahn</td>
<td>hot-and-sour soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yúxiâng qiézi</td>
<td>yew shyang chyeh dzuh</td>
<td>spicy eggplant with garlic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some favorite Chinese dishes

You may be familiar with many of the following dishes if you’ve ever been in a Chinese restaurant:

- **Bêijing kâo yâ** *(bay jeeng cow yah; Peking roast duck)*
- **chûnjuân** *(chwun jwan; spring roll)*
- **dânhuà tâng** *(dahn hwah tahn; egg drop soup)*
- **dôufu gân** *(doe foo gahn; dried beancurd)*
**Sauces and seasonings**

The Chinese use all kinds of seasonings and sauces to make their dishes so tasty. Check out *Chinese Cooking For Dummies* by Martin Yan for much more info. Here are just a few of the basics:

- **jiāng** (jyahng; ginger)
- **làyóu** (lah yo; hot sauce)
- **yán** (yan; salt)
- **máyóu** (mah yo; sesame oil)
- **jiàngyóu** (jyahng yo; soy sauce)
- **cù** (tsoo; vinegar)

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**Chowing down on the Chinese New Year**

On the eve of the Chinese lunar New Year, known as **chú xī** (*choo she*), the Chinese eat a big **niányèfàn** (*nyan yeh fahn*; New Year’s Eve dinner). The dinner almost always includes a whole cooked **yú** (*yew*; fish), because the word for fish rhymes with the word for abundance (**yú**), even though the written characters for the words look quite different. In some of the poorer parts of northern China, people often eat **jiāozi** (*jyaow dzuh*; dumplings) rather than fish because their shape resembles traditional **yuánbāo** (*ywan baow*; gold ingots) used in pre-modern times by people of means. These people hope that the prosperity and abundance of such wealthy families will also come into their lives through the eating of the **jiāozi** (*jyaow dzuh*). Southerners often eat **fā cài** (*fah tsye*; a kind of stringy black vegetable), which rhymes with **fā cài** (*fah tsye*), although you pronounce the words in different tones. **Fā cài** means to get wealthy and prosper; in fact, the most common greeting on New Year’s day is **gōngxi fā cài!** (*goong she fah tsye*; Congratulations and may you prosper!)


Placing an order and chatting with the wait staff

I bet you’re used to everyone ordering one dish for themselves, right? Well, in China, diners almost always share dishes by putting them on common platters smack in the middle of the table where everyone can pick and choose. You get used to ordering with the whole group in mind, not just yourself — just one more example of how the collective is always considered before the individual in Chinese culture.

Chinese table etiquette dictates that everyone decides together what to order. The two main categories you must decide upon are the cài (tsye; food dishes) and the tāng (tahng; soup). Feel free to be the first one to ask Wǒmen yīnggāi jiào jīge cài jīge tāng? (waw men eeng gye jyaow jee guh tsye jee guh tahng; How many dishes and how many soups should we order?) Ideally, one of each of the five major tastes should appear in the dishes you choose for your meal to be a “true” Chinese meal: suān (swan; sour), tián (tyan; sweet), kū (koo; bitter), là (lah; spicy), and xián (shyan; salty).

I know it can be hard to choose what to eat from all the fantastic choices staring back at you from most any Chinese menu; after all, the Chinese perfected the art of cooking long before the French and Italians appeared on the scene. But when you finally hit on something you like, you have to figure out how to tell the waiter what you want to eat, whether you like là (lah; spicy) food or not, if you want to avoid wèijīng (way jeeng; MSG), what kind of píjiǔ (pee jyoe; beer) you want to drink, and that you want to know what kind of nǎshōu cài (nah show tsye; house specialty) the restaurant has going today.

Here are some questions your waiter or waitress is likely to ask you:

✔️ Nǐmen yào shénme cài? (nee menyaow shummuh tsye; What would you like to order; literally: What kind of food would you like?)

✔️ Nǐmen yào hē diār shénme? (nee men yaow huh dyar shummuh; What would you like to drink?)

✔️ Yào jǐ píng píjiǔ? (yaow jee peeng pee jyoe; How many bottles of beer do you want?)

And here are some phrases that come in handy when you need to give an answer:

✔️ Wǒmen yào yīge suān lā tāng. (waw menow ee guh swan lah tahng; We’d like a hot-and-sour soup.)
When addressing a waiter or waitress, you can call them by the same name: fúwùyuán (foo woo ywan; service personnel). In fact, “he,” “she,” and “it” all share the same Chinese word, too: tā (tah). Isn’t that easy to remember?

- Wǒ bù chǐ là de. (waw boo chir lah duh; I don’t eat spicy food.)
- Qǐng bie fàng wèijǐng, wǒ guómǐn. (cheeng byeh fahng way jeeng, waw gwaw meen; Please don’t use any MSG, I’m allergic.)

Regular nouns in Chinese make no distinction between singular and plural. Whether you want to talk about one píngguǒ (peeng gwaw; apple), two júzi (jyew dzuh; oranges), or both píngguǒ hé júzi (peeng gwaw huh jyew dzuh; apples and oranges), the fruits always sound the same in Chinese. On the other hand, if you want to refer to human beings, you can always add the suffix men (mun). The word for “I” or “me” is wǒ (waw), but “we” becomes wǒmen (waw men). The same goes for nǐ (nee; you) and tā (tah; he, she, and it). “They” becomes nǐmen (nee mun) or tāmen (tah mun). If you want to refer to a specific number of apples, however, you don’t use “men” as a suffix. You can either say píngguǒ (peeng gwaw) for apple (or apples) or liàngge píngguǒ (lyahng guh peeng gwaw), meaning two apples. Got it?
Tom and Wendy go to a Chinese restaurant that specializes in Hunan and Sichuan cuisine — the two spiciest cuisines of China. They hail the waiter to ask for a menu.

**Tom:** Wǒmen néng bùnéng kànkan cài dàn? Waw mun nung boo nung kahn kahn tye dah? May we see the menu?

**Waiter:** Dāngrán kěyí. Dahng rahn kuh yee. Of course you may.

A few minutes later, the two diners still can’t decide what to order, so they call over the waiter once again.

**Waiter:** Nǐmen xiāng diàn shénme cài? Nee men shyang dyan shumma tye? What dishes would you like to order?

**Tom:** Qǐng wèn, nǐmen de náshǒu cài shì shénme? Cheeng one, nee mun duh nah show tye shir shummuh? Excuse me, may I ask what your house specialty is?

**Waiter:** Mǎpō dòufu hé Chǎngshā jī dòu yǒumíng. Mah paw doe foo huh chahng shah jee doe yo meeng. Sichuan beancurd and Changsha chicken are both very famous.

**Wendy:** Tǐngshūō mǎpō dòufu hěn là. Dùibùqǐ, kěshì wǒ būchǐ là de. Yǒu méiyǒu biéde cài? Teeng shwaw mah paw doe foo hun lah. Dway boo chee, kuh shir waw boo chir lah duh. Yo mayo byeh duh tye? I’ve heard the Sichuan beancurd is very spicy. I’m sorry, but I don’t like spicy food. Do you have any other kinds of dishes?


Chapter 5: Eating and Drinking: Gānbēi!

Tom: Qing lingwài gěi wǒmen làjiāo jiàng. Wǒ hěn xīhuān chí lādè.
Cheeng leeng wye gay waw men lah jyaow jyahng. Waw hun she hwan chir lah duh.
Please also bring us some hot pepper sauce. I love spicy food.

Waiter: Hái yào biéde ma?
Hi yaow byeh duh ma?
Would you like anything else?

Tom: Qing lingwái lái yīge chāo qǐngcài.
Cheeng leeng wye lye ee guh chaow cheeng tsey.
Please also bring a sautéed green vegetable.

Waiter: Hǎo. Xièxiè.
How. Shyeh shyeh.
Very good. Thank you.

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ hěn è</td>
<td>waw hun uh</td>
<td>I'm very hungry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǒde kǒu hěn kě</td>
<td>waw duh ko hun kuh</td>
<td>I'm thirsty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>náshǒu cài</td>
<td>nah show tsey</td>
<td>house specialty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuìjìàn</td>
<td>tway jyan</td>
<td>recommend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yán</td>
<td>yan</td>
<td>salty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suān</td>
<td>swan</td>
<td>sour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>là</td>
<td>lah</td>
<td>spicy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tián</td>
<td>tyan</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yóu</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>greasy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wèijīng</td>
<td>way jeeng</td>
<td>MSG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guòmǐn</td>
<td>gwaw meen</td>
<td>allergic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuàizi</td>
<td>kwyeh dzuh</td>
<td>chopsticks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dipping into some dim sum

Dim sum is probably the most popular food of Chinese in the United States and of people in Guangdong Province and all over Hong Kong, where you can find it served for breakfast, lunch, and sometimes dinner. Vendors even sell dim sum snacks in subway stations.

The dish’s main claim to fame is that it takes the shape of mini portions, and it’s often served with tea to help cut through the oil and grease afterwards. You have to signal the waiters when you want a dish of whatever is on the dim sum cart they push in the restaurant, however, or they just pass on by. Dim sum restaurants are typically crowded and noisy, which only adds to the fun.

Part of the allure of dim sum is that you get to sample a whole range of different tastes while you catch up with old friends. Dim sum meals can last for hours, which is why most Chinese people choose the weekends to have dim sum. No problem lingering on a Saturday or Sunday.

Because dim sum portions are so small, your waiter often tallies the total by the number of plates left on your table. You can tell the waiter you want a specific kind of dim sum by saying: Qǐng lái yì dié _____. (cheeng lye ee dyeh ______; please give me a plate of______). Fill in the blank with one of the tasty choices I list in Table 5-7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-7</th>
<th>Common Dim Sum Dishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word(s)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guō tiě</td>
<td>gwaw tyeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiǎolóng bāo</td>
<td>shyaow loong baow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xià jiāo</td>
<td>shyah jyaow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xià wán</td>
<td>shyah wahn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niúròu wán</td>
<td>nyoe row wah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yùjiāo</td>
<td>yew jyaow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dântā</td>
<td>dahn tah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luóbō gāo</td>
<td>law baw gaow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Finding the restrooms**

After you have a bite to eat, you may be in need of a restroom. The need may be dire if you’re smack in the middle of a 12-course banquet in Beijing and already have a couple of glasses of máotái (maow tye), the stiffest of all Chinese drinks, under your belt.

Now all you have to do is garner the energy to ask “Cèsuō zài năr?” (tsuh swaw dzye nar; Where’s the restroom?) if you’re in mainland China or “Cèsuō zài nālǐ” (tsuh swaw dzye nah lee) if you’re in Taiwan. You can also ask “Nālǐ kēyī xī shōu?” (nah lee kuh yee she show; Where can I wash my hands?)

No matter what way you ask for directions to the restroom, don’t forget to take some toilet paper with you before you leave the hotel if you’re in mainland China, because many public restrooms don’t supply it there. In most cases, the pictures on the bathroom doors are self-explanatory, but you may also see the pīnyīn for male (nán; nahn) and female (nǚ; nyew) before the word cèsuō. Those are the words you want to pay attention to above all else.

You can also find the word cèsuō in the term for graffiti: cèsuō wénxué (tsuh swaw one shweh; literally: bathroom literature). How apropos.

**Finishing your meal and paying the bill**

Once you’re through sampling all possible permutations of Chinese cuisine (or French or Italian, for that matter), you won’t be able to just slink away unnoticed out the front door and on into the sunset. Time to pay the bill, my friend. Hopefully it was worth the expense. Here are some phrases you should know when the time comes:

- ✔ jiézhàng (jyeh jahng; to pay the bill)
- ✔ fēnkài suàn (fun kye swahn; to go Dutch)
- ✔ Wǒ qíng kē. (waw cheeng kuh; It’s on me.)
All the Tea in China

You encounter about as many different kinds of tea as you do Chinese dialects. Hundreds, in fact. To make ordering or buying this beverage easier, however, you really need to know only the most common kinds of tea:

✔ Lǜ chá. (lyew chah; Green tea) Green tea is the oldest of all the teas in China, with many unfermented subvarieties. The most famous kind of Green tea is called lóngjǐng chá (loong jeeng chah), meaning Dragon Well tea. You can find it near the famous West Lake region in Hangzhou, but people in the south generally prefer this kind of tea.

✔ Hóng chá. (hoong chah; Black tea) Even though hóng means red in Chinese, you translate this phrase as Black tea instead. Unlike Green tea, Black teas are fermented and enjoyed primarily by people in the Fujian Province.

✔ Wūlóng chá. (oo loong; Black Dragon tea) This kind of tea is semi-fermented. It’s a favorite in the Guangdong and Fujian provinces and in Taiwan.

✔ Mòlì huā chá. (maw lee hwah chah; Jasmine) This kind of tea is made up of a combination of Black, Green, and Wūlóng teas, in addition to some fragrant flowers like jasmine or magnolia thrown in for good measure. Most northerners are partial to Jasmine tea, probably because the north is cold and this type of tea raises the body’s temperature.

Tea is always offered to guests the minute they enter a Chinese home. The hosts aren’t just being polite; the offering of tea shows respect to the guest and presents a way to share something that all parties can enjoy together. It may be considered rude not to at least take a sip. Chinese custom says that a host only fills the teacup to 70 percent of its capacity. The other 30 percent is supposed to contain friendship and affection. Isn’t that a nice concept?

You often use the adjective hǎo (how; good) with a verb to create an adjective that means “good to.” Here are a couple of examples:

✔ Qǐng jiézhàng. (cheeng jye jahng; The check, please.)
✔ Zhàngdān yǒu cuò. (jahng dahn yo tswaw; The bill is incorrect.)
✔ Bāokuò fúwùfèi. (baow kwaw foo woo fay; The tip is included.)
✔ Qǐng kāi shōuju. (cheeng kye show jyew; Please give me the receipt.)
✔ Wǒ kěyǐ yòng xīnyòng kǎ ma? (waw kuh yee yoong sheen yoong kah mah; May I use a credit card?)
You may be tempted to *chī* (*chir*; eat) your soup in a Chinese restaurant, but you should actually *hē* (*huh*; drink) it instead. If it tastes really good, you can say the soup is *hěn hāohē* (*hun how huh*; very tasty), just like anything else you may have ordered to drink.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

George, Susan, and Rhoda are all eating dim sum during their trip to Hong Kong, a place famous for dim sum restaurants.

George:  
*Nǐ chī guò dim sum ma?*  
*Nee chir gwaw deem sum mah?*  
Have you ever had dim sum before?

Rhoda:  
*Méiyǒu. Zhè shì dì yī cì.*  
*Mayo. Jay shir dee yee tsuh.*  
No. This is the first time.

Susan:  
*Wèidào zěnme yàng?*  
*Way daow dzummuh yahng?*  
How does it taste?

Rhoda:  
*Hǎo jíle.*  
*How jee luh.*  
It’s great.

George:  
*Nǐ xī būxīuān chī dim sum?*  
*Nee she boo she hwahn chir deem sum?*  
Do you like dim sum?

Susan:  
*Yídǐng. Hěn xīuān.*  
*Ee deeng. Hun she hwahn.*  
Absolutely. I like it very much.

Rhoda:  
*Nǐ zúi xīuān chī de dim sum shì shénme?*  
*Nee dzway she hwahn chir duh deem sum shir shummuh?*  
What’s your favorite dim sum dish?
Dim sum wǒ dòu xǐhuān chī.
Nà hūn nahn shwaw. Boo shir gwaw tyeh jyoe shir shyah jyaow bah. Deem sum waw doe she hwahn chî.
It’s difficult to say. If not pork dumplings then definitely shrimp dumplings. I love all dim sum dishes.

If you want to ask if someone has ever done something, use the word guò (gwaw) directly after the verb to get your point across. Nǐ qù guò Měiguó méiyǒu? (nee chew gwaw may gwaw mayo; Have you ever been to America?)
Nǐ chī guò Yídàlì fàn ma? (nee chir gwaw ee dah lee fahn ma; Have you ever eaten Italian food?) So, have you ever used the particle guò?

Some verbs in Chinese have two syllables. Yào (yaow; to want) is not one of them. Xǐhuān (she hwan; to like or to want), on the other shǒu (show; hand), is an example. When Chinese people speak quickly, they may leave out the second syllable in a few bisyllabic verbs and even a few auxiliary verbs the first time they come up in the “verb-bù-verb” pattern (“bù” between two verbs automatically creates a question). So instead of saying “Tā xǐhuān bùxǐhuān hé jiǔ?” (tah she hwan boo she hwan huh jyo; Does he or she like to drink wine?), you may hear someone say “Tā xǐ bùxǐhuān hé jiǔ?” (tah she boo she hwan huh jyoe)

**Taking Your Chinese to Go**

Restaurants are great, but once in a while you may want to mingle with the masses as people go about buying food for a home-cooked family dinner. Outdoor food markets abound in China and are great places to see how the locals shop and what they buy. And what better way to try out your Chinese? You can always point to what you want and discover the correct term for it from the vendor.

In addition to clothes, books, and kitchen utensils, outdoor markets may offer all sorts of food items:

- Ròu (row; meat): niúròu (nyoe row; beef), yángròu (yahng row; lamb), or jíròu (jee row; chicken)
- Yú (yew; fish): xià (shyah; shrimp), pángxìè (pahng shyeh; crab), lóngxià (loong shyah; lobster), or yóuyú (yo yew; squid)
- Shuīguǒ (shway gwaw; fruit): píngguǒ (peeng gwaw; apples) or júzi (jyew dzuh; oranges)
Chinese people generally don’t eat any raw food. The idea of a raw salad bar is truly foreign to them. In fact, shèngcài (shung tsye; lettuce) literally translates as raw food, and the Chinese generally consider it fit only for farm animals.

**Sizing up weights and measures**

The metric system is standard in both mainland China and Taiwan. The basic unit of weight is the gōngkè (goong kuh; gram), so you usually buy fruits and vegetables in multiples of that measure. The standard liquid measurement is the shèng (shung; liter). One liter equals about 1.06 quarts. Table 5-8 gives you a list of weights and measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-8</th>
<th>Weights and Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pīntuō</td>
<td>peen twaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>bahng</td>
</tr>
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<td>kwah twaw</td>
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<td>ahng suh</td>
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<td>jyah lwun</td>
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<tr>
<td>gōngkè</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>jīn; gōngjīn</td>
<td>jeen; goong jeen</td>
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<td>háokè</td>
<td>how kuh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>shung</td>
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<td>lee mee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>mee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yīnglǐ</td>
<td>eeng lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mā</td>
<td>mah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yīngcūn</td>
<td>eeng tswun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yīngchī</td>
<td>eeng chir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the Chinese use the metric system, more often than not you encounter traditional measurement terms that predate the metric system, such as the words cún (tsun) for “inch” and chǐ (chir) for “foot.”

**Making comparisons**

When you want to compare people or objects, you generally put the word bǐ (bee; compared to) between two nouns, followed by an adjective: A bǐ B (Adjective). This means A is more ____ than B.

Here are a few examples:

- Pingguo bǐ júzi hǎochī. (peeng gwaw bee jyew dzuh how chir; Apples are tastier than oranges.)
- Zhèige fànguār bǐ nèige fànguār guì. (jay guh fahn gwar bee nay guh fahng gwar gway; This restaurant is more expensive than that one.)
- Tā bǐ nǐ niánqīng. (tah bee nee nyan cheeng; She’s younger than you.)

**How much is that thousand-year-old egg?**

When you’re ready to buy some merchandise after making all the necessary comparisons, here are two simple ways to ask how much the products cost:

- Duōshāo qián? (dwaw shaow chyan; How much money is it?)
- Jīkuài qián? (jee kwyee chyan; literally: How many dollars does it cost?)

The only difference between the two questions is the implied amount of the cost. If you use the question word “duōshāo” (dwaw shaow), you want to inquire about something that’s most likely greater than $10.00. If you use “jī” in front of kuài (kwyee; the term for dollars), you assume the product costs less than $10.00.

You can also use jī in front of sui (sway; years) when you want to know how old a child under 10 is. You say, “Tā jī sui?” (tah jee sway; How old is he [or she]?)
**Talkin’ the Talk**

At the local open-air market in Kaifeng, Lindsey and Adam eye some vegetables and discuss the price with the older man selling them in his stall. **Shīfu** (*shir foo*) is a term used to indicate someone providing a service, and indicates more respect due to age than the term **fúwùyuán** (*foo woo ywan*), meaning any kind of attendant.

**Lindsey:** Shīfu, qīng wèn, nǐ yǒu méiyǒu bōcài?  
*Shir foo, cheeng one, nee yo mayo baw tsye?*  
Sir, may I ask, do you have any spinach?

**Shīfu:** Dāngrán. Yào jījīn?  
*Dahng rahn. Yaow jee jeen?*  
Of course. How many kilograms would you like?

**Adam:** Wǒmen mǎi sān jīn, hǎo būhāo?  
*Waw men my sahn jeen, how boo how?*  
Let’s get three jin, okay?

**Lindsey:** Hǎo. Sān jīn ba.  
*How. Saahn jeen bah.*  
Okay. It’ll be three jin then.

**Shīfu:** Méi wèntī. Yījīn sān kuài qián. Nèmmé, yìwǒng jī jū kuài.  
*May one tee. Ee jeen sahn kwye chyan. Nummuh, ee goong jyoe kwye.*  
No problem. It’s $3 a jin. So, that will be $9 altogether.

**Adam:** Děng yíxià. Bōcài bǐ gāilán guī duōle. Wǒmen mǎi gāilán ba.  
*Dung ee shyah. Baw tsye bee guy lahn gway. Waw mun my guy lahn bah.*  
Wait a minute. Spinach is more expensive than Chinese broccoli. Let’s buy Chinese broccoli then.

**Shīfu:** Hǎo. Gāilán liǎng kuài yījīn. Hái yào sān jīn ma?  
*How. Guy lahn lyahng kwye ee jeen. Hi yaow sahn jeen mah?*  
Okay. Chinese broccoli is $2 a jin. Do you still want three jin?
Lindsey: Shì de.
Shir duh.
Yes.

Shīfu: Nà, sānjīn yīgòng liù kuài.
Nah, sahn jeen ee goong lyo kwye.
In that case, three jin will be $6.00.

How. Juh shir lyoe kwye.
Okay. Here's $6.00.

Shīfu: Xièxiè.
Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you.

Adam: Xièxiè. Zàijiàn.
Shyeh shyeh. Dzye jyan.
Thanks. Good bye.

Shīfu: Zàijiàn.
Dzye jyan.
Good bye.

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**Words to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chāojí shìchǎng</td>
<td>chow jee shir chahng</td>
<td>supermarket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shìchǎng</td>
<td>shir chahng</td>
<td>market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shòuhuòtān</td>
<td>show hwaw tahn</td>
<td>stall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cānshāzhě</td>
<td>tsahn shah juh</td>
<td>butcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>záhuòshāng</td>
<td>dzah hwaw shahng</td>
<td>grocer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shǐpīn záhuò</td>
<td>shir peen dzah hwaw</td>
<td>groceries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhī dài</td>
<td>jir dye</td>
<td>a paper bag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fun & Games

Identify these fruits and vegetables and write their Chinese names below. Check out Appendix C for the answers.

A. __________________________
B. __________________________
C. __________________________
D. __________________________
E. __________________________
F. __________________________
G. __________________________
Chapter 6
Shopping Made Easy

In This Chapter
- Checking out the stores
- Looking for clothes and other items
- Bargaining for a better price

Ever dreamed of shopping till you dropped in a foreign country where the rate of exchange is really great? Or in faraway lands where lively outdoor night markets abound? This chapter helps you navigate both small shops and fancy department stores; get a handle on prices, colors, and merchandise; and in general negotiate the best deal wherever possible.

To mài dōngxi (my doong she; buy things) is one of the most enjoyable pastimes for people the world over. Whether you’re just going guàngshāngdiàn (gwahng shahng dyan; window shopping) or actually about to mài dōngxi doesn’t matter. You can still enjoy looking at all the shāngpǐn (shahng peen; merchandise), fantasizing about buying that zuànshí jièzǐ (dzwan shir jye jir; diamond ring), and haggling over the jiàgé (jyah guh; price).

Going to Stores

If you don’t have a clue how to begin shopping in China, much less what you want to buy, you might want to start off at one of the many bāihuò shāngdiàn (bye hwaw shahng dyan; department stores) that have sprouted up throughout China in the last decade. Here you can get almost anything you’re looking for, from zhūbāo (joo baow; jewelry) and huāpǐng (hwah peeng; vases) to yīfú (ee foo; clothing) and yuèqì (yweh chee; musical instruments).

Department stores aren’t the only places you can shop, but they’re certainly the easiest because everything is right there within walking distance and you can browse without fighting off vendors trying to push their wares. Or you might be someone who actually enjoys all the haggling that goes on at street fairs and prefers to experience a lively outdoor cài shichāng (tsye shir chahng; food market).
Even though traditional alley markets and shop fronts still exist in China, Western-style shopping malls are quickly putting their imprint on places like Beijing and Shanghai. You can still get the best prices, though, at the many open-air markets and street vendors, which sell traditional arts and crafts and other specialties. Beijing’s #1 shopping area is not far from Tīán’ānmén Square (tyan ahh mun) Square on Wángfūjīng (wahng foo jeeng) and Dōngdān (doong dahn) streets. Or on Jiānguóménwài Dàjīè (jyan gwaw mun why dah jyeh).

Here are some types of stores and the things you can find in them:

- In a bookstore, you can buy books, magazines, and newspapers.
- In a hardware store, you can buy adapters, plugs, and smoke detectors.
- In a tobacco shop, you can buy cigars, cigarettes, pipes, and all kinds of tobacco.
- In a jewelry store, you can buy bracelets, earrings, necklaces, pins, and rings.

When you finally make up your mind about what to shop for, you may want to call ahead to check out the store’s hours. Here are some questions that can be of help:

- What time do you open/close?
- Are you open after 5 p.m.?
- Are you open on Sundays?

Most stores in China are open quite early, around 8 a.m., and don’t close until 8 p.m. or even later. If you want a less harried shopping experience, avoid shopping on the weekends, when seemingly a quarter of humanity is out doing the same thing.
Talkin’ the Talk

Muriel and Helayne discuss going shopping for the day. Here’s how they start out.

Muriel:  Wǒ jīntiān xiǎng qù mǎi dōngxi.  
Waw jin tyan shyahng chyew my doong she.  
I want to go shopping today.

Helayne:  Nǐ qù nǎr mǎi dōngxi?  
Nee chyew nar my doong she?  
Where will you go to shop?

Muriel:  Wǒ yào qù bāihuògōngsī mǎi yīfu.  
Waw yaow chyew bye hwaw goong suh my ee foo.  
I want to go to the department store to buy some clothes.

Helayne:  Tǐngshuò zài zhèige chénglǐ dōngxi dōu hén guì.  
Teeng shwaw dzoe jay guh chuhng lee doong she doe hun gway.  
I’ve heard that everything’s very expensive in this city.

Muriel:  Nà bùyídìng. Kàn shì shénme diàn. Yǒude hén guì,  
yǒude yìdiān dōu búguì.  
Not necessarily. It depends on the store. Some are really expensive and some aren’t expensive at all.

Great. Let’s go. Let’s buy some clothes.

Whenever you see the words “yìdiān dōu bú ___” (ee dyan doe boo ___) before an adjective, it means not at all (adjective). It’s a great way to emphasize something. You can say something like Wǒ yìdiān dōu bùlèi (waw ee dyan doe boo lay; I’m not tired in the least.) or Tā yìdiān dōu búpiàoliàng (Tah ee dyan doe boo pyaow lyahng; She’s not at all pretty.) to get your point across.
Just browsing

You may want to call ahead of time to see when the biggest department store in town opens before you decide to stroll on over. It’s a nice day outside, you’re in a mellow mood, all’s right with the world, and all you want to do is just window shop—inside the store. You start out on the Yi céng (ee tsuhng; first floor), take the zidòng lóutí (dzuh doong low tee; escalator) all the way up to the sān céng (sahn tsuhng; third floor), and enjoy checking out tons of shāngpǐn (shahng peen; merchandise) quietly by yourself, when all of a sudden a shōuhuóyuán (show hwaw ywan; salesperson) sneaks up behind you and says Nǐ xiǎng mǎi shénme? (nee shyahng my shummuh; What would you like to buy?)
At this point, you really just want to be left alone, so you say Wo zhi shi kankan. Xiexie. (Waw jir shir kahn kahn. Shyeh shyeh; I’m just looking. Thanks.)

**Asking for help**

But what if you really do want help? First, you’d better look around for that salesperson you just told to go away. You may not find too many others nearby when you finally need them. If your luck holds, though, here are some questions you may want to ask:

- **Neng bu neong bangmang?** (Nung boo nung bahng mahng; Can you help me?)
- **Wo zhaoyi ben you guan Zheongguo lishi de shu.** (Waw jaow ee bun yo guan joong gwaw lee shir duh shoo; I’m looking for a book about Chinese history.)
- **Ni you meiyou Yingwen de shu?** (Nee yo mayo eeng one duh shoo; Do you have any books in English?)
- **Nar you waitao?** (Nar yo why taow; Where are the jackets?)
- **Qing ni gai wo kankan ni de xizhuang.** (Cheeng nee gay waw kahn kahn nee duh she jwahng; Please show me your [Western] suits.)
- **Nimen mai bu mai guangpian?** (Nee mun my boo my gwahng pahn; Do you sell CDs?)
- **Nar you ruanjian?** (Nar yo rwahn jyan; Where is the software?)

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Barbara and Kate are in a clothing store. The try to get a fuwuyuan (foo woo ywan; attendant) to help them locate dresses in their sizes.

**Barbara:** Xiaojie! Ni neong bang women ma?
Shyaow jye! Nee nung bahng waw men mah?
Miss! Can you help us?

**Fuwuyuan:** Keyi. Qing deng yixia.
Kuh yee. Cheeng dung ee shyah.
Yes. Just a moment.
After the store attendant puts some boxes away, she returns to help Barbara and Kate.

Fúwùyuán: Hǎo. Nǐmen yào mǎi shénme?
How. Nee men yow shumuh?
Okay. What did you want to buy?

Barbara: Nǎr yǒu qúnzi?
Nar yo chwun dzuh?
Where are the skirts?

Fúwùyuán: Qúnzi jiù zài nàr.
Chwun dzuh jyo dzye nar.
The skirts are just over there.

Barbara and Kate walk over to the skirt section.

Kate: Zhè tiáo hóng qúnzi duōshǎo qián?
Jay tyaow hoong chwun dzuh dwaw shaow chyan?
How much is this red skirt?

Fúwùyuán: Nà tiáo qúnzi èrshíwǔ kuài qián.
Nah tyaow chwun dzuh are shir woo kwye chyan.
That skirt is $25.

Barbara: Nà tài guīle! Nǐ néng bùnéng dǎ zhé?
Nah tye gway luh! Nee nung boo nung dah juh?
That’s too expensive! Can you give me a discount?

Fúwùyuán: Kěnénɡ.
Kuh nung.
Perhaps.

Barbara: Nǐ néng gěi wǒ duōdà de zhěkòu?
Nee nung gay waw dwaw dah duh juh ko?
How much of a discount can you give me?

Fúwùyuán: Bǎi fèn zhī shí, hào būhǎo?
Bye fun jir shir, how boo how?
How’s 10 percent?

Barbara: Nà tài hǎo le. Xièxiè.
Nah tye how luh. Shyeh shyeh.
That’s great. Thanks.
You can use two classifiers when it comes to clothing: jiàn and tiáo. Classifiers are the words used in between a number or the words this or that and the clothing you’re talking about. Jiàn is used when you’re talking about clothing worn on the upper part of the body, and tiáo is used for clothes worn on the lower part. So you’d say yījiàn chènshān (ee jyan chun shahn; one shirt) or sāntiáo kùzi (sahn tyaow koo dzuh; three pairs of pants).

**Shopping for Clothes**

Going shopping for clothes is an art — one requiring lots of patience and fortitude, not to mention lots of new vocabulary if you’re going to do it in Chinese. You need to know how to ask for your own size, how to see whether something is available in a different color or fabric, and in general how to compare apples and oranges (or at least skirts and shirts).

**What’s your size?**

If you ask for clothing in the dàxiǎo (dah shyaow; size) you’re used to quoting in the United States when you’re in Taiwan or mainland China, you’ll be in for a surprise. The numbers you generally throw out when talking to salespeople in the United States are vastly different from the ones you’ll have to get used to using when dealing with Chinese sizes.
Here are some useful phrases you might want to know:

- **Nín chuán duō dà hào?** (nee chwan dwaw dah how; What size are you?)
- **Dàxiāo búduì.** (dah shaow boo dway; It’s the wrong size.)
- **Hênh héshên.** (hun huh shun; It fits really well.)
- **Zài Měiguó wòde chîcûn shì wū hào.** (dzye may gwaw waw duh chir tswun shir woo how; In America I wear a size 5.)

Instead of using the word **dàxiāo** (dah shaow; size), you can say things like

- **Wǒ chuán sânsâiqí hào.** (waw chwahn sahn shir chee how; I wear a size 37.)
- **Nín chuán jî hào de chênsânh?** (nee chwan jee how duh chun shahn; What size shirt do you wear?)
- **Wǒ chuán xiăohào.** (waw chwahn shaow how; I wear a size small.)

Of course, you can always guess your approximate size just by indicating you’d like to see something in one of the following categories:

- **xiăo** (shaow; small)
- **zhōng** (joong; medium)
- **dâ** (dah; large)

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**Talkin’ the Talk**

Julia approaches a salesperson at the Friendship Store in Beijing. She’s unsure of what size to ask for because the measurement systems are different in China than they are in the United States.

**Julia:**  
**Xiăojiē!**  
*Shyaow jyeh!*  
*Miss!*

**Fúwływûyn:**  
**Nî hâo. Xiăng mài shênme?**  
*Nee how. Shyahng my shummuh?*  
Hello. What would you like to buy?

**Julia:**  
**Wô xiăng mài yîjiån jiâkê.**  
*Waw shyahng my ee jyan jyah kuh.*  
*I’m looking for a jacket.*

**Fúwływûyn:**  
**Hâo ba. Nî chuăn jî hào?**  
*How bah. Nee chwahn jee how?*  
Very well. What size are you?
Julia: Wǒ bùzhídào. Měiguó de hàomā hé Zhōngguó de hàomā hěn bùyìyàng. Waw boo jir daow. May gwaw duh how ma huh joong gwaw duh how ma hun boo ee yahng. I don’t know. American sizes are quite different from Chinese sizes.

Fúwùyuán: Wǒ gūjī nǐ chuān xiǎohào. Waw goo jee nee chwahn shyaow how. I would estimate you wear a size small.


Words to Know

chīcùn chir tswun measurement
dàhào dah how large
jiādàhào jyah dah how extra-large
kuān kwan wide
sōng soong loose
wǒ bùzhídào waw boo jir daow I don’t know
xiǎohào shyaow how small
zhǎi jye narrow
zhōnghào joong how medium
Comparing quality: Good, better, best

When you want to let loose with a superlative in order to say something is absolutely the best — or, for that matter, the worst — always keep this one little word in mind: zuì (dzway) which means the most (it’s the equivalent of the suffix -est).

Zui is a word just waiting for something to follow it; otherwise it won’t have much meaning. Here are some superlatives you may need to use from time to time:

- zuì lèi (dzway lay; the most tired)
- zuì màn (dzway mahn; the slowest)
- zuì máng (dzway mahng; the busiest)
- zuì qíguài (dzway chee guye; the strangest)
- zuì yōumíng (dzway yo meeng; the most famous)
- zuì yōuqián (dzway yo chyan; the richest)

If you just want to say that something is better than something else, or “more” something, rather than the best necessarily, you use the word rèng (guhng) before an adjective. You can consider these the equivalent of the suffix -er. Another word that has the meaning of more or -er is yìdiăn (ee dyan; or ee dyan). While the term rèng comes before an adjective, the term yìdiăn must appear after it. Instead of saying rèng kuài (guhng kwee; faster), for example, you’d say kuài yìdiăn (kwye ee dyan) to mean faster.

Here are some examples:

- rèng cōngmíng (guhng tsoong meeng; smarter)
- rèng gui (guhng gway; more expensive)
- piányī yìdiăn (pyan yee ee dyan; cheaper)
- rèng kuài (guhng kwee; faster)
- rèng màn (guhng mahn; slower)
- hǎo (how; good)
- rèng hǎo (guhng how; better)
- zuì hǎo (dzway how; best)
- duăn yìdiăn (dwahn ee dyan; shorter)
- cháng yìdiăn (chahng ee dyan; longer)
Comparing two items

The simplest way to compare two items is by using the coverb (the part of speech akin to a preposition) は (bee; compared with) in between the two things you’re comparing, followed by an adjective. If you say A は は B は (A bee B how) you’re saying A is better than B.

Here are some ways to make comparisons with は:

- たは は は は. (tah bee waw laow; She’s older than me.)
- ぜひ は は は は. (jay guh woo dzuh bee nay guh dah; This room is bigger than that one.)
- はも は は は. (hoong duh bee hwahng duh how; The red one is better than the yellow one.)

One way to convey similarity between two things is to use the coverbs が (gun) or は (huh) in between the two things being compared, followed by the word は (ee yahng; the same) and then the adjective. So if you say A が は は B は (A gun B ee yahng dah), you’re saying that A and B are equally large or as big as each other. You can also just say A が は は, meaning A and B are the same. Here are some other things you can say with this sentence pattern:

- げ は は は. (guh guh huh dee dee ee yahng gaow; My older brother is as tall as my younger brother.
- は は は は. (maow gun go ee yahng tyaow pee; Cats are just as naughty as dogs.)
- は は は は. (waw gun nee ee yahng dah; You and I are the same age.)

So what if you want to make a negative comparison, such as I’m not as tall as him? For that you’d have to use the following sentence pattern:

A は は は

A méiyōu B nèmme adjective
The means “A is not as (adjective) as B.” You can see this pattern in action in the following sentences:

- **Shānyú méiyōu jīnyū nèmme kě’ài.** (shah yew mayo jeen yew nummuh kuh eye; Sharks are not as cute as goldfish.)
- **Yīngwén méiyōu Zhōngwén nèmme nán.** (eeng one mayo joong one nummuh nahn; English is not as difficult as Chinese.)
- **Māo de wěiба méiyōu tūzi de wěiба nèmme cū.** (maow duh way bah mayo too dzuh duh way bah nummuh tsoo; Cats’ tails aren’t as thick as the tails of rabbits.)

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**Talkin’ the Talk**

Olivia and Lēiléi go shopping and check out some traditional Chinese women’s dresses known as **qípáo** (chee paow). Those are the ankle-length dresses with high necks, and a high slit up the side of one leg.

**Olivia:** Zhèi jiàn qípáo zěnmeyàng?
Jay jyan chee paow dzummuh yahng?
What do you think of this traditional Chinese dress?

**Lēiléi:** Wǒ juéde hěn hǎo.
Waw jweh duh hun how.
I think it looks great.

**Olivia:** Zhěndè ma?
Jun duh mah?
Really?

**Lēiléi:** Zhěndè. Kěshi jīnsède méiyōu hónɡde nèmme piàoliàng.
Jun duh. Kuh shir jeen suh duh mayo hoong duh nummuh pyaow lyahng.
Really. But the gold one isn’t as pretty as the red one.

**Olivia:** Jīnsède hé hónɡde yíyàng guì ma?
Jeen suh duh huh hoong duh ee yahng gway mah?
Are the gold one and the red one the same price?

**Lēiléi:** Méiyōu. Jīnsède bǐ hónɡde piányì.
Mayo. Jeen suh duh bee hoong duh pyan yee.
No. The gold one is less expensive than the red one.

**Olivia:** Nà, wǒ jiù mài jīnsède.
Nah, waw jyoe my jeen suh duh.
In that case I’ll buy the gold one.
What are you wearing? Chuān versus dài

Dài (dye) and chuān (chwah) both mean to wear, but they’re used for different types of things you put on your body. In English, you can say you’re “wearing” everything from hats to socks to skirts or even a necklace. In Chinese, though, you can only dài things like màozì (maow dzuh; hats), yânjìng (yen jeeng; glasses), and xiézi (shyeh dzuh; shoes) — in other words, articles more akin to accessories rather than actual clothing, but you chuān things like qúnzi (chewn dzuh; skirts) and dài (dah ee; coats).

Here are some things you can chuān:

✔ bèixīn (bay sheen; vest)
✔ chángkù (chahng koo; pants; also referred to simply as kūzi)
✔ chángxiù (chahng shyow; long sleeve)
✔ chēnshān (chun shahn; blouse)
✔ dài (dah ee; coat)
✔ duānkù (dwan koo; shorts)
✔ duānxìu (dwan shyow; short sleeve)
✔ jiákè (jah kuh; jacket)
✔ kūzi (koo dzuh; pants)
✔ nèiyǐ (nay ee; underwear)
✔ niúzālkù (nyo dzye koo; blue jeans)
✔ qúnzi (chewn dzuh; skirt)
✔ tuóxié (twaw shyeh; slippers)
✔ wàzi (wah dzuh; socks)
✔ yūyī (yew ee; raincoat)
✔ gāogēnxīě (gaow gun shyeh; high heels)

Here are some things you can’t chuān but you can dài:

✔ lǐngdài (leen dye; necktie)
✔ shōubiāo (show byaow; wristwatch)
✔ shōutào (show taow; gloves)
✔ zhūbāo (joo bao; jewelry)
Asking about the color

When you go shopping for yīfu (ee foo; clothes), you have a chance to compare all the different yánsè (yan suh; colors) they come in and choose the one that looks the best on you. Do you generally prefer dānsè (dahn suh; solid colors) or huā (hwah; patterned) shirts? How about hēi (hey; black) hats or fēnhóng (fun hoong; pink) skirts? Whatever your clothing preferences are, after you know how to express your heart’s desire with the correct word, you can be sure to ask for what you like.

The following is a list of handy words the next time you go shopping either for clothes or for material to create your own. Shénme yánsè (shummuh yan suh; what color) is your favorite from the list below? Don’t be shy to speak up about your preferences. If someone wants you to wear pink with purple polka dots to a wedding, you can always politely just say, “Yánsè búduì” (yan suh boo dway; the color is wrong) and leave it at that.

- bái (bye; white)
- fēnhóng (fun hoong; pink)
- hēi (hey; black)
- hóng (hoong; red)
- huáng (hwahng; yellow)
- jūhóng (jyew hoong; orange)
- lán (lahn; blue)
- zī (dzuh; purple)
- dānsè (dahn suh; solid color)
- dàn yìdiān (dahn ee dyan; lighter)
- duànzi (dwahn dzuh; satin)
- huā (hwah; patterned)
- kāishīmī (kye shir mee; cashmere)
- liàozì (lyaow dzuh; fabric)
- shěn yìdiān (shun ee dyan; darker)
- sīchōu (suh cho; silk)
- yángmáo (yahng maow; wool)
Talkin’ the Talk

Laurel goes shopping for sweaters with her husband John and asks him to weigh in on which color looks best on her.

Laurel:  Zhèi jiàn máoyí nǐ juéde zěnmeyāng?
          Jay jyan maow ee nee jweh duh dzummuh yahng?
          What do you think of this sweater?

          Nay jyan mow ee tye shaow. Yan suh yeh boo pyaow lyahng.
          That sweater is too small. The color doesn’t look good either.

Laurel:  Nǐ xīhuān shénme yánsè?
          Nee she hwahn shummuh yan suh?
          What color do you like?

          Waw she hwahn hoong duh. Boo yaow nay guh hey duh.
          I like the red one. You shouldn’t get the black one.

Laurel:  Hāole. Nà, wǒ jiù mǎi hóngde ba.
          How luh. Nah, waw jyo my hoong duh bah.
          Okay. In that case I’ll buy the red one.

When the possessive particle de is attached to an adjective and there’s no noun following it, it can be translated as the one which is (adjective), as in hóngde (hoong duh; the red one), dà de (dah duh; the big one), tián de (tyan duh; the sweet one), and so on.

Shopping for Other Items

Of course clothes aren’t the only things in the world to shop for (although I know some would beg to differ with me). How about some antiques or hi tech toys? The possibilities are endless in this consumer-oriented world of ours.
Hunting for antiques

One of the best places in the world to go searching for gūdōng (goo doong; antiques) is — you guessed it — China. Gūdōng diàn (goo doong dyan; antique shops) abound in major cities near large stores and in small alleyways. You can buy everything from 200-year-old diāokē pīn (dyaw kuh peen; carved objects) to 100-year-old bí yān hú (bee yan who; snuff bottles). You can find all sorts of rare things.

After you find the perfect antique item, though, you need to deal with all the possible export restrictions, like for porcelain that is older than 200 years or some types of rare wood products. You have to have a red wax seal put on the item in order to legally take it out of China. The cultural artifacts bureau of the city in which you buy the item must apply the seal.

Slightly southwest of Tiān’ānmén Square in Beijing lies Liúlìchāng (lyoe lee chahng), an area considered the best in the city for antiques and other traditional arts and crafts. In Shanghai, the Dōngtái (doong tye) antiques market is the one to look for, not far from Huáihǎi Lù (hyue hi loo). There’s even a Ghost Market in the Old Town Bazaar where folks go for weekend antique shopping. The Ghost Market is so named because of the ungodly hour the vendors begin setting up shop — a time before sunrise when only ghosts can check out what’s on sale. If you purchase antiques in China, you need to have a red wax seal applied by the local cultural artifacts bureau before you can legally take it out of the country. Even though you’re dealing with antiques, you’re still allowed to haggle over the price, so don’t be shy trying to get the best deal possible.

Here are some words and phrases that should come in handy when hunting for antiques:

- Zhèi shì nèige cháodài de? (jay shir nay guh chaow dye duh; Which dynasty is this from?)
- Néng dài chūguó ma? (nung dye chooaw gwaw mah; Can it be taken out of China?)
- Nǐde gūdōng ditān zài nǎr? (nee duh goo doong tee tahn dzye nar; Where are your antique carpets?)
- Kéyī bùkēyī jiā zhúnxū chūguó de huǒqǐ yīn? (kuh yee boo kuh yee jyah jwun shyew choo gwaw duh hwaw chee yeen; Can you put the export seal on it?)
- Zhēiègē duōshāo nián? (jay guh dwaw shaow nyan; How old is this?)
- Nèige cháodài de? (nay guh chaow dye duh; Which dynasty is it from?)
Buying high-tech and electronic things

New electronic gadgets appear on the market every two minutes these days, or so it seems. Just when you think you’ve gotten the latest model of something, another one comes out with great fanfare. Below is a list of the most commonly used (and most commonly bought) items you might be in need of — even while reading *Chinese For Dummies*. Now you’ll know how to ask for what you want when you walk in that store.
Getting a Good Price and Paying

Folks the world over want to get good deals on their purchases. At least they should. This section helps you discover the joys (and pitfalls) of haggling in Chinese.

Negotiating prices at the night market

Among the more fun things to do in Taiwan and mainland China is visit one of the many lively night markets that abound. There, you can find anything from clothing and jewelry to antiques and food. Because the Chinese love to mǎi dōngxi (my doong she; shop) and tāojià huánjià (taow jyah hwahn jyah; haggle), you’ll have plenty of company on your sojourns.

You should always assume that prices are negotiable in an open air market. You can always ask one of the following and see what happens:

✔ Néng bùnéng piányi yìdiäRR? (nung boo nung pyan yee ee dyar; Can you sell it more cheaply?)

✔ Néng bùnéng shào yidiäRR? (nung boo nung shaow ee dyar; Can you lower the price?)

Or you can always play hardball and say something like Zěnme zhèmmagui ah? (dzuh muh juh muh gway ah; Why is this so expensive?) in an exasperated voice, start walking away and see what happens. (Bet they come back with a lower price.)
These haggling-related phrases are also worth knowing:

- **Nîmen shōu bù shōu Mèiyuán?** (nee men show boo show may ywan; Do you accept U.S. dollars?)
- **Zhèige duōshāo qián?** (jay guh dwaw shaow chyan; How much is this?)
- **Dā zhé, hāo būhāo?** (dah juh, how boo how; How about giving me a discount?)
- **Kéyī jiāng jià ma?** (kuh yee jyahng jyah mah; Can we negotiate the price?)

If you see something called a **Yōuyí Shāngdiàn** (yo ee shahng dyan; Friendship Store) be aware that it is one of the ubiquitous state-run stores in China, so prices are generally fixed. However, bargaining is the norm everywhere else. Beware of goods with no prices marked on them! If you ask about them, you’ll probably be quoted a price far different than that charged to the locals. Often you’ll be able to have 5 to 10 percent taken off any price quoted verbally, so try to practice bargaining before you set foot in a street market.

### Paying for your purchase (or demanding a refund)

When you finish checking out all the merchandise, haggling (or not) over the price, and deciding on just what to māi (my; buy), you’ll probably start reaching for your qiánbāo (chyan baow; wallet) to see whether you should take out your xìnyòng kā (sheen yoong kah; credit card) or some xiànqian (shyan chyan; cash) or, if you got a really good deal, just some língqián (leeng chyan; small change). When you fǔqián (foo chyan; pay), you might also want to get a shōujù (show jyew; receipt).

If you end up being bùyuèkuài (boo yew kwye; unhappy) about your purchase, one of these phrases may come in handy when you try to tui (tway; return) your huò (hwaw; merchandise):

- **Wō yāoqiú tuikuān.** (waw yaow chyo tway kwahn; I want a refund.)
- **Wō yào tui huò.** (waw yaow tway hwaw; I would like to return this.)
- **Qīng nǐ bā qián jírù wǒde xìnyòng kā.** (cheeng nee bah chyan jee roo waw daw sheen yoong kah; Please refund my credit card.)
- **Wō néng bìnéng jiān zǒngjīnglí?** (waw nung boo nung jyan dzoong jeeng lee; May I see the manager?)
- **Qīng nǐ bāo qīlái.** (cheeng nee baow chee lye; Please wrap these/this.)
- **Dùi wō bù hēshēn.** (dway waw boo huh shun; It doesn’t fit me.)
Take a look at the illustrations below. In what type of store would you find these items? The answers are in Appendix C.

a. Zhūbāo diàn ____________

b. Cài shìchǎng ____________

c. Huādiàn ________________

d. Yàofáng ________________

e. Wánjù diàn ______________

A. B. C.
Chapter 7
Exploring the Town

In This Chapter
- Counting down days and time
- Dropping in on a show
- Checking out museums and historical sites
- Taking in a movie or concert
- Hanging out in bars and clubs

Don’t even think of staying around your lūguān (lyew gwahn; hotel) or house on a beautiful sunny day — especially if you’re about to explore a new chéngshì (chuhn shir; city) in China. You have so much to see and do. You may want to check out a performance of Jīngjù (jeeng jyew; Peking Opera) or head over to the nearest bówùguān (baw woo gwahn; museum) to take in the latest yīshù zhānlán (ee shoo jahn lahn; art exhibit). If you don’t know where you’re going, you need to know how to ask for fāngxiàng (fahng shyahng; directions); how to read a dītú (dee too; map); and how to get from here to there via gōnggōngqìchū (goong goong chee chuh; bus), dìtiē (dee tyeh; subway), or chūzhūchē (choo dzoo chuh; taxi). If you want to look at a train or bus shìjiānbiāo (shir jyan byaow; schedule), you may ask yourself what day it is jǐntiān (jin tyan; today) and what time it is xiànzài (shyan dzye; now).

Knowing the Time and Day

So what day is it today? Could it be xīngqīliù (sheeng chee lyo; Saturday), when you can sleep late and go see a diànyǐng (dyan yeeng; movie) in the evening with friends? Or is it xīngqīyī (sheeng chee ee; Monday), when you have to be at work by jiǔ dìǎn zhōng (jyo dyan joong; 9:00) in the morning to prepare for a 10 a.m. kāihui (kye hway; meeting)? Or maybe it’s xīngqīwǔ (sheeng chee woo; Friday) and you already have liǎng zhāng piào (lyahng jahng pyaow; two tickets) for the jiǎoxiāng yuè (jyow shyahng yweh; symphony) that begins at wānshāng bā diǎn (wahn shahng bah dyan; 8 p.m.).
Talking about days, weeks, months, and more

You may not be a big fan of going to work from xìngqìyì (sheeng chee ee; Monday) to xìngqìwù (sheeng chee woo; Friday), but when the zhōumò (joe maw; weekend) comes, you have two days of freedom and fun. Before you know it, though, xìngqìyì comes again.

The days of the week

Although Chinese people recognize seven days in the week just as Americans do, the Chinese week begins on xìngqìyì (sheeng chee ee; Monday) and ends on xìngqìtiān (sheeng chee tyan; Sunday). If you're talking about zhèige xìngqì (jay guh sheeng chee; this week) in Chinese, you're talking about any time between this past Monday through this coming Sunday. Anything earlier is considered shàngge xìngqì (shahng guh sheeng chee; last week). Any day after this coming Sunday is automatically part of xiàge xìngqì (shyah guh sheeng chee; next week). See Table 7-1 for a list of days of the week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xìngqìyì</td>
<td>sheeng chee ee</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xìngqì’èr</td>
<td>sheeng chee are</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xìngqìsān</td>
<td>sheeng chee sahn</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xìngqìsì</td>
<td>sheeng chee suh</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xìngqìwù</td>
<td>sheeng chee woo</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xìngqìliù</td>
<td>sheeng chee lyo</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xìngqìtiān</td>
<td>sheeng chee tyan</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, jǐntiān xìngqìjī? (jin tyan sheeng chee jee; What day is it today?) Where does today fit in your weekly routine?

- Jǐntiān xìngqì’èr. (jin tyan sheeng chee are; Today is Tuesday.)
- Wǒ xìngqìyì dào xìngqìwù gōngzuò. (waw sheeng chee ee daow sheeng chee woo goong dzwaw; I work from Monday to Friday.)
- Wǒmen mèige xìngqìyī kāihui. (waw men may guh sheeng chee ee kye hway; We have meetings every Monday.)
- Xiàge xìngqìsān shì wōde shèngdí. (shyah guh sheeng chee sahn shir waw duh shung ir; Next Wednesday is my birthday.)
Chapter 7: Exploring the Town

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Michael and Virginia discover that the weekend is coming up and begin to make plans.

**Michael:**  
**Jintiān xīngqī jī?**  
*Jin tyan sheeng chee jee?*  
What day is today?

**Virginia:**  
**Jintiān xīngqīwū.**  
*Jin tyan sheeng chee woo.*  
Today is Friday.

**Michael:**  
**Hāojíle. Míngtiān bùgōngzuò.**  
*How jee luh. Meeng tyan boo goong dzwaw.*  
Great. No work tomorrow.

**Virginia:**  
**Duīle. Hòutiān qù jiàotáng.**  
*Dway luh. Ho tyan chyew jyaow tahng.*  
That’s right. The day after tomorrow I’ll go to church.

**Michael:**  
**Hǎo. Wǒ gēn nǐ yíqí qù.**  
*How. Waw gun nee ee chee chyew.*  
Okay. I’ll go with you.

---

**Words to Know**

- *zhèige xīngqī*  
  *jay guh sheeng chee*  
  this week

- *shàngge xīngqī*  
  *shahng guh sheeng chee*  
  last week

- *xiàge xīngqī*  
  *shyah guh sheeng chee*  
  next week

- *zuótiān*  
  *dzwaw tyan*  
  yesterday

- *jīntiān*  
  *jin tyan*  
  today

- *míngtiān*  
  *meeng tyan*  
  tomorrow

- *hòutiān*  
  *ho tyan*  
  the day after tomorrow

- *qián tiān*  
  *chyan tyan*  
  the day before yesterday
The months and seasons

Days don’t exist in a vacuum — or even just in a week — and weeks exist within months. So if you don’t just want to say today is Monday, but rather Monday, June 1st, you have to say the yuè (ywèh; month) before the day and end with the day of the week:

▶ liùyuè yì hào, xīngqìyì (lyo yweh ee how, sheeng chee ee; Monday, June 1st)
▶ siyuè èr hào, xīngqìtiān (suh yweh are how, sheeng chee tyan; Sunday, April 2nd)

The larger unit of the month always comes before the smaller unit of the date in Chinese:

▶ yìyuè èr hào (ee yweh are how; January 2nd)
▶ sānyuè sì hào (sahn yweh suh how; March 4th)
▶ shí’èryuè sānshí hào (shir are yweh sahn shir how; December 30th)

To ask what today’s date is, you simply say jǐntiān jìyuè jīhào? (jin tyan jee yweh jee how; literally: Today is what month and what day?)

Even though you say each month by adding the number of the month in front of the word yuè (which means “month”), if you add the classifier ge (guh) in between the number and the word yuè, you say “one month,” “two months,” and so on. For example, bā yuè (bah yweh) means August (which is the 8th month), but bā ge yuè (bah guh yweh) means eight months.

The same basic idea goes for saying the days of the week. All you have to do is add the number of the day of the week (Monday: Day #1), preceded by the word lìbāi (lee bye) or xīngqì (sheeng chee), meaning “week,” to say the day you mean. The only exception is Sunday, when you have to add the word tiān (tyan; heaven, or day) in place of a number. Wǒde tiān! (waw duh tyan; My heavens!) Isn’t this easy?

I list the months of the year in Table 7-2 and the seasons in Table 7-3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7-2</th>
<th>Months of the Year and Other Pertinent Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word or Phrase</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yīyuè</td>
<td>ee yweh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Èryuè</td>
<td>are yweh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sānyuè</td>
<td>sahn yweh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siyuè</td>
<td>suh yweh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7-3 Seasonal Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word or Phrase</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word or Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sì jì</td>
<td>suh jee</td>
<td>The four seasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōngjì</td>
<td>doong jee</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūnjì</td>
<td>chwu jee</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiàjì</td>
<td>shyah jee</td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qiūjì</td>
<td>chyo jee</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Talkin’ the Talk

Steve asks Xiāo Lán about her birthday.

Steve:  Xiāo Lán, nǐde shēngrì shì jǐyuè jǐhào?
Shyao lahn nee duh shung ir shir jee yweh jee how?
Xiāo Lán, when’s your birthday?
Part II: Chinese in Action

Xiao Lan:  Wöde shèngrì shì liùyuè èr hào. Nǐde ne?
Waw duh shung ir shir lyo yweh are how. Nee
duh nuh?
My birthday is June 2nd. How about yours?

Steve:  Wöde shèngrì shì wǔyuè qī hào.
Waw duh shung ir shir woo yweh chee how.
My birthday is May 7th.

Xiao Lan:  Nèmme, xiàge xīngqīsān jiù shì nǐde shèngrì! Zhù nǐ
chàjītiān shèngrì kuàilè!
Nummuh, shyah guh sheeng chee sahn jyo shir nee
duh shung ir! Joo nee chah jee tyan shung ir
kwyē luh!
In that case, next Wednesday is your birthday! Happy
almost birthday!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words to Know</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zhù nǐ shèngrì kuàilè!</td>
<td>joo nee shung ir kwyē luh</td>
<td>Happy Birthday!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jīn nián</td>
<td>jin nyan</td>
<td>this year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qùnìán</td>
<td>chyew nyan</td>
<td>last year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>míngnián</td>
<td>meeng nyan</td>
<td>next year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>měinián</td>
<td>may nyan</td>
<td>every year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hùnìán</td>
<td>ho nyan</td>
<td>the year after next</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qiánnián</td>
<td>chyan nyan</td>
<td>the year before last</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiàge xīngqīyì</td>
<td>shyah guh sheeng chee ee</td>
<td>next Monday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shàngge xīngqīsì</td>
<td>shahng guh sheeng chee suh</td>
<td>last Thursday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Telling time in Chinese

All you have to do to find out the shíjiān (shir jyan; time) is take a peek at your shǒubiāo (show byaow; watch) or look at the zhōng (joong; clock) on the wall. These days, even your jisuànjì (jee swan jee; computer) or shǒujì (show jee; cell phone) show the time. And you can always revert to that beloved luòdīshì dà bāizhōng (lwaw dee shir dah bye joong; grandfather clock) in your parents’ living room. You no longer have any excuse to chídào (chir daow; be late), especially if you own a nāo zhōng (now joong; alarm clock)!

You can express time in Chinese by using the words diān (dyan; hour) and fēn (fun; minute). Isn’t using fēn fun? You can even talk about time in miāo (meow; seconds) if you like and sound like a cat. Table 7-4 shows you how to pronounce all the hours on the clock.

You can indicate the hour by saying 3-diān or 3-diān zhōng. Diān (dyan) means “hour,” but it’s also a classifier, and zhōng (joong) means “clock.” Feel free to use either to say what time it is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Phrase</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-diān zhōng</td>
<td>ee dyan joong</td>
<td>1 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-diān zhōng</td>
<td>lyahng dyan joong</td>
<td>2 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-diān zhōng</td>
<td>sahn dyan joong</td>
<td>3 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-diān zhōng</td>
<td>suh dyan joong</td>
<td>4 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-diān zhōng</td>
<td>woo dyan joong</td>
<td>5 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-diān zhōng</td>
<td>lyo dyan joong</td>
<td>6 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-diān zhōng</td>
<td>chee dyan joong</td>
<td>7 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-diān zhōng</td>
<td>bah dyan joong</td>
<td>8 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-diān zhōng</td>
<td>jyo dyan joong</td>
<td>9 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-diān zhōng</td>
<td>shir dyan joong</td>
<td>10 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-diān zhōng</td>
<td>shir ee dyan joong</td>
<td>11 o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-diān zhōng</td>
<td>shir are dyan joong</td>
<td>12 o’clock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When mentioning 12 o’clock, be careful! The way to say noon is simply zhōngwǔ (joong woo), and the way to say midnight is bānyè (bahn yeh).

The Chinese are very precise when they tell time. You can’t just say 3-diān zhōng (sahn dyan joong) when you want to say 3 o’clock. Do you mean to say qīngzāo sān diān zhōng (cheeng dzaow sahn dyan joong; 3 a.m.) or xiàwǔ sāndiān zhōng (shyah woo sahn dyan joong; 3 p.m.)?

The segment of the day that you refer to needs to come before the actual time itself in Chinese. Here’s a list of the major segments of the day:

✔ qīngzāo (cheeng dzaow; midnight to dawn)
✔ zāoshàng (dzaow shahng; 6 a.m. to noon)
✔ xiàwǔ (shyah woo; noon to 6 p.m.)
✔ wānshàng (waahn shahng; 6 p.m. to midnight)

Here are some samples of combining the segment of the day with the time of day:

✔ wānshàng qī diān zhōng (waahn shahng chee dyan joong; 7 p.m.)
✔ xiàwǔ sān diān bān (shyah woo sahn dyan bahn; 3:30 p.m.)
✔ qīngzāo yì diān yì kè (cheeng dzaow ee dyan ee kuh; 1:15 a.m.)
✔ zāoshàng bā diān èrshíwǔ fēn (dzaow shahng bah dyan are shir woo fun; 8:25 a.m.)

If you want to indicate half an hour, just add bān (bahn; half) after the hour:

✔ 3-diān bān (sahn dyan bahn; 3:30)
✔ 4-diān bān (suh dyan bahn; 4:30)
✔ 11-diān bān (shir ee dyan bahn; 11:30)

Do you want to indicate a quarter of an hour or three quarters of an hour? Just use the phrases yì kè (ee kuh) and sān kè (sahn kuh) after the hour:

✔ 2-diān yì kè (lyahng dyan ee kuh; 2:15)
✔ 4-diān yì kè (suh dyan ee kuh; 4:15)
✔ 5-diān sān kè (woo dyan sahn kuh; 5:45)
✔ 7-diān sān kè (chee dyan sahn kuh; 7:45)
Of course, you have other ways to indicate time in Chinese. On the hour, half hour, and quarter of an hour aren’t the only parts of time which exist, after all. For example, instead of saying 七点五十 (chih dyan woo shir fun; 7:50), you can say 八点差十 分 (bah dyan chah shir fun; 10 to 8, literally: 8 o’clock minus 10 minutes). “差” (chah) means “to lack.” Unlike 分 (fun; minute), 一刻 (kuh; quarter of an hour), and 半 (bahn; half), you can use 差 either before or after 点 (dyan; hour).

Here are some other examples of alternative ways to indicate the time:

- 差十分 (chah shir fun; 10 to 5)
- 五点差十分 (woo dyan chah shir fun; 10 to 5)
- 四点差十分 (suh dyan woo shir fun; 4:50)
- 八点差一刻 (bah dyan chah ee kuh; a quarter to 7)
- 零点差一刻 (loo dyan chah ee kuh; a quarter to 7)
- 六点三十分 (lyo dyan sahn kuh; 6:45)
- 六点三十五分 (lyo dyan suh shir woo fun; 6:45)

When talking about time, you may prefer to say before or after a certain hour. To do so, you use either 前 (ee chyan; before) or 后 (ee ho; after) along with the time, day, month, or anything else. Here are some examples:

- 下午三点 前 (shyah goo suh dyan joong ee chyan; before 3:00 p.m.)
- 清早 四点半 后 (cheeng dzaow suh dyan bahn ee ho; after 4:30 a.m.)
- 四月 前 (suh yweh ee chyan; before April)
- 下个星期 后 (shyah guh sheeng chee ee ho; after next week)
- 五月三号 前 (woo yweh sahn how ee chyan; before May 3rd)

## Talkin’ the Talk

Xiao Huá and Chén Míng discuss their plans to see a movie.

Xiao Huá: Wōmen jintiān wǎnshàng qù kàn diànyǐng hǎo būhāo?
Waw men jin tyan wahn shahng chyew kahn dyan yeeng how boo how?
Let’s go see a movie tonight, okay?
Chén Míng: **Bùxíng. Wǒde fūmǔ jǐntiān wǎnshàng yìdìng yào wǒ gēn tāmen yìqí chī wǎnfàn.**

Boo sheeng. Waw duh foo moo jin tyan wahn shahng ee deeng yaow waw gun tah men ee chee chir wahn fahn.

No can do. My parents are adamant that I have dinner with them tonight.

Xiǎo Huá: **Nǐmen jǐdiǎn zhōng chīfàn?**

Nee men jee dyan joong chir fahn?

What time do you eat?

Chén Míng: **Píngcháng wǒmen liùdiǎn dào qīdiǎn zhōng chīfàn.**

Peeng chahng waw men lyo daow chee dyan joong chir fahn.

We usually eat from 6 to 7.

Xiǎo Huá: **Hǎo ba. Nǐ chīfàn yǐhòu wǒmen qù kàn yǐbù jiǔdiǎn zhōng yǐqián de piānzi, hǎo bùhǎo?**

How bah. Nee chir fahn ee ho waw men chyew kahn ee boo jyo dyan joong ee chyan duh pyan dzuh, how boo how?

Okay. How about we see a movie that starts before 9 after you’re finished eating?

Chén Míng: **Hěn hǎo. Yíhuí jìan.**

Hun how. Ee hwar jyan.

Okay. See you later.

---

**Attending a Performance**

Plan on taking in a few yānchū (yan choo; shows) in the near future? You have so much to choose from nowadays. You can check out some gējù (guh jyew; operas), or, if you prefer, a bāléi (bah lay; ballet) or a yǐnyuèhuì (yin yweh hway; music concert).

Shanghai in particular is pretty famous for its zájì tuán (dzah jee twahn; acrobatics troupes).
Before you can attend any performances, however, or even try to catch a diànyìng (dyan yeeng; movie), you have to buy a piào (pyaow; ticket) or two. The following phrases should help you get what you want, or at least understand what you’re being told:

✔ Zài năr kĕyǐ màidào piào? (dzye nar kuh yee my daow pyaow; Where can I buy tickets?)

✔ Yōu měi yŏu jīntiān wānshāng yānchū de piào? (yo mayo jin tyan wahn shahng yan choo duh pyaow; Are there any tickets to tonight’s performance?)

✔ Duìbùqǐ, jīntiān wānshāng de piào dōu màiwán le. (dway boo chee, jin tyan wahn shahng duh pyaow doe my wahn luh; I’m sorry, tickets for tonight are all sold out.)

✔ Wō yào māi yì zhāng dàrēn piào, liāng zhāng èrtóng piào. (waw yaow my ee jahng dah run pyaow, lyahng jahng are toong pyaow; I’d like to buy one adult ticket and two kid’s tickets.)

If you want to ask a person if he or she has ever done anything, just add the particle –guò (gwaw) to the verb and use the question word ma (mah) or méiyǒu (mayo) at the end. Here are some examples:

✔ Nǐ kànguò Jīngjù ma? (nee kahn gwaw jeeng jyew mah; Have you ever seen Peking Opera?)

✔ Nǐ chīguò xià méiyǒu? (nee chir gwaw shyah mayo; Have you ever eaten shrimp?)

✔ Nǐ qūguò Měiguó ma? (nee chyew gwaw may gwaw mah; Have you ever been to America?)
To answer any of these questions, you can repeat the verb plus **guò** if the answer is yes, or simply say **méiyōu**, meaning “No, I haven’t.” You can also say **méiyōu — verb — guò** if you like.

If you happen to do something **chángcháng** (*chahng chahng*: often) or just **yǒude shìhòu** (*yo duh shir ho*: sometimes), don’t be shy about saying so. You can use these adverbs in both the questions and the answers.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Maria, Catherine, and Elizabeth discuss what kind of performance they want to see this evening.

**Maria:** **Nîmen jingtīăn wānsīng xiăng kàn shènme? Kàn huàjū ma?**
* Nee men jin tyan wahn shahng shyahng kahn shum-muh? Kahn hwah jyew mah?
What do you guys want to see tonight? A play?

**Catherine:** **Wô hên xiăng qù kàn wūshù biāoyān. Zājì biāoyān yè kéyī.**
* Waw hun shyahng chyew kahn woon shoo byaow yan. Dzah jee byaow yan yeah kuh yee.
I’d really like to see a martial arts performance.
Acrobatics would be okay, too.

**Elizabeth:** **Wô xiăng kàn huàjū.**
* Waw shyahng kahn hwah jyew.
I want to see a play.

**Maria:** **Nîmen kànguò Jīngjù ma?**
* Nee men kahn gwaw jeeng jyew mah?
Have you ever seen Peking Opera?

**Catherine:** **Méiyōu.**
* Mayo.
No.

**Maria:** **Nà, wômen qù kàn Jīngjù ba! Jīngjù shènme dōu yǒu. Yǒu huàjū, yǒu wūshù, lián zājì yè yǒu.**
* Nah, waw men chyew kahn jeeng jyew bah! Jeeng jyew shummuh doe yo. Hwah jyew yo, woo shoo yo, lyan dzah jee yeah yo.
In that case, let’s go to see Peking Opera! It has everything. It has a play, it has martial arts, it even has acrobatics.
Elizabeth: Tâi hâo le!
    Tye how luh!
    That’s great!

Maria goes to the theater box office to buy tickets for tonight’s Peking Opera performance and speaks with the clerk.

Maria: Nî hâo. Wô xiâng mài sànzhâng jîntiânh wânishâng dê piào.
    Nee how. Waw shyahng my sahn jahng jin tyan wahn shahng duh pyaow.
    Hello. I’d like to buy three tickets to tonight’s performance.

    Sure. Tickets for tonight are almost all sold out. We only have second floor seats left.

Maria: Èr lóu méiyû wêntî. Qián pái zuòwèi de piào yû méiyû?
    Are lo mayo one tee. Chyan pye dzwaw way duh pyaow yo mayo?
    Second floor is no problem. Do you have any front row seats, though?

Clerk: Yûo. Yîgông sànsî kuái qián.
    Yo. Ee goong sahn shir kwye chyan.
    Yes. That will be $30 all together.

Maria gives the clerk $30, and the clerk gives her the tickets.

Maria: Xièxiè.
    Shyeh shyeh.
    Thank you.
## Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>什么时候开演？</td>
<td>shénme shíhòu kāiyǎn?</td>
<td>What time does the show begin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>什么时候演完？</td>
<td>shénme shíhòu yǎn wán?</td>
<td>What time does the show end?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>狱下位子</td>
<td>lóuxià de wèizi</td>
<td>orchestra seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>狱上位子</td>
<td>lóushàng de wèizi</td>
<td>balcony seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>票</td>
<td>piào</td>
<td>tickets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>音乐厅</td>
<td>yīnyuè tīng</td>
<td>concert hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>剧场</td>
<td>jùchǎng</td>
<td>theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>礼堂</td>
<td>lǐtáng</td>
<td>auditorium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>幕间休息</td>
<td>mùjiān xiūxi</td>
<td>intermission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>杂技表演</td>
<td>zájì biáoyǎn</td>
<td>acrobatic performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>武术表演</td>
<td>wǔshù biáoyǎn</td>
<td>martial arts performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>芭蕾舞</td>
<td>bālèi wǔ</td>
<td>ballet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>歌舞</td>
<td>gēwǔ</td>
<td>song and dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>客技</td>
<td>Yuèjù</td>
<td>Cantonese opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>京剧</td>
<td>Jīngjù</td>
<td>Peking opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>方戏</td>
<td>difāng xì</td>
<td>local folk opera</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From sex to art: Interesting Chinese museums

The Museum of Ancient Chinese Sex Culture, which opened in Shanghai in 1999, displays the private collection of a Shanghai University professor. The collection contains all sorts of sexual artifacts ranging from ancient tomb paintings and erotic devices, exhibits dealing with that old Chinese fetish footbinding, and even furniture for lovemaking.

The Shanghai Museum, which opened at People’s Plaza in 1996, is a world-class museum. Considered China’s top museum, it consists of four stories of 11 galleries with audiophones and explanatory signs in English as well as Chinese—a rare feature in any other Chinese museum. Arranged by themes rather than dynasties, it houses everything from ancient bronzes, to Tang and Ming ceramics, to paintings and calligraphy. It has an impressive jade gallery as well.

Exploring Museums and Galleries

Theatre shows and live musical performances aren’t the only forms of entertainment you can see to get your fill of wénhuà (one hwah; culture). One of the nicest, calmest activities to do at your own pace is to visit a bówúguăn (baw woo gwahn; museum) or huàláng (hwah lahng; gallery). You can check out anything from gūdàide yishù pín (goo dye duh ee shoo peen; ancient artifacts), to shānshuí huà (shahn shway hwah; landscape painting), to xiàndài yishù (shyan dye ee shoo; modern art). Sometimes the best reason to go to a bówúguăn is to buy some lǐwǔ (lee woo; gifts) and some cool zhāotiē (jaow tyeh; posters) for yourself.

Here are some questions you may want to ask in a museum or gallery:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bówúguăn jídiān zhōng kāimén?</td>
<td>Bówúguăn jídiān zhōng kāimén? (baw woo gwahn jee dyan joong kye mun; What time does the museum open?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lìpǐn shāngdiàn shénmé shìhòu guānmén?</td>
<td>Lìpǐn shāngdiàn shénmé shìhòu guānmén? (lee peeng shahng dyan shummuh shir ho gwahn mun; What time does the gift shop close?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nǐmen mài búmài zhāotiē?</td>
<td>Nǐmen mài búmài zhāotiē? (nee mun my boo my jaow tyeh; Do you sell posters?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talkin’ the Talk

John arrives at the local art museum pretty late in the day, so he approaches the clerk to ask some questions.

John: Qǐng wèn, nǐmen jídiān zhōng guānmén? Cheeng one, nee mun jee dyan joong gwahn mun? Excuse me, what time do you close?
Part II: Chinese in Action

Clerk: Zhèige bówùguǎn wǎnshàng liù diǎn zhōng guǎnmén.
Jay guh baw woo gwahn wahn shahng lyo dyan joōng gwahn mun.
This museum closes at 6:00 p.m.

John: Xiànzài yǐjīng wùdiǎn duō le. Wǒ néng bùnéng miǎnfèi jǐnqù?
Shyan dzye ee jeeng woo dyan dwaw luh. Waw nung boo nung myan fay jeen chyew?
It's now already after 5. May I enter for free?

Boo sheeng. Hi yaow foo chyan. Shir kwye ee jahng. No. You still have to pay. It's 10 dollars a ticket.

John: Nà, wǒ míngtiān zài lái, duō huā yìdiār shìjīān zài zhèr. Xièxiè.
Nah, waw meeng tyan dzye lye, dwaw hwah ee dyar shir jyan dzye jar. Shyeh shyeh.
In that case, I'll come back tomorrow to spend a little more time here. Thanks.

Words to Know

| bówùguǎn | baw woo gwahn | museum |
| huàláng | hwah lahng | gallery |
| yīshù | ee shoo | art |
| shǒuyìrén | show ee run | artisan |
| yīshùjíā | ee shoo jyah | artist |
| jiézuò | jyeh dzwaw | masterpiece |
Visiting Historical Sites

You shouldn’t pass up at least one well-coordinated trip to a historical site if you visit China, even if you have only a week for business. Take the Cháng Chéng (chahng chung; Great Wall), for example. Just north of Beijing, the wall is one of the greatest man-made objects on earth.

And while you’re on your way to the Great Wall, you may want to stop off at the Míng shísān líng (meeng shir sahn leeng; Ming Tombs), which contain the mausoleums of thirteen Ming dynasty (1368-1644) emperors guarded by stone animals and warrior statues.

By far the easiest way to see the major historical sites in China is to join a tour. Here are some phrases that may come in handy:

- Lǚxíngshè zài nár? (lyew sheeng shuh dzye nar; Where’s the travel agency?)
- Yǒu méiyǒu shuō Yīngwén de dǎoyóu? (yo mayo shwaw eeng one duh daow yo; Are there any English speaking guides?)
- Bàn tiān duōshǎo qián? (bahn tyan dwaw shaw chyan; How much for half a day?)
- Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu lǐyóu shǒucè? (nee yo mayo lyew yo show tsuh; Do you have a guidebook?)

Some of China’s most-visited historical sites include the Great Wall, the Forbidden City in Beijing, and the terra-cotta warriors of Xi’an, where an army of over 6,000 carved warriors and horses stands guard over the tomb of China’s first Emperor, Qin Shihuang (chin shir hwahng), who dates back to the third century BCE.

Talkin’ the Talk

Phil hires a taxi and takes his two children to the Jade Buddha Temple in Shanghai, where he tries to get entrance tickets from the clerk. He’s eager to show his children the temple’s Song dynasty (960-1279) architecture.

Phil: Qingwèn, zài nár kěyǐ mǎi piào? Cheeng one, dzye nar kuh yee my pyaow? Excuse me, where can I buy tickets for admission?

Clerk: Jiù zài zhèr. Jyo dzye jar. You can buy them here.
**Phil:** Haojile. Piàojià duōshāo?
*How jee luh. Pyaow jyah dwaw shaow?*
Great. How much is the ticket price?

**Clerk:** Yìzhāng shí kuài.
*Ee jahng shir kwye.*
Tickets are $10 each.

**Phil:** Xiāo háizi miānfèi ma?
*Shyaow hi dzuh myan fay mah?*
Do children get in free?

**Clerk:** Bù miānfèi, kěshì xiāo háizi bànpiào.
*Boo myan fay, kuh shir shyaow hi dzuh bahn pyaow.*
No, but they’re half price.

**Phil:** Wǒmen kě bù kěyǐ zhàoxiàng?
*Waw mun kuh boo kuh yee jaow shyahng?*
May we take pictures?

**Clerk:** Dāngrán kěyǐ. Méiyǒu wèntí.
*Dahng rahn kuh yee. Mayo one tee.*
Of course you can. No problem.

---

**Going to the Movies**

After a full day of sightseeing, you may want to relax, kick back, and take in a movie. At the movies you can sit and watch what’s on the **yínmù** (*yeen moo*; screen) without walking or talking. But what to do when the lights dim and you suddenly realize the film is completely in **Zhōngwén** (*joong one*; Chinese), without any **Yīngwén zìmù** (*eeng one dzuh moo*; English subtitles) whatsoever? You read this book, of course!

What kind of movie do you want to see? Table 7-5 gives you a few genres to choose from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word(s)</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xǐjù pián</td>
<td>she jyew pyan</td>
<td>comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gūshì pián</td>
<td>goo shir pyan</td>
<td>drama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Talkin’ the Talk

Wendy and Tom decide to go to the movies tonight.

Wendy: **Wômen jîntiān wànsànhànɡ qù kàn yībù diànyīnɡ bā.**
**Waw men jin tyan wahn shahng chyew kahn ee boo dyang yeeng bah.**
Let’s go see a movie tonight.

Tom: **Jîntiān yān shènme?**
**Jin tyan yan shumwuh?**
What’s playing today?

Wendy: **Yīge Zhānɡ Yîmòu dàoyān de piānzi. Wô wânglè nèige míngzi.**
**Ee guh jahng ee moe daow yan duh pyan duh. Waw wahng luh nay guh meeng duh.**
A film directed by Zhang Yimou. I forget the name.

Tom: **Shì shuō Yīnɡwén de ma?**
**Shir shwaw eeng one duh mah?**
Is it in English?

Wendy: **Bùshī, kēshí yǒu Yīnɡwén zìmù.**
**Boo shir, kuh shir yo eeng one duh moo.**
No, but there are English subtitles.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word(s)</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>àiqíng piān</td>
<td>eye cheeng pyan</td>
<td>romance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōngzuò piān</td>
<td>doong dzwaw pyan</td>
<td>action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jìlù piān</td>
<td>jee loo pyan</td>
<td>documentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōnghuà piān</td>
<td>doong hwah pyan</td>
<td>cartoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kǒngbù piān</td>
<td>koong boo pyan</td>
<td>horror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wǔxiá piān</td>
<td>woo shyah pyan</td>
<td>kung-fu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Listening to a Concert

You often hear that the language of music crosses international boundaries. If you’re feeling a bit exhausted after practicing Chinese, you can head to a concert in the evening where you can relax. Let the music transport you to another mental space.

At the end of a concert in China, you don’t hear anyone yelling “Encore!” What you do hear, however, is “Zài lái yíge, zài lái yíge!” (dzye lye ee guh, dzye lye ee guh; Bring on one more!)

Talkin’ the Talk

Susan and George discuss what kind of concert to attend this weekend.

George: Wōmen zhèige zhōumò qù yǐnyuè tīng tīng Zhōngguó gǔdiǎn yǐnyuè. Waw men jay guh joe maw chyew een yweh teeng teeng joong gwaw goo dyan een yweh. This weekend we’re going to the concert hall to hear a classical Chinese music concert.

Chapter 7: Exploring the Town

Waw boo she hwahn joong gwaw goo dyan yeen yweh. Waw gung she hwahn jyweh shir een yweh. I don’t like classical Chinese music. I prefer jazz.

Jazz is too strange. I also don’t like rock ’n roll.

Susan: Nǐ dàgài zhǐ xǐhuān jiàoxiâng yuè nèi lèi de yínyuè ba. Nee dah gye jir she hwahn jyaow shyahng yweh nay lay duh een yweh bah.
You probably only like symphonic music and that sort of thing.

George: Dui le.
Dway luh.
Yup.

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yínyuè hùì</td>
<td>een yweh hway</td>
<td>concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dàiwèiyuán</td>
<td>dye way ywan</td>
<td>usher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiémùdān</td>
<td>jyeh moo dahn</td>
<td>program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōngguó yú</td>
<td>joong gwaw goo dyan yeen yweh</td>
<td>classical Chinese music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gùdiânyínyuè</td>
<td>guh chahng hway</td>
<td>choral recital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gē chàng hùì</td>
<td>shir nay yweh</td>
<td>chamber music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shènèi yuè</td>
<td>goo dyan een yweh</td>
<td>classical music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>míngè</td>
<td>meen guh</td>
<td>folk song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qì yuè</td>
<td>chee yweh</td>
<td>instrumental music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juéshì yínyuè</td>
<td>jyweh shir een yweh</td>
<td>jazz music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yáogûn yuè</td>
<td>yaow gun yweh</td>
<td>rock 'n roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiàoxiâng yuè</td>
<td>jyaow shyahng yweh</td>
<td>symphonic music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hopping Around Bars and Clubs

Are you a night owl who, after a full day of sightseeing and even an evening concert, still has the energy to go bar hopping and carousing around fun clubs? If so, you need to know some common barspeak, especially when you’re on vacation in a toddlin’ town like Shanghai — or Chicago, for that matter. After all, not everyone you meet or go out with may be fluent in English.

Before the Communist takeover of the mainland in 1949, Shanghai was known as the Paris of the Orient. It has always been the most delightfully decadent city in China and continues to live up to its reputation. Bars, clubs, and all sorts of nightlife abound.

The following phrases may come in handy when you’re out exploring the local pubs and dance halls:

- **Qíng lái yìpíng píjiú.** (cheeng lye ee peeng pee jyoe; Please bring me a bottle of beer.)
- **Nǐ xiǎng gèn wǒ tìàowǔ ma?** (nee shyahng gun waw tyaow woo mah; Would you like to dance?)
- **Wǒ néng bùnéng qíng nǐ hē jǐù?** (waw nung boo nung cheeng nee huh jyoe; May I get you a drink?)
- **Wǒmen dào nár qù tìàowǔ?** (waw men daow nar chyew tyaow woo; Where can we go to dance?)
- **Yǒu méiyǒu rúchāng fèi?** (yo mayo roo chahng fay; Is there a cover charge?)

When you go to a bar with friends, you may ask for some bīngzhèn de pìjiū (beeng juhn duh pee jyoe; cold beer) or maybe some hóng (hoong; red) or bái (bye; white) pǔtáo jiǔ (poo taow jyoe; wine). And don’t forget to ask for some huāshēngmǐ (hwah shung mee; peanuts) or tūdòupiàn (too doe pyan; potato chips) so you don’t get too sloshed with all that pìjiū.
Fun & Games

Matching: Draw a line between the matching pairs.

9:15 a.m.  bänyè
Next month  xiàwù sì diǎn bàn
Midnight  xiàge yuè
Two weeks ago  zǎoshàng jiǔ diǎn yīkè
4:30 p.m.  liàngge xǐngqǐ yīqián
Chapter 8

Enjoying Yourself: Recreation and Sports

In This Chapter
- Talking about your hobbies
- Appreciating Mother Nature
- Pretending to be Picasso
- Creating your own tunes
- Exercising as an athlete

After a hard day at work, most people are ready to kick back and relax. But where to begin? Do you feel so consumed by your gōngzuò (goong dzwau; work) that you can’t seem to switch gears? Get a life! Better yet, get a yèyú àihào (yeh yew eye how; hobby). Play some yǐnyuè (yeen yweh; music) on your xiāotiqín (shyaow tee cheen; violin). Paint a huà (hwah; picture). Kick a zúqiú (dzoo chyo; football) around. Do whatever it takes to make you relax and have some fun. Your outside interests will make you more interesting to be around, and you’ll make new friends at the same time — especially if you join a duì (dway; team). And if you’re into lánqiú (lahn chyo; basketball), just utter the name Yao Ming (yaow meeng) and you’ll instantly discover hordes of potential language exchange partners from among the many fans of this Shanghai native who made it big as a Houston Rockets superstar.

Yao Ming, the 7-foot 6-inch former Shanghai Mavericks basketball player, earned fame and fortune as an NBA player with the Houston Rockets. With the 2008 Olympics set to take place in Beijing, basketball is sure to be of keen interest to the local spectators. If you find yourself in that city, check out the Sports Bar at the Gloria International Hotel, where basketball takes center stage.
Naming Your Hobbies

Are you someone who likes to collect yóupiào (yo pyaow; stamps) from different guójì (gwaw jyah; countries)? Or do you prefer to play guójì xiàngqí (gwaw jee shyahng chee; chess) in your spare time? How about watching some niǎo (nyaow; birds) through a pair of wàngyuânjìng (wahng ywan jeeng; binoculars) in Zhōngyāng Gōngyuán (joong yahng goong ywan; Central Park)? Whatever you enjoy doing, your hobbies are always a good conversation piece. Having at least one yèyǔ àihào (yeh yew eye how; hobby) is always a good thing. How about getting involved in some of the following?

✔ kàn shū (kahn shoo; reading)
✔ diàoyú (dyaw yew; fishing)
✔ yuányì (ywan ee; gardening)
✔ pēngtiáó (pung tyaow; cooking)

Some of the things you can dǎ (dah; do or play with), which literally means to strike, hit, or beat, are qiú (chyo; balls), tàijíquán (tye jee chwan; commonly referred to just as Tai Ji, a slow form of martial arts), and pú kè (poo kuh; cards). But you can also wán (wahn; play) ball games as well — including games with little qiú, such as píngpāngqiú (peeng pahng chyo; ping pong). Here are some quick questions using the verb dǎ that will help get a conversation started:

✔ Nǐ hui búhuì dǎ tài jí quán? (nee hway boo hway dah tiye jee chwahn; Do you know how to do Tai Ji?)
✔ Nǐ dǎ bùdǎ píngpāngqiú? (nee dah boo dah peeng pahng chyo; Do you play ping pong?)
✔ Nǐ dǎ máijiàng ma? (nee dah mah jyahng mah; Do you play mah-jong?)

Both tàijíquán and máijiàng are quintessential Chinese pastimes. In addition to tàijíquán, everyone is familiar with other forms of wūshù (woo shoo; martial arts), including kung fu — a martial art practiced since the Tang (tahng) dynasty back in the eighth century. In fact, you can still see kung fu masters practicing at the Shaolin Temple in Zhengzhou, Henan Province — one great reason for making a trip off the beaten path if you ever visit China.

Tàijíquán is considered an internal martial art and is the most widely practiced form throughout the world. The term tàijí (“the Great Ultimate”) refers to the interplay between opposing yet complementary forces in the universe — yin and yang — as the basis of creation. Quán means “fist,” emphasizing that this art is a kind of unarmed combat. Very early every morning in China, tons of people flock to local parks to practice this slow-motion form of exercise together.
Donald and Helga discuss their knowledge of Taijiquan with each other.

Donald:  
*Ní hui būhui dà tài jí quán?*  
*Nee hway boo hway dah tye jee chwan?*  
Do you know how to do Tai Ji?

Helga:  
*Būhui. Kèshì wǒ zhīdào tài jí quán shì yī zhòng hěn liúxing de jiānshēn yǔndòng.*  
*Boo hway. Kuh shir waw jir daow tye jee chwan shir ee joong hun lyo sheeng duh jyan shun yoon doong.*  
No, but I know that Tai Ji is a very popular kind of workout.

Donald:  
*Dùile. Měitiān zāoshàng hěn zāo hěn duō rén yìqǐ dà tài jí quán.*  
*Dway luh. May tyaw shahng hun dzaow hun dwaw run ee chee dah tye jee chwan.*  
That’s right. Very early every morning, lots of people practice Tai Ji together.

Helga:  
*Tài jí quán de dōng zuò kàn qí lái hěn màn.*  
*Tye jee chwan duh doong dzaow kahn chee lye hun mahn.*  
Tai Ji movements look very slow.

Donald:  
*Yòu shuō dùile! Shěntǐ zǒng shì yào wèndìng.*  
*Yo shwaw dway luh! Shun tee dzoong shir yaow one deeng.*  
*Dōng zuò zǒng shì yào xiètiáo.*  
Right again! The body is always stable, and the movements are always well coordinated.
Exploring Nature

If you’re working overseas in China and want to get really far from the madding crowds, or even just far enough away from your bànɡōnɡshì (bahn goong shir; office) to feel refreshed, try going to one of the seven sacred shān (shahn; mountains) or a beautiful hāitān (hi tahn; beach) to take in the shānshuǐ (shahn shway; scenery), which is sure to include niǎo (nyaow; birds), shù (shoo; trees), yún (yewn; clouds), and the hǎi (hi; ocean). You may want to qù lùyíng (chyew lyew eeng; go camping) or set up camp on the beach and have a yěcān (yeh tsahn; picnic) before you pá shān (pah shahn; climb a mountain).

Here are some things you would see along the way if you were to travel through the Chinese countryside:
If you’re ever exploring 大自然 (dah dzuh rahn; nature) with a friend who speaks Chinese, a few of these words may come in handy:

- 河 (huh; river)
- 湖 (hoo; lake)
- 池塘 (chir tahng; pond)
- 沙洞 (shahn doong; cave)
- 海滩 (hi tahn; beach)
- 岸 (ahn; shore)
- 沙漠 (shah maw; desert)
- 山 (shahn; mountains)
- 小山 (shyaow shahn; hills)
- 海 (hi; ocean)

### China’s sacred mountains

Both Buddhists and Daoists have traditionally built monasteries high on quiet mountaintops or deep inside lush forests to meditate. Nine of China’s mountains — five Daoist and four Buddhist — are still considered sacred today, all which remain sites of pilgrimage. 

**Huang Shang** (hwahng shahn; Yellow Mountain) is perhaps China’s most famous sacred mountain, distinguished by rare pine trees, unusual rock formations, and hot springs, and surrounded by lakes and waterfalls.
Talkin’ the Talk

Jack and Nell discover the beauty of the seaside resort of Bèidàihé (bay dye huh) in northern China.

Jack: Nǐ kàn! Zhèr de fēngjǐng duōme piàoliàng!
Nee kahn! Jar duh fung jeeng dwaw muh pyaow lyahng!
Look! How gorgeous the scenery here is!

Nee shwaw dwaw luh. Jun pyaow lyahng.
You’re right. It’s truly beautiful.

Jack: Shénme dōu yǒu. Shān, shēn lán de hǎi, lán tiān.
Shummuh doe yo. Shahn, shun lahn duh hi, lahn, cheeng tyan.
It has everything. Mountains, deep blue ocean and clear sky.

Nell: Nǐ shuō duile. Xiàng tiāntáng yìyàng.
Nee shwaw dwaw luh. Shyahng tyan tahng ee yahng.
You’re right. It’s like paradise.

Words to Know

piàoliàng   pyaow lyahng   beautiful
fēngjǐng    fung jeeng    scenery
tiāntáng    tyan tahng   paradise

To indicate a similarity between two ideas or objects, as in the last line of the “Talking the Talk” involving Jack and Nell, use the phrase xiàng . . . yìyàng. Here are some examples:

✔️ xiàng nǐ didi yìyàng (shyahng nee dee dee ee yahng; like your younger brother)
✔️ xiàng qīngwā yìyàng (shyahng cheeng wah ee yahng; like a frog)
✔️ xiàng fēngzi yìyàng (shyahng fungdzuh ee yahng; like a crazy person)
Tapping into Your Artistic Side

You may pride yourself on having been the biggest jock who ever played varsity football, but I bet you still get teary-eyed when you see a beautiful painting or listen to Beethoven. It’s okay, just admit it. You’re a regular Renaissance man and you can’t help it. No more apologies.

Okay, now you’re ready to tap into your more sensitive, artistic side in Chinese. Don’t be afraid of expressing your gângqìng (gahn cheeng; emotions). The Chinese will appreciate your sensitivity to their Song (soong) dynasty shànshuǐ huà (shahn shway hwah; landscape painting) or the beauty of a Ming (meeng) dynasty cíqì (tsuh chee; porcelain).

I bet you have tons of chuàngzào xìng (chwahng dzaow sheeng; creativity). If so, try your hand at one of these fine arts:

- huà (hwah; painting)
- sūmíáohuà (soo meow hwah; drawing)
- diâokè (dyaw kuh; sculpting)
- shuícâihuà (shway tsye hwah; watercolor)
- tâoqì (taow chee; pottery)
- shûfâ (shoo fah; calligraphy)

Striking Up the Band

Like kids all over the world, lots of Chinese children take xiăo tîqín (shyaow tee cheen; violin) and gângqín (gahng cheen; piano) classes — often under duress. They appreciate the forced lessons when they get older, though, and have their own kids.
Do you play a yuè qì (yweh chee; musical instrument)? It’s never too late to learn, you know. You don’t have to become a professional yínyuèjiā (een yweh jyah; musician) to enjoy playing an instrument. How about trying your hand (or mouth) at one of these?

- pipa (pee pah; a plucked string instrument with a fretted fingerboard that sits on your lap)
- gúzhēng (goo juhng; a long, plucked string instrument that rests on a large stand in front of you)
- èrhú (are hoo; a two-stringed bowed instrument)

The Chinese language has a couple of different verbs that you can use to indicate the practice of various instruments. Those who play stringed instruments should use the verb lá (lah; to draw, as in draw a bow) before the name of the instrument. For example, you can say that you lá zhōng tíqín (lah joong tee cheen; play the viola), but you can only tán (tahn; play) a gāngqín (gahng cheen; piano). For wind instruments, you have to chuí (chway; blow) them.
Playing on a Team

No matter where you go in the world, you’ll find a national pastime. In America, it’s  bànqíú (bahng chyo; baseball). In most of Europe, it’s  zúqíú (dzoo chyo; soccer). And in China, it’s  píngpāngqíú (peeng pahng chyo; ping pong), although now that Yao Ming is on the scene,  lánqíú (lahn chyo; basketball) is getting some attention as well. Here’s a list of these and many other popular sports:

-  yūmáóqíú (yew maow chyo; badminton)
-  bàngqíú (bahng chyo; baseball)
-  lánqíú (lahn chyo; basketball)
-  shōuqíú (show chyo; handball)
-  bǐngqíú (beeng chyo; hockey)
-  píngpāngqíú (peeng pahng chyo; ping pong)
-  zúqíú (dzoo chyo; football)
-  yīngshí zúqíú (eeng shir dzoo chyo; soccer (literally, English-style football))
-  lēiqíú (lay chyo; softball)
-  yóuyōng (yo yoong; swimming)
-  wāngqíú (wahng chyo; tennis)
-  páiqíú (pye chyo; volleyball)

The Olympics is the best known conglomeration of all sorts of sports.  Tīcāo (tee tsaow; gymnastics), such as  zìyóu tīcāo (dzih yo tee tsaow; floor exercises), the  dān gāng (dahn gahng; horizontal bar), the  shuāng gāng (shwahng gahng; parallel bars), the  gāo dī gāng (gaow dee gahng; uneven parallel bars) and the  ān mā (ahn mah; pommelled horse), are all familiar to viewing audiences around the world.

Yóuyōng (yo yoong; swimming) is also quite popular. Whether you do the  dié yōng (dyeh yoong; butterfly stroke), the  yāng yōng (yahng yoong; backstroke), the  cē yōng (tsuh yoong; side stroke), prefer to swim  wā yōng (wah yoong; frog-style or breast stroke) or  zìyóu yōng (dzih yo yoong; freestyle swimming), don’t forget to keep breathing. (And don’t forget to wear your  yóuyōng mào (yo yoong maow; swimming cap). And if you’re a  tiàoshuǐ yùndōngyuán (tyaow shway yewn doong ywan; diver), you’d better not  pà gāo (pah gaw; be scared of heights).

Some games require the use of  píngpāngqíú pāi (peeng pahng chyo pye; ping-pong paddles); others require  wāngqíú pāi (wahng chyo pye; tennis rackets) or  lánqíú (lahn chyo; basketballs). All games, however, require a sense of  gōngpíng jīngzhēng (goong peeng jeeng jung; fair play).
Soccer season in Beijing is from May to October, but in southern China it goes year-round. As in Europe, soccer is the spectator sport of preference throughout the country. And just as in Europe, passionate fans sometimes boil over into brawling hordes. If you ever find yourself in Shanghai, check out the game at the Hong Kou Stadium. In Beijing, try the Workers’ Stadium near the City Hotel.

Here are some useful phrases to know, whether you’re an amateur or a professional athlete. At one time or another, you’ve certainly heard (or said) them all.

- **Wǒ xiāng qù kàn qiúsài.** (waw shyahng chyew kahn chyo sye; I want to see a ballgame.)
- **Bǐfēn duōshǎo?** (bee fun dwaw shaow; What’s the score?)
- **Nèixie duì cānjiā bǐsài?** (nay shyeh dwaw tsahn jya bee sye; Which teams are playing?)
- **Wǒ yíngle.** (waw yeeng luh; I won.)
- **Nǐ shūle.** (nee shoo luh; You lost.)
- **Wǒ zhēn xūyào liànxi.** (waw jun shyew yaow lyan she; I really need to practice.)
- **Wǒ dā de bútài hǎo.** (waw dah duh boo tye how; I don’t play very well.)

Here’s a list of things that happen at sports events. You’ll need to know these terms if you want to follow the action:

- **chuī shàozǐ** (chway shaow dzuh; to blow a whistle)
- **dāngzhù qiú** (dahng joo chyo; to block the ball)
- **dé yì fēn** (duh ee fun; to score a point)
- **tījīn yì qiú** (tee jeen ee chyo; to make a goal)
- **fā qiú** (fah chyo; to serve the ball)
- **méi tóuzhòng** (may toe joong; to miss the shot)

Today you can find such sports as hot-air ballooning and gliding in Anyang. Kind of amazing when you discover Anyang was the capital of China’s very first dynasty, almost two millennia before the Common Era. You can even hook up with a hot-air balloon tour of the Great Wall and the Silk Road. These sports certainly present a good way to cover such great distances without requiring you to have been a Hun on horseback. Speaking of which, if camel treks are your thing, Chinese travel agencies can now even arrange for you to ride with the Mongols, those horsemen who’ve perfected the art of riding over the centuries.
Chapter 8: Enjoying Yourself: Recreation and Sports

Talkin’ the Talk

Tim and Lacie go to a basketball game together.

Tim: 超 sai shénme shíhòu kāishì?
Bee sye shummuh shir ho kye shir?
When does the game begin?

Lacie: 快 yào kāishì le.
Kwye yaow kye shir luh.
It’s going to start soon.

A few minutes later the game finally begins.

Tim: 伟! Tā méi tóuzhòng!!
Wah! Tah may toe joong!
Wow! He missed the shot!

Lacie: 木 guānxì. Lingwài néige duiyuán gāng gāng kòulán défēn.
May gwahn she. Leeng why nay guh dway ywan gahng gahng ko lahn duh fun.
It doesn’t matter. That other player just gained a point with a slam dunk.

Words to Know

- tǐyù chǎng  足球场  足球场  stadium
- cáipànyuán  裁判员  裁判员  referee
- duìfāng  对方  对方  the opposing team
- zúqíú chǎng  足球场  足球场  soccer field
- píngjú  比分  比分  tied
- fēnshǔ  分数  分数  the score
- jīfēnbiăn  比分板  比分板  scoreboard
- fànguī  违规  违规  foul
- shàngbàncāng  上半场  上半场  first half of a game
- xiàbàncāng  下半场  下半场  second half of a game
Fun & Games

What are the people in the pictures doing? Use the correct verb in your response. (See Appendix C for the answers.)

A. ___________________
B. ___________________
C. ___________________
D. ___________________
E. ___________________
Although e-mail may be the preferred method of communication these days, you can’t duplicate hearing your loved one’s shēngyīn (shung yeen; voice) on the other end of the line or reaching just the right person you need to begin discussing a merger over the computer. All the more reason to know how to use the telephone in addition to surfing the Net.

The art of making a phone call in another language, and even in another country, is just that — an art. To master it, you have to feel comfortable with such basics as using the diànhuà (dyan hwah; telephone) in the first place. Be sure to check out a few things beforehand, like what dìqū hàomā (dee chyew how mah; area code) to bō (baw; dial) first. What do you actually say when someone picks up on the other end? This chapter helps you navigate the communication terrain, whether you’re in Idaho or China.

Using a Telephone

Before even going near a diànhuà (dyan hwah; telephone), you may want to become familiar with some common Chinese words and phrases connected to using one. In fact, you see so many different kinds of phones nowadays, you shouldn’t have a problem finding out which one best suits your needs:

- shōu̯jí (show jee; cell phone)
- wúxiàn diànhuà (woo shyan dyan hwah; cordless phone)
- gōngyòng diànhuà (goong yoong dyan hwah; public telephone)
Sometimes you need the help of a jiěxiàn yuán (jye shyan ywan; operator) for things like guójì diànhuà (gwaw jee dyan hwah; international phone calls) or to help you look up a diànhuà hàomā (dyan hwah how mah; telephone number). Of course, you don’t need a jiěxiàn yuán to help you make a běnshì diànhuà (bun shir dyan hwah; local call) or even a chángtú diànhuà (chahng too dyan hwah; long-distance call). By and large, you can take care of most anything else on your own. Except, perhaps, a duīfāng fūfèi diànhuà (dway fahng foo fay dyan hwah; collect call).

Here are some other communication tools you may want to use:

- **dā diànhuà** (dah dyan hwah; to make a phone call)
- **chá diànhuà hàomābù** (chah dyan hwah how mah boo; look a number up in a phone book)
- **diànhuà hàomā** (dyan hwah how mah; telephone number)
- **diànhuàkā** (dyan hwah kah; phone card)

If you’re like me, you need to ask plenty of basic questions before you figure out what you’re doing with a telephone overseas. Here are a couple questions that may come in handy:

- **Zēnme dā diànhuà?** (dzummuh dah dyan hwah; How can I place a phone call?)
- **Zài nār kéyī dā diànhuà?** (dzye nar kuh yee dah dyan hwah; Where can I make a call?)
- **Běnshì diànhuà shōufēi duōshāo qián?** (bun shir dyan hwah show fay dwaw shaow chyan; How much is a local phone call?)

## Going Mobile with a Cell Phone

The majority of folks in the world don’t have telephones in their homes. Can you imagine? That goes for mainland China as well, where a quarter of humanity resides. You can find them everywhere in Taiwan, however, as well as in Singapore and Hong Kong. In big cities across the globe you’re apt to see a million people (sometimes literally in places like Shanghai) on the street with their shōujī (show jee; cell phone) in tow . . . or, rather, in hand, right next to their zuībā (dzwaw bah; mouth), yakking away. It’s the preferred mode of communication these days.

Although the more well-known cell phone brands have tried to make their mark on the vast Chinese market of cell phone users, home grown brands such as TCL and Ningbo Bird corner the market on their home turf nowadays.
Here are some words that may come in handy now that everyone’s using a cell phone or beeper:

- **hū** (who; beep)
- **hūjí** (who jee; beeper)
- **hūjí hàomà** (who jee how mah; beeper number)
- **shōují** (show jee; cell phone)
- **shōují hàomà** (show jee how mah; cell phone number)

Cell phones have become so wildly popular that even as recently as 1998, over 10,000 phones were confiscated in northern China after officials discovered that members of high government used them as bribes or gifts for friends and family. They even became the subject of a government anti-corruption campaign.

So now that you have the lowdown on how crucial cell phones appear to be in contemporary China, you’re probably itching to make a phone call. On to the basics... 

### Making a Phone Call

“**Wéi?**” (way; hello). You hear this word spoken in the second (or rising) tone a lot on the other end of the line when you make a phone call. It’s kind of like testing the waters to see if someone is there. You can reply with the same word in the fourth (or falling) tone so it sounds like you’re making a statement, or you can just get right to asking if the person you want to speak with is in at the moment. (For more about the four tones, see Chapter 1.)

A phrase you may hear on the other end of the line in mainland China is “**Nǐ nār?**” (nee nar; literally: where are you?) It asks what **dānwèi** (dahn way; work unit) you’re attached to. After these first little questions, you may finally be ready to ask for the person you intended to call in the first place.

For decades after the Communist rule took over mainland China in 1949, all Chinese people were assigned a **dānwèi**, which pretty much regulated every aspect of one’s life — from where one lived, when one married, and even when one had children. Asking about one’s **dānwèi** is still pretty common when answering the phone.
Here are some things you can do before, during, or after your call:

- **náqǐ diànhuà** (nah chee dyan hwah; pick up the phone)
- **dǎ diànhuà** (dah dyan hwah; make a phone call)
- **shŏu dăo diànhuà** (show daow dyan hwah; receive a phone call)
- **jiē diànhuà** (jyeh dyan hwah; answer a phone call)
- **huí diànhuà** (hway dyan hwah; return a phone call)
- **liú yī ge huà** (lyo ee guh hwah; leave a message)
- **guà diànhuà** (gwah dyan hwah; hang up)

### Calling your friends

Feel like getting in touch with a **péngyǒu** (puhng yo; friend) or **tóngshī** (toong shir; co-worker) to **liáotián** (lyaow tyan; chat) after class or work? Want to confer with your **tóngxué** (toong shweh; classmate) about tomorrow’s **kăoshi** (cow shir; exam)? Maybe you two are planning a **wăn huì** (wahn hway; party) over the **zhōumò** (joe maw; weekend) and you need to confer about the details. To get the party started, you have to pick up that phone and start talking.

### Talkin’ the Talk

Margaret calls to see if her friend Luò Chéng is at home and speaks with his father.

Mr. Chéng:  **Wéi?**
            Way?
            Hello?

Margaret:  **Qĭngwēn, Luò Chéng zài ma?**
            Cheeng won, law chung dzye mah?
            May I please speak to Luo Cheng?

Mr. Chéng:  **Qĭngwēn, nín shì nă yí wèi?**
            Cheeng won, neen shir nah ee way?
            May I ask who’s calling?

Margaret:  **Wŏ shĭ tăde tóngxué, Margaret.**
            Waw shir tah duh toong shweh, Margaret.
            I’m his classmate, Margaret.

Mr. Chéng:  **Hăo. Shăodēng. Wŏ qŭ jiăo tă.**
            Okay. Just a moment. I’ll go get him.
Chapter 9: Talking on the Phone

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wéi?</td>
<td>way</td>
<td>Hello?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wèi.</td>
<td>way</td>
<td>Hello.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qǐngwèn, nín shì nǎ yì wéi?</td>
<td>cheeng won, neen shir nah ee way</td>
<td>May I ask who's calling?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shǎođèng</td>
<td>shaow dung</td>
<td>Just a moment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ringing hotels and places of business

Calling places of business may be a bit different than the more informal call to a friend or co-worker. When you call a lǐguān (lyew gwahn; hotel), shāngdiàn (shahng dyan; store), or a particular gōngsi (goong suh; company), you may be asked what fēnjī hàomā (fun jee how mah; extension) you want. If you don't know, you can ask for the same:

Qǐngwèn, fēnjī hàomā shì duōshāo? (cheeng one, fun jee how mah shir dwaw shaow; May I ask what the extension number is?)

After you figure out the extension, the jìèxiànshev (jyeh shyan shung; operator) will hopefully say:

Wǒ xiànzài jiù gěi nǐ jiè hào. (waw shyan dzye jyo gay nee jyeh how; I'll transfer you now.)

Even after all your work thus far, you may find that you jìè bù tōng (jyeh boo toong; can’t connect) or that méiyǒu rén jìe (mayo run jyeh; no one answers). Maybe the diànhuàxiàn duànle (dyaw hwah shyan dwahn luh; the line has been disconnected). That’s really máfan (mah fahn; annoying), isn’t it? Here are some other máfan problems you may encounter while trying to make a phone call:

- méiyǒu bōhàoyīn (mayo baw how yeen; no dial tone)
- nǐ bōcuò hàomāle (nee baw tswaw how mah luh; you dialed the wrong number)
- zāyīn (dzah yeen; static)
- méi rén jìe diànhuà (may run jyeh dyan hwah; no one answers)
If you finally do get through to an employee’s office only to discover the person isn’t there, you can always leave a **yōu shēng yóujiàn** (yo shung yo jyan; voicemail). When dealing with voicemail, you may have to deal with the following kinds of instructions on a recorded message:

- **Nín rúguō shìyòng ànjian shì diànhuàjì, qìng ànjian shì diànhuàjì.** (neen roo gwaw shir yoong ahn jyan shir dyan hwah jee, cheeng ahn sahn; If you have a touch-tone phone, please press 3 now.)
- **Nín rúguō shìyòng xuánzuān bōhào jì, qìng bie guà.** (neen roo gwaw shir yoong shwan jawn bow how jee, cheeng byeh gwah; If you have a rotary phone, please stay on the line.)
- **Yào huí dào zhǔ mìlù qìng àn jīngzhìhào.** (yaow hway daow joo moo loo cheeng ahn jeeng dzuh how; If you want to return to the main menu, please press # (pound) now.)

Phoning a client

If you want to reach your **kèhù** (kuh hoo; client) or your **shēng yì huǒ bàn** (shuhng yee haw ban; business partner) in today’s business world, you just have to pick up that phone. Personally connecting with a phone call is a good way to maintain good **guānxi** (guan she; relationships; connections). It’s the next best thing to being there.

Sometimes you need a little help from the **mǐshù** (mee shoo; secretary) to connect to the person you want to reach.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Jacob enlists the help of Liú Xiǎo jiě (Miss Liu), his trusty secretary in Taipei, to help him make a call.

**Jacob:** Liú Xiǎo jiě, zěnme jiē wàixiàn?
*Lyō shyaow jyeh, dzummuh jyeh why shyan?*
Miss Liu, how can I get an outside line?

**Liú Xiǎo jiě:** Méi wèntí. Wǒ bāng nǐ dà zhège hàomǎ.
*May one tee. Waw bahng nee dah jay guh how mah.*
Don’t worry. I’ll help you dial the number.
Chapter 9: Talking on the Phone

Jacob: Xièxiè.
Shyeh shyeh.
Thanks.

Miss Liu gets through and speaks to Mr. Wang’s secretary.

Liú Xiăojiĕ: Wéi? Zhè shì Wáng Xiănshēng de bāngōngshì ma?
Way? Jay shir wahng shyan shung duh bahn goong shir ma?
Hello? Do I have the office of Mr. Wang?

Secretary: Dui le. Jiù shì.
Dway luh. Jyo shir.
Yes it is.

Liú Xiăojiĕ: Kéyī gēi wǒ jìe tā ma?
Kuh yee gay waw jyeh tah mah?
Can you connect me with him please?

Secretary: Duìbùqî, tā xiànzài kāihui. Nǐ yào liúyán ma?
Dway boo chee, tah shyan dzye kye hway. Nee yaow lyo yan mah?
I’m sorry, he’s in a meeting at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?

Liú Xiăojiĕ: Máfan nǐ gàosù tā ABC gōngsī de jīnglǐ Jacob Smith géi tā dà diànhuà le?
Mah fahn nee gaow soo tah ABC goong suh duh jeeng lee Jacob Smith gay tah dah dyan hwah lah?
May I trouble you to tell him that Jacob Smith, the Manager of ABC Company, called him?

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>wàixiàn</td>
<td>outside line</td>
<td>jǐnglǐ</td>
<td>manager</td>
<td>zōngcái</td>
<td>president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhǔrèn</td>
<td>director</td>
<td>fù zōngcái</td>
<td>vice president</td>
<td>dzoong tseye</td>
<td>joo run</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

171
Using a calling card

Sometimes you may find yourself on the road without a cell phone or yìngbì (yeeng bee; coins) to make a phone call directly from the nearest gōngyòng diànhuàting (goong yoong dyan hwah teeng; public telephone booth). However, you have a diànhuàkā (dyan hwah kah; phone card) in your pocket, so you decide to try it out.

Sorry, I’m Not Home Right Now . . .

Because people lead such busy lives, more often than not you don’t find them in when you try to gěi tāmen dà diànhuà (gay tah mun dah dyan hwah; give them a call). You have no choice but to liúhuà (lyo hwah; leave a message) on the lûyīn diànhuà (loo yeen dyan hwah; answering machine). You can always try to liúhuà with a real rén (run; person), too. Sometimes you have to press the jìngzìjiàn (jeen dzuh jyan; pound key) before leaving a xìnxì (sheen she; message). In that case, you have to recognize the jìngzìhào (jeeng dzuh how; pound sign).

Listening to messages that people leave you

If you return home from a long, hard day at work to discover that many callers have liúle huà (lyo luh hwah; left messages) for you, you may be tempted to tīng (teeng; listen to) them right away rather than bùlī (boo lee; ignore) them. Relax. Take a hot bath. Have a glass of wine while you cook dinner. After a break you’ll be ready to tackle all the messages on that ol’ answering machine.

Here’s what a typical message sounds like:


Hello? Jeremy, this is Jason. Want to go to that party together this weekend? It should be awesome. When you get a chance give me a call. My cell number is (212) 939-9991. Thanks.
Understanding other people's greeting messages

Here are some common greetings you may hear if you reach an answering machine:

- **Zhè shì Barry Jones.** *(jay shir Barry Jones; You have reached Barry Jones.)*
- **Wǒ xiànzái búzài.** *(waw shyan dzye boo dzye; I'm not in at the moment/I'm away from my desk.)*
- **Sān yuè sì hào zhīqián wǒ zài dūjià.** *(sahn yweh suh how jir chyan waw dzye doo jyah; I'm on vacation until March 4th.)*
- **Nín rúguǒ xiǎng gèn wǒde zhǔshōu tōnghùa, qǐng bō fēnjī 108.** *(neen roo gwaw shyahng gun waw duh joo show toong hwah, cheeng baw fun jee yaow leeng bah; If you’d like to speak with my assistant, please dial extension 108.)*
- **Qǐng liú xià nín de míngzi, diànhuà hàomā hé jiānduǎn de liúyán. Wǒ huì gěi nín huì diànhuà.** *(cheeng lyo shyah neen duh meeng dzuh, dyan hwah how mah huh jyan dwahn duh lyo yan. Waw hway gay neen hway dyan hwah; Please leave your name, number, and a brief message. I’ll get back to you.)*

Leaving messages

When you leave a message on an answering machine, be sure to leave clear instructions about what you want the person to do:

- **Wǒ zài gěi nǐ dǎ diànhuà** *(waw dzye gay nee dah dyan hwah; I’ll call you again.)*
- **Nǐ huì jiā zhīhòu qǐng gěi wǒ dǎ diànhuà.** *(nee hwah jyah jir ho cheeng gay waw dah dyan hwah; After you get home, please give me a call.)*
- **Bié wàngle huí wǒde diànhuà.** *(byeh wahng luh hwah waw duh dyan hwah; Don’t forget to return my call.)*

If a live person answers and you have to leave a message, be sure to be polite. Here are some good phrases to keep in mind:

- **Qǐng gāosù tā wǒ gěi tā dǎ diànhuà le.** *(cheeng gaow soo tah waw gay tah dah dyan hwah luh; Please tell her I called.)*
- **Máfan nǐ qǐng tā huí wǒde diànhuà?** *(mah fahn nee cheeng tah hway waw duh dyan hwah; May I trouble you to please have him return my call?)*
Answering machines are still something of an oddity in China, so many Chinese don’t know quite what to do when they hear your recorded voice on the other end of the line. Be clear in your message that the caller should leave a name and phone number after the hū (who; beep).

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Ruby calls Betty and discovers she’s not home. She has to leave a message with her mother.

Mom:  
Wēi?  
Way?  
Hello?

Ruby:  
Qīngwèn, Betty zài ma?  
Cheeng one, Betty dzye mah?  
Hello, is Betty there?

Mom:  
Tā búzài. Tā qù yóu jú le. Qīngwèn, nǐ shì nǎ yí wèi?  
Tah boo dzye. Tah chyew yo jyew luh. Cheeng one, neen shir nah ee way?  
She’s not home. She went to the post office. May I ask who this is?

Ruby:  
Wǒ shì Ruby, tāde tóngbān tóngxué. Máfan nǐ qīng gāosù tā wǒ gěi tā dǎ diànhuà le.  
Waw shir Ruby, tah duh toong bahn toong shweh.  
Mah fahn nee cheeng gaow soo tah waw gay tah dah dyan hwah luh.  
I’m Ruby, her classmate. May I trouble you to please tell her I called?

Mom:  
Yídìng huì.  
Ee deeng hway.  
Certainly.
# Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Máfàn nǐ?</td>
<td>mah fahn nee</td>
<td>May I trouble you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vídìng huì</td>
<td>ee deeng hway</td>
<td>I certainly will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qìngwèn, nín shì nǎ yí wèi?</td>
<td>Cheeng one neen shir nah ee way?</td>
<td>May I ask who this is?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Match each of the Chinese phrases to the correct English phrase. Turn to Appendix C for the answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Phrases</th>
<th>Chinese Phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just a moment.</td>
<td>Wéi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is she at home?</td>
<td>Duìbúqǐ, nǐ bōcuò hàomǎle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hello.</td>
<td>Shǎodēng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorry, you dialed the wrong number.</td>
<td>Qing nǐ liú yíge huà.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please leave a message.</td>
<td>Tā zài ma?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 10

At the Office and Around the House

In This Chapter

- Conducting business
- Using the Internet
- Checking e-mail
- Apartment hunting

Time to get down to shēng yì (shuhng yee; business). Your shēng yì, that is. Want to know how to manage that job in Jiangsu or how to deal with the head honcho? This chapter will help you do business in Chinese — everything from making a business appointment to conducting a meeting to checking your e-mail on the fly. It also tells you how to look for a new apartment and search for furniture so that you can finally come home and relax after all that work.

Because China has the fastest growing economy in the world, it’s no wonder you gravitated to this chapter. Think of it. China is the fastest-growing source of international profits for U.S. companies, with over a billion potential customers. The United States is China’s second largest trading partner (after Japan), and has hundreds of satellite offices everywhere from Shanghai to Shenzhen. With hundreds of billions (that’s right, billions) of dollars in exports throughout the world, China is most decidedly making its mark.

Your Office Digs

Whether you’re a mishū (mee shoo; secretary) or the zhūxí (joo she; chairman) of the Board, the atmosphere and physical environment of your bàngōngshì (bahn goong shir; office) is pretty important. It can even help get you through an otherwise tough day. Might as well make it as shūfu (shoo
foo; comfortable) as possible. Why not put a zhàopiàn (jaow pyan; photo) of the family gǒu (go; dog) on your bàngōngzhūō (bahn goong jwaw; desk) for starters? That should put a smile on your face as you start the day.

You don’t even have to get up out of your yīzi (ee dzuh; chair) to notice all the techie stuff around you. These days, just about any office you work in or visit has the following basic things:

- diànhuà (dyan hwah; telephone)
- fūyínjī (foo een jee; copier)
- diānnào (dyan now; computer)
- chuánzhēn (chwan jun; fax)
- dāyínjī (dah een jee; printer)

Of course, the first thing you might look around for when you get to work in the morning is the kāfēijī (kah fay jee; coffee machine). In fact, the one part of the day you may look forward to the most is the xiūxi (shyo she; coffee break).

As you look around your xiāogéjīān (shyaow guh jyan; cubicle), I bet you can find all these things:

- gāngbī (gahng bee; pen)
- qiānbī (chyan bee; pencil)
- dāng’ān (dahng aahn; file)
- huíwénzhēn (hway one jun; paper clip)
- dīngshūjī (deeng shoo jee; stapler)
- xiāngpǐjīn (shyahng pee jeen; rubberband)
- bijiběn (bee jee bun; notebook)
- jiāo dāi (jyaow dye; scotch tape)

If you can’t find some indispensable item just when you need it, you can always ask someone in the next xiāogéjīān (shyaow guh jyan; cubicle). The simplest way to ask is by using the phrase “Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu ____?” (nee yo mayo ______; Do you have any ____?) Use that phrase as often as you like. Just make sure you can reciprocate whenever your tóngshì (toong shir; co-worker) needs something as well.

- Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu gāngbī? (nee yo mayo gahng bee; Do you have a pen?)
- Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu dīngshūjī? (nee yo mayo deeng shoo jee; Do you have a stapler?)
Mínglêi and Shirley are co-workers in Xi’an. Shirley is about to go into a meeting but can’t find her notebook. She quickly checks with her good friend Mínglêi in the next cubicle.

Shirley:  Mínglêi! Wǒ jíde yào ming! Kuài yào kâihui le, kěshì zhāobúdào wǒde bíjìběn.
Meeng lay! Waw jee duh yaow meeng! Kwye yaow kye hway luh, kuh shir jaow boo daow waw duh bee jee bun.
Mínglêi! I’m in such a hurry! We’re about to have a meeting, and I can’t find my notebook.

Waw yo bee jee bun. Jyeh gay nee.
I have a notebook. I’ll loan it to you.

Shirley:  Tài hǎo le! Xièxiè.
Tye how luh! Shyeh shyeh.
That’s great. Thanks.

Whenever you add “-de yào ming” (duh yaow meeng) right after a verb, you add a touch of drama and emphasize whatever the verb is. For example, if you say you’re lèi (lay), that means you’re tired. But if you say you’re lèi de yào ming (lay duh yaow meeng), that means you’re absolutely exhausted. If you’re not just máng (mahng; busy), but máng de yào ming (mahng duh yaow meeng), you’re extremely busy, running around like a chicken without a head. Here are some useful phrases to compare:

➤ Wǒ lěng. (waw lung; I’m cold.)
➤ Wǒ lěng de yào ming. (waw lung duh yaow meeng; I’m freezing.)
➤ Jǐntiān hěn rè. (jeen tyan hun ruh; It’s very hot today.)
➤ Jǐntiān rè de yào ming. (jeen tyan ruh duh yaow meeng; It’s a real scorcher today.)

If you’re going to emphasize a verb by adding -de yào ming after it, you can’t also use hěn (hun; very) in the same breath. It makes your statement redundant.
Conducting a Meeting

Congratulations! You’ve finally set up shop in your new office in Beijing or welcomed your business partners from China and are all set to have your first business meeting. But just what is the mùdì (moo dee; purpose) of your huìyì (hway ee; meeting)? Is it to yānshì (yan shir; give a presentation) about a new chānpǐn (chahn peen; product)? Is it to tánpàn (tahn pahn; negotiate) a hétóng (huh toong; contract)? How about for the purpose of shòuxùn (show shwun; training) — either you or your Chinese colleagues? Do you have a specific yíchéng (ee chung; agenda) in mind already? I hope so. You definitely don’t want to look unprepared.

Scheduling and planning a meeting

You might be one of those people who needs to ānpái huìyì yíchéng (ahn pye hway ee ee chung; schedule a meeting) just to prepare for another meeting. Here are some things you may want to do at such a preliminary meeting:

✓ zhídīng huìyì yíchéng (jir deeng hway ee ee chung; set an agenda)
✓ tǎolùn wèntí (taow lwun one tee; discuss problems)
✓ jǐéjué wèntí (jyeh jweh one tee; solve problems)
✓ tuánduì jiànshe (twan dway jyan shuh; team building)

What will your role be at these meetings? Will you be the one to zhūchí huìyì (joo chir hway ee; lead the meeting) or just cānjiā huìyì (tsahn jya hway ee; participate in the meeting)? Will you be the xiétiáorén (shyeh tyaow run; facilitator) of the meeting, trying to elicit as much fānkui (fahn kway; feedback)
as possible? Or do you always have the unenviable task of contacting everyone in order to qūxiào huiyì (chyew shyaow hway ee; cancel the meeting)?

Suppose you’re the one who’s zhūchí huiyì (joo chir hway ee; leading the meeting) and you want to make sure everyone has a say in matters. Here are some phrases you can use to try and include everyone in the process:

✔ Jack, nǐ hái yǒu shénme xǔyào būchōng ma? (Jack, nee hi yo shummuh shyew yaow boo choong mah; Jack, do you have anything else to add?)

✔ Wǒmen xǔyào duì zhège xiàngmù biāojué ma? (waw men shyunw yaow dway jay guh shyahng moo byaow jweh mah; Do we need to vote on this item?)

✔ Shéi hái yǒu shénme yìjiàn huòzhè wèntí? (shay hi yo shummuh ee jyan hwaw juh one tee; Who still has any comments or questions?)

Making the initial greeting

Suppose you’ve already had some contacts with your business counterparts on the phone or via e-mail but have never actually met them until now. A mere “nice to meet you” may not suffice, especially if you want to emphasize how very glad you are to finally be speaking face to face. Here are a couple of phrases you can use:

✔ Zōngsuàn jiàn dào nín le, shízài ràng wǒ hěn gāoxìng. (dzoong swan jyan daow neen luh, shir dzye rahng waw hun gaow sheeng; It’s a pleasure to finally meet you.)

✔ Hěn gāoxìng jiàn dào nín běnrén. (hun gaow sheeng jyan daow neen bun run; I’m glad to meet you in person.)

Always greet the person who holds the highest rank first before saying hello to others. Hierarchy is important to the Chinese, so try to always be conscious of this or you may unintentionally cause someone to “lose face” by not acknowledging his or her importance in the overall scheme of things. This goes for your side of the equation as well. The leader of your team should enter the room first and then wait to be seated by the host of the meeting.

And one more thing: Try to get a list of the names of your Chinese counterparts in advance so you can practice pronouncing them correctly. That’s sure to win a few brownie points right there.

The people you meet with may have one of the following titles:

✔ zhūxí (joo she; chairman)

✔ zhūrèn (joo run; director of a department)
In Chinese, last names always come first. When addressing someone with a title, always say the last name first, followed by the title. So if you know someone’s name is Li Peijie (Li being the surname), and he’s the Director of the company, you address him as Lî Zhûrèn (lee joo run; Director Li).

Be sure you have business cards ready to give out when you go to China. It is most appreciated if they are in Chinese as well as English. You should always hand and receive each business card with two hands. Feel free to lay out the name cards in the exact same order as those seated so you’ll remember who is who.

If you are the guest of honor at a dinner banquet, you’re seated facing the entrance to the room. Don’t worry if you get confused figuring out where to sit when facing a round table. Your host will make sure to show you to your seat. (See Chapter 5 for more eating tips.)

**Starting the meeting**

Here are some things to say when you’re ready to get the business meeting started:

- Zǎoshàng hǎo. (dzaow shahng how; Good morning.)
- Huânyìng nín dào wômen de bàngôngshì. (hwahn eeng neen daow waw mun duh bahn goong shir; Welcome to our office.)
- Zài kâihui yìqián, ràng wômen zuò yîge ziwô jièshào. (dzye kye hway ee chyan, rahng waw men dzwaw yee guh dzuh waw jyeh shaow; Before the meeting begins, let’s introduce ourselves.)
- Wô xiâng jièshào yìxià huîyì de cànjiâzhē. (waw shyahng jyeh shaow ee shyah hway ee duh tsahn jya juh; I’d like to introduce the conference participants.)
- Zánmen kâishī ba. (dzah mun kye shir bah; Let’s begin.)
Making a presentation

When it’s time to give a presentation during the meeting, here are some words that you may want to use:

- bânzi (bahn dzuh; board) and fēnbī (fun bee; chalk)
- huàbān (hwah bahn; easel) and cāibī (tsye bee; marker)
- cāi liào (tsye lyaow; handouts)
- chātú (chah too; illustrations)
- biāogé (byaow guh; charts)
- túbīào (too byaow; diagrams)

Planning to go hi-tech instead? In that case, you may want one of these:

- PowerPoint yānshì (PowerPoint yan shir; PowerPoint presentation)
- huángdēngjǐ (hwahn dung jee; slide projector) and píngmù (peeng moo; screen)
- tóu yǐng piàn (toe yeeng pyan; transparency)

If you plan on videotaping your presentation, you need a lùxiàngjì (loo shyahng jee; video recorder), and if the room is pretty big, you may also want to use a mālkèfèng (my kuh fung; microphone).

Ending the meeting

Here are some phrases that may come in handy at the conclusion of the meeting:

- Gānxìè dàjiā jǐntiān chūxí huìyì. (gahn shyeh dah jyah jeen tyan choo she hway ee; Thank you everyone for participating in today’s meeting.)
- Wǒmen xūyào zài kāihuǐ tāolùn zhè jiàn shìqíng ma? (waw men shyew yaow dzye kye hway taow lwun jyan jyan shir cheeng mah; Do we need another meeting to continue the discussion?)
- Zài lǐkǎi zhǐqián, wǒmen bā xià cì huìyì de rìqī dìng xiàlái ba. (dzye lee kye jir chyan, waw mun bah shyah tsuh hway ee duh ir chee deeng shyah lye bah; Before we leave, let’s confirm a date for the next meeting.)
Catherine and Joseph have introduced themselves to their Chinese counterparts at the ABC Company in Shenzhen. They plan to give a presentation on their new software product a little later on.

Catherine: Dàjiā hǎo. Zhè cì huìyì de mùdì shì gěi nǐmen jièshào ABC gōngsī de xīn chǎnpǐn — yīzhòng bào biǎo de ruǎnjiàn.

Hello everyone. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce you all to ABC Company’s new product — a type of spreadsheet software.

Joseph: Měi gè rén dōu yǒu huìyì yìchéng ma?

Does everyone have a copy of the agenda?

Catherine: Xièxiè, Joseph. Dui le. Dàjiā dōu yǐjīng nǎdào zǐliào le ma?

Thank you, Joseph. Yes, has everyone already received the materials?

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**Words to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zǐliào</td>
<td>dzuh lyaow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huìyì</td>
<td>hway ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huìyì yíchéng</td>
<td>hway ee ee chung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mùdì</td>
<td>moo dee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bào biào</td>
<td>baow byaow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruǎnjiàn</td>
<td>rwahn jyan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because China has opened up to the world so quickly since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 (the United States established diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic in 1979), U.S. businesses in many areas have set up shop in many parts of the country. Whether your company has an office in mainland China, Taiwan, or Hong Kong, you’re sure to find one or more of the industries listed in Table 10-1 represented in those places.

Table 10-1: Foreign Industries with Representation in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>guānggào hé gōngguǎn</td>
<td>gwhang gaow huh goong gwan</td>
<td>advertising and public relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qìché</td>
<td>chee chuh</td>
<td>automotive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yínháng yǔ cáiwù</td>
<td>yeen hahng yew tsye woo</td>
<td>banking and finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diànnǎo</td>
<td>dyan now</td>
<td>computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiànzǎo</td>
<td>jyan dzaow</td>
<td>construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gōngchéng</td>
<td>goong chung</td>
<td>engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yúlè</td>
<td>yew luh</td>
<td>entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shízhūāng</td>
<td>shir jwahng</td>
<td>fashion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bǎoxiān</td>
<td>baow shyan</td>
<td>insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xīnwēn</td>
<td>sheen one</td>
<td>journalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guǎnlǐ zhíxún</td>
<td>gwhahng lée dzuh shwun</td>
<td>management consulting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cǎikuǎng yú shíyóu</td>
<td>tsye kwhahng yew shir yo</td>
<td>mining and petroleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhīyào</td>
<td>jir yaw</td>
<td>pharmaceuticals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūbān</td>
<td>choo bahn</td>
<td>publishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fángdīchān</td>
<td>fahng dee chahn</td>
<td>real estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yūn shū</td>
<td>yewn shoo</td>
<td>shipping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regardless of what industry you’re in, here are some things that you can do to help you decide how to advertise your company and its products or services or to determine how it’s going:
And here are some things you should have on hand in meetings or at that mào yì zhànxiāohùi (maow ee jahn shyaow hway; trade show):

- xiāocèzhī (shyaow tsuh dzuh; brochure)
- chānpīn mù lù (chahn peen moo loo; catalogue)
- tùbiāo (too byaow; logo)

Of course, if your product is so good it virtually sells itself, your greatest source of business is undoubtedly going to come from good ol’ kǒuchuán guānggào (ko chwan gwaehng gaow; word-of-mouth advertising).

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Joel and Peter, two salesmen, visit Guangdong to see if the Flying Peacock Company wants to buy their product. They’re in a meeting with the Flying Peacock Company president. They have already gone through the preliminary introductions and small talk.

Joel: **Zhè shì yǒu guān wǒmen chānpīn de xiāocèzhī.**
*Jay shir yo gwan waw mun chahn peen duh shyaow tsuh dzuh.*
Here’s a brochure on our product.

Peter: **Wǒmen de chānpīn shì yǒu wǒmen zǐjì de zhūānjīā shějī de ěrqíě zhèngmíng shì mǎn chénggōng de.**
*Waw men duh chahn peen shir yo waw men dzuh jee duh jwan jyah shuh jee duh are chyeh jung meeng shir mahn chung goong duh.*
Our product was designed by our own experts and has proven to be quite successful.
Using the Internet

These days you can reach your business partner in Beijing in a matter of seconds through **diànzǐ kōngjiān** (dyan dzuh koong jyan; cyberspace). With **shǒútǐ shì** (show tee shir; portable) computers and multiple **jiānsuǒ yǐnqín** (jyan swaw yeen cheen; search engines), it’s possible to **jiānsuǒ guójì wǎngluò** (jyan swaw gwaw jee wahng lwaw; search the Internet) and find just about anything you’re looking for. Not sure what you’re doing with computers? Forget your **mìmǎ** (mee mah; password)? **Jíshù fúwù** (jee shoo foo woo; technical support) is only a phone call away. Here are some things you can do nowadays with computers and through the Internet

- **dǎkāi diànnǎo** (dah kye dyan now; turn on the computer)
- **guǎndiào diànnǎo** (gwahn dyaow dyan now; turn off the computer)
- **jìn rù** (gin roo; log on)
By the beginning of the 21st century, there were over 10 million PCs and 26 million Internet users in China, even though the government strictly controls its use. Individuals are charged by the minute if they use their own home computers, so folks may not be that keen on checking their e-mail too frequently. If something’s really important, you might want to resort to a phone call so you know they’ll pick up on the other end of the line.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Eugene and Sarah discuss the wonders of the Internet.

Eugene:  
**Yǐntèwǎng dàodī shì shénme dōngxi?**
*Een tuh wahng daow dee shir shummuh doong she?*  
Just what exactly is the Internet?

Sarah:  
**Yǐntèwǎng shì yīzhǒng diànnǎo de guójì hùlián wǎng. Tā tígòng xìnxi fúwù.**
*Een tuh wahng shir ee joong dyan now duh gwaw jee hoo lian wahng. Tah tee goong sheen she foo woo.*  
The Internet is a kind of interconnected international network that provides information.

Eugene:  
**Tǐngshuō wànwäiwǎng shénme dōu yǒu.**
*Teeng shwaw wahn way wahng shummuh doe yo.*  
I’ve heard that the World Wide Web has everything.

Sarah:  
**Duí le. Nǐ yì shàngwǎng jiù kěyī liúlán hēn duō bǔtóng de wāngzhàn.**
*Dway luh. Nee ee shahng wahng jyo kuh yee lahn hun dwaw boo toong duh wahng jahng.*  
That’s correct. The minute you go online you can browse all sorts of different Web sites.
Checking Your E-Mail

These days your diànzì yóuxiāng dizhī (dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir; e-mail address) is as important as your míngzi (meeng dzuh; name) and your diànhuà hàomā (dyan hwah how mah; phone number) when it comes to keeping in touch. It’s almost indispensable if you want to do business. Just check your shōuxinxiāng (show sheen shyahng; inbox) and you’ll probably have received a few more diànzì yóujìàn (dyan dzuh yo jyan; e-mails) while reading this section alone.

Here are some things you can do with e-mail when you have your own account:

✔ fā diànzì yóujìàn (fah dyan dzuh yo jyan; send an e-mail)
✔ sòng wénjiàn (soong one jyan; send a file)
Talkin’ the Talk

Lonnie and Terry discuss how to e-mail each other.

Lonnie:  
Zēnme fā yīge diànzī yóujiàn ne?  
Dzummuh fah ee guh dyan dzuh yo jyan nuh?  
So how do you send an e-mail?

Terry:  
Shōuxiān nǐ děi dǎkāi “xīn yóujiàn.”  
Show shyan nee day dah kye “sheen yo jyan.”  
First you have to open up to “new mail.”

Lonnie:  
Ránhòu ne?  
Rahn ho nuh?  
And then?

Terry:  
Ránhòu tiánhāo shōujiānrén de diànzī yóuxiāng dizhī hē yóu jiàn de tímù. Xiēhāo xin, jiǔ kěyǐ fā le.  
Rahn ho tyan how show jyan run duh dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir huh yo jyan duh tee moo. Shyeh how sheen, jyo kuh yee fah luh.  
After that, you have to fill in the recipient’s e-mail address and type in the subject. After you’re finished writing the message, you can finally send it.

Hunting for an Apartment

Are you one of the hundreds of people considering making a long-term move to China for business purposes? Starting to think about purchasing some fāngdīchān (fahng dee chahn; real estate) in the form of a gōngyǔfāng (goong yew fahng; condominium) or a hézuò gōngyù (huh dzwaw goong yew; co-op) in Beijing or Shanghai? Just a few decades ago, contemplating such a purchase of cáichān (tsye chahn; property) was unthinkable. These days, though, with the enormous influx of foreign investment and joint-venture companies, countless foreigners are beginning to take advantage of the many reputable fāngdīchān jīnglèrén (fahng dee chahn jeeng gee run; realtors) to
help them do just that. And if you’ve already purchased some cáichăn and now want to chūzū (choo dzoo; rent) or zhuānzū (jwan dzoo; sublet) a kòng gōngyù fāngjiān (koong goong yew fahng jyan; vacant apartment) to someone else, there are services that help you, the wūzhū (woo joo; owner), find a trustworthy chéngzhūrēn (chung dzoo run; tenant). Here are some terms you might want to know when thinking of buying a place in China:

✓ dàilǐ (dye lee; agent)
✓ píngjià (peeng jya; appraisal)
✓ tóubiāo (toe byaow; bid)
✓ jīngjírēn (jeeng jee run; broker)
✓ jiànzhù gūzé (jyan joo gway dzuh; building code)
✓ ànjìefèi (ahn jye fay; closing costs)
✓ hétóng (huh toong; contract)
✓ xǐnyòng bàogào (sheen yoong baow gaow; credit report)
✓ tóukuâ (toe kwahn; down payment)
✓ gūbēn (goo bun; equity)
✓ lìxī (lee she; interest)
✓ dǐyājīn (dee yah jeen; mortgage)

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Iris contacts a realtor about buying a condo in Shanghai.

**Iris:** Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ xiǎng zài Shànghǎi mǎi yī ge gōngyùfáng. 
Nee how. Waw shyahng dzye Shahng hi my ee guh goong yew fahng.
Hi. I’m thinking of buying a condo in Shanghai.

**Realtor:** Méiyǒu wèntí. Wǒ jù shì yī ge fángdīchān jǐngjírēn. 
Hěn yuànyì bāngmáng.
Mayo one tee. Waw jyo shir ee guh fahng dee chahn jeeng jee run. Hun ywan yee bahng mahng.
No problem. I’m a real estate broker. I’d be more than happy to help you.

**Iris:** Nà tài hǎo le. Zài nèige dìqū mǎi fángzi zuì hǎo? 
Nah tye haow luh. Dzye nay guh dee chyew my fahng dzuh dzway how?
That’s great. Which area do you consider to be the best to buy some property?
Part II: Chinese in Action

Realtor: Shanghai has many excellent properties. Perhaps the most popular locations are Hongqiao and Jinqiao. Many foreign offices are now in Pudong.

Words to Know

| fángdíchăn jīngjìrén | fahng dee chahn jeeng jee run | realtor |
| cǎichǎn | tɔye chahn | property |
| mǎi yīge gōngyùfǎng | my ee guh goong yew fahng | to buy a condo |
| mài yīge gōngyùfǎng | my ee guh goong yew fahng | to sell a condo |
| hézuò gōngyù | huh dwaw goong yew | co-op |
| qiǎngshǒu | chyahng show | popular |
| dìqū | dee chyew | area; location |
| línjìn dìqū | lee jen dee chyew | neighborhood |

Be real sure you’re using the correct tone when you pronounce the letters “m-a-i” (pronounced my) in Chinese. If you say it with a third (dipping) tone, mài, it means to buy. If you say it with a fourth (falling) tone, however, mài, it means to sell. If you’re not careful, you may end up selling something you had hoped to live in yourself.
The Chinese language is fascinating and incredibly logical. Although mǎi (spoken with a third tone) means to buy and mài (spoken with a fourth tone) means to sell, if you put them together and add the word zuò (dzaw; to do) in front of them, to say zuò mǎi mài (dzaw my my), it means to do business. (To buy and to sell . . . get it?)

Furnishing Your New Digs

Whether you’ve bought a gōngyùfáng (goong yew fahng; condo) or a hézuò gōngyù (huh dzaw goong yew; co-op), have rented a gōngyù fāngjiàn (goong yew fahng jyan; apartment) or are spending a semester in Xi’an and live in a sūshè (soo shuh; dormitory), you’ll probably want to start buying some jiājū (jyah jyew; furniture) or otherwise zhuāngshì (juawng shir; decorate) your new digs and put your individual stamp on the place.

How many of the following fāngjiàn (fahng jyan; rooms) does your new place have?

✓ yūshì (yew shir; bathroom)
✓ wōshì (waw shir; bedroom)
✓ fāntīng (fahn teeng; dining room)
✓ xiūxīshì (shyo she shir; den)
✓ chūfáng (choo fahng; kitchen)
✓ kētīng (kuh teeng; living room)
✓ shūfáng (shoo fahng; study)
✓ kòngfáng (koong fahng; spare room)
Does your new place have a **yuānzi** (ywan dzuh; backyard) with a pretty **huàyuàn** (hwah ywan; garden), perhaps? How about a **yángtái** (yahng tye; balcony) or a more romantic little **tōngdào** (toong daow; veranda)? You can put some really nice **zhíwù** (jir woo; plants) out there, or even some **huā** (hwah; flowers), like **júhu≈** (jyew hwah; chrysanthemums) or **lánhu≈** (lahn hwah; orchids) or even some **měihu≈** (may hwah; plum blossoms). Wouldn’t that be nice?

Is there a **lóushàng** (low shahng; upstairs) as well as a **lóuxià** (low shyah; downstairs)? Is there a grand **ménkôu** (mun koe; entrance) or at least a **diàntì** (dyan tee; elevator) if you’re on the top floor? Are there lots of floor-to-ceiling **chuānghu** (chwahng hoo; windows) with great views, or do they look straight into an air shaft, forcing you to cover them with **chuānglián** (chwahng lyan; curtains) the first chance you get? No matter. At least you finally have a place you can call your own.

After you finally move in and discover how much empty space there really is, you probably want to go out and buy at least the bare bones basics as far as **jiājù** (jah jyew; furniture) is concerned. How about some of these?

✔ **chuáng** (chwahng; bed)
✔ **chuángdiàn** (chwahng dyan; mattress)
✔ **zhuōzi** (jwaw dzuh; table)
✔ **yīzi** (ee dzuh; chair)
✔ **chájí** (chah jee; coffee table)
✔ **shūzhuō** (shoo jwaw; desk)
✔ **yīguì** (ee gway; chest of drawers)
✔ **shāfā** (shah fah; sofa)

And once you have your bed, you’ll probably want to buy some of the following items to put on it. (The list just never ends. Try to make sure you don’t run up too much of a **xìnyòng kâ** [sheen yoong kah; credit card] bill too quickly or you may regret having made that move from Poughkeepsie to Pudong in the first place.)

✔ **chuāngzhào** (chwahng jaow; bedspread)
✔ **tănzi** (tahn dzuh; blanket)
✔ **chuángdān** (chwahng dahn; sheets)
✔ **zhěntóu** (juhn toe; pillow)
✔ **bēizi** (bay dzuh; quilt)
The good news, of course, is that after you’ve purchased all the above items, you can actually sleep on your own new bed in China. The bad news, though, is that now you have no excuse not to *pūchuāng* (*poo chwahng;* make the bed) every morning.

Okay, there’s one last thing I almost forgot to remind you to get before you settle in for the night. Trust me, it will make all the difference in the world when it comes to your ability to relax and enjoy your new digs. It’s something that you don’t want to realize you’ve forgotten to stock up on before turning in for the night. Here’s a hint: It belongs in the *yūshì* (*yew shir;* bathroom). Give up? It’s *weishēngzhī* (*way shung jir;* toilet paper), silly. (Don’t say I didn’t warn you.)
For the following household items, match the English word to the Chinese word. Check Appendix C for the answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Phrases</th>
<th>English Phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yùshì</td>
<td>dining room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wòshì</td>
<td>balcony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fàntíng</td>
<td>sofa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tānzi</td>
<td>desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yángtái</td>
<td>quilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhèntóu</td>
<td>bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bèizi</td>
<td>bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shūzhūō</td>
<td>blanket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shāfā</td>
<td>pillow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part III
Chinese on the Go

The 5th Wave
By Rich Tennant

“This is why you shouldn’t use the Chinese you picked up in oriental restaurants when making a reservation. We’ve got a room with a view and a queen size eggroll.”
Ah, to travel the world! These chapters help you with every aspect of your travel, from getting a visa and making hotel reservations to deciphering foreign currency, asking for directions, and getting to your destination. I even include a chapter on handling emergencies, although I hope you never have to use it. *Yì lù píng'ān!* (ee loo peeng ahn; Bon Voyage!)
Chapter 11
Money, Money, Money

In This Chapter
► Understanding Chinese currencies
► Knowing how (and where) to change money
► Cashing checks and charging to plastic
► Exchanging money at banks and ATMs
► Leaving proper tips

Qián (chyan; money) makes the world go around. Of course, family and friends are priceless, but you can’t very well support yourself or help those you love, much less donate to a charity of your choice, unless you have something to give. And that’s what life is really all about. (Unless, of course, your main goal in life is to buy a Ferrari, acquire rare works of art, and live in the south of France . . . in which case you need a LOT of qián. All the more reason to read this chapter.)

In this chapter, I share with you important words and phrases for acquiring and spending money — things you can easily do nowadays all over the world. I give you some banking terms to help you deal with everything from live tellers to inanimate objects like ATM machines. I even give you tips on tipping.

Staying Current with Chinese Currency

Depending on where in Asia (or any place where Chinese is spoken) you live, work, or visit, you have to get used to dealing with different types of huòbì (hwaw bee; currency), each with its own duìhuànliǔ (dway hwahn lyew; rate of exchange). See Table 11-1 for the Chinese versions of international currency and the following sections for the main forms of Chinese huòbì.
Table 11-1  International Currencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Words</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mèiyuán</td>
<td>may ywan</td>
<td>U.S. dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rénmínbi</td>
<td>run meen bee</td>
<td>Mainland Chinese dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xin tái bì</td>
<td>shin tye bee</td>
<td>Taiwan dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Găng bì</td>
<td>gahng bee</td>
<td>Hong Kong dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xìng bì</td>
<td>sheeng bee</td>
<td>Singapore dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ri yuán</td>
<td>ir ywan</td>
<td>Japanese dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ōu yuán</td>
<td>oh ywan</td>
<td>Euro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rénmínbi (RMB) in the PRC

In the People’s Republic of China, the equivalent of the Mèiyuán (may ywan; U.S. dollar) is the yuán (ywan). The yuán is also known as rénmínbi (run meen bee; literally: the people’s money). As of early 2005, 1 U.S. dollar is equivalent to about 8.25 (mainland) Chinese dollars. Here’s how you say that in Chinese:

Yī mèiyuán huàn bā diān ěr wū yuán rénmínbi. (ee may ywan hwahn bah dyan are woo ywan run meen bee; One U.S. dollar is 8.25 (mainland) Chinese dollars.)

The Chinese yuán, which is a paper bill, comes in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100. You also see coins worth 1, 2, or 5 yuán. In addition to saying you have yì yuán, you can say you have yí kuài qián (ee kwye chyan), which means the exact same thing — one Chinese dollar. Over a billion people around the globe currently use this currency.

Want to know how much money I have right now in my pocket, Nosy? Why not just ask me?

✓ Nǐ yǒu jǐ kuài qián? (nee yo jee kwye chyan; How much money do you have?)
   Use this phrase if you assume the amount is less than $10.00.

✓ Nǐ yǒu duōshǎo qián? (nee yo dwaw shaow chyan; How much money do you have?)
   Use this phrase if you assume the amount is greater than $10.00.
One **yuán** is the equivalent of 10 **máo** (*maow*), which may also be referred to as **jiāo** (*jaow*) — the equivalent of 10 cents. Each **máo** or **jiāo** is the equivalent of 100 **fēn** (*fun*), which compare to American pennies. Paper bills, in addition to the **yuán**, also come in denominations of 2 and 5 **jiāo**. Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, and 5 **fēn**; 1, 2, and 5 **jiāo**; and 1, 2, and 5 **yuán**.

The difference between **yuán** and **kuài**, and between **jiāo** and **máo**, is that **yuán** and **jiāo** are formal, written ways of saying those denominations and **kuài** and **máo** are the more colloquial forms.

**Xīn Táíbi in the ROC**

In Taiwan, also known as the Republic of China, or ROC, 1 U.S. dollar equals about 31.80 **xīn táíbi** (*shin tye bee*; New Taiwan dollars).

Here’s how you say that in Chinese:

**Yī měiyuán huàn sānshíyī diǎn bā yuán xīn táíbi.** (*ee may ywan hwahn sahn shir ee dyan bah ywan shin tye bee*; One U.S. dollar is 31.80 New Taiwan dollars.)

You see bills in denominations of 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 and coins in denominations of 1, 5, 10, and 50 cents. Coins, or **língqián** (*leeng chyan*; small change), in Taiwan are particularly beautiful — they have all sorts of flowers etched into them — so you may want to save a few to bring back to the States or to show friends. Just make sure you keep enough on hand for all the great items you can buy cheaply at the wonderful night markets.

Here’s how you ask for change:

**Nǐ yǒu měiyǒu yí kuài qián de língqián?** (*nee yo mayo ee kwyee chyan duh leeng chyan*; Do you have change for a dollar?)

**Hong Kong dollars**

**Xiāng gāng** (*shyahng gahng*; Hong Kong; literally: fragrant harbour), the long-time financial dynamo of Asia, uses the Hong Kong dollar, or the **gāngbi** (*gahng bee*). Currently, 1 U.S. dollar is equivalent to 7.65 Hong Kong dollars. Here’s how you say that in Chinese:

**Yī měiyuán huàn qī diǎn liù wǔ yuán gāngbi.** (*ee may ywan hwahn chee dyan lyo woo ywan gahng bee*; One U.S. dollar is 7.65 Hong Kong dollars.)
Singapore dollars

Singapore is a Mandarin-speaking country in Asia. Its dollars are called xìng bì (sheeng bee) and come in denominations of 2, 5, 10, 50, and 100. You can find coins in denominations of 1 cent, 5 cents, 10 cents, 20 cents, 50 cents, and 1 dollar.

In Singapore, if you want to say $1.25, you don’t use the number wū (woo; five) to refer to the final 5 cents in the amount. You use the term bàn (bahn), which means half: yí kuài liàng máo bàn (ee kwye lyahng maow bahn) rather than yí kuài liàng máo wū (ee kwye lyahng maow woo). You can definitely use the number wū in Taiwan, Hong Kong, or mainland China, however.

Making and Exchanging Money

People make their money in all sorts of ways. Most ways are legitimate. (If you’ve attained yours through nefarious means, I’m not sure I want to know, so don’t tell me!) You may be one of those lucky people who win the cāi juàn (isye jywahn; lottery) or receive a large yí chān (yee chahn; inheritance) you use to traipse to the other side of the world. Or perhaps you have a modest amount saved up from working hard and paying your bills on time, and you hope to make it go a long way. However you get your money, you find out how to change it (and then spend it) with the help of this chapter.

You can always huàn qián (hwahn chyan; exchange money) the minute you arrive at the fēiji chāng (fay jee chahng; airport) at the many duihuànchù (fay hwahn choo; exchange bureaus), or you can wait until you get to a major yīnháng (een hahng; bank) or check in at your lǐguān (lyew gwahn; hotel). Of course, you can’t make it to a bank or hotel if you don’t have enough money to hail a chūzū chē (choo dzoo chuh; taxi) to reach the yīnháng or lǐguān, and you don’t want to find yourself in jiānyù (jyan yew; jail) — where you won’t be able to make bāo shì jīn (baow shir jeen; bail) — because you still don’t have any local huò bì (hwaw bee; currency).

The following phrases come in handy when you’re ready to huàn qián:

 شيئ wèn, zài nǎr kěyǐ huàn qián? (cheeng one, dzye nar kuh yee hwahn chyan; Excuse me, where can I change money?)

 chees wèn, yīn háng zài nǎr? (cheeng one, eeng hahng dzye nar; Excuse me, where is the bank?)

 tāntān de duihuàn lū shì shénme? (jin tyan duh fay hwahn lyew shir shummuh; What’s today’s exchange rate?)
Qǐng nǐ gěi wǒ sì zhāng wǔshí yuán de. (cheeng nee gay waw suh jahng woo shir ywan duh; Please give me four 50-yuan bills.)

Wǒ yào huàn yī bāi měi yuán. (waw yaow hwahn ee bye may ywan; I’d like to change $100.)

Nǐmen shōu duōshǎo qián shǒuxūfèi? (nee men show dwaw shaow chyan show shyew fay; How much commission do you charge?)

No matter where you get money or how much money you plan to convert into local currency, you may have to show your húzhào (hoo jaow; passport), so always have that ready to whip out.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Jane arrives at the airport in Beijing and needs to change some money. She asks a xíngliyuán (sheeng lee ywan; porter) where she can find a place to exchange money.

Jane: Qǐng wèn, zài nǎr kěyí huàn qián? Cheeng one, dzye nar kuh yee hwahn chyan? Excuse me, where can I change money?

Xíngliyuán: Duìhuànhù jiù zài nàr. Dway hwahn choo jyoe dzye nar. The exchange bureau is just over there.


Jane goes to the money exchange counter to change some U.S. dollars into Chinese yuán with the help of the chūnàyuán (choo nah ywan; cashier).

Jane: Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ yào huàn yī bāi měi yuán de rénmǐnbi. Nee how. Waw yaow hwahn ee bye may ywan duh run meen bee. Hello. I’d like to change USD $100 into RMB.


Jane: Jìntiān de duihuàn lǜ shì duōshǎo? Jin tyan duh dway hwahn lyew shir dwaw shaow? What’s today’s exchange rate?
Chūnàyuán: Yi měiyuán huàn bā diàn ěr wǔ yuán rénmínbì.
One U.S. dollar is 8.25 (mainland) Chinese dollars.

Jane: Hǎo. Qīng gěi wǒ liǎng zhāng wǔshí yuán de.
Great. Please give me two 50 yuán bills.

Chūnàyuán: Méiyōu wèntí. Qīng gěi wǒ kàn kàn nǐde hùzhào.
No problem. Please show me your passport.

**Words to Know**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>měiyuán</td>
<td>may ywan</td>
<td>U.S. dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yī měiyuán</td>
<td>ee may ywan</td>
<td>one U.S. dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rénmínbi</td>
<td>run meen bee</td>
<td>Chinese dollar (mainland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xīn táibì</td>
<td>shin tye bee</td>
<td>New Taiwan dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huàn</td>
<td>hwahn</td>
<td>to exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duìhuàn lǜ</td>
<td>dway hwahn lyew</td>
<td>exchange rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duìhuànchù</td>
<td>dway hwahn choo</td>
<td>exchange counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūnàyuán</td>
<td>choo nah ywan</td>
<td>cashier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huàn qián</td>
<td>hwahn chyan</td>
<td>to exchange money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wài bì</td>
<td>why bee</td>
<td>foreign currency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shǒuxùfèi</td>
<td>show shyew fay</td>
<td>commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qīng gěi wǒ kàn kàn nǐde hùzhào.</td>
<td>cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hoo jaow</td>
<td>Please show me your passport.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Spending Money

I don’t think I’ll have trouble selling you on (no pun intended) the thought of spending money. Whenever you see something you want, whether in a shāngdiàn (shahng dyan; store), on the jiēshàng (jyeh shahng; street), or at a yè shì (yeh shir; night market), you may as well give in to temptation and buy it, as long as you have enough qián. It’s as easy as that. Have money, will travel. Or, rather, have money, will spend.

When you’re ready to buy something, you can do it with xiànjīn (shyan jeen; cash), zhìpiào (jir pyaow; check), or xìnyòng kǎ (sheen yoong kah; credit card). And when traveling overseas, you often use lùxing zhìpiào (lyew sheeng jir pyaow; traveler’s checks).

If you end up buying so many items that you can barely hold them all with both hands, here’s one adverb you should remember. It comes in handy when you start adding up the cost of everything before you fork over all your money: I’m speaking of yígòng (ee goong), which means “altogether,” as in “How much are these 20 toys and 80 sweaters altogether?”

You may overhear the following conversation in a store:

Zhèige hé nèige yígòng duōshǎo qián? (jay guh huh nay guh ee goong dwaw shaow chyan; How much are this and that altogether?)

Zhèige sān kuài liǎng máo wū, nèige yì kuài liǎng máo, suǒyǐ yígòng sì kuài sì máo wū. (jay guh sahn kuwe lyahng maow woo, nay guh ee kwye lyahng maow, suaw yee ee goong suh kwye suh maow woo; This is $3.25, and that is $1.20, so altogether that will be $4.45.)

Before you decide to mǎi dōngxi (my doong she; buy things), be sure you have enough money yígòng to buy everything you want so you don’t feel disappointed after spending many hours in your favorite store.

The term dōngxi (doong she; things) is literally a combination of “east” (dōng) and “west” (xī). The Chinese language often combines two such opposite words to come up with various concepts. Dōngxi always refers to physical objects.

Cashing checks and checking your cash

I don’t care what anybody tries to tell you, xiànjīn (shyan jin; cash) in local currency is always useful, no matter where you are and what time of day it is. Sometimes you can buy things and go places with xiànjīn that you can’t
swing with a xìnyòngkǎ (sheen yoong kah; credit card). For example, if your kid hears the ice cream truck coming down the street, you can’t just whip out your xìnyòngkǎ to buy him an ice cream cone when the truck stops in front of your house. You can’t even try to convince the guy to take a zhìpiào (jîr pyaow; check). For times like these, my friend, you need cold, hard xiànjìn. You can use it to buy everything from bǐngqîlîn (beeng chee leen; ice cream) on the street to a diânyîng piào (dyan yeeng pyaow; movie ticket) at the theater. Just make sure you put your qián (chyan; money) in a sturdy qiánbào (chyan baow; wallet or purse) and keep it in your front kǒudài (ko dye; pocket) so a zéi (dzay; thief) can’t easily steal it.

When you talk about how much something costs, you put the numerical value before the word for bill or coin. For example, you can call a dollar yì kuài (ee kwye; one dollar) or sān kuài (sahn kwye; three dollars). You translate 10 cents, literally, as one 10-cent coin — yì máo (ee maow) — or 30 cents as, literally, three 10-cent coins — sān máo (sahn maow).

Here’s how you speak of increasing amounts of money. You mention the larger units before the smaller units, just like in English:

✓ sān kuài (sahn kwye; $3.00)
✓ sān kuài yì máo (sahn kwye ee maow; $3.10)
✓ sān kuài yì máo wū (sahn kwye ee maow woo; $3.15)

As useful and convenient as xiànjìn is, you really have to pay with zhìpiào for some things. Take your zūjîn (dzoo jeen; rent) and electricity bills, for example. Can’t use cash for these expenses, that’s for sure. And when you travel overseas, everyone knows the safest way to carry money is in the form of lûxing zhìpiào (lyew sheeng jîr pyaow; traveler’s checks) so you can replace them if they get lost or stolen.

The basic elements of all Chinese currency are the yuán (colloquially referred to as a kuài), which you can think of as a dollar, the jiâo (colloquially referred to as the máo), which is the equivalent of a dime, and the fēn (fôn), which is equivalent to the penny.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Jacqueline goes shopping in Taipei and finds something she likes. She asks the clerk how much it is.

Jacqueline:  Qing wèn, zhè jiàn yífu duōshāo qián?
Cheeng one, jîyant ee foo dwaw shaow chyan?
Excuse me, how much is this piece of clothing?
Clerk: Érshíwǔ kuài.  
Are shir woo kwye.  
It’s $25.00.

Jacqueline: Nîmen shôu bù shôu zhîpiào?  
Nee men show boo show jir pyaow?  
Do you take checks?

Clerk: Lûxîng zhîpiào kêyî. Xînyòng kâ yê kêyî.  
Lyew sheeng jir pyaow kuh yee. Sheen yoong kah yeah kuh yee.  
Traveler’s checks are okay. Credit cards are also okay.

---

**Words to Know**

- qiánbāo: chyan baow  wallet; purse
- kǒudài: ko dye  pocket
- zhîpiào: jir pyaow  checks
- zhîpiào bù: jir pyaow boo  checkbook
- lûxîng zhîpiào: lyew sheeng jir pyaow  traveler’s checks
- fù zhàng: foo jahng  to pay a bill
- língqián: leeng chyan  small change
- dà piàozi: dah pyaow dzuh  large bills
- huàn kāi: hwahn kye  to break (a large bill)

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**Paying with plastic**

The xînyòng kâ (sheen yoong kah; credit card) may be the greatest invention of the 20th century — for credit card gōngsī (goong suh; companies), that is. The rest of us are often stuck paying all kinds of potentially exorbitant lîlû (lee lyew; interest rates) if we’re not careful. Still, credit cards do make paying for things much more convenient, don’t you agree?
To find out if a store accepts credit cards, all you have to say is:

Nîmen shōu bù shōu xînyòng kā? (nee men show boo show sheen yoong kah; Do you accept credit cards?)

Overseas, many places accept Mèiguó yùntòng kā (may gwaw yewn toong kah; American Express). Closer to America, businesses may only shōu (show; accept) MasterCard or Visa. In some out-of-the-way parts of China, you can’t use plastic at all, so have plenty of xiànjin (shyan jeen; cash) or lūxìng zhîpiào (lyew sheeng jir pyaow; traveler’s checks) on hand, just in case.

Whether the jìgé (jyah guh; price) of the items you want to buy is guì (gway; expensive) or piányì (pyan yee; cheap), the xînyòng kā comes in handy.

Read on for a list of credit-card-related terms:

- xînyòng (sheen yoong; credit)
- xînyòng kā (sheen yoong kah; credit card)
- xînyòng xiàn’è (sheen yoong shyan uh; credit limit)
- shêzhàng de zui gào é (shuh jahng duh dzway gaow uh; credit line)

**Doing Your Banking**

If you plan on staying in Asia for an extended time or you want to continue doing business with a Chinese company, you may want to open a huóqì zhânghù (hwaw chee jahng hoo; checking account) where you can both cún qián (tswun chyan; deposit money) and qû qián (chyew chyan; withdraw money). If you stay long enough, you should open a dingqî cûnkûân hûtóu (deeng chee tswun kwan hoo toe; savings account) so you can start earning some lixi (lee she; interest). Sure beats stuffing dà piàozi (dah pyaow dzuh; large bills) under your chuang diàn (chwahng dyan; mattress) for years.

How about trying to make your money work for you by investing in one of the following:

- gûpiào (goo pyaow; stock)
- zhâiquàn (jye chwan; bond)
- tàotóu jîjîn (taow toe jee jeen; hedge fund)
- hûzhù jîjîn (hoo joo jee jeen; mutual fund)
- chûxù cûnkûân (choo shyew tswun kwan; Certificate of Deposit; CD)
- guókù quàn (gwaw koo chwan; treasury bond)
Dan decides to open a savings account in Hong Kong. He enters a bank and approaches the teller.

Dan: **Nín hào. Wǒ xiǎng kāi yī ge dīngqǐ cúnkuǎn hùtóu.**
Hello. I'd like to open a savings account.

Teller: **Méiyǒu wèntí. Nín yào xiǎn cún dōushāo qián?**
No problem. How much would you like to deposit initially?

Dan: **Wǒ yào cún yībāi kuài qián.**
I'd like to deposit $100.

Teller: **Hǎo. Qīng tiān zhè ge biǎo. Wǒ yě yùyào kàn kàn nín de hūzhào.**
Fine. Please fill out this form. I will also need to see your passport.

**Words to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yínháng</td>
<td>een hahng</td>
<td>bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiànjīn</td>
<td>shyan jeen</td>
<td>cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūnà chuāngkǒu</td>
<td>choo nah chwhahng ko</td>
<td>cashier's window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cúnkuǎn</td>
<td>tswun kwan</td>
<td>savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūnàyuán</td>
<td>choo nah ywan</td>
<td>bank teller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāi yī ge cūnkuǎn hùtóu</td>
<td>kye ee guh tswun kwan hoo toe</td>
<td>to open a savings account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cūn qián</td>
<td>tswun chyan</td>
<td>to deposit money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qū qián</td>
<td>chyew chyan</td>
<td>to withdraw money</td>
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</table>
Banks in the PRC are generally open at 8:30 a.m. from Monday through Saturday. They close for two hours from 12-2 p.m. and then reopen from 2-5:30 p.m. Many branches of the Bank of China are open on Sunday mornings, but some close on Wednesday afternoons. In Taiwan, banks close at 3:30 p.m., and in Hong Kong they’re usually open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the week and from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturdays.

Making withdrawals and deposits

Whether you need to cún qián (tswyn chyan; deposit money) or qū qián (chyew chyan; withdraw money), you need to make sure you have enough qián in the first place to do so. One way to ensure you don’t overextend is to make sure you know what your jiéyú (jye hew; account balance) is at any given moment. Sometimes you can check your available balance if you shàngwāng (shahng wahng; go online) to see which zhīpiào (jir pyaou; checks) may have already cleared. If someone gives you an yínháng běnpìào (een hahng bun pyaow; cashier’s check), however, it cashes immediately. Lucky you!

If you plan to cash some checks along with your deposits, here are a couple of useful phrases to know:

✔️ Wǒ yào duìxiàn zhè hǎi zhīzhīpiào. (waw yaow dway shyan jay jahng jir pyow; I’d like to cash this check.)
✔️ Bèimiàn qián zi xiē zài nǎr? (bay myan chyan dzuh shye dzye nar; Where shall I endorse it?)

One of the most convenient ways to access some quick cash is to go to the nearest zìdòng tíkuānjǐ (dzuh doong tee kwan jee; ATM machine).

Accessing an ATM machine

Zìdòng tíkuānjǐ (dzuh doong tee kwan jee; ATM machines) are truly ubiquitous these days. Wherever you turn, there they are, on every other street corner. Sometimes I wonder how we ever survived without them. (Same goes for the personal computer . . . but I digress.)

In order to use a zìdòng tíkuānjǐ, you need a zìdòng tíkuān kā (dzuh doong tee kwan kah; ATM card) to find out your jiéyú (jye hew; account balance) or to cún qián (tswyn chyan; deposit money) or qū qián (chyew chyan; withdraw money). And you definitely need to know your mímâ (mee mah; PIN number); otherwise, the zìdòng tíkuānjǐ is useless.

And one more thing: Make sure you don’t let anyone else know your mímã. It’s a mímì (mee mee; secret).
Tips on Tipping

Pingcháng (peeng chahng; usually) in the United States, a 15 percent tip is customary at restaurants, and you often give a 10 percent tip to taxi drivers. Giving xiào fèi (shyaow fay; tips) is expected everywhere from here to Timbuktu. In some instances, you should even give xiào fèi to people setting up towels in the public xǐshǒu jiàn (she show jyan; bathroom). Better to know in advance of your trip how much (or how little) is expected of you so you don’t embarrass yourself (and by extension, your countrymen).

In Taiwan, xiào fèi are generally included in restaurant bills. If not, 10 percent is standard. You can gěi (gay; give) bellboys and porters a dollar (USD) per bag.

In Hong Kong, most restaurants automatically include a 10 percent tip, but feel free to give an additional 5 percent if the fúwù (foo woo; service) is good. Small tips are also okay for taxi drivers, bellboys, and washroom attendants.

Tipping in mainland China used to be rare, but the idea is finally catching on, especially now that service with a scowl rather than a smile is fast becoming a thing of the past. (For the longest time, workers simply had no incentive to work harder or with a more pleasant demeanor after the Cultural Revolution. Can you blame workers for having no reason to perform their duties with the idea of customer service in mind?) A 3 percent tip is standard in restaurants (still low compared to Taiwan and Hong Kong). Bellboys and room service attendants typically expect a dollar or two (USD). Tipping in Mèijīn (may jeen; U.S. currency) is still very much appreciated, because it’s worth about eight times as much as the Chinese dollar.

If you get a bill and can’t make heads or tails of it, you can always ask the following question to find out if the tip is included:

Zhàngdān bāokuò fúwù fèi ma? (jahng dahn baow kwaw foo woo fay mah; Does the bill include a service charge/tip?)

In English, when you say “15 percent,” you mean 15 percent out of a total of 100. The way to express bāi ènbí (bye fun bee; percentages) in Chinese is to start with the larger denomination of bāi (bye; 100) first and then work your way backwards with the percentage of that amount. Here are some examples:

- bāi èn zhī bāi (bye fun jir bye; 100 percent; literally: 100 out of 100 parts)
- bāi èn zhī bāshíwǔ (bye fun jir bah shir woo; 85 percent; literally: 85 out of 100 parts)
- bāi èn zhī shíwǔ (bye fun jir shir woo; 15 percent; literally: 15 out of 100 parts)
For more information on numbers, see Chapter 2.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Rebecca and Rachel are in a restaurant. They get their bill and discuss how much of a tip to leave.

**Rebecca:** Wômen de zhàngdān yígòng sânsì huái qián. Xiâo fèi yìnggāi duóshāo? Waw men duh jahng dahn ee goong sahn shir kwye chyan. Shyaow fay eeng guy dwaw shaow? Our bill comes to $30.00 altogether. How much should the tip be?

**Rachel:** Yînwèi fúwù hên hǎo, suǒyí xiào fèi kēyì bái fên zhī èr shí. Nǐ tóngyì ma? Een way foo woo hun how, swaw yee shyaow fay kuh yee bai fun jir are shir. Nee tooong ee mah? Because the service was really good, I think we can leave a 20 percent tip. Do you agree?

**Rebecca:** Tóngyì. Toong ee. I agree.

**Words to Know**

| zhàngdān | jahng dahn | the bill |
| yígòng | ee goong | altogether |
| yìnggāi | eeng guy | should |
| yînwèi ... suǒyí | een way ... swaw yee | because ... therefore |
| tóngyì | tooong ee | to agree |
Fun & Games

Identify what the following illustrations depict in Chinese. See Appendix C for the correct answers.

A. 
B. 
C. 
D. 
E. 
F. 

A. 
B. 
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F. 
Chapter 12

Taking the Road Less Traveled:
Asking for (and Giving) Directions

In This Chapter

► Asking and entertaining “where” questions
► Directing other people
► Covering time and distances
► Pointing the way with directional coverbs

Everyone (yes, even you) has to ask for fāngxiàng (fahng shyahng: directions) at some time or another. Even if you just need to find the cèsuǒ (isuh swaw; bathroom) — when you’ve got to go, you’d better know.

You may find yourself baffled by the boulevards in Beihai or dumbfounded by directions in Dalian. This chapter helps you figure out exactly how to ask for directions before you ever mìlù (mee loo; get lost). Whether you lose your bearings in Beijing or wander off the path in Luoyang, this chapter gives you helpful tips that make it easier to find your way back home. Or at least back to your hotel.

You definitely need to know how to ask where certain places are in mainland China, where most people don’t speak English. You have a greater likelihood of hailing an English-speaking cabbie in Taipei or Kowloon to take you where you need to go but not in one of the cities or towns in mainland China.
Avoiding 20 Questions: Just Ask “Where”

Okay, so you’re searching for the closest yóujú (yo jyew; post office) to mail a package home before your mother’s birthday next week. A passerby tells you to go right down the jiēdào (jyeh daow; street), but for the life of you, all you see are a couple of shūdiàn (shoo dyan; bookstores) and an occasional dìtiĕ zhàn (dee tyeh jahn; subway station). Time to ask for directions. But how?

The easiest way to ask where something is in Chinese is to use the question word nâr (nar). It means “where.” But you can’t just say nâr, or folks still won’t know what you’re talking about. You have to use the coverb zài (dzye) in front of nâr (zài nâr), which can be translated as “in” or “at.” Just put the name of whatever you’re looking for before the word zài to create a complete question:

✔ Yóujú zài nâr? (yo jyew dzye nar; Where’s the post office?)
✔ Shūdiàn zài nâr? (shoo dyan dzye nar; Where’s the bookstore?)
✔ Nī zài nâr? (nee dzye nar; Where are you?)

Here are some more places you may be looking for when you lose your way:

✔ cèsuŏ (tsuh swaw; bathroom)
✔ Mēiguó dâshīguăn (may gwaw dah shir gwahn; American Embassy)
✔ xuéxiăo (shweh shyaow; school)
✔ yínháng (een hahng; bank)
✔ fângguăn (fahn gwahn; restaurant)
✔ gōnggōngqíchězhàn (goong goong cheuh jahn; bus stop)
✔ huŏchézhàn (hwaw chuh jahn; train station)
✔ dìtiĕzhàn (dee tyeh jahn; subway station)
✔ chūzū qíchězhàn (choo dzoo cheuh jahn; taxi stand)
✔ jízhěnshe (jee juhn shir; emergency room)
✔ piăofăng (pyaow fahng; ticket office)

When you travel in unknown areas, you may need to determine whether you can walk or if you need to take a gōnggōng qíchĕ (goong goong cheuh jahn; bus) or chūzū qíchĕ (choo dzoo cheuh jahn; taxi) to reach your destination:
Different strokes for different folks: năr versus năli

Chinese people immediately know where you’re from, where you’ve studied, or at least where your Chinese language teacher is from by the way you say the word “where.” If you say năr (nahr) with an “r” sound at the end of the word, you represent a northern Chinese accent commonly found in Beijing. If you say it with a “lee” sound at the end rather than an “r” sound, as in năli (nah lee), it indicates you’ve probably lived or studied in Taiwan.

When someone gives you a compliment, proper Chinese etiquette dictates that your response should be a swift and decisive “năli, năli,” which literally means “Where? Where?” but translates more loosely into “No, no, you’re too kind.” When a Chinese person says something nice about you, your clothes, your car, or your kids, never accept a compliment the way you do in English, which is with a gracious and accepting “Why, thank you.” Instead, you should insist that the compliment is undeserved and vociferously disagree with a quick năli, năli. In mainland China, the equivalent expression is “năr de huà.” (nar duh hwah; literally: where are such words coming from?) Humility about your attributes, even if you have to feign it, is always well respected in Chinese culture.

The word năr spoken with a third (low falling and then rising) tone means “where,” but the same word said with a fourth (falling) tone, năr, means “there,” so be particularly careful which tone you use when you ask for directions. The person you ask may think you’re making a statement, not asking a question.

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**Talkin’ the Talk**

Helayne is about to leave her hotel in Beijing to head for the American Embassy to renew her passport. She’s not sure where to find it, so she asks a hotel attendant how to get there.

Helayne: **Qing wèn, Mèiguó dàshíguǎn zài năr?**
*Cheeng one, may gwaw dah shir gwahn dzye nar?* Excuse me, where’s the American Embassy?

Attendant: **Mèiguó dàshíguǎn zài Xiù Shuǐ Běi Jiē.**
*May gwaw dah shir gwahn dzye shyow shway bay jyeh.* The American Embassy is on Xiu Shui Bei Street.
Helayne:  Hēn yuǎn ma?  
      Hun ywan mah?  
        Is it far?

      Hun ywan. Nee dzway how zwaw choo dzoo chee chuh chyew.  
        Yes, it’s quite far. You’d best take a taxi.

Helayne:  Xièxiè.  
      Shyeh shyeh.  
        Thanks.

As Helayne starts to leave, the attendant comments on the skirt she’s wearing.

Attendant:  Xiǎojiě, nǐde qúnzi hěn piàoliàng.  
      Shyaow jyeh, nee duh chwun dzuh hun pyaow lyahng.  
        Miss, your skirt is very pretty.

Helayne:  Nǎr de huà!  
      Nar duh hwah!  
        No, it’s not really!

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Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pinyin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fāngxiàng</td>
<td>fahng shyahng</td>
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<tr>
<td>dìtú</td>
<td>dee too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shíjīnlǐǎo</td>
<td>shir jyan byaow</td>
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<tr>
<td>dīzhǐ</td>
<td>dee jir</td>
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<tr>
<td>zuò chūzū qíchē</td>
<td>dzwaw choo dzoo chee chuh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zuò gōnggōng qíchē</td>
<td>dzwaw goong goong chee chuh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zuò fēijī</td>
<td>dzwaw fay jee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting direction about directions

Knowing how to ask where you can find a particular place is the first step, but you also need to know how to get there. (Otherwise, why would you ask where it is in the first place, right?) Here’s the simplest way to find out:

Qù_____zēnme zōu? (chyew_____dzumuh dzoe; How do I get to______?)

Here are some examples of how to use this question pattern:

✔ Qù féijīchāng zēnme zōu? (chyew fay jee chahng dzumuh dzoe; How do I get to the airport?)

✔ Qù túshūguān zēnme zōu? (chyew too shoo gwahn dzumuh dzoe; How do I get to the library?)

✔ Qù xuéxiào zēnme zōu? (chyew shweh shyaow dzumuh dzoe; How do I get to the school?)

Answering “where” questions

Short of using international sign language with a pantomime act, you may want to get a handle on some basic terms that indicate direction and location. Read on for a quick list:

✔ yǒu (yo; right)
✔ zuǒ (dzaw; left)
✔ qián (chyan; front)
✔ hòu (ho; back)
✔ lǐ (lee; inside)
✔ wài (why; outside)
✔ shàng (shahng; above)
✔ xià (shyah; below)
✔ duìmiàn (dway myan; opposite)
✔ kàojìn (kaow jeen; next to)
If you plan to indicate that something is inside, outside, above, below, in front of, or behind something else, you can use three different, completely interchangeable word endings with any of the location words:

- biàn (byan)
- miān (myan)
- tóu (toe)

So, for example, if you want to say that the dog is outside, you can say it in any of the following ways:

- Gǒu zài wàimiàn. (go dzye why myan; The dog is outside.)
- Gǒu zài wàibiàn. (go dzye why byan; The dog is outside.)
- Gǒu zài wàitóu. (go dzye why toe; The dog is outside.)

Sometimes you may have the need to use a more complex location expression, such as when you don’t want to simply note where something is. Perhaps you want to tell someone where a certain action should take place. For example, if you want to say “Wait in front of the school,” here’s what you say:

Qīng nǐ zài xuéxiào qiánmiàn dēng. (cheeng nee dzye shweh shyaow chyan myan dung; Please wait in front of the school.)

In such cases, the verb dēng (dung; to wait) comes after the specified location (xuéxiào qiánmiàn). Here are some other examples:

- Zài xuéxiào hòumiàn dēng. (dzye shweh shyaow ho myan dung; Wait in back of the school.)
- Zài wūzi lī chīfàn. (dzye woo duh lee chir fahn; Eat in the room.)
- Zài tūshūguān kānshū. (dzye too shoo gwahn kahn shoo; Read in the library.)

Talkin’ the Talk

Corey asks Casey for directions in Tainan. He wants to get to the post office.

Corey: Qing wèn, Casey, yóujú zài nǎr?
Cheeng one, Casey, yo jyew dzye nar?
Excuse me, Casey, where’s the post office?
Yo jyew jyo dzye een hahng dway myan. Gwaw lyahng tyaow loo jyo shir.
The post office is right opposite the bank. If you go two more blocks it’s right there.

Corey: Xièxiè. Qù yóujú zěnme zǒu?
Shyeh shyeh. Chyew yo jyew dzummuh dzoe?
Thank you. How should I walk to the post office?

Casey: Wàng nán zǒu. Yìzhí zǒu jiù dào le.
Wahng nahn dzoe. Ee jir dzoe jyoe daow luh.
Walk south. Go straight and you’ll see it.

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wàng</td>
<td>wahng</td>
<td>toward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duì miàn</td>
<td>dway myan</td>
<td>opposite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zài yínháng</td>
<td>dzye een hahng</td>
<td>opposite the bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duìmiàn</td>
<td>dway myan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǒu (zǒu lù)</td>
<td>dzoe (dzoe loo)</td>
<td>to walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāi chē</td>
<td>kye chuh</td>
<td>to drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zuò huǒchē</td>
<td>zwaw hwaw chuh</td>
<td>to take the train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shàng</td>
<td>shahng</td>
<td>to get on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xià</td>
<td>shyah</td>
<td>to get off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Giving Directions

Are you the kind of know-it-all who thinks you’re pretty familiar with a foreign city by virtue of having pored over a couple of dìtú (dee too; maps) before arrival? If so, you may want to be the one giving directions on occasion
rather than just asking for them. Knowing your stuff comes in handy when you think the taxi driver is about to take you for a ride (figuratively, that is) because he figures you don’t know your way around town.

If you want to jiào (jyaow; hail) a cab, say this to your hotel door attendant:

Wǒ yào jiào jichéngché. (waw yaow jyaow jee chung chuh; I would like a taxi.)

You can also say:

Wǒ yào jiào chûzûchê. (waw yaow jyaow choo dzoo chuh; I would like a taxi.)

The two methods are interchangeable, just like saying “taxi” or “cab.”

If you really do know your way around the city, you can instruct the taxi driver as to which găosùgônglù (gaow soo goong loo; freeway), gônglù (goong loo; highway), qiáo (chyaow; bridge), or lù (loo; road) to take; where to turn the guâijiâo (guye jyaow; corner); or which xiângzi (shyah dzuh; alley or lane) to travel down. Or perhaps you want to avoid going over a particular tînjîâo (tyan chyaow; overpass) or under a particular dixiâdào (dee shyah daow; underpass).

Wherever you want to go, you need to know a few key verbs to instruct the cab driver:

✔️ guò (gwaw; to pass)
✔️ shàng (shahng; to go up)
✔️ xià (shyah; to go down)
✔️ yòu zhuân (yo jwan; turn right)
✔️ zuô zhuân (dzaww jwan; turn left)
✔️ zhí zōu (jir dzoe; go straight ahead)
✔️ zhuân wân (jwan wahn; turn around)

If you don’t know an exact location, you can also convey less specific details:

✔️ fûjîn (foo jeen; near)
✔️ sizhîu (suh joe; around)
Talkin’ the Talk

Jon and Minnie discuss where they want to meet later today in Taiwan.

Minnie: Wômen jìntiān xiàwǔ liǎng diǎn zhōng jiàn, hǎo bù hǎo?
Waw men jin tyan shyah woo lyahng dyan joong jyan, how boo how?
Let’s meet this afternoon at 2:00, okay?

Jon: Hǎo. Nǐ yào zài nǎr jiàn?
How. Nee yaow dzye nar jyan?
Okay. Where would you like to meet?

Minnie: Wômen zài guógōng bówúguān qiánmiàn jiàn.
Waw men dzye goo goong baw woo gwahn chyan myan jyan.
Let’s meet each other in front of the National Palace Museum.

Jon: Hǎo, yíhuǐr jiàn.
How, ee hwair jyan.
Okay, see you later.

At around 1:30, Minnie leaves her hotel in downtown Taipei and asks for help hailing a cab.

Minnie: Máfan nǐ bāng wǒ jiào jichéngchè?
Mah fahn nee bahng waw jyaow jee chung chuh?
May I trouble you to help me hail a cab?

After she enters the cab, Minnie asks the taxi driver what route he plans to take to get to the National Palace Museum.

Minnie: Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ yào dào guógōng bówúguān qù. Cóng zhèr dào nàr zěnme zǒu?
Nee how. Waw yaow daow goo goong baw woo gwahn chyew. Tsoong jar daow nar dzummuh dzoe?
Hello. I’d like to go to the National Palace Museum. How do you get there from here?

Taxi Driver: Cóng zhèr wǒmen guò mǎlú, wànghǎo yòu guǎi, zhī zǒu jiù dàole.
Tsoong jar waw men gwaw mah loo, wahng yo gwye, jir dzoe jyo daow luh.
From here we cross the avenue, make a right, and then go straight and we’re there.
Words to Know

cóng . . . dào  

tsoong . . . daow  

from . . . to

guò mǎlù  

gwah mah loo  

cross the avenue

máfan nǐ  

mah fahn nee  

cross the avenue

yīhuǐr jiàn  

ee hwahr jyan  

see you later

Expressing Distances (Time and Space) with lí

Even though you can use the cónɡ . . . dào pattern to literally say “from here to there” (cónɡ zhèr dào nàr; tsoong jar daow nar) when you want to indicate the distance from one place to another, you need to use the “distance from” coverb “lí” (lee). The general sentence pattern looks something like this:

Place word + lí + place word + description of the distance

For example:

✔ Gōngyuán lí tǔshūguǎn hěn jin. (goong ywan lee too shoo gwan hun jeen; The park is very close to the library.)

✔ Wō jiā lí nǐ jià tǐng yuǎn. (waw jyah lee nee jyah teeng ywan; My home is really far from your home.)

If you want to specify exactly how far one place is from another, you use the number of lí (lee; the Chinese equivalent of a kilometer) followed by the word lí and then the word lù (loo; literally: road). Whether you say sì lí lù (suh lee loo; 4 kilometers), bà lí lù (bah lee loo; 8 kilometers), or èrshísān lí lù (are shir sahn lee loo; 23 kilometers), people know the exact distance when you use this pattern. You also have to use the word yǒu (yo; to have) before the number of kilometers. If the answer includes an adjectival verb such as yuǎn (ywan; far) or jìn (jin; close) rather than a numerical distance, however, you don’t need to specify the number of kilometers or use the word yǒu.
Check out the following sample questions and answers that use these new patterns:

- **Gōngyuán lí tǔshǔguān duōme yuǎn?** (goong ywan lee too shoo gwahn dwaw muh ywan; How far is the park from the library?)
- **Gōngyuán lí tǔshǔguān yǒu bā lǐ lǜ.** (goong ywan lee too shoo gwahn yo bah lee loo; The park is 8 kilometers from the library.)
- **Yíngháng lí nǐ jiā duōme jìn?** (eeng hahng lee nee jyah dwaw muh jin; How close is the bank from your home?)
- **Hēn jìn. Zhǐ yǐ lǐ lǜ.** (hun jin. jir ee lee loo; Very close. Just 1 kilometer.)

You may have some other questions when you inquire about locations and distances:

- **Yào duō cháng shìjiān?** (yaow dwaw chahng shir jyan; How long will it take?)
- **Zōu de dào ma?** (dzoe duh daow mah; Can I walk there?)
- **Zōu de dào, zōu bù dào?** (dzoe duh daow, dzoe boo daow; Can one walk there?)

To indicate whether something is likely to happen or unlikely to be attained, the pattern you use includes potential complements. You do this by putting the words de (duh) and bù (boo) between the verb and the complement to indicate whether a positive or negative potential is involved.

If you say “Nǐ kànjiàn,” you mean “you see.” If instead you say “Nǐ kàn de jiān ma?” you mean “Can you see?” And if you use the negative “bù” rather than the positive implication that goes with de to ask “Nǐ kàn bù jiān ma?” you mean “You can’t see?” Finally, if you use both positive and negative potential forms in the same breath by asking “Nǐ kàn de jiān, kàn bù jiān?” you mean “Can you see (or not)?”

Here are some other examples of this pattern:

- **zuò wán** (dzwaw wahn; to finish [doing something])
- **zuò de wán** (dzwaw duh wahn; can finish)
- **zuò bù wán** (dzwaw boo wahn; can’t finish)
- **zuò de wán; zuò bù wán?** (dzwaw duh wahn; dzwaw boo wahn; can you finish it; can it be finished?)
- **xī gânjìng** (she gohn jeeng; to wash [and make clean])
When you ask for directions, the following questions may come in handy:

- **Wǒmen zǒu de dào, zǒu bú dào?** *(waw mun dzoe duh daow, dzoe boo daow; Can we walk [to get there]?)*
- **Wǒmen lái de jí, lái bù jí?** *(waw mun lye duh jee, lye boo jee; Will we make it on time?)*

## Discovering Ordinal Numbers

Ever tell someone to make a right at the second jiăotōng dēng *(jyaow toong dung; traffic light)* or that your house is the third one on the left?

You can’t simply use the numeral plus a classifier in Chinese, such as when you say săn ge *(sahn guh; three)* of something. If you say săn ge jiăotōng dēng *(sahn guh jyaow toong dung)*, the person hears “three traffic lights.” If you want to say “the third traffic light,” you have to add the word “dì” *(dee)* before the numeral to create dì săn ge jiăotōng dēng, which indicates the third traffic light.

If you use an ordinal number followed by a noun, you must always have a classifier between them. You can’t combine dì săn *(dee sahn; the third)* with qiche *(chee chuh; car)*. You have to put the classifier “ge” in between the number and the noun to say dì săn ge qiche *(dee sahn guh chee chuh)*, meaning “the third car.”

Creating ordinal numbers (numbers that indicate the order of things) in Chinese is quite easy. Just put dì in front of the numeral:

- dì yī *(dee ee; first)*
- dì èr *(dee are; second)*
- dì săn *(dee sahn; third)*
- dì sì *(dee suh; fourth)*
- dì wú *(dee woo; fifth)*
- dì liù *(dee lyoe; sixth)*
Specifying Cardinal Points with Directional Coverbs

You can tell someone to go you (yo; right) or zuō (dzwaw; left) until you’re blue in the face, but sometimes the best way to give people directions is to point them the right way with the cardinal points: north, south, east, or west.

In Chinese, however, you say them in this order:

- dōng (doong; east)
- nán (nahn; south)
- xī (she; west)
- bēi (bay; north)

To give more precise directions, you may have to use the following:

- dōng bēi (doong bay; northeast)
- xī bēi (she bay; northwest)
- dōng nán (doong nahn; southeast)
- xī nán (she nahn; southwest)

When it comes to indicating north, south, east, west, left, or right, you can use either -biān (byan) or -miàn (myan) as a word ending, but not -tóu (to), which you can use with other position words such as front, back, inside, and outside.
Giving directions often entails multiple instructions. You can’t always say “make a right and you’re there” or “go straight and you’ll see it right in front of you.” Sometimes you have to use a common Chinese pattern for giving multiple directions. That pattern is:

\[ \text{xiàn} \ +\ \text{Verb #1}, \ \text{zài} \ +\ \text{Verb #2} \]

This translates into “first you do X, and then you do Y.” Here are some examples:

- \[ \text{xiàn wàng dòng zǒu, zài wàng yòu zhùān} \quad \text{(shyan wahng doong dzoe, dzye wahng yo jwan; First walk east, and then turn right.)} \]
- \[ \text{xiàn zhí zǒu, zài wàng xī zǒu} \quad \text{(shyan jir dzoe, dzye wahng she dzoe; First go straight, and then turn west.)} \]

### Talkin’ the Talk

George is walking around Shanghai looking for the Shanghai Museum. He begins to wonder if he’s going in the right direction, so he decides to ask a stranger how to get there.

**George:** Qing wèn, Shànghāi bówùguān lí zhèr hên yuǎn ma?  
*Cheeng one, shahng hi baw woo gwahn lee jar hun ywan mah?*  
Excuse me, is the Shanghai Museum very far from here?

**Stranger:** Bù yuǎn. Shànghāi bówùguān jiù zài rénmín dà dào.  
*Boo ywan. Shahng hi baw woo gwahn jyo dzye run meen dah daow.*  
It’s not far at all. The Shanghai Museum is on the Avenue of the People.

**George:** Rénmín dà dào lí zhèr duōme yuǎn?  
*Run meen dah daow lee jar dwaw muh ywan?*  
How far is the Avenue of the People from here?

**Stranger:** Rénmín dà dào lí zhèr zhī yǒu yì lǐ lù zuòyǒu.  
*Run meen dah daow lee jir yo ee lee loo dzwaw yo.*  
The Avenue of the People is only about 1 kilometer from here.

**George:** Cóng zhèr zǒu de dào, zǒu bú dào?  
*Tsoong jar dzoe duh daow, dzoe boo daow?*  
Can I walk there from here?
Chapter 12: Taking the Road Less Traveled: Asking for (and Giving) Directions

Stranger:  
Kěndìng zǒu de dào. Nǐ xiān wàng nán zǒu, zài dì èr tiáo lù wàng xī zhuǎn. Dì yī ge lóu jiù shì.  
Kun deeng dzoe duh daow. Nee shyan wahng nahn dzoe, dzye dee are tyaow loo wahng she jwan. Dee ee guh low jyo shir.  
It’s certainly walkable. Walk north first, and then turn west at the second street. It’ll be the first building you see.

George:  
Fēicháng gǎnxiè nǐ.  
Fay chahng gahn shyeh nee.  
I’m extremely grateful (for your help).

Stranger:  
Méi shì.  
May shir.  
It’s nothing.

Words to Know

xiān … zài … shyan … dzye …  
first … then …

fēicháng gǎnxiè  
many thanks

méi shì  
it’s nothing

kěndìng  
definitely

zuǒyòu  
approximately

bówùguǎn  
museum

CULTURAL WISDOM

If you get lost in any city in mainland China, you can often get back on track by asking where “Zhōngshān Lù” (joong shahn loo) or “Jiēfàng Lù” (jyeh fahng loo) is. “Zhōngshān,” literally meaning the middle mountain, refers to the birthplace of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, founder of the modern Chinese Republic in 1911. “Jiēfàng,” on the other hand, means “liberation,” referring to the “liberation” of the mainland by the Communists in 1949. “Lù” just means “road.” Generally, these streets are located in the middle of town. They serve as the Chinese equivalent of “Main Street” in “Anytown, U.S.A.” Always a safe bet.
Fun & Games

According to the illustration below, say in Chinese which cardinal direction these buildings are located in. (See Appendix C for the answers.)

A. School: ____________________________________________
B. Post Office: ________________________________________
C. Bank: ______________________________________________
D. House: ______________________________________________
Chapter 13
Staying at a Hotel

In This Chapter
▶ Booking your room reservation
▶ Checking in upon arrival
▶ Requesting hotel service
▶ Packing your bags and paying your bill

The right lûguăn (lyew gwahn; hotel) can make or break a vacation. Whether you stay in a capital city or a little backwater town with only one lûguăn to its name, you still need to know how to check in, check out, and ask for anything you need in between (including the check). This chapter runs you through the gamut of booking your hotel, checking in at the front desk, checking out at the designated time, and dealing with all sorts of issues that may come up in between.

First, however, I have an astounding fact for you: You have not one, not two, but as many as five ways to say the word “hotel” in Chinese:

✔ lûguăn (lyew gwahn; hotel)
✔ fàndiàn (fahn dyan; literally: a place for meals)
✔ jiûdiàn (jyo dyan; literally: a place for wine)
✔ zhàodàisuō (jaow dye swaw; literally: a place to receive people)
✔ bînuăn (been gwahn; literally: a place for guests)

Making a Room Reservation

Thinking of yùdìng (yew deeng; reserving) a hotel fángjiān (fahng jyan; room)? What kind do you want? A dānrén fángjiān (dahn run fahng jyan; single room) all for yourself? A shuângrén fángjiān (shwahng run fahng jyan; double room) for you and your special someone? Or perhaps a penthouse tâojìâ (taow jyan; suite) for a special occasion like your 50th wedding zhôunián (joe nyan; anniversary)?
Whatever the occasion and whatever kind of room you want, you need to know how to make a reservation. Just make sure you know your yùsuàn (yew swan; budget) in advance (and stick to it). You’re sure to find a decent hotel no matter the price range if you spend some time checking out the competition. Oh, and when you do finally pick up your phone to reserve a room, make sure you have your xìnyòng kâ (sheen yoong kah; credit card) in front of you (see Chapter 11 for more money talk).

Here are some questions you may want to ask over the phone as you begin the search for your lìxiâng (lee shyahng; ideal) hotel:

- Nîmen hâi yôu fângjiàn mä? (nee mun hi yo fahng jyan mah; Do you have any rooms available?)
- Nîmen fângjiàn de jiâgé shì duôshào? (nee mun fahng jyan duh jyah guh shir dwaw shaw; How much are your rooms?)
- Wô yào yîge fângjiàn zhù liâng ge wânhshâng. (waw yaow ee guh fahng jyan joo lyahng guh wahn shahng; I’d like a room for two nights.)
- Nîmen shôu bù shôu xìnyòng kâ? (nee men show boo show sheen yoong kah; Do you accept credit cards?)
- Yôu méiyôu shângwû zhôngxîn? (yo mayo shahng woo joong sheen; Is there a business center?)
- Nîmen de fângjiàn yôu méiyôu wângluò liânjîé? (nee men duh fahng jyan yo Mayo wahng lwaw lyan jyeh; Do your rooms have Internet access?)

You have many kinds of rooms to choose from, depending on your budget and your unique needs:

- yîge ânjìng de fângjiàn (ee guh ahn jeeng duh fahng jyan; a quiet room)
- yîge guângxîán hâo de fângjiàn (ee guh gwahng shyan how duh fahng jyan; a bright room)
- yîge cháow hâi de fângjiàn (ee guh chaow hi duh fahng jyan; a room with an ocean view)
- yîge cháow yuântsî de fângjiàn (ee guh chaow ywan dzuh duh fahng jyan; a room facing the courtyard)
- yîge yôu kôngtiáu de fângjiàn (ee guh yo koong tyaow duh fahng jyan; a room with air conditioning)
- yîge dâi yángtâi de fângjiàn (ee guh dye yahng tye duh fahng jyan; a room with a balcony)
- yîge bû xîyân de fângjiàn (ee guh boo she yan duh fahng jyan; a non-smoking room)
- yîge fângbiàn cânjí rên de fângjiàn (ee guh fahng byan tsahn jee run duh fahng jyan; a room equipped for handicapped people)
Talkin’ the Talk

Elly calls a well-known hotel chain in Hong Kong to make a three-day reservation for his whole family. The hotel clerk quickly answers his call.

Elly: Qing wen, nimen fangjian de jiage shi duoshao?
Cheeng one, nee men fahng jyan duh jyah guh shir dwaw shaow?
May I ask, how much are your rooms?

Hotel Clerk: Women de fangjian yi tian wanshang yi bai wu shi kuai mei yuan.
Waw men duh fahng jyan ee tyan wahn shahng ee bye woo shir kwye may ywan.
Our rooms are $150 U.S. dollars a night.

Elly: Nà shì dànrén fangjian hái shi shuangrén fangjian de jiage?
Nah shir dahnh run fahng jyan hi shir shwhang run fahng jyan duh jyah guh?
Is that the price of a single room or a double?

Hotel Clerk: Danren fangjian hé shuangrén fangjian de jiage dōu yiyang.
Dahn run fahng jyan huh shwhang run fahng jyan duh jyah guh doe ee yahng.
The price of our single and double rooms is the same.

Elly: Hào jile. Wō yào liangge dànrén fangjian yige shuangrén fangjian.
How jee luh. Waw yaow lyahng guh dahn run fahng jyan ee guh shwhang run fahng jyan.
Great. I’d like two single rooms and one double.

Hotel Clerk: Méiyōu wèntí. Nimen yào dāi jī ge wānshāng?
Mayo one tee. Nee men yaow dye jee guh wahn shahng?
No problem. How many nights will you be staying?

Elly: Yígòng sān ge wānshāng.
Ee goong sahn guh wahn shahng.
Altogether three nights.

Hotel Clerk: Hào. Nà yígòng jiǔ bāi kuài.
How. Nah ee goong jyo bye kwye.
Very well. That will be $900 altogether.
Words to Know

dānrén fángjiān  dahn run fahng jyan  single room
shuāngrén fánjìān  shwahng run fahng jyan  double room
tàojiān  taow jyan  suite
yígòng  ee goong  altogether
yíyàng  ee yahng  the same
jiàgé  jyah guh  price
hé  huh  and
dōu  doe  both; all
dōu yíyàng  doe ee yahng  they're both the same
dǎi  dye  to stay

The coverb hé (huh; and), along with the noun that always follows it, pre-cedes the main verb or adjective of a sentence. Some synonyms of hé are gèn (gun), yū (yew), and tóng (toong), although tóng translates more closely as “with.”

Hotel or apartment?

China’s booming economy has become a magnet for foreign businesses, and scores of foreign business people have begun taking up residence there. Because living in mainland China can be quite expensive and nice apartments that don’t come with long waiting lists are hard to come by, many foreigners opt to stay in a permanent hotel room or a serviced apartment connected to a foreign-run hotel. A friend of mine in Shanghai rents out his nice-sized apartment for $2,000 U.S. dollars a month, comparable to the rent of major U.S. cities like New York or Chicago. And you can expect the hotels to run $150 per night, just like in metropolitan U.S. cities.
Checking In Before You Hit the Pool

Aaahhh, Yàzhōu (yah jo; Asia)! Its allure often begins as soon as you pull up to the front entrance and walk through the hotel door. You may even find yourself mysteriously lingering a bit in the dàtìng (dah teeng; lobby), visually casing the joint long enough to take in all sorts of amenities. The luxuries at your disposal may include the following:

- yóuyǒngchí (yo yoong chir; swimming pool)
- diànsì (dyen shir; television)
- gānxī fúwù (gahn she foo woo; dry cleaning service)
- huíyā ànmōchí (hway yah ahn maw chir; jacuzzi)
- tǐyúguān (tee yew gwahn; gym)
- shāngwù zhōngxin (shahng woo joong sheen; business center)
- lǚguān fāndiàn (lyew gwahn fahn dyan; hotel restaurant)

Before you can take advantage of these conveniences, however, you have to officially bànlǐ rǔzhù shōuxì (bahn lee roo joo show shyew; check in). You don’t want to be caught red handed running in the tǐyúguān or relaxing in the huíyā ànmōchí unless you’re a bona fide guest, right? (Don’t answer that.)

When you walk up to the fāndiàn qiántái (fahn dyan chyan tye; reception desk), you’ll invariably find yourself needing to say one of the following sentences:

- Wǒ yījīng yùdìng le fángjiàn. (waw ee jeeng yew deeng luh fahng jyan; I already made a reservation.)
- Wǒ méiyǒu yùdìng fángjiàn. (waw mayo yew deeng fahng jyan; I don’t have a reservation.)
- Nǐmen hái yǒu fángjiān ma? (nee men hi yo fahng jyan mah; Do you have any rooms available?)

If you’re in luck, the hotel will have at least one kōng (koong; empty, vacant) fángjiān (fahtng jyan; room). If the hotel has no available space, you’ll hear “Duìbùqǐ, wǒmen kēmān le.” (dwaw boo chee, waw men kuh mahn luh; Sorry, there are no vacancies/we’re full.)

The qiántái fūwùyuán (chyan tye foo woo ywan; front desk clerk) will ask you to tián (tyan; fill out) a couple of biāo (byaow; forms) to book your room, so have a gāngbǐ (gahtng bee; pen) and some form of zhèngjiàn (juhng jyan; ID) ready — especially your húzhào (hoo jaow; passport). Voilà! You’re officially a hotel kèrén (kuh run; guest).
After you successfully manage to check in, a xíngliyuán (sheeng lee ywan; porter/bell boy) immediately appears to help take your xíngli (sheeng lee; luggage) to your fángjiān. After he lets you in, he'll give you the yàoshi (yaow shir; key) if you didn't get it from the qiántái fúwùyuán downstairs.

Now you can finally xiūxi (shyo she; take a rest) and maybe even fall asleep. Before you do, however, you may want to put in for a wake-up call. All you have to say is

Qīng nǐ jiào wǒ qǐchuáng. (cheeng nee jyaow waw chee chwahng; literally: Please call me to get out of bed.)

Talkin’ the Talk

Beverly arrives in Taiwan and wants to check into a hotel in downtown Taipei, but the clerk informs her that the hotel has no vacancy.

Beverly:  Nǐ hǎo. Qīng wèn, nǐmen hái yǒu fángjiān ma?
Nee how. Cheeng one, nee men hi yo fahng jyan mah?
Hello. May I ask, do you have any rooms available?

Clerk:  Duìbùqǐ, wǒmen jǐntiān kěmǎn le. Méiyǒu kòng fángjiān le.
Dway boo chee, waw men jin tyan kuh mahn luh.
I'm sorry, but we're full today. There aren't any vacant rooms.

Beverly:  Zǎogāo! Nǐ néng bù néng tuìjiān biéde lǚguān?
Dzaow gaow! Nee nung boo nung tway jyan byeh duh lyew gwahn?
Rats! Could you perhaps recommend another hotel then?

Yes. The hotel next door has vacancies. You may as well walk over there and have a look.

Beverly:  Xièxiè.
Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you.
Chapter 13: Staying at a Hotel

Words to Know

- duìbùqǐ (dway boo chee) I'm sorry
- zāogāo (dzaow gaow) rate!/what a shame
- tuǐjiàn (tway jyan) recommend
- biéde (byeh duh) other
- lǚguǎn (lyew gwahn) hotel
- gébì (guh bee) next door

Taking Advantage of Hotel Service

Uh oh . . . you’re finally ensconced in your big, beautiful hotel room when you discover that the mén suǒ bú shàng (mun swaw boo shahng; door doesn’t lock) and the kōngtiáo huái le (koong tyaow hwye luh; air conditioning doesn’t work). To make matters worse, your chuāng dā bù kāi (chwahng hoo dah boo kye; window won’t open). Heat wave! It may be hard to believe, but in addition to all that, your mātōng dūzhūle (mah toong doo joo luh; toilet is clogged). Time to call the nearest kēfáng fúwúyuán (kuh fahng foo woo ywan; hotel housekeeper) and yell for help.

You may want the kēfáng fúwúyuán to sòng (soong; send) the following items right over:

- chuīfēngjì (chway fung jee; hair dryer)
- máotān (maow tahn; blanket)
- zhěntóu (jun toe; pillow)
- máojīn (maow jeen; towel)
- wēishēngzhǐ (way shung jir; toilet paper)

Call quick if the following pieces of equipment are huàile (hwye luh; broken) and need immediate fixing:

- nuǎnqì (nwan chee; heater)
- kōngtiáo (koong tyaow; air conditioner)
Maybe you just need someone to dasao fangjian (dah saow fahng jyan; clean the room). Oh well. Even the best hotels need some tweaking every now and then.

You interact with many different employees on any given hotel stay:

- fuwutaide jingli (foo woo tye jeeng lee; concierge)
- zongjingli (dzoong jeeng lee; general manager)
- zhuli jingli (joo lee jeeng lee; assistant manager)
- fuwuuyuan lingban (foo woo ywan leeng bahn; bell captain)
- fuwuuyuan (foo woo ywan; attendant)

Hey! I almost forgot one of the best kinds of service you can take advantage of on occasion . . . room service! Before you decide to order room service for food, however, just remember that it’s often gui liang bei (gway lyahng bay; twice as expensive) as dining in the luquan fandian (lyew gwahn fahn dyan; hotel restaurant), because the service is more fangbian (fahng byan; convenient).

To make a comparison by saying that something is a number of times more expensive than something else, you first use the word gui (gway; expensive), followed by the number of times you think it’s more expensive and the word bei (bay; roughly translated as “times”). You can compare the relative cost of two products or services by using the word bi (bee; compared to) in the following pattern:

X bi Y gui # bei

Here are some examples:

- Zuochuzhe bi zuogonggong qiche gui wu bei. (zwaw choo dzoo chuh bee dzawaw goong goong chee chuh gway woo bay; Taking a cab is five times more expensive than taking the bus.)
- Zheitiiao qunzi bi nige gui shi bei. (jay tyaow chwun dzuh bee nay guh gway shir bay; This skirt is 10 times more expensive than that one.)

Every hotel room in China has a large flask of boiling water that you can use to make tea or for drinking water. Never drink directly from the tap. You can brush your teeth with tap water, because you just spit it out. Local Chinese don’t dare drink the tap water either, so you’re in good company.
David enters his hotel room after he checks in, only to discover the bathroom faucet is broken. He calls for housekeeping and a few minutes later hears a knock on his door.

Housekeeper:  
Kèfáng fúwùyuán!  
*Kuh fahng foo woo ywan!*  
Housekeeping!

David:  
Qíng jìn!  
*Cheeng jìn!*  
Come on in!

Housekeeper:  
Yǒu shénme wèntí?  
*Yo shummuh one tee?*  
What seems to be the trouble?

David:  
Zhèige shuǐlónɡtóu huàile. Yě méiyǒu rèshuǐ.  
*Jay guh shway loong toe hwyeh luh. Yeah mayo ruh shway.*  
This faucet is broken. There’s also no hot water.

Housekeeper:  
Hén duìbūqǐ. Mǎshānɡ sònɡ shuǐnuǎnɡōnɡ  
*Hun dway boo chee. Mah shahng soong shway nwan goong gwaw lye kahn kahn.*  
I’m so sorry. We’ll send a plumber right away to have a look.

David:  
Xièxiè.  
*Shyeh shyeh.*  
Thank you.

As the housekeeper starts to leave, David suddenly remembers some other things that the housekeeper may be able to take care of as long as she’s there.

David:  
Xiǎojiě, nǐmen yǒu méiyǒu xǐyī fúwù?  
*Shyaow jyeh, nee men yo mayo she ee foo woo?*  
Miss, do you have any laundry service?

Housekeeper:  
Yǒu.  
*Yo.*  
Yes we do.
David:  
Hǎo jíle. Jīntiān kěyǐ bā zhè xīě yǐfú xǐ hǎo ma?  
*How jee juh. Jin tyan kuh yee bah jay shyeh ee foo she how mah?*
Great. Can I have these clothes cleaned today?

Housekeeper:  
Kěyǐ.  
*Kuh yee.*
Yes.

David:  
Yóuqíshì zhège wūdiàn. Néng bùnéng qūdiào?  
*Yo chee shir jay guh woo dyan. Nung boo nung chyew dyaow?*
Especially this stain. Can it be removed?

Housekeeper:  
Méiyǒu wèntí.  
*Mayo one tee.*
No problem.

David:  
Hǎo. Xièxiè.  
*How. Shyeh shyeh.*
Great. Thanks.

---

**Words to Know**

- **qǐng jìn**  
  *cheeng jin*  
  come in, please
- **xǐ**  
  *she*  
  to wash
- **yóuqíshì**  
  *yo chee shir*  
  especially
- **wūdiàn**  
  *woo dyan*  
  stain
- **qūdiào**  
  *chyew dyaow*  
  erase; remove
- **méiyǒu wèntí**  
  *mayo one tee*  
  no problem
- **xǐyī fúwù**  
  *she ee foo woo*  
  laundry service
- **mǎshàng**  
  *mah shahng*  
  immediately
- **shuǐnuǎngōng**  
  *shway nwan goong*  
  plumber
As you can see in the previous Talkin’ the Talk section, the coverb bā often appears right after the subject of the sentence, separating it from the direct object, which is always something concrete rather than an abstract idea. It separates the indirect and direct objects.

Instead of having the following sentence pattern:

Subject + Verb + Complement (+ Indirect Object) + Object

You have:

Subject + bā + Object + Verb + Complement (+ Indirect Object)

Here are some examples:

✔️ Wǒ bā shū jiè gěi nǐ. (waw bah shoo jyeh gay nee; I’ll loan you the book.)
✔️ Qīng nǐ bā běnzhī ná gěi lāo shī. (cheeng nee bah bun dzuh nah gay laow shir; Please give the notebook to the teacher.)

## Checking Out Before Heading Out

That oh-so-depressing time has come again. Time to say zàijiàn (dzye jyan; goodbye). Time to tèngchū (tuung choo; vacate) your hotel fángjiān (fahng jyan; room) and tuìfáng (tway fahng; check out).

You may need to say some of the following as you begin the end of your stay:

✔️ Wǒ yào fù zhǎng. (waw yaow foo jahng; I’d like to pay the bill.)
✔️ Nǐmen jiēshòu shénme xìnyòng kǎ? (nee men jyeh show shummuh sheen yoong kah; Which credit cards do you accept?)
✔️ Zhè bùshì wǒde zhāngdān. (jay boo shir waw duh jahng dahn; This isn’t my bill.)
✔️ Wǒ bù yīnggāi fù zhè xiàng. (waw boo eeng gye foo jay shyahng; I shouldn’t be charged for this.)
✔️ Jiēzhǎng yīhòu wǒ néng bùnèng bā bāoguǒ liú zài qiántái? (jyeh jahng ee ho waw nung boo nung bah baow gwaw lyo dzye chyan tye; After checking out, may I leave my bags at the front desk?)
✔️ Yǒu méiyǒu qú fēijīchāng de bānchē? (yo mayo chyew fay jee chahng duh ban chuh; Is there a shuttle to the airport?)
Sandy is ready to check out after his three-day stay at a five-star hotel in Shanghai. He approaches the reception clerk to check out.

Sandy:  "Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ jǐntiān yào tuífáng, suǒyǐ yào fù zhàng.
Nee how. Waw jin tyan yaow tway fahng, swaw yee yaow foo jahng.
Hello. I'd like to check out today, so I'd like to pay the bill."

Clerk:  "Qǐng wèn, nín de fángjiān hàomǎ shì duōshǎo?
Cheeng one, neen duh fahng jyan how mah shir dwaw shaow?
May I ask, what's your room number?"

Sandy:  "Wǔlínɡliù hào fängjiān.
Woo leeng lyo how fahng jyan.
Room # 506."

Okay. This is your bill. It's altogether $1,500."

Sandy pays the bill with his credit card.

Sandy:  "Zhè shì wǒmen fángjiān de yàoshi.
Jay shir waw mun fahng jyan duh yaow shir.
This is my room key."

Clerk:  "Xièxiè.
Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you."

Sandy:  "Jièzhǎnɡ yíhòu wǒ néng bùnénɡ bā bāoguó liú zài qiántái?
Jyeh jahng ee ho waw nung boo nung bah baow gwaw lyo dzye chyan tye?
After checking out, may I leave my bags at the front desk?"

Clerk:  "Kèyì. Méiyǒu wèntí.
Kuh yee. Mayo one tee.
Yes. No problem."

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Sandy is ready to check out after his three-day stay at a five-star hotel in Shanghai. He approaches the reception clerk to check out.

Sandy:  "Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ jǐntiān yào tuífáng, suǒyǐ yào fù zhàng.
Nee how. Waw jin tyan yaow tway fahng, swaw yee yaow foo jahng.
Hello. I'd like to check out today, so I'd like to pay the bill."

Clerk:  "Qǐng wèn, nín de fángjiān hàomǎ shì duōshǎo?
Cheeng one, neen duh fahng jyan how mah shir dwaw shaow?
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Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you."

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Jyeh jahng ee ho waw nung boo nung bah baow gwaw lyo dzye chyan tye?
After checking out, may I leave my bags at the front desk?"

Clerk:  "Kèyì. Méiyǒu wèntí.
Kuh yee. Mayo one tee.
Yes. No problem."
Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tuìfáng</td>
<td>tway fahng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhàngdān</td>
<td>jahng dahn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jié zhàng</td>
<td>jyeh jahng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fángjià</td>
<td>fahng jya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suǒyǐ</td>
<td>swaw yee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yàoshi</td>
<td>yaow shir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

check out
bill
figure out the bill
room charge
so; therefore
key
Fun & Games

Fill in the blanks, using the following words: tuífáng, zhàngdān, fángjiān, kèmǎn, qīchuáng. See the answer key in Appendix C.

1. Nǐmen de ________ yǒu méiyǒu wǎngluò liánjié?
   Do your rooms have Internet access?

2. Duìbùqǐ, wǒmen ________ le.
   I’m sorry, we have no vacancies.

3. Qǐng nǐ jiào wǒ ________.
   Please give me a wake up call.

4. Zhè bùshì wǒde ________.
   This isn’t my bill.

5. Wǒ jīntiān yào ________.
   I’d like to check out today.
Chapter 14
Transportation

In This Chapter

▶ Traveling by plane
▶ Surviving customs
▶ Getting around town

Traveling halfway around the world to Zhōngguó (joong gwaw; China) can be a long haul. Knowing the magic traveling words and phrases in Chinese can make your journey as efficient and shūfù (shoo foo; comfortable) as possible. This chapter helps you make your way around the fēijichāng (fay jee chahng; airport) and the fēijī (fay jee; airplane), survive the hāiguān (hi gwahn; customs) experience, and board different types of jiāotōng (jyaow toong; transportation) after you reach your destination.

Flying Around the Airport

Consider yourself a veteran traveler just because you’ve been all through Ōuzhōu (oh joe; Europe) and the Americas? Well, my friend, you’re in for a rude awakening. When it comes to finding your way around China, English, or any other Western language, does you little good. You spend a lot of unproductive time trying to interpret the signs to get some sense of which line to stand in and where to go next at the airport. You need to at least know the Pīnyīn (pin yin; literally: spelled the way it sounds) romanization system, if not Chinese characters themselves. If you don’t, you’ll be up a creek without a paddle. You may end up following the guy next to you, even if it takes you to the bathroom rather than baggage claims. (See Chapter 1 for more about the pīnyīn system of spelling Chinese words.)
Good move to get a head start by reading Chinese For Dummies in advance of your trip. You can bone up on some essential words and phrases before the whole airport experience makes you want to get right back on the next plane bound for home.

**Making it past the check-in counter**

Ready to bànlǐ dēngjí shǒuxù (bahn lee duhng jee show shyew; check in)? After lugging your bags up to this point, you finally get to tuōyùn (twaw yewn; check) your xíngli (sheeng lee; luggage). You receive a dēngjipāi (duhng jee pye; boarding pass) at the check-in counter, at which point you’re ready to make your way to the appropriate chūkǒu (choo ko; gate), taking only your shǒutí xíngli (show tee sheeng lee; carry-on luggage).

All sorts of questions may be running through your mind about now. Here are some basic phrases that may come in handy during check in:

- **Wǒ xiǎng yào kào guòdào de wèizi.** (waw shyahng yaow cow gwaw daow duh way dzuh; I’d like an aisle seat.)
- **Wǒ xiǎng yào kào chuāng de wèizi.** (waw shyahng yaow cow chwahng duh way dzuh; I’d like a window seat.)
- **Wǒ xiǎng tuōyùn xíngli.** (waw shyahng twaw yewn sheeng lee; I’d like to check my luggage.)
- **Feījí ji diàn qǐfēi?** (fay jee jee dyan chee fay; What time does it depart?)
- **Wǒde hángbān hào mǎ shì duōshāo?** (waw duh hahng bahn how mah shir duaw shaow; What’s my flight number?)
- **Zài jǐ hào mén hòují?** (dzye jee how mun ho jee; Which gate do we leave from?)

After you check in, you may encounter all sorts of unpleasant surprises. Perhaps the plane can’t zhèngdiǎn qǐfēi (juhng dyan chee fay; depart on time) after all and the airline must tuìchí (twaw chir; postpone) your departure or qūxǐāo (chyew shyaw; cancel) it altogether. Maybe the tiānqì (tyan chee; weather) is causing the problems. Better that than a kōngbù fènzhī (koong boo fun dzuh; terrorist) scare in this day and age, right?
Talkin' the Talk

Gordon is checking in at the airport in New York for a business trip to Beijing. He shows his ticket and passport to the zhíyuán (jir ywan; agent) and checks his luggage.

Zhiyuán:  Nín hǎo. Qǐng chūshǐ níndè jìpiào.
          Neen how. Cheeng choo shir neen duh jee pyaow.
          Hello. Your ticket, please.

Gordon:  Jiù zài zhèr.
          Jyo dzye jar.
          Here it is.

Zhiyuán:  Nín shì bù shì qù Běijīng? Néng kànkàn níndè hùzhào ma?
          Neen shir boo shir chyew bay jeeng? Nuhng kahn kahn neen duh hoo jaow mah?
          Are you going to Beijing? May I see your passport?

Gordon:  Kēyī.
          Kuh yee.
          Here you are.

Zhiyuán:  Yǒu jī jiàn xīnglì?
          Yo jee jyan sheeng lee?
          How many suitcases do you have?

Gordon:  Wǒ yǒu sān gè xiāngzì.
          Waw yo sahn guh shyahng dzuh.
          I have three suitcases.

Zhiyuán:  Yǒu méiyǒu shōuti xīnglì?
          Yo mayo show tee sheeng lee?
          Do you have any carry-on luggage?

Gordon:  Wǒ zhī yǒu yī ge gōngwénbāo.
          Waw jir yo ee guh goong one baow.
          I have only one briefcase.

Zhiyuán:  Hǎo. Nín yào kào guòdào de wèiži hǎishi yào kào chuāng de wèiži?
          How. Neen yow cow gwaw daow duh way dzuh hi shir yaow cow chwahng duh way dzuh?
          Alright. Would you like an aisle or a window seat?
Gordon: Wǒ xiǎng yào kào guòdào de wèizi. 
Waw shyahng yaow cow gwaw daow duh way dzuh. 
I’d like an aisle seat.

Fine. Here’s your boarding pass. Flight #108 to Beijing, Row 19, Seat B.

Gordon: Xièxiè. 
Shyeh shyeh. 
Thanks.

Zhíyuán: Zhè shì nǐde xínglǐ língqûdān. Dàole Běijīng yǐhòu kěyǐ língqû nǐde xínglǐ. 
Jay shir neen duh sheeng lee leeng chyew dahn. Dow luh bay jeeng ee ho kuh yee leeng chyew neen duh sheeng lee. 
Here are your luggage claim tags. After you arrive in Beijing, you can claim your luggage.

Gordon: Xièxiè. 
Shyeh shyeh. 
Thanks.

Zhíyuán: Zhù nǐ yí lù píng ān. 
Joo neen ee loo peeng ahn. 
Have a nice trip.
Chapter 14: Transportation

Words to Know

| guójì   | gwaw jee          | international |
| guónèi  | gwaw nay          | domestic      |
| piào    | pyaow             | ticket        |
| hùzhào  | hoo jaow          | passport      |
| qiānzhèng | chyan juhng     | visa          |
| dàodá   | dow dah           | arrivals      |
| qǐfēi   | chee fay          | departures    |
| mùn or chūkǒu | mun or choo ko | gate          |
| shōutí xíngli | show tee sheeng lee | carry-on luggage |
| gōngwènbāo | goong one baow    | briefcase     |
| lǐngqǔdān | leeng chyew dahn | luggage claim tag |
| fànjīn zuòwèi dīxià | fahng jeen dzwaw way | fit under the seat |
| tóudìng shànfāng de xínglìcāng | toe deeng shahng fahng duh sheeng lee tsahng | overhead compartment |
| yí lù píng ān | ee loo peeng ahn | have a good trip |

Boarding your flight

Okay! You’re all set to board the plane. Are you lucky enough to sit in the tóudìngcāng (toe duhng tsahng; first class) section, or do you have to sit in jìngjīcāng (jeeng jee tsahng; economy class) the whole time? Either way, international flights no longer have a chōuyān qū (cho yan chyew; smoking area), so if you indulge in that sort of thing, you’ll have to white-knuckle it for the next 10 hours or so.
In the meantime, here are some people you see get on the plane before you (at least I hope you do):

- **jiàshīyuán** (jyah shih ywan; pilot)
- **jízū** (jee dzoo; crew)
- **chéngwūyuán** (chung woo ywan; flight attendants)

And if you’re like me, you get worried about some things as the plane begins to taxi down the runway:

- **qīfēi** (chee fay; take off)
- **qīlú** (chee lyo; turbulence)
- **zhuólù** (jwaw loo; landing)

Aaah! I get nervous just thinking about them. It’s okay, though. The **chéngwūyuán** are on to people like you and me. That’s why they make sure to tell you before takeoff where the **jiùshēngyī** (jyo shung ee; life vests) and **jīnjī chūkōu** (jin jee choo ko; emergency exits) are located. You may also hear them bark out the following instructions, if you haven’t already managed to tune everything out:

- **Jījīn nǐde ānquángdài.** (jee jin nee duh ahn chwan dye; Fasten your seat belt.)
- **Bù zhūn chōuyān.** (boo jwun cho yan; No smoking permitted.)
- **Bā zuòyì kàobèi fāngzhí.** (bah dzwaw ee cow bay fahng jir; Put your seat back to the upright position.)
- **Bā tuōpán cānzhūo shōu qīlái.** (bah twaw pahn tsahn jwaw show chee lye; Put your tray table back.)
- **Rúguǒ kōngqì yáli yōu biānhuà, yāngqízhào huì zìdòng luòxià.** (roo gwaw koong chee yah lee yo byan hwah, yahng chee jaow hway dzuh doong lwaw shyah; If there’s any change in air pressure, the oxygen mask will automatically drop down.)

If you’re not a nervous flyer, you’ll probably spend all your time listening to **yín yuè** (een yweh; music) through the **ěrjī** (are jee; headset), flipping **pǐndào** (peen daow; dials) on the radio or **diànshì tái** (dyan shir tye; channels) on the television, or trying to **shuǐjiào** (shway jyaow; sleep). Hopefully the flight is showing a good **diàn yīng** (dyen yeeng; movie) on such a long trip. But if the show is boring, at least it may help you **shuǐjiào**.
You use the coverb bā (bah) when you want to put the object right up front before you state the verb that tells what you did or will do with the object. (See Chapter 13 for more on this unique coverb.)

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Carl asks an agent in the boarding area if his flight will be on time.

**Carl:** Qing wèn, wōmen de fēijī hui bùhuì zhèngdiǎn qǐfēi? Cheeng one, waw mun duh fay jee hway boo hway juhng dyan chee fay? Excuse me, but will our plane be departing on time?

**Agent:** Hěn duibùqǐ. Fēijī yào tuīchí chàbǔduō bàngè xiǎoshí. Hun dway boo chee. Fay jee yaow tway chir chah boo dwaw bahn guh shyaow shir. I’m very sorry. Takeoff has been postponed for about a half an hour.

**Carl:** Zāogāo! Dzaow gaow! That’s awful!

**Words to Know**

zhèngdiǎn  juhng dyan    on time
chàbǔduō  chah boo dwaw  about; almost (approximately)
zūyǒu    dzwaw yo         approximately
zāogāo   dzow gow        that’s awful!
Going through customs

If you survive all the turbulence and the boring movie on your long flight without having a breakdown, good for you! The next test you have to survive is the customs experience. After you get to customs, you see many customs officers, none of whom may understand English. Table 14-1 lists the items you need to have ready at customs. The following phrases should come in handy, too:

- **Nǐ dōng Yǐngyǔ ma?** (nee doong eeng yew mah; Do you understand English?)
- **Wō shì Měiguó rén.** (waw shir may gwaw run; I’m American.)
- **Wō shì Yīngguó rén.** (waw shir eeng gwaw run; I’m British.)
- **Wō shì Jiānádà rén.** (waw shir jyah nah dah run; I’m Canadian.)
- **Xiǎoshǒujiān zài nār?** (she show jyan dzye nar; Where are the restrooms?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 14-1</th>
<th>Items to Have Ready at Customs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Word(s)</td>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rùjìng dēngjī kā</td>
<td>roo jeeng duhng jee kah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chújìng dēngjī kā</td>
<td>choo jeeng duhng jee kah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiānkàng zhèng</td>
<td>jyan kahng jyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shēnbiào de wùpín</td>
<td>shun baow duh woo peen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiāngyān</td>
<td>shyahng yan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jǐù</td>
<td>jyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāo</td>
<td>baow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiāngzi</td>
<td>shyahng dzuh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xíngli</td>
<td>sheeng lee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The customs may ask you a couple of these important questions:

- **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu yào shēnbiào de wùpín?** (nee yo mayo yaow shun baow duh woo peen; Do you have anything you want to declare?)
- **Qǐng gěi wǒ kàn kàn nǐde hùzhào.** (cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hoo jaow; Please show me your passport.)
Qǐng gěi wǒ kàn kàn nǐ dāo ān shēn bāo dān. (cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hi gwan shun baow dahn; Please show me your customs declaration form.)

Nǐ dāsūn zài zhè dāi duō jiǔ? (nee dah swan dzye jar dye dwaw jyo; How long do you plan on staying?)

Nǐ lái zhè shì bān gōng wù hái shì lū yōu? (nee lye jar shir bahn goong woo hi shir lyew yo; Are you here on business or as a tourist?)

Customs agents aren’t the only people with questions to ask. You may have some questions you want to try out yourself:

Xíng li yào dākāi mā? (sheeng lee yaow dah kye mah; Should I open my luggage?)

Xíng li kēyǐ shōu qīlái mā? (sheeng lee kuh yee show chee lye mah; May I close my suitcases now?)

X guāng huì sūn huài wō de jiāo juān mā? (X gwahng hway swuhn hwy e waw duh jyaow jwan mah; Will the X-ray damage my film?)

Wǒ yào fū shuì mā? (waw yaow foo shway mah; Must I pay duty?)

Talkin’ the Talk

Cynthia gets off her plane in Shanghai and begins the customs process by approaching an agent.

Agent: Qǐng gěi wǒ kàn kàn nǐ dāo ān hù zhào. Cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hoo jaow. Please show me your passport.

Cynthia shows him her passport, and the agent asks her some important questions.

Agent: Měiguó rén. Nǐ yǒu méi yǒu yào shēn bāo de wǔ pīn? May gwaw run. Nee yo mayo yaow shun baow duh woo peen? American. Do you have anything you’d like to declare?


Agent: Nǐ lái zhè shì bān gōng wù hái shì lū yōu? Nee lye jar shir bahn goong woo hi shir lyew yo? Are you here on business or as a tourist?
Cynthia:  Wǒ lái zuò shēngyì.  
Waw lye dzwaw shung ee.  
I’ve come on business.

Agent:  Nǐ kěyǐ zǒu le.  
Nee kuh yee dzoe luh.  
You may go.

**Words to Know**

| qǔ xíngli chù | chyew sheeng lee choo | baggage-claim area |
| gōngwù | goong woo | to be on business |
| lǚyóu | lyew yo | tour |
| lùguò | loo gwaw | passing through |
| jiāo shuǐ | jyaow shway | pay duty |
| yìtiáo xiāngyān | ee tyao shyahng yan | a carton of cigarettes |

**Navigating Around Town**

It’s virtually impossible to rent a car in China. Cars just aren’t available. And even if you can find a rental, you may not want to, given the bureaucracy and driving conditions. Signs aren’t printed in English, which is probably the main reason you shouldn’t even attempt it. Just think of the upside. You don’t have to suddenly learn how to use a shōupáidāng (show pye dahng; stick shift) or purchase any extra car bāoxiān (baow shyan; insurance). Take a taxi and relax. Let the driver worry about how to get you from point A to point B.

No matter what form of transportation you end up taking from the airport, and later on around town, here are a few crucial words and phrases to know:

- **fangxiàng** (fahng shyahng; directions)
- **ditú** (dee too; map)
- **Wǒ milù le**. (waw mee loo luh; I’m lost.)
Hailing a cab

It’s Friday night, and you just had a pretty successful day doing business with your Chinese counterparts. You’ve finally mustered the courage to venture out of your hotel room for a night on the town. You decide to check out a popular wǔtīng (woo teeng; dance hall), and you begin to determine what mode of transport can best get you there.

Although zìxíngchē (dzuh sheeng chuh; bicycles), mótuōchē (maw twaw chuh; motorcycles), māchē (mah chuh; horse-drawn carts), and even niú (nyo; cows) are still the main forms of transportation for the average individual in some parts of mainland China, most foreigners take taxis wherever they go. You can easily find taxis around hotels, and cabs are certainly more shūfu (shoo foo; comfortable) and fāngbiàn (fahng byan; convenient) than having to deal with nonexistent rules of the road, breathing in kōngqì wūrān (koong chee woo rahn; air pollution) while bicycling, finding your way through a maze of old alleyways, or, depending on the time of year, leaving yourself to the mercy of the natural elements.

Here’s what you say to the hotel door attendant if you want help hailing a cab:

Wǒ yào jiào jìchéngchē. (waw yaow jyaow jee chung chuh; I would like a taxi.)

After you’re safely ensconced in the cab, you need to know how to say the following phrases:

- Qǐng dài wǒ dào zhège dìzhǐ. (cheeng dye waw daow jay guh dee jir; Please take me to this address.)
- Qǐng dǎ biăo. (cheeng dah byaow; Please turn on the meter.)
- Qǐng kāi màn yìdiār. (cheeng kye mahn ee dyar; Please drive a little slower.)
- Qǐng kāi kuài yìdiār. (cheeng kye kwye ee dyar; Please drive a little faster.)
- Wǒ děi gān shíjiān. (waw day gahn shir jyan; I’m in a hurry.)
- Qǐng zǒu fēngjǐng hǎo de lù. (cheeng dzoe fung jeeng how duh loo; Please take a scenic route.)
- Zài zhèr guǎi wār. (dzye jar gwye wahr; Turn here.)
- Nǐ kěyǐ děng jǐ fēn zhōng ma? (nee kuh yee duhng jee fun joong mah; Can you wait a few minutes?)

Oh, and one more thing. As you chūfā (choo fah; set off) with your taxi sījī (suh jee; driver), make sure you put on your ānquándài (ahn chwan dye; seat belt).
Finally, before you get out of the cab, these phrases may come in handy for price negotiations:

✔️ Wǒ gāi gěi nǐ duōshǎo qián? (waw guy gay nee dwaw shaow chyan; How much do I owe you?)
✔️ Wǒ huì àn biǎo fù kuǎn. (waw hway ahn byaow foo kwahn; I'll pay what the meter says.)
✔️ Bié qǐpiàn wǒ. (byeh chee pyan waw; Don't cheat me.)
✔️ Kāi wán xiào! Wǒ jùjué fù zhèmme duō qián. (kye wahn shyaow! waw jyew jweh foo juhmmuh dwaw chyan; You’ve got to be kidding! I refuse to pay so much.)
✔️ Bú yòng zhǎo le. (boo yoong jaow luh; Keep the change.)
✔️ Qǐng gěi wǒ shōujù. (cheeng gay waw show jyew; Please give me a receipt.)

Because most people in China don’t speak English, always remember to take a hotel card when you leave your hotel. Your card has the name and address in English and Chinese. You can always show the card to a taxi driver when you want to get back. If you’re walking around town, you may want to take a dītú (dee too; map) that shows local landmarks such as pagodas or train stations near your hotel.

**Tip**

Because most people in China don’t speak English, always remember to take a hotel card when you leave your hotel. Your card has the name and address in English and Chinese. You can always show the card to a taxi driver when you want to get back. If you’re walking around town, you may want to take a dītú (dee too; map) that shows local landmarks such as pagodas or train stations near your hotel.

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**Talkin’ the Talk**

Herby ventures out for a night on the town and needs a cab. He enlists the help of his hotel doorman.

**Herby:** Wǒ yào jiào jichéngché.  
_Waw yaow jyaow jee chung chuh._  
I would like a taxi.

**Doorman:** Hǎo.  
_How._  
Certainly.

The doorman hails a cab and then opens the cab door. Herby gives him a ridiculously large tip of USD$5.

**Herby:** Bú yòng zhǎo le.  
_Boo yoong jaow luh._  
Keep the change.
Doorman:  Xièxiè!
            Shyeh shyeh!
            Thank you!

Herby enters the cab and shows the driver a card with the name
and address of a local nightclub.

Herby:  Qìng dài wǒ dào zhèige yèzōnghui.
            Cheeng dye waw daow jay guh yeh dzoong hway.
            Please take me to this nightclub.

Driver:  Méiyǒu wèntí.
            Mayo one tee.
            No problem.

Herby:  Wǒ bùjí. Qìng kǎi màn yìdiǎr.
            Waw boo jee. Cheeng kye mahn ee dyar.
            I'm not in a hurry. Please drive a little slower.

Herby finally reaches the nightclub after his scenic cab drive.

Herby:  Wǒ gāi gěi nǐ duōshǎo qián?
            Waw guy gay nee dwaw shaow chyan?
            How much do I owe you?

Driver:  Shí kuài liàng máo wǔ.
            Shir kwye lyahng maow woo.
            That will be $10.25.

Herby hands the driver USD $15.

            Cheeng gay waw show jyew. Boo yoong jaow luh.
            Please give me a receipt. Keep the change.

Driver:  Hǎo. Xièxiè.
            How. Shyeh shyeh.
            Okay. Thanks.
### Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chē</td>
<td>chuh</td>
<td>car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūzūchē</td>
<td>choo dzoo chuh</td>
<td>taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sījī</td>
<td>suh jee</td>
<td>driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāi chē</td>
<td>kye chuh</td>
<td>to drive a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jìchēngbiǎo</td>
<td>jee chuhan byaow</td>
<td>meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiǎofèi</td>
<td>shyaow fay</td>
<td>tip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chéngkè</td>
<td>chuhng kuh</td>
<td>passenger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wènlù</td>
<td>one loo</td>
<td>to ask for directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gāofēngqī</td>
<td>gaow fung chee</td>
<td>rush hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dǔchē</td>
<td>doo chuh</td>
<td>traffic jam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hopping on the bus

**Gōnggōng qíchē** (goong goong chee chuh; buses) are almost as common as bicycles in China. They also cost much less than **chūzūchē** (choo dzoo chuh; taxis). But here’s the catch: Bus drivers usually don’t speak a word of English, signs are only in Chinese, and the buses are always super crowded. Still, if you’re game for a unique travel experience, and you don’t mind killing time waiting for the bus, put these phrases in your carry-on bag:

- **Yīnggāi zuò jǐ lù chē?** (eeng guy dzwaw jee loo chuh; Which (number) bus should I take?)
- **Chē piào duōshāo qián?** (chuh pyaow dwaw shaow chyan; How much is the fare?)
- **Gōnggōng qíchē zhàn zài nār?** (goong goong chee chuh jahn dzye nar; Where’s the bus station?)
- **Duōjiū lái yìtāng?** (duaw jyo lye ee tahng; How often does it come?)
- **Qǐng gàosù wǒ zài nār xià chē.** (cheeng gaow soo waw dzye nar shyah chuh; Please let me know where to get off.)
Alina is walking along the street, trying to find a bus that can take her to the famous Shilin night market in Taiwan. She sees her old friend Gretchen, and after saying hello, she asks her for help.

Alina:  
Qù Shìlín yìnggāi zuò jì lù gōnggōng qíchē?
*Chyew shir leen eeng guy dzwaw jee loo goong goong cheh chuh?*

Which bus should I take to go to Shilin?

Gretchen:  
Yìnggāi zuò sān lù chē. Nèige gōnggōng qíchē zhàn jiù zài zhèr.
*Eeng guy dzwaw sahn loo chuh. Nay guh goong goong cheh chuh jahn jyo dzye jar.*

You should take the number 3 bus. That bus stop is right here.

Alina:  
Tài hǎo le. Duōjiǔ lái yītàng?
*Tye how luh. Dwaw jyo lye ee tahng?*

That's great. How often does it come?

Gretchen:  
Měi sānshí fèn zhōng. Hái hǎo.
*May sahn shir fun joong. Hi how.*

Every 30 minutes. That's not too bad.

Alina:  
Xièxiè nǐ.
*Shyeh shyeh nee.*

Thank you.
Riding the rails

If you want to get where you need to go really quickly, especially in Hong Kong or New York, the fastest way to get there may take you below the ground — to the dìtiē (dee tyeh; subway). Most dìtiē zhàn (dee tyeh jahn; subway stations) are pretty easy to navigate.

Unlike in Hong Kong, the subway system in mainland China is relatively new, and you find stations in less than a handful of cities. Above-ground huòché (huaw chuh; train) travel, however, is tried and true — especially because China is such a huge place and distances between cities are so great. Unlike the number of subway stations, you can find plenty of huòchézhàn (huaw chuh jahn; train stations) in China. They even come equipped with hòuchēshi (ho chuh shir; waiting rooms).

February is a particularly risky month to attempt long-distance train travel, because the shortest month features the Chinese New Year, and you’re bound to meet what seems like the entire country traveling from one part of China to another. Make sure you consult a shìkèbǐ (shir kuh byaow; time schedule) in advance and note the correct dàodá shíjiān (daow dah shir jyan; arrival time) and kāichē shíjiān (key chuh shir jyan; departure time) of your train.

If you plan to travel a long distance, be sure to book a ruānwò (rwan waw; soft sleeper) for such occasions — or at least ask for a ruānzúò (rwan dwaw; soft seat) — because they’re the more comfortable accommodations and not as jam-packed as other parts of the train. Trust me. Soft sleepers are worth the extra cost. For more on the types of seats in trains, see Table 14-2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 14-2 Seating Accommodations on Trains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yìngzuò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruānzúò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yìngwò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruānwò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiàpù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shāngpù</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Before you **shàngchē** (*shahng chuh*; board the train) to enjoy your comfy, soft seat, you need to go to the **shòupiàochù** (*show pyaow choo*; ticket office) to buy your **piào** (*pyaow*; ticket). You use the following words and phrases to get the job done:

- ✓ **piào** (*pyaow*; ticket)
- ✓ **piàojià** (*pyaow jyah*; fare)
- ✓ **dānchéngpiào** (*dahn chuhng pyaow*; one-way ticket)
- ✓ **láihuípiào** (*lye hway pyaow*; round-trip ticket)
- ✓ **shòupiàochù** (*show pyaow choo*; ticket office)
- ✓ **tèkuài** (*tuh kwye*; express train)
- ✓ **mànchē** (*mahn chuh*; local train)

The following may come in handy at the train station:

- ✓ **Piàofáng zài nār?** (*pyaow fahng dzye nar*; Where’s the ticket office?)
  Notice the different way of saying ticket office in this question. Options abound in the Chinese language.

- ✓ **Wō yào yīzhāng yīngwò piào.** (*waw yow ee jahng eeng waw pyaow*; I’d like a hard-sleeper ticket.)

- ✓ **Huŏchē cōng nēige zhàntái kāi?** (*hwaw chuh tsoong nay guh jahn tye kye*; Which gate does the train leave from?)

And when you finally hear the **lièchéyúàn** (*lyeh chuh ywan*; conductor) say “**Shàng chē le!**” (*shahng chuh luh*; All aboard!), you can board and ask the following questions:

- ✓ **Zhèige zuòwèi yǒu rén ma?** (*jay guh dzwaw way yo run mah*; Is this seat taken?)

- ✓ **Cānchē zài nār?** (*tsahn chuh dzye nar*; Where’s the dining car?)
Talkin’ the Talk

Lorna is at the Beijing train station to buy a round-trip ticket to Shanghai for tomorrow. She approaches a ticket agent to purchase her ticket.

Lorna:  
Qìng wèn, yǒu méiyǒu míngtiān qǔ Shànghǎi de huǒchē piào?
Cheeng one, yo mayo meeng tyan chyew shahng hi duh hwaw chuh pyaow?
Excuse me, do you have any train tickets to Shanghai for tomorrow?

Ticket Agent: Yǒu. Yào jǐ zhǎng?
Yo. Yaow jee jahng?
Yes. How many would you like?

Lorna:  
Zhī yì zhǎng lái huí piào. Xiàge líbāiyī yào huí lái.
Jir ee jahng lye hway pyaow. Shyah guh lee bye ee yaow hway lye.
Just one round-trip ticket. I’d like to return next Monday.

Ticket Agent: Hǎo. Yào yíngwò, ruǎnwò, háishì ruānzúò?
How. Yaow eeng waw, rwahn waw, hi shir rwahn dzwaw?
Okay. Would you like a hard sleeper, a soft sleeper, or a soft seat?

Lorna:  
Wǒ yào yì zhǎng ruǎn wò. Xièxiè.
Waw yaow ee jahng rwahn waw. Shyeh shyeh.
I’d like a soft sleeper. Thanks.
### Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lái huí piào</td>
<td>lye hway pyaow</td>
<td>round-trip ticket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huí lái</td>
<td>hway lye</td>
<td>to return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huànchē</td>
<td>hwahn chuh</td>
<td>change trains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chápiào</td>
<td>chah pyaow</td>
<td>check the ticket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cānchē</td>
<td>tsahn chuh</td>
<td>dining car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhàntái</td>
<td>jahn tye</td>
<td>platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fun & Games

How do you say these types of transportation in Chinese? (See Appendix C for the answers.)

A. ______________
B. ______________
C. ______________
D. ______________
E. ______________
Chapter 15

Traveling Abroad

In This Chapter
- Checking your calendar for open dates
- Choosing a travel destination
- Filling your luggage
- Dealing with travel agents

Careful planning is the key to a successful vacation or business trip. You have to keep in mind not only where you want to go, but also the best time to travel. This chapter tells you how to prepare for a trip abroad and how to choose the exact day, date, and year you want to travel. When it comes to making sure your hūzhào (hoo jaow; passport) is still valid and your qiānzhèng (chyan juhng; visa) is in order, however, you’re on your own. Yì lù píng ān! (ee loo peeng ahn; Have a good trip!)

When Do You Want to Travel?

The time of year you choose to travel can make all the difference in the world for a great (or lousy) vacation. Should you plan it for dōngtiān (doong tyan; winter), chūntiān (chuun tyan; spring), xiàtiān (shyah tyan; summer), or qiūtiān (choo tyan; fall)? A trip to Beijing during sān yuè (sahn yweh; March), just when the dust storms are blowing in from the Gobi Desert, for example, is quite different than a trip during wǔ yuè (woo yweh; May) or shí yuè (shir yweh; October), when pollution is at a minimum and sunny skies are at a maximum. Of course, wǔ yuè and shí yuè are peak seasons to travel to China for exactly these reasons, which means hotel prices are also at their peak. Paris in the chūntiān is just as great (and just as expensive) for the same reason. Can’t do much to help you there. For more on dates, weeks, months, and years, head to Chapter 7.

Want to find out when friends plan to leave on their vacation? Just ask them one of these basic questions:
Ni ji yue ji hao zou? (nee jee yweh jee how dzoe; When are you leaving; literally: What month and day are you leaving?)

Ni ji yue ji hao qu Zhongguo? (nee jee yweh jee how chyew joong gwaw; When will you be going to China; literally: What month and day will you be going to China?)

If you have to answer the preceding questions, just fill in the month and the number of the day you plan on leaving and put those words in place of yue and hao. Here are some examples:

Ni ji yue ji hao zou? (nee jee yweh jee how dzoe; When are you leaving?)

Woo wu yue sanshi hao zou. (waw woo yweh sahn shir how dzoe; I’m leaving on May 30th.)

Ni ji yue ji hao qu Miguo? (nee jee yweh jee how chyew may gwaw; When will you be going to America?)

Woo san yue yi hao qu Miguo. (waw sahn yweh ee how chyew may gwaw; I’m going to America on March 1st.)

Bet you can’t wait to start making those travel plans now. Which brings me to my next point . . .

Celebrating the Chinese Holidays

You may want to time your trip to mainland China, Taiwan, or Hong Kong to coincide with certain holidays — or, just as important, to avoid certain days and weeks.

First you celebrate xinnian (shin nyan; New Year’s Day; also known as yuandan; ywan dahn) on yi yue yi hao (ee yweh ee how; January 1st), in addition to a three-day celebration coinciding with the lunar New Year known as chunjie (chwun jyeh; Spring Festival, or Chinese New Year). Every year the dates for chunjie change because — you guessed it — it follows the yinli (ween lee; lunar calendar) rather than the yangli (yahng lee; solar calendar). Chunjie always occurs sometime in January or February.

If you travel to China jin nian (jin nyan; this year) during 2005, you arrive during jiniyan (jee nyan; the Year of the Rooster). Want to travel in the coming years instead?

2006: gounian (go nyan), Year of the Dog
2007: zhu nian (joo nyan), Year of the Pig
2008: shu nian (shoo nyan), Year of the Rat
The Year of the Rat is actually the beginning of a whole new 12-year cycle of animals. Table 15-1 shows all the animals of the Chinese zodiac. Just as in Western astrology, each of the Chinese animals represents a different personality type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 15-1 Animals of the Chinese Zodiac</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shǔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hǔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lóng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mǎ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yáng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hóu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gǒu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhǔ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In mainland China, **Láodòng jié** (laow doong jyeh; Labor Day) is celebrated on **wǔ yuè yī hào** (woo yweh ee how; May 1st), and **Guó qìng jié** (gwaw cheeng jyeh; National Day) is celebrated on **shí yuè yī hào** (shir yweh ee how; October 1st) in commemoration of the day Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party declared the founding of **Zhōnghuá rénmín gònghé guó** (joong hwah run meen goong huh gwaw; the People’s Republic of China) in 1949. In Taiwan, **Guó qìng jié** is celebrated on **shí yuè shí hào** (shir yweh shir how; October 10th) to commemorate the day in 1911 when China’s long dynastic history ended and a new era of **Zhōnghuá mín guó** (joong hwah meen gwaw; the Republic of China) began, under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen.

National Day in Taiwan is often referred to as **shuāng shí jié** (shwahng shir jyeh; literally: double 10 day), because it occurs on the 10th day of the 10th month.
In Taiwan, you often see years written out that seem to be 11 years short of what you think is correct. That’s because the founding of the Republic of China in 1911 is considered the base line for all future years. So 1921 is listed as 『min guo shi nian』 (meen gwaw shir nyan; “meen gwaw” is the abbreviation for Zhonghua min guo [joong hwah meen gwaw], or the Republic of China, and “shir nyan,” meaning 10 years, refers to 10 years following the founding of the Republic of China). The year 2005 is noted as 『min guo jiushi si nian』 (meen gwaw jyo shir suh nyan; 94 years after the establishment of the Republic of China).

In addition to the major public holidays worthy of closing down businesses, you may want to experience some of the other fun and interesting Chinese holidays first-hand:

- **Yuansiáo jie** (ywan shyaow jyeh; The Lantern Festival) is celebrated on the 15th day of the lunar New Year. It marks the end of **chūn jie** (chwuun jyeh; Spring Festival). Folks display colorful and creative lanterns on the street and eat boiled dumplings with glutinous rice and red bean paste.

- **Qingming jie** (cheeng meeng jyeh; The Clear and Bright Festival) takes place in April to honor one’s ancestors by sweeping their graves and burning incense and paper money for their use in the next world. This holiday is primarily celebrated in Taiwan, where you can still see entire families having veritable picnics on the graves of their ancestors, which are often located along the sides of hills and mountains.

- **Duansu jie** (dwan woo jyeh; The Dragon Boat Festival) occurs on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month and always features a real dragon boat race (well, as real as a dragon can be on a boat, that is). It commemorates the life and, more specifically, the death of China’s first great poet, Qu Yuan, who lived during the Warring States (475–221 BCE) period. He drowned himself in the Milo River in Hunan Province while exiled after failing to persuade the king to adequately defend the country. On **Duansu jie**, people eat sticky rice wrapped in grape leaves known as **zòngzi** (dzoong dzuh).

- **Zhongqiù jie** (joong chyo jyeh; The Mid-autumn Festival) is celebrated on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month as a kind of harvest festival, when families get together and everyone eats **yuèbíng** (yweh beeng; moon cakes) — round pastries with lotus seeds. Everyone takes a moment to really look at the moon on this evening — the subject of much Chinese classical poetry.

All sorts of folk festivals take place in villages throughout mainland China and Taiwan when you least expect them, so if you suddenly find yourself surrounded by a throng of jovial, clapping, and singing people, just follow the crowd and see where the action takes you. You won’t be disappointed. Even funeral processions can be the most fascinating and musical of events, with mourners dressed in white sackcloth playing all manner of wind and percussion instruments.
Where Do You Want to Travel?

So, now that you know the time you plan to lūyóu (lyew yo; travel), I can’t wait to finally ask you: Nǐ xiāng dào nǎr qù? (nee shyahng daow nar chyew; Where do you want to go?) Planning a trip to Yàzhōu (yah joe; Asia), Fēizhōu (fay joe; Africa), Ōuzhōu (oh joe; Europe), or Mēizhōu (may joe; the Americas)? Will your voyage be zài guó nèi (dzye gwaw nay; within the country; domestic) or zài guó wài (dzye gwaw why; outside the country)? Table 15-2 shows some countries you may xuǎnzé (shwan dzuh; choose) to visit.

Table 15-2 Places to Visit Around the Globe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiānàdà</td>
<td>jyah nah dah</td>
<td>Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōngguó dālù</td>
<td>joong gwaw dah loo</td>
<td>Mainland China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fāguó</td>
<td>fah gwaw</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Déguó</td>
<td>duh gwaw</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiānggāng</td>
<td>shyahng gahng</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiōngyáli</td>
<td>shyoong yah lee</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Àìèrlán</td>
<td>eye are lahn</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yísèliè</td>
<td>ee suh lyeh</td>
<td>Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rìběn</td>
<td>ir bun</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mòxǐgè</td>
<td>maw she guh</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Êguó</td>
<td>uh gwaw</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nánfèi</td>
<td>nahn fay</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruìshì</td>
<td>rway shir</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruìdiàn</td>
<td>rway dyan</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Táiwān</td>
<td>tye wahn</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tānsāngniyà</td>
<td>tahn sahng nee yah</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuēnān</td>
<td>yweh nahn</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zǎyǐèr</td>
<td>zah ee are</td>
<td>Zaire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Depending on the type of activities you enjoy doing while on vacation, you may want to consider traveling to a place that has plenty of the following features (or at least one special one to make it well worth the trip):

- hāitān (hi tahn; beach)
- shān (shahn; mountain)
- shāmò (shah maw; desert)
- zhīwǔyuán (jir wooy wan; botanical gardens)
- xiōngnào (shyoong maow; pandas)
- yóuliè (yo lyeh; safari)
- tă (tah; pagoda)
- fó miào (faw myaow; Buddhist temple)
- mótiǎndáolóu (maw tyan dah lo; skyscraper)
- gǔdōngdiàn (goo doong dyan; antique shop)
- mēishùguān (may shoo gwahn; art gallery)
- xīyuàn (she ywan; theatre)

Unless you’re the type who thrives on danger and excitement (or works for a relief agency), try to avoid places where the following natural phenomena occur:

- táifēng (lye fung; typhoon)
- hànzāi (hahn dzye; drought)
- dìzhèn (dee juhn; earthquake)
- huōzāi (hwaw dzye; fire)
- shuízāi (shway dzye; flood)
- yǔjí (yew jee; rainy season)

Planning to travel cóng (tsoong; from) Xióngyāli (shyoong yah lee; Hungary) dào (daow; to) Xiānggāng (shyahng gahng; Hong Kong) anytime soon? How about cóng Riběn (tsoong ir bun; from Japan) dào Mòxǐgē (daow maw she guh; to Mexico) instead? Wherever you travel, you always go cóng one place dào another. Here are some good phrases to know when you tell people about your upcoming travel plans, using the cóng . . . dào pattern:

- Wǒ cóng Niǔyuē dào Jiāzhǒu qù. (waw tsoong nyo yweh daow jyah joe chyew; I’m going from New York to California.)
- Tā míngtiān cóng Yīsèliè dào Ruidiān qù. (tah meeng tyan tsoong ee suh lyeh daow rway dyan chyew; She’s going from Israel to Sweden tomorrow.)
Nimen shenme shihou cong Zhongguo dao zher lai? (nee mun shum-muh shir ho tsoong joong gwaw daow jar lye; When are you all coming here from China?)

Cong Nanhui dao Zaiye duo chang shijian? (tsoong nahn fay daow zah ee are dwaw chahng shir jyan; How long does it take to get from South Africa to Zaire?)

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Pang Laoshi (pahng laow shir; Professor Pang) asks his American student, Kristina, where she plans to go during the upcoming winter vacation, because she has already been in Tianjin studying Chinese for four months.

Pang Laoshi: Kristina, nei han ji de shihou xiang qu nar? Kristina, nei hahn jyah duh shir ho shyahng chyew nar? Kristina, where do you plan on going during the winter vacation?

Kristina: Yinwei wo yijing zai Tianjin si ge yeue le, suoyi wo xiang zui zhong qu Feizhou kankan. Een way waw ee jeeng dzye tyan jeen suh guh yweh luh, swaw yee waw shyahng dzway joong chyew fay joe kahn kahn. Because I’ve already been in Tianjin for four months, I’d finally like to go to Africa to have a look.


Kristina: Yinwei dongo tian de shihou Tianjin tai leng. Erqie zai Feizhou keyi canjia youli! Een way doong tyan duh shir ho tyan jeen tye lung. Are chyeh dzye fay joe kuh yee tsaen jyah yo lyeh! Because winters in Beijing are too cold. What’s more, in Africa I can take part in a safari!

Pang Laoshi: Cong Yazhou dao Feizhou zuo feiji jige xiaooshi? Tsoong yah joe daow fay joe dzwaw fay jee jee guh shyaow shir? How many hours is it from Asia to Africa by plane?
Part III: Chinese on the Go

Passports and visas: Don’t leave home without ‘em

Surprise! Actually, it should come as no surprise that you need a valid hùzhào (hoo jaow; passport) and a qiānzhèng (chyan juhng; visa) if you want to enter mainland China or Taiwan. (For more on passports, visas, and navigating your way around airports, see Chapter 14.) And if you plan on visiting a couple of different countries in the region for any length of time, you may need a couple of different qiānzhèng to go with each destination. Check to see what regulations apply before you board your feijī (fay jee; airplane), or you may have the shortest vacation experience of your life. Check out Chapter 13 for hotel tips after you get where you’re going.

Kristina: Čóng Tiānjīn dào Tânsângniyà yào chàbūduō shìsān ge xiāoshí.
Tsoong tyan jeen daow tahn sahng nee yah yaow chah boo dwaw shir sahn guh shyaow shir.
From Tianjin to Tanzania it takes about 13 hours.

Páng Lǎoshí: Qíng dài huí lái hěn duò xiǎngpiàn gěi wò kànkan.
Cheeng dye hway lye hun dwaw shyahng pyan gay waw kahn kahn.
Please bring back lots of pictures to show me.

Kristina: Yídīng huì.
Ee deeng hway.
I certainly will.

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hán jià</td>
<td>hahn jyah</td>
<td>winter vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shǔ jià</td>
<td>shoo jyah</td>
<td>summer vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fàng jià</td>
<td>fahng jyah</td>
<td>to take a vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yóulǎn</td>
<td>yo lahn</td>
<td>to sightsee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhōngyú</td>
<td>joong yew</td>
<td>finally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ěrqǐě</td>
<td>are chyeh</td>
<td>moreover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Packing for Your Trip

Are you the type who likes to zhuàngrù (jwahng roo; pack) everything under the tàiyang (tye yahng; sun) in three different pieces of oversized xíngli (sheeng lee; luggage) before a trip? Or are you more the bēibāo (bay baow; backpack) type, content to take only the bare essentials? Either way, you have to prepare your bags in advance if you want to qualify them as shōutí xíngli (show tee sheeng lee; carry-on luggage) or tuòyùn xíngli (twaw yewn sheeng lee; checked luggage).

What should you pack for a trip to the hāitān (hi tahn; beach)? Maybe some of the following items:

✓ yóuyōngyī (yo yoong ee; bathing suit)
✓ tàiyang yānjìng (tye yahng yan jeeng; sunglasses)
✓ duān kù (dwahn koo; shorts)
✓ liángxié (lyahng shyeh; sandals)

No matter where you plan to go, you should pack some of these items:

✓ yáshuā (yah shwah; toothbrush)
✓ yágāo (yah gaow; toothpaste)
✓ huàzhuāng pīn (hwah jwahng peen; makeup)
✓ chúc'hòu jì (choo cho jee; deodorant)
✓ shuāzi (shwah dzuh; brush)
✓ shùkōu shuí (shoo ko shway; mouthwash)
✓ nào zhōng (naow joong; alarm clock)
✓ guāhú dāo (gwah hoo daow; razor)
✓ wèi shèng jīn (way shung geen; sanitary napkins)
✓ yuèjìng yòng miánsāi (yweh jeeng yoong myan sye; tampons)
✓ féizào (fay dzaow; soap)
✓ zhàoxiàng jī (jaow shyahng jee; camera)
✓ zhuānjiē qī (jwahng jyeh chee; adaptor)
✓ yùndōu (yewn doe; iron)
✓ yūsān (yew sahn; umbrella)
Chén Xiānshēng (chun shyan shung; Mr. Chen) and Chén Tàitài (chun tye tye; Mrs. Chen) are deciding what to pack for a trip to Hong Kong in October.

Chén Xiānshēng: Wǒmen yīnggāi bǎ yūsān zhuāngrù xīngli? Waw men eeng boo eeng guy bah yew sahn jwahng roo sheeng lee? Should we pack an umbrella (in the suitcase)?

Chén Tàitài: Búyòng le. Xiānggāng de tiānqì shìyuè fèn hěn hǎo. Boo yoong luh. Shyahng gahng duh tyan chee shir yweh fun hun how. There’s no need to. The weather in Hong Kong in October is real nice.

Chén Xiānshēng: Duǎn kù ne? Dwahn koo nuh? How about shorts then?

Chén Tàitài: Duǎn kù dàgài yě búyào. Shíyuè fèn de tiānqì yǒu yīdiǎn lèng. Dwahn koo dah gye yeah boo yaow. Shir yweh fun duh tyan chee yo ee dyan luhng. You probably don’t need to pack shorts. The weather in October is a little cool.

Chén Xiānshēng: Nà, wǒmen dàodí yào zhuāng shénme dōngxi? Nah, waw men daow dee yaow jwahng shum-muh doong she? Well, then, what in the world should we pack?

Chén Tàitài: Wǒmen jiù bǎ yáshuā hé zhàoxiàng jì zhuāngrù xīngli jiù wǎn le. Waw men jyo bah yah shwah huh jaow shyahng jee jwahng roo sheeng lee jyo wahn luh. Just a toothbrush and a camera, that’s it.

Chén Xiānshēng: Nǐ yídìng kǎi wǎn xiào ba! Nee ee deeng kye wahn shyaow bah! You’ve got to be kidding!
Chapter 15: Traveling Abroad

Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kāi wán xiào</td>
<td>kye wahn shyaow</td>
<td>just kidding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiù wán le</td>
<td>jyo wahn luh</td>
<td>that's all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dàodǐ</td>
<td>daow dee</td>
<td>in the end; after all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dàgài</td>
<td>dah gye</td>
<td>probably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>búyòng le</td>
<td>boo yoong luh</td>
<td>it's not necessary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sentence structure for the verb **zhuàng** (jwahng; to pack) is: **bā A zhuāngrù B**, which translates into “pack A into B,” even though the word for “pack” comes in between what you’re packing (A) and what you pack it into (B).

**Grammatically Speaking**

**Enlisting the Help of a Travel Agency**

Think you can handle traipsing around the world without an advance plan or hotel reservations? Think again. China, for example, is one country you should travel to as part of a **guānguāng tuán** (gwahn gwahng twahn; tour group). If you don’t like the idea of group travel, you should at least make advance reservations for hotels and domestic travel and even for your own private **dàoyóu** (daow yo; tour guide) through a **lǔxínshè** (lyew sheeng shuh; travel agency). Remember, you generally hear no **Yīngyǔ** (eeng yew; English) spoken anywhere in China.

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Daisy and Michael discuss their travel plans with a local travel agent, Miss Lǐ, in Hong Kong.

**Miss Lǐ:** Nǐmen hǎo. Wǒ néng bāng shénme máng?
             Nee men how. Waw nung bahng shummuh mahng?
             Hello. How may I be of help?

**Daisy:** Wǒmen hēn xiǎng qù Zhōngguó dālù. Néng bùnéng yǔdìng yíge lǚguān?
              Waw men hun shyahng chyew joong gwaw dah loo.
              Nung boo nung yew deeng ee guh lyew gwahn?
We’re very interested in traveling to mainland China. Would you be able to reserve hotels for us in advance?

Miss Lǐ:  
Méiyǒu wèntí. Nǐmen shénme shíhou yào zǒu?  
Mayo one tee. Nee mun shummuh shir ho yaow dzoë?  
No problem. When would you like to go?

Michael:  
Tǐngshuō wǔ yuè fēn de tiānqì zuì hǎo.  
Teeng shwaw woo yweh fun duh tyan chee dzway how.  
I’ve heard the weather in May is the best.

Miss Lǐ:  
Dùì le. Wǒ yě jiànyì nǐmen gēn yīge guāngguāng tuán yǐkuài qù.  
Dway luh. Waw yeah jyan ee nee mun gun ee guh gwahn gwahng twan ee kwar chyew.  
That’s correct. I also suggest you go with a tour group.

Daisy:  
Wèishénme?  
Way shummuh?  
Why?

Miss Lǐ:  
Guāngguāng tuán yǒu shuō Yīngyǔ de dǎoyóu hé yóulánhē. Nà zuì fāngbiàn.  
Gwahn gwahng twahn yo shwaw eeng yew duh daow yo huh yo lahn chuh. Nah dzway fahng byan.  
Tour groups have an English-speaking tour guide and a sightseeing bus. That’s the most convenient way to go.

Michael:  
Hǎo. Juédìng le.  
How. Jweh deeng luh.  
Okay. It’s decided.
### Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ㄍㄨㄤㄍㄨㄤ ㄊㄨㄢˊ</td>
<td>gwahn gwahng twahn</td>
<td>tour group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄉㄠㄅㄧㄡˊ</td>
<td>daow yo</td>
<td>tour guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄌㄨㄒㄧㄥˊ</td>
<td>lyew sheeng</td>
<td>travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄌㄨㄒㄧㄥ ㄉㄢㄒㄧㄣˊ</td>
<td>lyew sheeng dye lee run</td>
<td>travel agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄌㄨㄒㄧㄥㄒㄧˋ ㄏㄜˋ</td>
<td>lyew sheeng shuh</td>
<td>travel agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄙㄨㄤㄉㄨㄥˊ</td>
<td>yew deeng</td>
<td>to make a reservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄩㄡㄌㄢˊㄈㄧˊ</td>
<td>yo lahn chuh</td>
<td>sightseeing bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄑㄵㄒㄧㄠ ㄈㄦˋ</td>
<td>chyew shyaow fay</td>
<td>cancellation fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄐㄨㄝㄉㄧㄥ ㄌㄨˋ</td>
<td>jweh deeng luh</td>
<td>it’s decided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄈㄤㄤㄉㄧㄢˋ</td>
<td>fahng byan</td>
<td>convenient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ㄐㄧㄢˋ ˋˋ</td>
<td>jyan ee</td>
<td>to suggest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fill in the missing words with one of the three possible answers under each sentence. See Appendix C for the answers.

1. Wômen jînnián qù ____________. (This year we’re going to Ireland.)
   a. Àiĕrlán
   b. Éguó
   c. Nánfēi

2. Tâmén ____________ zǒu. (They’re leaving on June 8th.)
   a. sì yuè wǔ hào
   b. wǔ yuè jiǔ hào
   c. liù yuè bā hào

3. Wômen yídìng yào kàn ____________. (We definitely want to see Buddhist Temples.)
   a. xióngmào
   b. fó miào
   c. yóuliè

4. Bié wàngle zhuāngrú ____________. (Don’t forget to pack a toothbrush.)
   a. yáshuā
   b. yágāo
   c. huázhuāng pîn

5. Méiyǒu wèntì. ____________. (No problem. Just kidding.)
   a. Juédìng le
   b. Kâi wăn xiào
   c. Jiù wăn le
Chapter 16
Handling Emergencies

In This Chapter

- Yelling for help
- Visiting your doctor
- Going to the authorities
- Looking for legal advice

You can easily plan the fun and exciting things you want to experience while you travel or go out with friends, but you can’t predict needing to call the police to report a theft or rushing to an emergency room with appendicitis on your trip to the Great Wall. Such things can and do happen, and this chapter gives you the language tools you need to communicate your problems during your times of need.

Calling for Help in Times of Need

When you’re faced with an emergency, the last way you want to spend your time is searching for an oversized Chinese-English dictionary to figure out how to quickly call for help. Try memorizing these phrases before a situation arises:

- Jiù ming! (jyo meeng; Help; Save me!)
- Zhuā zéi! (jwah dzay; Stop, thief!)
- Zháohuō là! (jaow hwaw lah; Fire!)
- Jiào jiùhùchē! (jyaow jyo hoo chuh; Call an ambulance!)
- Jiào jǐngchá! (jyaow jeeng chah; Call the police!)

Be careful when you say the words jiào (jyow; to call) and jiù (jyo; to save) in the phrases above. You don’t want to mistakenly ask someone to save the police when you want him to call the police.
Sometimes you have to ask for someone who speaks English. Here are some phrases you can quickly blurt out during emergencies:

- **Nǐ shuō Yīngwén ma?** (nee shwaw eeng one mah; Do you speak English?)
- **Wǒ xūyào yīge jiāng Yīngwén de lūshī.** (waw shyew yaow ee guh jyahng eeng one duh lyew shir; I need a lawyer who speaks English.)
- **Yǒu méiyǒu jiāng Yīngwén de dàif u?** (yo mayo jyahng eeng one duh dye foo; Are there any English-speaking doctors?)

When you finally get someone on the line who can help you, you need to know what to say to get immediate help:

- **Wǒ bèi rén qiăng le.** (waw bay run chyahng luh; I’ve been robbed.)
- **Yǒu rén shòu shāng le.** (yo run show shahng luh; People are injured.)
- **Wǒ yào huì bào yīge chū huò.** (waw yaow hway baow yee guh chuh hwaw; I’d like to report a car accident.)

**Word to the wise:** Chinese people don’t have O-negative blood, so Chinese hospitals don’t store it. If you have a medical emergency in China that requires O-negative blood, you should check directly with your country’s nearest Embassy or Consulate for help. You may need to be airlifted out to get the appropriate care. You may also want to take your own hypodermic needles in case you need an injection, because you can’t guarantee that the needles you may come across are sterilized. Better safe than sorry away from home.

**Receiving Medical Care**

It’s everyone’s greatest nightmare — getting sick and not knowing why or how to make it better. If you suddenly find yourself in the **yīyuàn** (ee ywan; hospital) or otherwise visiting an **yīshēng** (ee shung; doctor), you need to explain what ails you — often in a hurry. This may be easier said than done, especially if you have to explain yourself in Chinese (or help a Chinese-speaking victim who’s having trouble communicating). You may not have the energy to remember both the pronunciation and the proper tone for the word you mean to use. You may want to say you’re feeling kind of **tóuyǔn** (toe yewn; dizzy), but if it comes out sounding like **tuòyǔn** (twaw yewn) instead, you alert your caregiver that you’re sending your luggage on ahead of you. You don’t want your doctor to move on to the next patient. Use Table 16-1 to figure out how to say the basic body parts.
When you travel, don’t forget to bring your prescription medicines. Carry them in a separate carry-on bag or in your purse. You don’t want to pack them in a piece of check-in luggage, never to be seen again if the luggage gets lost.
Unless you’re in a big city like Beijing or Shanghai, if you get seriously ill while staying in mainland China, your best bet is to fly to Hong Kong or back home for medical care. Don’t forget to check into evacuation insurance before you go.

**Finding a doctor**

If your yùnqì (yewn chee; luck) is good, you’ll never need to use any of the phrases I present in this chapter. If you end up running dãoméi (daow may; out of luck), however, keep reading. Even if you’ve never chóuyân (cho yan; smoked) a day in your life, you can still develop késòu (kuh so; a cough) or even qiguányân (chee gwahn yan; bronchitis). Time to see a yīshēng (ee shung: doctor).

**Talkin’ the Talk**

Dàlín and his wife, Miān, are on their first trip back to China in 20 years. Miān becomes concerned about a sudden onset of dizziness. The two discuss her symptoms.

**Dàlín:**  
Nǐ zěnme bǔshūfu?  
Nee dzummu shoo foo?  
What’s wrong?

**Miān:**  
Wǒ gānjùè bǔshūfu kěshì bù zhídào wǒ déle shénme bìng.  
Waw gahn jweh shoo foo kuh shir foo jir daow waw duh luh shummu beeng.  
I don’t feel well, but I don’t know what I have.

**Dàlín:**  
Nǐ fà shāo ma?  
Nee fah shaow mah?  
Are you running a fever?

**Miān:**  
Méiyǒu, dànsì wǒ tóuyún. Yēxū wǒ xǔyào kàn nèikē yīshēng.  
Mayo, dahn shir waw toe yewn. Yeh shyew waw shyew yaow kahn nay kuh ee shung.  
No, but I feel dizzy. Perhaps I need to see an internist.

Dàlín calls the nearest medical clinic to make an appointment and then returns to Miān.
Chapter 16: Handling Emergencies

Dàlín: Wǒ jīntiān xiàwù sān diǎn zhōng yùē le yīge shìjìān. Nǐ zuì hǎo zānshì zuò xiàlái. Waw jin tyan shyah woo sahn dyan joong yweh luh ee guh shir jyan. Nee dzway how dzahn shir dzwaw shyah lye. I’ve made an appointment for 3 p.m. this afternoon. In the meantime, you’d better sit down for a while.

Words to Know

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kàn bìng</td>
<td>kahn beeng</td>
<td>to see a doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yī shēng</td>
<td>ee shung</td>
<td>doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yá yī</td>
<td>yah ee</td>
<td>dentist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hū shī</td>
<td>hoo shir</td>
<td>nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bìng rén</td>
<td>beeng run</td>
<td>patient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although verbs don’t express tense in Chinese, you often connect them to things called aspect markers, which come directly after the verb and indicate the degree of completion of an action. The aspect markers “xiàlái” (shyah lye) and “xiàqù” (shyah chyew) are two such examples. Xiàlái refers to an action that slowly turns into a non-action or a calmer state, such as “zuò (dzwaw) xiàlái” (meaning to sit down and rest) in the previous Talkin’ the Talk section. Xiàqù refers to continuing action.

Describing what ails you

Did your doctor say those magic words: Měi shénme (may shummuh; It’s nothing)? Yeah, neither did mine. Too bad. Maybe you’re just now checking your old wěndūjì (one doo jee; thermometer) and finding out, “Wǒ fā shāo le!” (waw fah shaow luh; I have a fever!) Áiya! (eye yah; Oh my goodness!) Time to figure out what the problem is. Whether you make a sudden trip to the jīzhēn-shì (jee jun shir; emergency room) or take a normal visit to a private doctor’s office, you’ll probably field the same basic questions about insurance and your symptoms. Table 16-2 lists some symptoms you may have.
Table 16-2 Common Medical Symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Phrase</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pàngle</td>
<td>pahng luh</td>
<td>Put on weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shòule</td>
<td>show luh</td>
<td>Lose weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fāshāo</td>
<td>fah shaow</td>
<td>To have a fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lādùzi</td>
<td>lah doo dzuh</td>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biànmì</td>
<td>byan mee</td>
<td>Constipation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĕxīn</td>
<td>uh sheen</td>
<td>Nauseous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hóulóng téng</td>
<td>ho loong tung</td>
<td>Sore throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tóuténg</td>
<td>toe tung</td>
<td>Headache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wèi tòng</td>
<td>way toong</td>
<td>Stomachache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bèi tòng</td>
<td>bay toong</td>
<td>Backache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĕr tòng</td>
<td>are toong</td>
<td>Earache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yá tòng</td>
<td>yah toong</td>
<td>Toothache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiàntí zhōngle</td>
<td>shyan tee joong luh</td>
<td>Swollen glands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your doctor has a laundry list of inspections she must perform when you hit the check-up table:

- **Qīng juānqǐ nǐde xiùzi.** (cheeng jwan chee nee duh shyo dzuh; Please roll up your sleeve.)

- **Wō yòng tīngzhēnqǐ tīng yíxià nǐde xīnzàng.** (waw yoong teeng jun chee teeng ee shyah nee duh shin dzahng; I’m going to use a stethoscope to listen to your heart.)

- **Shēn hūxī.** (shun hoo she; Take a deep breath.)

- **Bā zuǐ zhāngkāi.** (bah dzway jahng kye; Open your mouth.)

- **Bā shé tou shēn chūlái.** (bah shuh toe shun choo lye; Stick out your tongue.)

- **Wōmen huàyàn yíxià xiāobiàn.** (waw men hwah yan ee shyah shyaow byan; Let’s have your urine tested.)
Kristina shows up for her appointment to see Huò Dàifu (Dr. Huo). Because this is her first visit to Dr. Huo, the jiēdàiyuán (jyeh dye ywan; receptionist) needs her to fill out some forms before she sees the doctor to discuss her symptoms.

Jiēdàiyuán: Nǐ shì lái kànbing de ma?
Nee shir lye kahn beeng duh mah?
Have you come to see a doctor?

Kristina: Shì de.
Shir duh.
Yes.

Jiēdàiyuán: Yǒu méiyǒu yǐliao bǎoxiǎn?
Yo mayo ee lyaw baow shyan?
Do you have any medical insurance?

Kristina: Yǒu.
Yo.
Yes, I do.

Jiēdàiyuán: Hǎo. Qīng tiān yīxià zhè zhǎng biǎo.
How. Cheeng tyan ee shyah jay jahng byaow.
Alright. Please fill out this form.

A short while later, the receptionist introduces Kristina to a hùshì (hoo shir; nurse) who plans to take her blood pressure.
Jièdàiyuán:  Hūshì huì xiǎn liàng yìxià xuèyā.
            *Hoo shir hway shyan lyahng ee shyah shweh yah.*
            The nurse will first take your blood pressure.

Hūshì:  Qing juānqī nǐde xiūzi.
            *Cheeng jwan chee nee duh shyo dzuh.*
            Please roll up your sleeve.

Hūshì:  Hǎo. Huò Dàifu xiànzài gěi nǐ kànbing.
            *How. Hwaw dye foo shyan dzye gay nee kahn beeng.*
            Alright. Dr. Huo will see you now.

Kristina enters Dr. Huo’s office, and after a few basic introductory questions, Dr. Huo asks her what brings her to his office.

Huò Dàifu:  Yǒu shénme zhèngzhuàng?
            *Yo shummuh juhng jwahng?*
            What sorts of symptoms do you have?

Kristina:  Wǒde hóulóng cóng zuótiàn jiù tòngle.
            *Waw duh ho loong tsoong dzwaw tyan jyo toong luh.*
            I’ve had this pain in my throat since yesterday.

Huò Dàifu:  Hǎo. Wǒ xiān yòng tǐngzhènqǐ tíng yìxià nǐde xīnzàng.
            *How. Waw shyan yoong teeng jun chee teeng ee shyah nee duh shin dzahng.*
            Alright. I’m first going to use a stethoscope to listen to your heart.

Dr. Huo puts the stethoscope to Kristina’s chest.

Huò Dàifu:  Shēn hūxī.
            *Shun hoo she.*
            Take a deep breath.

Dr. Huo finishes listening with the stethoscope and takes out a tongue depressor.

            *Cheeng bah dzway jahng kye, bah shuh to shun choo lye . . . dway luh. Nee duh ho loong how shyahng yo ee dyan fah yan.*
            Please open your mouth and stick out your tongue . . . yes. Your throat seems to be inflamed.
Chapter 16: Handling Emergencies

Words to Know

- jiǎnchá  jyan chah  to examine
- wǒ bùshūfu  waw boo shoo foo  I don’t feel well
- bìngle  beeng luh  to be sick
- bìngrén  beeng run  patient
- zháoliáng  jaow lyahng  to catch a cold
- gānmào  gahn maow  to have a cold
- shòushāng  show shahng  be injured
- liúgǎn  lyo gahn  the flu
- fāyán le  fah yan luh  it’s inflamed
- gāo xuǎnyā  gaow shweh yah  high blood pressure
- bìng lì  beeng lee  medical history

Discussing your medical history

When you see a doctor for the first time, he or she will want to find out about your bìng lì (beeng lee; medical history). You’ll hear the following query:

Nǐ jiā yǒu méiyǒu ____ de bìnglì? (nee jyah yo mayo ___ duh beeng lee; Does your family have any history of ____?)

Table 16-3 lists some of the more serious illnesses that hopefully neither you nor your family members have ever had.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 16-3</th>
<th>Serious Illnesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Word(s)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>áizhèng</td>
<td>eye juhng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fèi’ái</td>
<td>fay eye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Table 16-3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Word(s)</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>English Word(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>qìchuănbing</td>
<td>chee chwan beeng</td>
<td>Asthma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xīnzàng yōu máobìng</td>
<td>shin dzahng yo maow beeng</td>
<td>Heart trouble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tāngniàobìng</td>
<td>tahng nyaow beeng</td>
<td>Diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>àizìbing</td>
<td>eye dzuh beeng</td>
<td>AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lìjí</td>
<td>lee jee</td>
<td>Dysentery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shuīdòu</td>
<td>shway doe</td>
<td>Chicken pox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huòluàn</td>
<td>hwaw lwan</td>
<td>Cholera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiǎxing gānyán</td>
<td>jya sheeng gahn yan</td>
<td>Hepatitis A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yīxing gānyán</td>
<td>ee sheeng gahn yan</td>
<td>Hepatitis B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bīngxīng gānyán</td>
<td>beeng sheeng gahn yan</td>
<td>Hepatitis C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fèi jiéhé</td>
<td>fay jyeh huh</td>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Making a diagnosis

I bet you’ve heard stories about how doctors who use traditional medical techniques from ancient cultures can just take one look at a person and immediately know what ails them. The truth is, aside from simple colds and the flu, most doctors still need to take all kinds of tests to give a proper diagnosis. They may even need to perform the following tasks:

- **huà yàn** *(hwah yan; lab tests)*
- **xīndiäntú** *(shin dyan too; electrocardiogram)*
- **huàyàn yíxià xiāobiàn** *(hwah yan ee shyah shyaow byan; have your urine tested)*
Talkin’ the Talk

Marland takes his daughter, Katherine, to the yīshēng (see shung; doctor) after he notices her bad cough. The doctor takes her temperature and discusses what she may have with the family.

Yīshēng: Katherine, hǎo xiāoxi! Nǐ dīwēn zhèngcháng. 
Katherine, how shyaow she! Nee duh tee one juhng chahng.
Katherine, good news! Your temperature is normal.

Katherine: Hǎo jí le.
How jee luh.
Great.

Yīshēng: Kēnéng zhī shì gǎnmào.
Kuh nung jir shir gahn maow.
Perhaps it’s just a little cold.

Marland: Huí chuánrǎn ma?
Hway chwahn rahn mah?
Is it contagious?

Yīshēng: Bú huì.
Boo hway.
No.

Katherine: Yánzhòng ma?
Yan joong mah?
Is it serious?

Yīshēng: Bù yánzhòng. Nǐ zúi hào xiūxi jī tiān hē hěn duō shuǐ, jì hǎo le.
Boo yan joong. Nee dzway how shyow she jee tyan huh hun dwaw shway, jyo how luh.
No. You should rest for a few days and drink lots of liquids, and it should get better.

Marland: Tā děi zài chuángshàng tǎng duōjiǔ?
Tah day dzye chwahng shahng tahng dwaw jyo?
How long must she rest in bed?

Yīshēng: Zúi hǎo liǎng sān tiān.
Dzway how lyahng sahn tyan.
Ideally for two or three days.
In Chinese, you generally put a negative prefix, such as bù (boo), in front of the verb you’re negating. It sounds redundant in English to literally translate a response as “not serious” when someone asks about the seriousness of a situation. It’s more colloquial and appropriate to translate it as “no,” as you see in the previous Talkin’ the Talk section when Katherine asks the doctor if her ailment is serious.

When you give approximate numbers or amounts, you don’t need to use the word “or” (huò zhe), as in “three or four days.” Just say the numbers right after each other to automatically imply the “or.” For example, wǔ liù ge rén (woo lyo guh run) means “five or six people,” and sì wǔ tiān (suh woo tyan) means “four or five days.”

**Words to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xiě/xuè</td>
<td>shyeh/shweh</td>
<td>blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chōu xiě</td>
<td>cho shyeh</td>
<td>to draw blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xuèyā</td>
<td>shweh yah</td>
<td>blood pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiǎoibiàn</td>
<td>shaow byan</td>
<td>to urinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dàbiàn</td>
<td>dah byan</td>
<td>to have a bowel movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wēndù jì</td>
<td>one doo jee</td>
<td>thermometer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liáng tīwēn</td>
<td>lyahng tee one</td>
<td>take one’s temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>màibó</td>
<td>my baw</td>
<td>pulse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Treating yourself to better health**

Not everything can be cured with a bowl of jī tāng (jee tahng; chicken soup), despite what my grandmother told me. If your grandmother cooks as well as mine did, however, the soup couldn’t hurt . . .

Your doctor may prescribe some yào (yaow; medicine) to make you feel better. After you lín (leen; fill) your yàof āng (yaow fahng; prescription), you may find the following instructions on the bottle:
Maxine talks to the yàojìshí (yaow jee shir; pharmacist) about her prescription and about curing a lingering cough of hers.

Maxine:  
Nín néng bùnéng gêi wǒ pèi hâo zhèige yào?  
Neen nung boo nung gay waw pay how jay guh yaow?  
Can you fill this prescription for me?

Yàojìshí:  
Kêyi.  
Kuh yee.  
Yes, I can.

Maxine:  
Wǒ hai yào zhì kèsòu de yào.  
Waw hye yaow jir kuh so duh yaow.  
I’d also like something for a cough.

Yàojìshí:  
Nǐ zuì hào chī kèsòu tângjiàng. Kèsòu yào yê kêyi.  
Nee dzway how chir kuh so tahng jyahng. Kuh so yaow yeah kuh yee.  
Your best bet is to have some cough syrup. You can also have some cough drops.

Maxine looks at another medicine on the shelf and asks the pharmacist about it.

Maxine:  
Zhèige zēnme yâng?  
Jay guh dzummuh yahng?  
How about this?

Yàojìshí:  
(Laughing) Bùxíng! Nà shì xièyào. Chúfēi nǐ yǒu biànmi, nà méiyòng!  
Boo sheeng! Nah shir shyeh yaow. Choo fay nee you byan mee, nah may yoong!  
Definitely not! That’s a laxative. Unless you’re constipated, that won’t be of any use!

Maxine:  
Bùhâoyisis!  
Boo how ee suh!  
How embarrassing!
### Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nà méiyòng</td>
<td>nah may yoong</td>
<td>that's useless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bùhǎoyìsi</td>
<td>boo how ee suh</td>
<td>how embarrassing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiùhùchē</td>
<td>jyo hoo chuh</td>
<td>ambulance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhēnjǐǔ</td>
<td>juhn jyo</td>
<td>acupuncture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yào</td>
<td>yaow</td>
<td>medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōng yào</td>
<td>joong yaow</td>
<td>Chinese medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xī yào</td>
<td>she yaow</td>
<td>Western medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chī yào</td>
<td>chir yaow</td>
<td>to take medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yàofáng</td>
<td>yaow fahng</td>
<td>pharmacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yàowán</td>
<td>yaow wahn</td>
<td>pill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kàngshēngsù</td>
<td>kahng shung soo</td>
<td>antibiotics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dǎ zhēn</td>
<td>dah juhn</td>
<td>injection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wàikē</td>
<td>why kuh</td>
<td>surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dòng shōushù</td>
<td>doong show shoo</td>
<td>to undergo an operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sì</td>
<td>suh</td>
<td>to die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhēnliáosuǒ</td>
<td>juhn lyaow swaw</td>
<td>clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yǐyuàn</td>
<td>ee ywan</td>
<td>hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dānjìà</td>
<td>dahn jya</td>
<td>stretcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiùhùchē</td>
<td>jyo hoo chuh</td>
<td>ambulance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jízhěnshì</td>
<td>jee juhn shir</td>
<td>emergency room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kàngsuānyào</td>
<td>kahng swan yaow</td>
<td>antacid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āsǐpǐlín</td>
<td>ah suh pee leen</td>
<td>aspirin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wéitāmíng</td>
<td>way tah meeng</td>
<td>vitamin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ duì qǐngméisù guòmín</td>
<td>waw dway cheeng may soo gwaw meen</td>
<td>I'm allergic to penicillin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Calling the Police

Ever have your pocketbook tōu le (toe luh; stolen)? Being a victim is an awful feeling, as I can tell you from experience. You feel shēngqì (shung chee; angry) at such a kēpà (kuh pah; scary) experience, especially if it happens in another country and the zéi (dzay; thief) tāopāo (taow paow; escapes) quickly.

I hope you’re never the victim of a crime like theft (or something worse). Still, you should always be prepared with some key words you can use when the jǐngchá (jeeng chah; police) finally pull up in the jǐngchē (jeeng chuh; police car) and take you back to the jǐngchájú (jeeng chah jyew; police station) to identify a potential zéi. Hopefully the culprit will be zhūâ le (jwah luh; arrested).

You may also find yourself in an emergency that doesn’t involve you. If you ever witness an accident, here are some phrases you can relay to the police, emergency workers, or victims:

✓ Tā bèi qìchē yàzháo le. (tah bay chee chuh yah jaw luh; He was run over by a car.)
✓ Tā zài liúxiě. (tah dzye lyo shyeh; He’s bleeding.)
✓ Bié kū. Jǐngchá hé jǐuhûchê láîlé. (byeh koo. jeeng chah huh jyo hoo chuuh lye luh; Don’t cry. The police and the ambulance have arrived.)

Sticking to acupuncture and herbal remedies

Chinese acupuncture and herbal medicine are gaining currency in places outside of China. Little wonder, because these remedies have proven their efficacy in China for over a thousand years. Herbal medicine remedies from the jungles and rain forests of rural China have helped every ailment from rheumatism to cancer, and healers often use them in conjunction with Western medicine these days. As for acupuncture, proper placement of needles in certain key points of the body has proven so useful in alleviating pain and in numbing patients that you can undergo major surgery without Western anesthesia.
Acquiring Legal Help

Nine out of ten foreigners never need to look for a lawyer during a stay in China, which isn’t as litigious a society as the United States, to be sure. If you do need a lūshī (lyew shir; lawyer), however, your best bet is to check with your country’s dàshīguān (dah shir gwahn; Embassy) or lǐngshīguān (leeng shir gwahn; Consulate) for advice.

It can be very máf an (mah fun; annoying) and stressful to have to deal with lūshī, no matter what country you’re in, but you have to admit — they do know the fālū (fah lyew; law). And if you have to go to fāyuàn (fah ywan; court) for any serious shìjìàn (shir jyan; incident), you want the judge to pànjué (pahn jweh; make a decision) in your favor. Moral of the story: Good lūshī are worth their weight in jīn (gin; gold), even if you still consider them shāyū (shah yew; sharks) in the end.
Fun & Games

Identify the following body parts in Chinese. Check Appendix C for the answers.

1. Arm: ______________
2. Shoulder: ______________
3. Finger: ______________
4. Leg: ______________
5. Neck: ______________
6. Chest: ______________
7. Eye: ______________
8. Ear: ______________
9. Nose: ______________
The 5th Wave
By Rich Tennant

“Here's a recipe for Chinese Thousand Year Old Eggs. Thank goodness for microwave ovens.”
In this part . . .

This part is short and sweet. It’s also essential if you don’t want to make all sorts of cultural faux pas when you start using your Chinese. I give you practical tips to keep in mind and Chinese expressions and phrases that make you sound like a native. Equally important, I give you 10 things to avoid doing when you’re in China or with Chinese acquaintances. Dive right in. These chapters are fun!
Chapter 17

Ten Ways to Pick Up Chinese Quickly

In This Chapter

- Practicing by listening
- Speaking while you cook
- Finding practice tools online and on television
- Meeting Chinese friends
- Translating your name with calligraphy

This chapter contains ten good activities that can help speed up your Chinese learning curve. Having useful, easy-to-access, and easy-to-follow learning tools makes a big difference in your progress. And besides, you can have fun with them, too.

Listen to Chinese-Language Tapes, CDs, and CD-ROMs

Just imagine trying to figure out what Chinese tones sound like without actually hearing them spoken out loud. Kind of like imagining what Beethoven’s Fifth sounds like based on a written description. Even if you read this book cover to cover, you’ll be hard pressed to figure out just what the first, second, third, and fourth tones actually sound like unless you listen to the accompanying CD. Be creative with your discovery of the language (and your language listening) by picking up all the language tapes, CDs, and CD-ROMS you can find out there. Keep mimicking what you hear over and over again so that your pronunciation and intonation become better with each go-round. Pretty soon you’ll be able to tell a native Mandarin speaker from a native Cantonese speaker.
**Attend a Peking Opera Performance**

Okay, I admit that the first time I attended a performance of Peking Opera, I wished I had brought a pair of ear plugs. The opera is an acquired taste to be sure. Kind of like caviar. But I recommend spending time cultivating an appreciation for it. Peking Opera originated in the late 1700s, when opera troupes originally staged performances for the royal family. Only later did it become such a public art, and now it’s all the rage for any person who claims to appreciate Chinese culture. The makeup, costumes, cacophonous music, and stylized movements are predictable and much treasured by the Chinese people. Listening to Peking Opera not only helps you develop an appreciation for a great Chinese art form, but also fine-tunes your recognition of the pronunciation of standard Mandarin. You can even learn a few tunes at the same time. A win-win situation all around.

**Cook with a Wok**

You may be surprised what cooking with a wok can do for your Chinese. Not only do you start eating healthier, but because you’re forced to visit some Asian food markets to gather the ingredients you need to cook with, you also soak in Chinese words by osmosis. Ever hear of **dòufu** *(doe foo)*? That means soy bean curd in Mandarin. How about bok choi? Okay, so that’s Cantonese, but the Mandarin is **bái cài** *(bye tsye; Chinese cabbage)*. The best traditional Chinese cooking, all done with a wok, puts you in the proper frame of mind to want to soak up some more Chinese language. Try following some recipes from a Chinese cookbook and repeat the names of the ingredients over and over, a sure fire way to speak more Chinese. And if you’re not a great cook, get into the habit of eating at Chinese restaurants and mastering the names of at least ten dishes before the end of the meal.

**Shop for Food in Chinatown**

Mingle with the Mandarin-speaking masses while you attune your ear to the sounds and tones of Chinese. This is only one of the fun things to do in Chinatown, of course, but one worth doing often. Not only do you cultivate a good ear for Chinese, but you also become privy to the gestures that often go along with the sounds. (And you thought the Italians had cornered the market on hand gestures.)
**Surf the Net**

Tons of information on Chinese language and culture is only a mouse click away. Now that you’re in the information age, take advantage of it. Everything from how to write Chinese characters to discovering Peking Opera is out there. Whatever motivated you to start speaking Chinese in the first place, the World Wide Web keeps you involved. Just do a quick search for places like Shanghai, Beijing, or Taipei or cultural keywords like wok or pagoda. You’ll be amazed at what you can come up with.

**Watch Kung-Fu Flicks**

Bruce Lee is only the tip of the iceberg. Go to your local public library and ask to see the list of kung-fu movies. Everything from Hong Kong action films to mainland martial arts flicks — you should find them all there. Pick whatever interests you. Directors like Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige have become famous around the world. (Okay, so they didn’t direct kung-fu movies . . . but they’re still worth checking out.)

The best way to grasp Chinese is to watch them over and over to see how many words and phrases you can pick up in one sitting. You soon become adept at anticipating which gestures go with which words, and you develop a great ear for all those tones.

**Exchange Language Lessons**

Finding a language partner has to be one of the best ways to pick up Chinese. Not only do you get to learn the language, but you also develop a friendship along the way. Tons of students come to the States every year from China. Whether you’re in school at the moment or just live near one, you should have no problem putting up a sign offering a language exchange. And don’t forget to ask your language partner to compare notes about Chinese and American culture. That’s when the real fun begins.
Make Chinese Friends

Possibilities for meeting Chinese-speaking people are endless. Check out the cubicle next to you at your office or the desk ahead of you in class. Or how about the mother of the kid who’s in your son’s karate class? Wherever you go, you have a chance to make a new friend who not only knows Chinese, but who also can teach you a little about the culture. You may even find a new friend to see that kung-fu movie with or to help you navigate grocery shopping in Chinatown (not to mention how to use a wok after you buy all your food).

Study Chinese Calligraphy

Chinese calligraphy is one of the most beautiful art forms in the world. Why not pick up a brush and create those beautiful strokes yourself on rice paper? The whole ritual of preparing the ink and paper is an exercise in patience and meditation, and you get to appreciate the difficulty Chinese school children have in learning to write Chinese. You can discover how to write your name in Chinese (have your English name transliterated, because there’s no alphabet in Chinese) and then practice writing those characters over and over until you can sign your name to a Chinese New Year’s card and mail it to a friend.

Be Curious and Creative

If you look for opportunities to practice Chinese, I guarantee you can find them. Be imaginative. And stop worrying about failing. In fact, make as many mistakes as it takes so that you can make a mental note of what you should do or say differently the next time around. Give yourself a pat on the back every time you discover something new in Chinese or figure out a novel way to discover more about the Chinese language and people. Keep yakking away with the new words and phrases you find in Chinese For Dummies and enjoy watching the reactions on people’s faces when you open your mouth.
Chapter 18
Ten Things Never to Do in China

In This Chapter
- Understanding Chinese etiquette
- Being gracious and humble in social situations

This chapter may save you from certain embarrassment and possibly even outright humiliation one day. It gives you ten important tips on what not to do if you really want to win friends and make a good impression with your Chinese acquaintances. Take my tips to heart.

Never Accept a Compliment Graciously

You may find yourself at a loss for words when you compliment a Chinese host on a wonderful meal, and you get in response, “No, no, the food was really horrible.” You hear the same thing when you tell a Chinese parent how smart or handsome his son is — he meets the compliment with a rebuff of “No, he’s really stupid” or “He’s not good looking at all.” These people aren’t being nasty . . . just humble and polite. Moral of the story here: Feign humility, even if it kills you! A little less boasting and fewer self-congratulatory remarks go a long way towards scoring cultural sensitivity points with the Chinese.

Never Make Someone Lose Face

The worst thing you can possibly do to Chinese acquaintances is publicly humiliate or otherwise embarrass them. Doing so makes them lose face. Don’t point out a mistake in front of others or yell at someone.

The good news is that you can actually help someone gain face by complimenting them and giving credit where credit is due. Do this whenever the opportunity arises. Your graciousness is much appreciated.
Never Get Angry in Public

Public displays of anger are frowned upon by the Chinese and are most uncomfortable for them to deal with — especially if the people getting angry are foreign tourists, for example. This goes right along with making someone (usually the Chinese host) lose face, which you should avoid at all costs. The Chinese place a premium on group harmony, so foreigners should try to swallow hard, be polite, and cope privately.

Never Address People by Their First Names First

Chinese people have first and last names like everyone else. However, in China, the last name always comes first. The family (and the collective in general) always takes precedence over the individual. Joe Smith in Minnesota is known as Smith Joe (or the equivalent) in Shanghai. If a man is introduced to you as Lǐ Míng, you can safely refer to him as Mr. Lǐ (not Mr. Míng).

Unlike people in the West, the Chinese don’t feel very comfortable calling each other by their first names. Only family members and a few close friends ever refer to the man above, for example, as simply “Míng.” They may, however, add the prefix lǎo (laow; old) or xiǎo (shyaow; young) before the family name to show familiarity and closeness. Lǎo Lǐ (Old Lǐ) may refer to his younger friend as Xiǎo Chén (Young Chén).

Never Take Food with the Wrong End of Your Chopsticks

The next time you gather around a dinner table with a Chinese host, you may discover that serving spoons for the many communal dishes are non-existent. This is because everyone serves themselves (or others) by turning their chopsticks upside down to take food from the main dishes before putting the food on the individual plates.
Never Drink Alcohol Without First Offering a Toast

Chinese banquets include eight to ten courses of food and plenty of alcohol. Sometimes you drink rice wine, and sometimes you drink industrial strength Máo Tái, known to put a foreigner or two under the table in no time. One way to slow the drinking is to observe Chinese etiquette by always offering a toast to the host or someone else at the table before taking a sip yourself. This not only prevents you from drinking too much too quickly, but also shows your gratitude toward the host and your regard for the other guests. If someone toasts you with a “gǎn bèi,” (gahn bay) however, watch out.

Gǎn bèi means “bottoms up,” and you may be expected to drink the whole drink rather quickly. Don’t worry. You can always say “shuí yì” (shway ee; as you wish) in return and take just a little sip instead.

Never Let Someone Else Pay the Bill Without Fighting for It

Most Westerners are stunned the first time they witness the many fairly chaotic, noisy scenes at the end of a Chinese restaurant meal. The time to pay the bill has come and everyone is simply doing what they’re expected to do — fight to be the one to pay it. The Chinese consider it good manners to vociferously and strenuously attempt to wrest the bill out of the very hands of whoever happens to have it. This may go on, back and forth, for a good few minutes, until someone “wins” and pays the bill. The gesture of being eager and willing to pay is always appreciated.

Never Show Up Empty Handed

Gifts are exchanged frequently between the Chinese, and not just on special occasions. If you have dinner in someone’s house to meet a prospective business partner or for any other pre-arranged meeting, both parties commonly exchange gifts as small tokens of friendship and good will. Westerners are often surprised at the number of gifts the Chinese hosts give. The general rule of thumb is to bring many little (gender non-specific) gifts when you travel to China. You never know when you’ll meet someone who wants to present you with a special memento, so you should arrive with your own as well.
Never Accept Food, Drinks, or Gifts Without First Refusing a Few Times

No self-respecting guests immediately accept whatever may be offered to them in someone’s home. No matter how much they may be eager to accept the food, drink, or gift, proper Chinese etiquette prevents them from doing anything that makes them appear greedy or eager to receive it, so be sure to politely refuse a couple of times.

Never Take the First “No, Thank You” Literally

Chinese people automatically refuse food or drinks several times — even if they really feel hungry or thirsty. Never take the first “No, thank you” literally. Even if they say it once or twice, offer it again. A good guest is supposed to refuse at least once, but a good host is also supposed to make the offer at least twice.
Chapter 19

Ten Favorite Chinese Expressions

In This Chapter

- Sounding like a native
- Getting to know the lingo of daily life

Some English words and phrases are common expressions you hear repeatedly during the course of a day. The Chinese language is no different. It accommodates this tendency with tons of colorful expressions. Some expressions are known as chéngyu (chung yew) — four-character sayings — which help describe any given situation or put sentiments into words in a nutshell. Mastering these popular Chinese expressions and knowing when to use them helps you put a welcoming smile on the face of the native speaker when appropriate situations arise.

This chapter offers some idiomatic expressions that make you sound like a native. You hear these expressions all the time in typical daily situations.

Gōngxǐ Gōngxǐ

goong-she goong-she; Congratulations!

You say gōngxǐ gōngxǐ for happy occasions when congratulations are in order.

“My wife just had a baby!” your friend says. “Wow! I didn’t even know she was pregnant,” you say. “Gōngxǐ gōngxǐ!”

Your brother finally passes the Bar Exam (on the third try). Gōngxǐ gōngxǐ!

Hey! You just turned 21. Now you can finally go to a bar. Gōngxǐ gōngxǐ!

Let’s go!

On the Chinese New Year, you hear not only “gōngxǐ gōngxǐ,” but also “gōngxǐ fācái” (goong she fah-tyse), which means “Congratulations and may you prosper.”
Yì Lù Píng’ān

ee loo peeng ahn; Bon Voyage! Have a good trip.

This is a great phrase to use when a friend or acquaintance is about to embark on a long journey. When you see someone off at the airport, you hear many people say this. You may want to teach your family and friends yì lù píng’ān before you board the plane!

Yì Yán Nán Jin

ee yan nahn jeen; It’s a long story.

Maybe someone wants to know how you got that black eye. Maybe you don’t really want to go into the details. Just say yì yán nán jin to save the blow-by-blow description for when you’re ready.

Mǎmǎ Hūhū

mah mah hoo hoo; So-so.

The phrase mǎmǎ hūhū literally means “horse horse tiger tiger.” You use this expression when you want to indicate a situation is just okay or mediocre.

Just barely pass that test? You did mǎmǎ hūhū. Slightly under the weather today? You’re feeling mǎmǎ hūhū. Food at that new restaurant not so great? It’s just mǎmǎ hūhū.

Kāi Wán Xiào

kiye (rhymes with pie) wahn shyaow; Just kidding, or You’ve got to be kidding!

You say kāi wán xiào when you can’t believe your ears. Suppose your coworker just told you she’s been fired, even though she was promoted only a month ago. That definitely calls for a kāi wán xiào in response. When she finally tells you it’s not true, she adds kāi wán xiào at the end. She was just kidding. (Now you’re really angry.)
** Máfan Nǐ **

* mah fahn nee; Sorry to trouble you. *

You say *máfan nǐ* when, although you don’t want to put anyone out, you politely accept an extended offer to do something for you. If you can’t reach the salt at the other end of the dinner table and someone offers to pass it to you, you say *máfan nǐ*. It means, “So sorry to trouble you, but would you mind?”

You can also say something (or someone) is a real pain in the neck by proclaiming, “Tā hěn máfan.” (He’s really a pain, or it’s really an inconvenient annoyance.)

** Zēnme Yàng? **

* dzummuh yahng; How’s it going, or what’s up? *

A great catch-all expression when you run into old friends and want to find out how they’ve been or what they’re up to these days. You just say: Hey! *Zēnme yàng?*

You don’t say it to a stranger or someone you’ve just met in a more formal situation, but it’s a great expression to use between friends.

Another way you can use *zēnme* is by adding “le” in place of “yàng” at the end. *(Nǐ zēnme le?)* If you do, you say, “Hey, what’s wrong with you?” Kind of like, “What could you possibly have been thinking when you did such a stupid thing?”

** Qīng Wèn **

* cheeng one; Please, may I ask; excuse me, but . . .* 

Before you ask a question, be polite and preface it with *qīng wèn*. You’re asking if you can even ask about something. You can use it when you go shopping and need to address a store clerk:

*Qīng wèn* (Please, may I ask), how much is that thousand-year-old egg?
You can also use it when you need directions and have to approach a total stranger:

Qīng wèn (Excuse me), which bus can take me to the Temple of Heaven?

**Zìjī Lái**

*dzuh jee lye; I'll help myself, thanks.*

The rules of Chinese eating etiquette dictate that you should never start to fill up your plate before at least attempting to serve someone else first. Zìjī lái is a polite expression you use to indicate that you can help yourself as soon as someone starts to serve you. A host always starts to serve the guests sitting closest, but the guests should always say zìjī lái (and then relent and let the person serve them anyway) for each and every course. After the host has started a dish, however, you may indeed begin to serve yourself.

And just as you should never serve yourself first, you should also never take even a sip of alcohol without at least toasting someone else first (see Chapter 18 for more things you should never do). For that, you can say gānbēi! (*gahn bay; bottoms up!*)

**Āiyà!**

*eye yah; Oh my!*

Āiyàs can be heard all over China whenever people feel frustrated, shocked, or even just plain old annoyed. You hear it when you show up to your parents’ home for dinner with a friend who looks like he’s in a punk rock band. You may even say it yourself when you realize you left your briefcase in the taxi, which is now halfway across town. And you definitely have an āiyà moment when you wonder how to look anything up in a Chinese dictionary after finding out that there’s no alphabet.
Chapter 20

Ten Phrases That Make You Sound Chinese

In This Chapter

- Saying the right things in social situations
- Maintaining your humility and graciousness

This chapter gives you phrases that help your conversation for many social occasions. Knowing these phrases provides you with an authentic flavor of Chinese culture and hospitality. Use them liberally to fit right in with any crowd.

As you read this chapter, you may notice that the Chinese often repeat phrases. Repeating words happens often in spoken Chinese.

**Huānyíng Huānyíng!**

*hwan yeeng hwan yeeng; Welcome*

You use this phrase when guests arrive at your home or in your country to make them feel right at home. And if you say huānyíng zài lái (*hwan yeeng dzye lye*) before they leave, it means you welcome them to come again. A bit of Chinese hospitality in action.

**Bīcī Bīcī**

*bee tsuh bee tsuh; Same to you; You too.*

This little phrase comes in handy when someone wishes you well or gives you a compliment that merits return so you don’t appear vain. What’s that you say? Great looking dress I have on? Bīcī bīcī. (Yours looks great, too.) May you have a long and happy retirement. Bīcī bīcī. (Same to you.)
Jiǔyǎng Jiǔyǎng

*jyoe yahng jyoe yahng*; Pleased to meet you; *literally:* I have admired you for a long time.

Saying *Jiǔyǎng Jiǔyǎng* when you first meet someone you’ve heard something about is a polite gesture.

Màn Màn Chī!

*mahn mahn chir;* Bon Appetit!

Be sure to say *màn màn chī* to the others at your table before you take your first bite. You’ll win hearts all around. It actually means “eat real slowly”; saying the phrase lets everyone know you hope they take their time and enjoy the meal.

Wǒ Qǐng Kè

*waw cheeng kuh;* It’s on me; My treat.

You hear this phrase day in and day out all over China. Everyone wants to be the one to pay the bill (see Chapter 18), so folks make a big deal out of being the first person to go to the hip when the check comes. Even if you don’t mean it, ask for the bill at least once or twice while others protest. Whoever keeps insisting gets to pay the bill.

Friends often make a joke by adding “nǐ fù qián” (*nee foo chyan*) at the end of this phrase. If you hear someone say “wǒ qǐng kè, nǐ fù qián,” it means “I’ll take the bill, but you’ll be the one to pay it.” Only say this when you dine with a good friend who can take a joke, however, or you’ll be sunk just when you were starting to impress people with your newly acquired Chinese.

Yǒu Kōng Lái Wán

*yo koong lye wahn;* Please come again.

Just before guests leave your home, you should always say “Yǒu kōng lái wán.” *Literally:* When you have time, come back and play. Sometimes you also hear people say “màn zōu,” (*mahn dzo*) which literally means “walk
slowly” and is loosely translated as “careful going home.” A good host doesn’t forget to wish his or her guests well as they depart. The saying implies they’ll be back again anyway. Chinese hospitality at its best.

When you’re in mainland China, you may hear the last word pronounced as “wahr” rather than “wahn,” which is the way the Taiwanese pronounce it. In fact, any time you hear a word end in “r,” it indicates the person is speaking a northern dialect, like Mandarin spoken in Beijing. People in Taiwan speak in one of the southern dialects, so they invariably pronounce certain words with an “n” sound at the end rather than an “r” sound.

Lǎojià Lǎojià

*laow jyah laow jyah; Excuse me; Pardon me.*

Ever wonder what to say when you need to pass a person who’s standing in your way? Especially if you find yourself in busy Shanghai where it often feels like you’re in a sea of humanity, láojià láojià is exactly the phrase you want to remember for crowded moments. It offers you a nice way of getting someone’s attention without being rude.

Zhù Nǐ Zǎo Rì Kāng Fú

*joo nee dzaow ir kahng foo; Get well soon.*

Hopefully you won’t have to use this expression too often, but if you do, at least the folks hearing it will know your colloquial Chinese is good. You’ll fit right in with the rest of the well-wishers, and your Chinese friends are sure to appreciate your good wishes.

Búkèqi

*boo kuh chee; You’re welcome; No problem; Don’t mention it.*

You say búkèqi as the bookend to xièxiè (*shyeh shyeh; thanks*). You can’t say one without expecting to hear the other. Búkèqi represents more than just a response to “thank you,” however. It’s part and parcel of a larger group of words that express a humble spirit, which the Chinese always treasure in friends and acquaintances. If someone thanks you profusely for something you do, whether big or small, never accept the thanks as something you agree you deserve. Giving yourself a pat on the back is the opposite of what
you want to convey. Always make it sound like your deed is no big deal, something you prefer to downplay. Doing so puts you in the correct frame of mind for the kind of public humility prized by the Chinese. (See Chapter 18 for more tips on Chinese faux pas.)

 Hao Jiǔ Méi Jiàn

_how jyo jyan; Long time no see._

You can use this phrase in all seriousness or in jest if you’ve just seen someone an hour before. Either way, it puts people in a good mood to know that you care about being in their presence again. You can even say it to your _Chinese For Dummies_ book if it stays on your bookshelf for too long.
Part V
Appendixes

The 5th Wave
By Rich Tennant

TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION

STIFF JOINTED BUDDHIST MEDITATION
In this part . . .

The appendixes in this part give you easy-to-access Chinese reference sources. I include a simple list of verbs in Chinese, because Chinese has no equivalent of English verb conjugation. I provide a mini-dictionary with some of the words you use most often. Next, you get the answers to the Fun & Games exercises that appear at the ends of the chapters. Finally, I list the tracks of the audio CD included with this book so you can read along as you listen and then practice speaking Chinese with the correct tones.
Appendix A

Chinese Verbs

Here’s a handy list of useful Chinese verbs. For a general description of how verbs work in Chinese, see Chapter 2.

àn/ahn/to press
dài/dye/to bring; to carry; to wear (accessories)

ānpái/ahn pye/to arrange; to schedule
dēng/duhng/to wait

ānzhūāng/ahn jwahng/to install
diān/dyan/to order (food)
bāngmáng/bahng mahng/to help
dōng/doong/to understand

bō/baw/to dial
è/uh/to be hungry

cānjīa/tsahn jyah/to participate
fēi/fay/to fly

chàng/chahng/to sing
fū zhàng/foo jahng/to pay a bill

chī/chir/to eat
gāibiàn/gye byan/to change

chídào/chir daow/to be late
gānjué/gahn jweh/to feel

chóngxīn kāji/i choong sheen kye jee/to reboot
gānxiè/gahn shyeh/to thank

chuān/chwan/to wear
gāosù/gaow soo/to tell

chuī/chway/to blow
gāoxīng/gaow sheeng/to be happy

cún qián/tswun chyan/to deposit money
gēi/gay/to give

dā/dah/to hit; to strike; to play
gōngzuò/goong dzwaw/to work

guà/gwah/to hang up
guān/gwan/to close
gūji/goo jee/to estimate
guò/gwaw/to pass
hē/huh/to drink
hézuò/huh dzwaw/to cooperate
huà/hwah/to paint
huàn/hwahn/to exchange
huânyíng/hwahn eeng/to welcome
huí/hway/to return
huì/hway/to know how to do something
hūxī/hoo she/to breathe
jiàn/jyan/to see
jiāng/jyahng/to speak
jiànli/jyan lee/to set up
jiânyī/jyan ee/to suggest
jiào/jyaow/to call
jiē/jyeh/to answer (a phone call)
jiè/jyeh/to loan; to borrow
jiēfâng/jyeh fahng/to liberate
jiēhūn/jyeh hwun/to marry
jiējüé/jyeh jweh/to solve
jiēshào/jyeh shaow/to introduce
jiézhâng/jyeh jahng/to pay the bill
jiù/jyoe/to save (a life)
juédìng/jyweh deeng/to decide
kāi/kye/to open
kǎi chē/kye chuh/to drive
kǎihuì/kye hway/to have or be in a meeting
kàn/kahn/to read; to look; to see
kē/kuh/to be thirsty
lái/lye/to come
liànxi/lyan she/to practice
liâ/lee kye/to leave
liú/lyoe/to leave (an object; a message)
mà/mah/to scold
mǎi/my/to buy
mài/my/to sell
máng/mahng/to be busy
mílù/mee loo/to get lost
nà/nah/to pick up; to take
néng/nuhng/to be able to
pànjué/pahn jweh/to make a legal decision
qiān rù/chyan roo/to log on
qiān chū/chyan choo/to log off
qīng/cheeng/to invite
qù/chyew/to go
qū qián/chyew chyan/to withdraw money
qǔ xiāo/chyew shyaow/to cancel
ràng/rahng/to permit
rènshi/run shir/to know (a person); to recognize
shàng/shahng/to get on
shàngwāng/shahng wahng/to go online
shì/shir/to be
shòu/show/to receive
shòu/show/to accept (money, tickets, etc.)
shū/shoo/to lose
shuō/shwaw/to speak
sòng/soong/to send
tàn pān/tahn pahn/to negotiate
tāolùn/taow lwun/to discuss
tián/tyan/to fill out (a form)
tīng/teeng/to hear; to listen to
tóng yì/toong ee/to agree
tuīfāng/tyaw fahng/to check out (of hotel room)
tuīhuí/tyaw hwai/to return (merchandise)
tuíyùn/tuaw yewn/to check in luggage
wán/wahn/to play
wàng/wahng/to forget
wèn/one/to ask
xǐ/she/to wash
xià/shyah/to get off
xiāng/shyahng/to think; to miss
xiàzài/shyah dzye/to download
xīhuān/she hwan/to like; to enjoy
xin/sheen/to believe
xuānzé/shwan dzuh/to choose
xuéxí/sheh she/to study
yān shì/yen shir/to give a presentation
yào/yaow/to want
yíng/eeng/to win
yòng/yoong/to use
yōu/yo/to have; there are
yóulān/yoh lahn/to sightsee
yóuyōng/yoh yoong/to swim
yuànyì/ywan yee/to be willing to
yú suān/yew swan/to budget
zhāo/jaow/to look for
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zhàoxiàng</td>
<td>jaow shyahng</td>
<td>to take pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhīdào</td>
<td>jir daow</td>
<td>to know (a fact)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhù</td>
<td>joo</td>
<td>to reside; to extend wishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhuā</td>
<td>jwah</td>
<td>to catch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhuān</td>
<td>jwan</td>
<td>to transfer; to turn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhuāngrù</td>
<td>jwahng roo</td>
<td>to pack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhuānzū</td>
<td>jwan dzoo</td>
<td>to sublet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhūchí</td>
<td>joo chir</td>
<td>to lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zōu (lù)</td>
<td>dze (loo)</td>
<td>to walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zū</td>
<td>dzoo</td>
<td>to rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zuò</td>
<td>dzaw</td>
<td>to do; to make; to sit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zuò fàn</td>
<td>dzaw fahn</td>
<td>to cook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chinese-English Mini-Dictionary

#### A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>äi</td>
<td>/eye/short</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>àirén</td>
<td>/eye run/spouse (used only in the PRC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>àiyà</td>
<td>/eye yah/oh my goodness!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ânjing</td>
<td>/ahn jeeng/quiet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ânpai</td>
<td>/ahn pye/to arrange</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ânquândài</td>
<td>/ahn chwan dye/seat belt</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bàba</td>
<td>/bah bah/father</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāifēnbi</td>
<td>/bye fun bee/percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bàn</td>
<td>/bahn/half</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāngmáng</td>
<td>/bahng mahng/to help</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāngōngshì</td>
<td>/bahn goong shir/office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāngōngzhuō</td>
<td>/bahn goong jwaw/desk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bānyè</td>
<td>/bahn yeh/midnight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bàoqiàn</td>
<td>/baow chyan/I'm sorry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bàozhī</td>
<td>/baow jir/newspaper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bié</td>
<td>/byeh duh/other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bīng</td>
<td>/beeng/to be sick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bǐnguān</td>
<td>/been gwahn/hotel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bó</td>
<td>/baw/to dial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bōwūguān</td>
<td>/baw woo gwahn/museum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bù</td>
<td>/boo/not; no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bù kēqì</td>
<td>/boo kuh chee/you’re welcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>būchōng</td>
<td>/boo choong/to add</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>būcù</td>
<td>/boo tswaw/not bad; really good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>būzhāng</td>
<td>/boo jahng/department head; minister</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### C

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<th>Character</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>cā</td>
<td>/tsah/to sweep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cài</td>
<td>/tsye/food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cǎidān</td>
<td>/tsye dahn/menu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cānguān</td>
<td>/tsahn gwahn/restaurant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>cānjīnzhī</td>
<td>/tsahn jeen jir/napkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cèsuō</td>
<td>/tsuh swaw/toilet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chá</td>
<td>/chah/tea; to look something up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chángchāng</td>
<td>/chahng chahng/often</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>chángtú</td>
<td>/chahng too dyan hwah/long-distance phone call</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>chāoji</td>
<td>/shichāng/chaow jee shir chahng/supermarket</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chatóu</td>
<td>/chah toe/adaptor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chǎzi</td>
<td>/chah dzuh/fork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chéngshì</td>
<td>/chung shir/city</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chǐ yào</td>
<td>/chir yaow/to take medicine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chīfān</td>
<td>/chir fahn/to eat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chuān</td>
<td>/chwahn/to wear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chuāng</td>
<td>/chwahng/bed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chuánzhēn jī</td>
<td>/chwan juhn jee/tax machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūfā</td>
<td>/choo fah/to leave the house; to set off</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>chūzū</td>
<td>/choo dzoo/to rent</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>chǔzū ché</td>
<td>/choo dzoo chuh/taxi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cōng</td>
<td>/tsoong/from</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cōngmíng</td>
<td>/tsoong meeng/intelligent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuò</td>
<td>/tsaw/incorrect; mistake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D

dà/dah/big
dā/dah/to do, play, or hit
dlù/dah loo/mainland (China)
dâng/dah /[dahn]

dâng/piâo/dahng pyaow/one-way ticket
dâng/ran/dahng rahn/of course
dâng/shi/dahng shir/but; however
dâng/ghuân/dahng gwahn/embassy
dâng/shí/dahng shir/lobby
dâng/du/duhng/to wait
dâng/ji/pâi/dahng jee pye/boarding pass
dâng/nâ/duhng/to order (food)
dâng/huà/dahng hwaah/telephone

dâng/huà hàomâ/dahng hwaah how mah/telephone number
dâng/huà hàomâbú/dahng hwaah how mah boo/telephone book
dâng/nà/dahng now/computer
dâng/shí/dahng shir/television
dâng/tí/dahng tee/elevator
dâng/yíng/dahng yeeeng/movie

dâng/zi yóu/jiâ/dahng dzuh yo jyan/e-mail
dâng/zi yóu/xiâng dizhí/dahng dzuh yo shyahng dee jir/e-mail address
difâng/dée fahng/place
ding/wèi/deng way/to make a reservation
diâqú/déeh chyew/area; location
dití/dée yeh/subway
dítú/dée too/map
dízhí/dée jir/address
dông/xí/doon she/thing
dóu/déh/both; all
duâ/bûqí/daw boh chee/excuse me;
I’m sorry
duâ/fâng füê/diânuâ/daw fahng foo fay
diânuân lu/daw hwaah lyew/exchange rate
duâhuân/chú/daw hwaah choow/exchange bureaus
duâmiân/daw myan/opposite
duâ/jiâ/daw jyah/on vacation
duâ/du/daw/many
duâ/jiu/daw jyo/how long?
duâshâo/daw shaaw/how much?

e/uh/hungry
erzâ/are dzuh/son

F

fâlù/fah lyew/law
fân/fahan/food
fândiân/fahan dyan/restaurant
fândiân qiântái/fahan dyan chyan
tye/reception desk
fâng jiâ/fahng jyeh/to take a vacation
fângjîâ/fahng jyan/room
fângguân/fahng gwahn/hotel
fângzì/fahng dzuh/house
fântîng/fahng teeng/dining room
fâjî/fay jee/airplane
fâjîchâng/fay jee chaang/airport
fâizâo/fay dzaow/soap
fên/fun/minute; one cent
fûjîn/foo jeeun/area; vicinity
fûmû/foo moo/parents
fûqîân/foo chyan/to pay
fûqîn/foo cheen/father
fûwûqî/foo woo chee/server
fûwûtâi jînglî/foo woo tye jeeng
lee/concierge
fûwûyuán/foo woo ywan/attendant

gâbîân/guy byan/to change (attitude; behavior)
Gâng bî/gahng bee/Hong Kong dollar
gânbî/gahng bee/pen
gănjing/gahn jeeng/clean
gănxiè/gahn shyah/many thanks
gàofèngqǐ/gaow fung chee/rush hour
gàosù/gaow soo/to tell
gàosùngglù/gaow soo goong loo/freeway
gàoxìng/gaow sheeng/happy
gěi/gay/to give
gèng/guhng/more
gerèn diànnǎo/guh run dyan now/PC (personal computer)
gòngqǐ chē/goong goong chee chu̇h/public bus
gòngqǐ chē zhàn/goong goong chee chu̇h jahn/bus stop
gōnglù/goong loo/highway
gōngsī/goong suh/company
gōngwénbào/goong one baow/briefcase
gōngxī/goong she/congratulations
gōngyǒng diànhuà/goong yoong dyan hu̇aw/public telephone
gōngzuò/goong dzwaw/to work; job
guà/gwah/to hang up
guǎn/gwan/to care about
guāngguǎng tuán/gwahn guhng twahn/tour group
guāngpán/gwahn pahn/CD (music)
gūdài/goo dye/ancient; antique
guī/gway/expensive
guójì diànhuà/gwah jee dyan hu̇aw/international phone call
guójì wāngluò/gwah jee wahn lwaw/the Internet
guójìa/gwaw jyah/country
guóyu/gwaw yew/Mandarin (term used in Taiwan)
hàiguǎn/hi gwahng/customs
háizi/hi dzu̇h/child
Hányǔ/hahn yew/Chinese (language)
hào/how/good
hǎokàn/how kahn/pretty
hàomǎ/how mah/number
hē/huh/to drink
hétóng/huh toong/contract
huài/huye/broken; bad
huàn/hu̇ahn/to change (trains, money, and so on)
huàndèngjì/hu̇ahn duhng jee/slide projector
huàndèngpiàn/hu̇ahn duhng pyan/slides
huànyìng/hu̇ahn yeeng/welcome
huǐ/hway/to answer; return
huì/hway/to know (how to do something)
uí lái/hway lye/to return (come back)
uíyì/hway ee/meeting
huò zhe/hu̇aw juh/or
huòbì/hu̇aw bee/currency
huochē zhàn/hu̇aw chu̇h jahn/train station
hūshi/hoo shir/nurse
hùtōu/hoo toe/bank account
hūzhào/hoo jaow/passport

J
ji/jee/several; how many
jiá/jyah/family; home
jiàgé/jiāh guh/price
jiàn/jyan/to see; a classifier
jiānchá/jyan chah/to examine
jiānghi/jyahng/to talk
jiānshēn yùndòng/jyan shun yewn doong/to work out
jiānsuǒ/jyan suaw/to search
jiànyì/jyan ee/to suggest; suggestion
jiào/jyaow/to be called
jiào/jyaow/to teach
jiàoshòu/jyaow show/professor
jiāotōng/jyaow toong/transportation
jiārì/jyah ir/vacation day
jí/jee/hurry
jiè/jyeh/to borrow; also to loan
jiê/jyeh/to answer the phone; street
jiéhtû/jyeh hwun/to marry
jiêjué/jyeh jweh/to resolve; to solve
jiéri/jyeh ir/holiday
jiéshaô/jyeh shaow/to introduce
jiéyû/jyeh yew/account balance
jin/jin/close
jîngchá/jee chah/police
jîngcháû/jee chah jweh/police station
jîngjicâng/jee jee tsahng/economy class
jîngjirên/jee jee run/broker
jînglí/jee lee/manager
jînjî chûkôû/jee joo choo koe/emergency exits
jîntiân/jin tyan/today
jiû/joe/wine; alcohol
jiûhuchê/joe hoo chuh/ambulance
jiûshêngyû/joe shung ee/life vests
jîzhênshû/jee juhn shir/emergency room

K
kâfêi/kah fay/coffee
kâfêitîng/kah fay teeng/café
kâi/koe/to open
kâi chê/koe chuh/to drive
kâihui/koe hwah/to have a meeting
kâimên/koe mun/to open the door
kâishi/koe shir/to start
kàn/kahen/to read; to see
kânbing/kahen beeng/to see a doctor
kàojin/cow jeen/next to
ekê/kuh/class (academic)
kê/kuh/thirsty
kè hu/kuh hoo/client
kêndîng/kuhn deeng/definitely
kênêng/kuh nung/perhaps
kêpà/kuh pah/scary
kêrên/kuh run/guest
kêxi/kuh she/too bad; unfortunately
kêyî/kuh yee/can; to be able to
kôngtiáo/koong tyahw/air conditioning
kôngwêi/koong way/vacant
kuài/kweh/fast; dollar
kuàiji/kweh jee/accounting
kuàizi/kweh dzhuh/chopsticks

L
lái/lye/to come
lái huí piâo/lye hwah pyahw/round-trip ticket
lăo/laow/old; overdone
lăobân/laow bahn/a boss
lăoshi/laow shir/teacher
lèi/lai/tired
lêishê guângdié/lay shiuh gwahng dyeh/CD-ROM
lêng/lung/cold
lî/lee/inside; Chinese equivalent of a kilometer
liâotiân/lyaw tyan/to chat
lîbài/lee bye/to pray; week
lîkâi/lee kye/to leave
lîngqûdân/leeng chyew dahng/luggage claim tag
lîngshiguân/leeng shir gwahng/consulate
lîtàng/leeng tahn/auditorium
liûhuà/lyoh hwah/to leave a message
liûlân/lyoh lahn/to browse
liûxing/lyoh sheeng/popular
lîwû/lye woo/gifts
lôushâng/lou shahng/upstairs
lûuxià/lou shyah/downstairs
lû/lou/road
lûguân/lyew gwahng/hotel
lûshî/lyew shir/lawyer
lûxiàngjî/lou shyahng jee/video recorder
lûxing/lyew sheeng/to travel
lûxing dàllîrên/lyew sheeng dye lee run/travel agent
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>English</th>
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<tr>
<td>lǚxíng zhīpiào</td>
<td>traveler’s checks</td>
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<tr>
<td>lǚxíngshè</td>
<td>travel agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lùyín diànhuà</td>
<td>answering machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lǚyóu</td>
<td>tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lǚyóu shōucè</td>
<td>guidebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>máfan</td>
<td>annoying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mài</td>
<td>to sell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māi</td>
<td>to buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māma</td>
<td>mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>màn</td>
<td>slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mànch</td>
<td>local train</td>
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<tr>
<td>máng</td>
<td>busy</td>
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<tr>
<td>mójín</td>
<td>towel</td>
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<tr>
<td>mào tān</td>
<td>blanket</td>
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<tr>
<td>mào yí zhānxìăohuì</td>
<td>trade show</td>
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<td>mēiğe</td>
<td>each</td>
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<td>Mēiguó</td>
<td>America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mēiguó ren</td>
<td>American</td>
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<tr>
<td>méiyōu</td>
<td>don’t have</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mēiyuán</td>
<td>U.S. dollar</td>
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<tr>
<td>mèn</td>
<td>door</td>
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<td>ménkōu</td>
<td>entrance</td>
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<td>face</td>
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<td>miāntiáó</td>
<td>noodles</td>
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<td>mǐfān</td>
<td>rice</td>
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<td>mǐfū</td>
<td>to get lost</td>
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<tr>
<td>mimā</td>
<td>personal identification number; password</td>
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<tr>
<td>mǐngnián</td>
<td>next year</td>
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<td>mǐngpiàn</td>
<td>business card</td>
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<td>mǐngtiān</td>
<td>tomorrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>mishú</td>
<td>secretary</td>
</tr>
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<td>mùqīn</td>
<td>mother</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ná</td>
<td>to pick up</td>
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<td>nà</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nǎ</td>
<td>which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nán pêngyōu</td>
<td>boyfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nāo zhōng</td>
<td>alarm clock</td>
</tr>
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<td>nār</td>
<td>where</td>
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<tr>
<td>nǐ</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niān ji</td>
<td>young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niān qīng</td>
<td>young</td>
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<tr>
<td>nīmen</td>
<td>you (plural)</td>
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<tr>
<td>nīn</td>
<td>you (polite)</td>
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<tr>
<td>nuānhuó</td>
<td>warm</td>
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<tr>
<td>nūpêngyōu</td>
<td>girlfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Òu yuán</td>
<td>Euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Òuzhōu</td>
<td>Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pànjué</td>
<td>to make a legal decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pěngtìáó yishū</td>
<td>cooking</td>
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<tr>
<td>pěngyōu</td>
<td>friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piányì</td>
<td>cheap</td>
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<tr>
<td>piánzi</td>
<td>movie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piāo</td>
<td>ticket</td>
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<tr>
<td>piāoliáng</td>
<td>pretty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>píngcháng</td>
<td>usually; often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>píntuō</td>
<td>pint</td>
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<tr>
<td>pǐnyīn</td>
<td>Chinese romanization system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pǔtōnghuà</td>
<td>Mandarin (term used in mainland China)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qián</td>
<td>front; money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qiān chú</td>
<td>to log off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
qiánbāo/chyan baow/wallet
qiānbǐ/chyan bee/pencil
qián tāi fùwùyuán/chyan tye foo woo yuan/receptionist
qiānzhèng/chyan juhng/visa
qiáo/chyaow/bridge
qíguài/chee gwye/strange
qián ruì/chyan roo/to log on
qìch/chee chuh/car
qíng/cheeng/affection
qìng/cheeng/to celebrate
qìng/cheeng/please
qìng/cheeng/clear
qìng zào/cheeng dzaow/time (midnight to dawn)
qítā/chee tah/other; anything else
qízì/chee dzuh/wife
qù/chyew/to go
qùdiào/chyew daow/erase; remove
qùnián/chyew nyan/last year
qúnzi/chwun dzuh/skirt
qūxiāo/chyew shyaow/to cancel

S
shàng/shahng/above; on top
shàng/shahng/to go up; get on; above
shāngdiàn/shahng dyan/store
shàngge xīngqī/shahng guh sheeng chee/last week
shàngge yuè/shahng guh yweh/last month
shàngwáng/shahng wahng/to go online
shāngwù zhōngxīn/shahng woo joong sheen/business center
shāngyè/shahng yeh/business
shéi/shay/who; whom
shēn/shun/dark; deep
shēngqì/shung chee/angry
shēngrì/shung ir/birthday
shēng yì huò bàn/shuhng yee hwaw bahn/business partner
shēngyīn/shung een/voice
shénme/shummuh/what
shěntí/shun tee/body
shì/shir/yes; is
shífú/shir foo/master; cook
shíbù/shir ho/time
shǐjīănbiāo/shir jyan byaow/schedule
shipīn záhuò/shir peen dzah hwaw/groceries
shuǐzǐ/shway dzye/flood
shōudào/show daow/to receive
shōujī/show jee/cell phone
shōují hàomá/show jee how mah/cell-phone number
shōujù/show jyew/receipt
shōushāng/show shahng/to be injured
shōutí xīnglì/show tee sheeng lee/carry on luggage
shōutíshi/show tee shir/laptop
shū/shoo/to lose; book
shuāng/shwahng/a pair

R
ràng/rahng/to let; to allow
rè/ruh/hot
rén/run/person
rénmínbì/run meen bee/PRC dollar
rènshi/run shir/to know (someone)
Rì yuán/ir ywan/Japanese dollar
Ribēn/ir bun/Japan
rì/lir lee/calendar
rìqì/lir chee/date
róngxìng/roong sheeng/to be honored
róngyì/roong ee/easy
ròu/row/meat
ruǎnjiān/rwahn jyan/software
Appendix B: Chinese-English Mini-Dictionary

shuāngrén fángjiān/shwahng run fahng jyan/double room
shūfu/shoo foo/comfortable
shuǐguǒ/shway gwaw/fruit
shuǐjiào/shway jyaow/sleep
shuō/shwaaw/to speak
sījī/suh jee/driver
sìzhōu/suh joe/around
sòng/suong/to send
sòng/soong/loose
sùcài/soo tsye/vegetarian dishes
sù/shwaaw/age
sù/shwaaw/to lock
sùshè/soo shuh/dormitory

T

tā/tah/he; him
tāde/tah duh/his
tài/tay/too much
táishí/tye shir/desktop
tàitái/tye tae/wife (used mostly in Taiwan)
Táiwān/tye wahn/Taiwan
tàiyáng yànjìng/tye yahng yan jeeng/sunglasses

tāmen/tah mun/they; them
tāng/tahng/soup
tánpànn/tahng pahn/negotiate
tānzì/tahng dzuh/blanket
tàojìàn/tye jyan/suite
tāolùn/tye loon/to discuss
tèsè/teh suh/special
tián/tyan/fill out (a form)
tiānqì/tyan chee/weather
tiàowǔ/tyaow woo/to dance
fēng/teeng/to listen to
tóngshì/toong shir/colleague
tóngwù/toong woo/roommate
tóngyì/toong ee/to agree
tóudéngcāng/toe dung tsahng/first class
tóuténg/toe tung/headache
túchǐ/tway chir/postponed
tuífáng/tway fahng/to check out of a room
tuíhuí/tway hway/to return (merchandise)
tuíkuān/tway kwahng/refund
tuòyùn/taw yewn/to check in luggage

W

wài/wye/outside
wàibí/wye bee/foreign currency
wàijìăoguān/wye jyaow gwahng/diplomat
wǎnhàn/wahn fahng/dinner
wǎnglùo liánjìe/wahng lwaw lyan jyeh/Internet access
wǎngshāng fúwù tígōng shāhng/wahng shahng foo woo tee goong shahng/Internet service provider
wǎngzhàn/wahng jahn/Web site
wǎnhuì/wahn hway/party
wǎnshāng/wahng shahng/evening (6 p.m. to midnight)
wéi/way/hello (on phone only)
wēishēngzhǐ/way shung jir/toilet paper
wēishénme/way shumuh/why
wénjìàn/one jyan/a file
wěnlù/one loo/to ask for directions
wěnti/one tee/problem
wō/waw/I; me
wōde/waw duh/mine
wōmen/waw mun/we; us
wòshì/waw shir/bedroom
wǔfān/woo fahng/lunch
wǔyuè/woo yweh/May

X

xī/she/to wash
xià/shyah/below; go down; get off; next
xiā/guh/next
xiāxìngqì/shyah guh sheeng chee/
   next week
xiàge yuè/shyah guh yweh/next month
xiáng/shyahng/to think
Xiānggāng/shyahng gahng/Hong Kong
xiāngmù/shyahng moo/item
xiāngzi/shyahng dzuh/suitcase
xiānjin/shyan jen/cash
xiănliào/shyan lyaw/small talk
xiānzài/shyan dzye/now
xiāo/shyaow/small
xiāofēi/shyaow fay/tip
xiāogéjiān/shyaow guh jyan/cubicle
xiāoxin/shyaow sheen/be careful
xiàwǔ/shyah woo/afternoon (12 – 6 p.m.)
xiàzài/shyah dzye/to download
xìnglì/sheeng lee/luggage
xìngqì/sheeng chee are/Tuesday
xìngqīlìu/sheeng chee lyo/Saturday
xìngqīsān/sheeng chee sahn/Wednesday
xìngqīsì/sheeng chee suh/Thursday
xìngqītiān/sheeng chee tyan/Sunday
xìngqīwǔ/sheeng chee woo/Friday
xìngqìyī/sheeng chee ee/Monday
xìnxī/sheen she/a message
xìnyòng kā/sheen yoong kah/credit card
xìshōu jiān/she show jyan/bathroom
xìuxī/shyo she/to rest
xìyī fúwù/she ee foo woo/laundry service
xuānzē/shwan dzuh/to choose
xuéshēng/shehwe shung/student
xuéxī/shehwe she/to study
xuēxiào/shehwe shyaow/school
xǔyào/shehwe yaow/to need

yānjīng/yan jeeng/glasses
yānjīng/yan jeeng/eye
yānshì/yan shir/a presentation
yào/yaow/to want; medicine
yàofáng/yaow fahng/pharmacy
yáokòng qí/yaow koong chee/remote control
yàoshi/yaow shir/key
yàowán/yaow wahn/pill
yáshuā/yah shwah/toothbrush
yáyī/yah ee/dentist
Yàzhōu/yah joe/Asia
yě/yeah/also
yī/ee/one
yíchéng/ee chung/agenda
yǐfú/ee foo/clothing
yǐhòu/ee ho/after
yīhuār jiān/ee hwar jyan/see you later
yīhuār/ee hwar/in a little while
yījiàn/ee jyan/opinion
yīng/eeng/to win
yǐngbì/eeng bee/coins
yǐnggāi/eeng guy/should
yǐnháng/een hahng/bank
Yǐngwén; Yǐngyǔ/eeeng one; eeng yew/English (language)
yǐnlíāo/een lyaow/drinks
yǐnwèi/een way/because
yǐnyuè/een yew/music
yǐqǐ/ee chee/together
yǐshēng/ee shung/doctor
yǐwèi/ee way/to consider
yǐxie/ee shyeh/a few
yìyáng/ee yahng/the same
yìyuàn/ee ywan/hospital
yǐzi/ee dzuh/chair
yòng/yoong/to use
yònghù xìngmíng/yoong hoo sheeng meeng/user name
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yòu/yo</td>
<td>right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yōu/yu</td>
<td>to have</td>
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<tr>
<td>yòu shèng yǒu jiàn/yōu shèng yǒu jiàn</td>
<td>voicemail</td>
</tr>
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<td>yóu jú/yōu jú</td>
<td>post office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yóu lān/yōu lān</td>
<td>to sightsee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yū/yu</td>
<td>rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yuán/yuán</td>
<td>Chinese dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yuàn/yuàn</td>
<td>far</td>
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<tr>
<td>yùdìng/yùdìng</td>
<td>to make a reservation</td>
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<td>Yuènán/Yuènán</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
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<td>yùndòng/yùndòng</td>
<td>exercise</td>
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<td>yùnqì/yùnqì</td>
<td>luck</td>
</tr>
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<td>yùsān/yùsān</td>
<td>umbrella</td>
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<td>yúsān/yúsān</td>
<td>budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yūyī/yūyī</td>
<td>raincoat</td>
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**Z**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zài jiàn/dzài jyan</td>
<td>goodbye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zán men/dzán mun</td>
<td>we; us (informal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǎo fān/dzǎo fān</td>
<td>breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǎo gāo/dzǎo gāo</td>
<td>rats!; what a shame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǎo shāng/dzǎo shāng</td>
<td>morning (6 a.m. to noon)</td>
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<td>zá zhì/dzá jir</td>
<td>magazine</td>
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<td>zéi/dzái</td>
<td>thief</td>
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<tr>
<td>zěn me/džemmah</td>
<td>how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhàng dān/jahng dān</td>
<td>bill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhàng fu/jahng foo</td>
<td>husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhàntái/jahn téi</td>
<td>platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhāo hu/zaoh hu</td>
<td>to look for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhāo píà n/zaoh píà n</td>
<td>greeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhàoxiàng/jaow shyahng</td>
<td>to take pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhàoxiàng jì/jaow shyahng jì</td>
<td>camera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhēn/juhn</td>
<td>really; truly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhèng diàn/juhn dyan</td>
<td>on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhèng jiàn/juhn jyan</td>
<td>ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhí/jir</td>
<td>straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhǐ/jir</td>
<td>only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhǐ dào/jir dàow</td>
<td>to know (information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhǐ liàng/jir lyahng</td>
<td>quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhǐ piào/jir pyaow</td>
<td>check (money)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhǐ piào bù/jir pyaow boo</td>
<td>checkbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhōng/joong</td>
<td>time; size medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōng guó/joong gwaw</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōng guórén/joong gwaw run</td>
<td>Chinese person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōng wén/joong one</td>
<td>Chinese language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhōng wù/joong woo</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhōng yú/joong yeu</td>
<td>finally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhōu mò/joe maw</td>
<td>weekend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhù/joo</td>
<td>to reside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhū àn/jwan</td>
<td>to transfer; to turn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhū bāo/joo bao</td>
<td>jewelry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhū guān/joo gwaw</td>
<td>CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhū lù/zuaw loo</td>
<td>landing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhū zi/jwaw dzuh</td>
<td>table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhì dōng lòu tī/jzhì dōng lòu tī</td>
<td>escalator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhì dōng tī kuān kā/jzhì dōng tī kuān kā</td>
<td>ATM card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhī dōng tī kuān jī/jzhī dōng tī kuān jī</td>
<td>ATM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǐ jī/dzuh jee</td>
<td>self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǒng cái/jDoug tsye</td>
<td>president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(of company)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǒng shí/jDoug shir</td>
<td>always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǒng suān/jDoug swahn</td>
<td>finally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zōu/dzoe</td>
<td>to walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zū fēi/dzoo fay</td>
<td>rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zū fù/dzoo foo</td>
<td>grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zū jì/dzaw jî</td>
<td>the most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zúo/dzaw</td>
<td>left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zuò tián/dzuaw tyan</td>
<td>yesterday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A

above; on top/shàng/shahng
account balance/jiéyú/jyeh yew
accounting/kuàijì/kwye jee
adaptor/chàtóu/chah toe
add/bǔchōng/boo choong
address/dìzhī/dee jir
affection/qíng/cheeng
after/yīhòu/ee ho
afternoon/zhōngwǔ/joong woo
afternoon (12 – 6 p.m.)/xiàwǔ/shyah woo
age/niánjì; suì/nyan jee; sway
agenda/yìchéng/ee chung
agree/tóngyì/toong ee
air conditioning/kōngtiáo/koong tyaow
airplane/fēijī/fay jee
airport/fēijīchāng/fay jee chahng
alarm clock/nào zhōng/naow joong
also/yě/yeh
always/zōngshí/dzoong shir
ambulance/jiùhùchē/jyoe hoo chuh
America/Méiguó/may gwaw
American/Méiguóren/may gwaw run
ancient; antique/gǔdài/goo dye
angry/shēngqì/shung chee
annoying/máfàn/mah fahn
answer the phone/jiè/jyeh
answer; return/huí/hway
answering machine/lùyín diànhuà/loo een dyan hwah
area; vicinity; neighborhood/fùjìn/foo jeen
around/sìzhōu/suh joo
arrange/ānpái/ahn pye
Asia/Yàzhōu/yah joo
ask for directions/wènlù/one loo
ATM card/zìdòng tikuàn kā/dzuuh doong te kwan kah
ATM/zìdòng tikuānji/dzuuh doong tee kwon jee
attendant/fúwùyuán/foo woo ywan
auditorium/fitáng/lee tahng

B

bank/yínháng/een hahng
bank account/hùtōu/hoo toe
bathroom/xīshǒu jiān/she show jyan
be called/jiào/jyow
be careful/xiāoxīn/shyaow sheeng
be honored/róngxing/roong sheeng
be injured/shòusháng/show shahng
be sick/bìng/beeng
because/yīnwèi/een way
bed/chuáng/chwahng
bedroom/wòshì/waw shir
below/xià/shyah
big/dà/dah
bill/zhàngdān/jahng dahn
birthday/shēngrì/shung ir
blanket/máotān; tānzi/maow tahn; tahn dzuh
boarding pass/dēngjīpái/dung jee pye
body/shènti/shun tee
book/shū/shoo
borrow; loan/jiè/jyeh
boss/lāobān/laow bahn
both; all/dōu/doe
boyfriend/nán péngyōu/nahn pung yo
breakfast/zāofān/daow fahn
bridge/qiáo/chyaow
briefcase/gōngwénbāo/goong one baow
broken; bad/huài/hwye
broker/jīngjìrén/jee run
browse/liúlín/lyo lahn
budget/yùsuàn/yew swan
bus stop/gōnggōng qích zhàn/goong goong chee chuh jahn
business/shèngyi/shung yee
business card/míngpìàn/meeng pyan
business center/shāngwù zhōngxin/shahng woo joong sheen
business partner/shèng yì huō bān/shung yee huow bahn
busy/máng/mahng
but; however/dànshì/dahn shir
buy/mǎi/my

café/kāfēitīng/kah fay teeng
calendar/rìlì/ir lee
camera/zhàoxiàng jī/jaow shyahng jee
can; to be able to/kěyǐ/kuh yee
cancel/qūxǐào/chyew shyaow
car/qích/chee chuh
care about/guān/gwan
carry-on luggage/shōutì xínglì/show tee sheeng lee
cash/xiànjīn/shyan jeen
CD (music)/guāngpàn/gwahng pahn
CD-ROM, lèishè guāngdíè/lay shuh gwahng dyeh
celebrate/qìng/cheeng
cell phone/shōuji/show jee

cell-phone number/shōuji hàomā/show jee how mah
CEO/zhūguān/joo gwan
chair/yīzī/ee duh
change (attitude; behavior)/gāibiàn/guy byan
change (trains, money, and so on)/huàn/hwahng chuh
chat/láotīn; xiántān/lyaow tyen; shyan tahn
cheap/piányī/pyan yee
check (money)/zhīpiào/jir pyaw
check in luggage/tuōyīn/tway yewn
check out of a room/tuīfáng/tway fahng
checkbook/zhīpiào bù/jir pyaw boo
child/háizi/hi duh
China/Zhōngguó/joong gwaw
Chinese (language)/Hànyǔ/hahn yew;
Zhōngwén/joong gwaw
Chinese dollar/yuán/ywan
Chinese person/Zhōngguórén/joong gwaw run
Chinese romanization system/pīnyīn/peen yeen
choose/xuānzé/shwan duh
chopsticks/kuàizi/kwee duh
city/chéngshí/chung shir
class (academic)/kè/kuh
clean/gānjìng/gahn jeeng
clear/qìng/cheeng
client/kè hù/kuh hoo
close/jìn/jen
clothing/yīfu/ee foo
coffee/kāfēi/kah fay
coins/yīngbi/eeeng bee
cold/lěng/luhng
colleague/tóngshí/toong shir
collect call/duīfáng fùfèi diànhuà/dway fahng foo fay dyan hwah
come/lái/lye
comfortable/shūfū/shoo foo
company/gōngsī/goong suh
Part V: Appendixes

D

country/guójià/gwaw jyah
credit card/xìnyòng kǎ/sheen yoong kah
cubicle/xiāogéjiàn/shyaow guh jyan
currency/huòbì/hwaw bee
customs/hâiguān/hi gwahn
dance/tiàowǔ/tiaow woo
dark; deep/shēn/shun
date/rìq/ir chee
definitely/kěndìng/kuhn deeng
dentist/yáyí/yah ee
department head; minister/bùzhâng/boo jahng
desk/bângōngzhōu/bahn goong jwaw
desktop/tâishi/tye shir
dial/bō/baw
dining room/fângtīng/fahn teeng
dinner/wānfàn/wahn fahn
diplomat/wâijiāoguān/wye jyaow gwahn
discuss/tâolûn/taow loon
do, play, or hit/dă/dah
doctor/yìshêng/ee shung
don't have/méiyǒu/mayo
door/mén/mun
dormitory/sūshè/soo shuh
double room/shuāngrén fângjiàn/shuahng run fahng jyan
download/xiàzài/shyah dye
downstairs/lóuxià/low shyah
drink/hē/huh
drinks/yǐnliào/een lyaow
drive/kāi chē/kye chuh
driver/sì/ji/suh jee

each/měige/may guh
easy/róngyì/roong ee
eat/chîfàn/chir fahn
economy class/ jiângjìcâng/jeeng jee tsahng
elevator/diântí/dyan tee
e-mail/diânzǐ yóu jiàn/dyan dzuh yo jyan
e-mail address/diânzǐ yóuxiâng
dîzhi/dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir
embassy/dâshîguān/dah shir gwahn
emergency exits/jînjí chûkōu/jeen jee choo ko
equipment room/jîzhēnshì/jee jun shir
English (language)/Yîngwén;
Yîngyû/eeng one; eeng yew
entire; the whole thing/quânbù/chwan boo
entrance/měnkòu/mun ko
erase; remove/qùdiào/chyew dyaow
escalator/zìdòng lóut dzuh doong low tee
Euro/Ôu yuán/oh ywan
Europe/Ôuzhōu/oh joe
evening (6 p.m. to midnight)/wānshâng/wahn shahng
examine/jiânchá/jyan chah
exchange bureaus/duìhuânchù/dway hwahn choo
exchange rate/duìhuân lǜ/dway hwahn lyew
excuse me; I'm sorry/duìbùqǐ/dway boo chee
exercise/yûndîng/yewn doong
expensive/guai/gway
eye/yânjìng/yan jeeng

E

each/měi/may guh
easy/róngyì/roong ee
eat/chîfàn/chir fahn
economy class/jîngjìcâng/jeeng jee tsahng
elevator/diântí/dyan tee
e-mail/diânzǐ yóu jiàn/dyan dzuh yo jyan
e-mail address/diânzǐ yóuxiâng
dîzhi/dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir
embassy/dâshîguān/dah shir gwahn
emergency exits/jînjí chûkōu/jeen jee choo ko
emergency room/jîzhēnshì/jee jun shir
English (language)/Yîngwén;
Yîngyû/eeng one; eeng yew
entire; the whole thing/quânbù/chwan boo
entrance/měnkòu/mun ko
erase; remove/qùdiào/chyew dyaow
escalator/zìdòng lóut dzuh doong low tee
Euro/Ôu yuán/oh ywan
Europe/Ôuzhōu/oh joe
evening (6 p.m. to midnight)/wānshâng/wahn shahng
examine/jiânchá/jyan chah
exchange bureaus/duìhuânchù/dway hwahn choo
exchange rate/duìhuân lǜ/dway hwahn lyew
excuse me; I'm sorry/duìbùqǐ/dway boo chee
exercise/yûndîng/yewn doong
expensive/guai/gway
eye/yânjìng/yan jeeng

F

face/miàn/myan
family; home/jiā/jyah
Appendix B: English-Chinese Mini-Dictionary

far/yuān/ywan
fast; dollar/kuài/kwe
father/bāba; fùqin/bah bah; foo cheen
fax machine/chuánzhēn ji/chwahn juhn jee
few/yìxiē/ee shye
file/wénjiàn/one jyan
fill out (a form)/tián/tyan
finally/zhōng yú/joong yew
first class/tóudēngcāng/toe dung tsahng
flood/shuǐ/zhway dzye
food/cài; fàn/tsye; fahn
foreign currency/wàibì/wye bee
fork/chī/zuh
free/mì fèi/myan fay
freeway/ɡǎosùɡōnɡlù/goaw soo goong loo
Friday/xīngqìwǔ/sheeng chee woo
friend/péngyǒu/puhng yo
from/cóng/tooong
front; money/qián/chyan
fruit/shùɡuǒ/shway gwaw

get lost/mílù/mee loo
gifts/lǐwù/lee woo
girlfriend/nǚpéngyǒu/nyew puhung yoe
give/gěi/gay
glasses/yǎnjǐng/yan jeeng
go/qù/chyew
go down; get off; next/xià/shyah
go online/shàngwāng/shahng wahng
go up; get on/shàng/shahng
good/hǎo/how
goodbye/zàijiàn/dzye jyan
grandfather/zúfū/dzoo foo
greeting/zhāohù/jaow hoo
groceries/shipǐn záhuò/shir peen dzah hway
guest/kèrén/kuh run
guidebook/lǜyǒu shōucè/lyew yo show tsuh

H

half/bàn/bahn
hang up/guà/guah
happy/gāoxìng/gaw sheeng
have/yǒu/yo
have a meeting/kāihui/kye hway
he; him/tā/tah
headache/tóuténg/toe tuhng
hello (on phone only)/wèi/way
help/bāngmáng/bahng mahng
highway/gōnglù/goong loo
his/tā/tah
duh
holiday/jiěrì/jyeh ir
Hong Kong/Xiānggāng/shyahng gahng
Hong Kong dollar/Gāng bì/gahng bee
hospital/yīyuàn/ee ywan
hot/rè/ruh
hotel/bīnān/been gwahn
hotel/fàngguān/fahn gwahn
hotel/lǚguān/lyew gwahn
house/fāngzǐ/fahng dzuh
how/zěnme/dzummuh
how long?/duō jīu?/dwaw jyo
how much?/duōshāo?/dwaw shaow
hungry/è/uh
hurry/jí/jee
husband/zhàngfū/jahng foo

I

I; me/wǒ/waw
I’m sorry/bàoqiàn/baow chyan
ID/zhèngjiàn/juhan jyan
in a little while/yīhuír/ee hwar
incorrect; mistake/cuò/tsaww
inside; Chinese equivalent of a kilometer/lǐ/lee
intelligent/cōngmíng/soong meeng
international phone call/\textit{guójì diànhuà}/gwaw jee dyan hwah
Internet/\textit{guójì wăngluò}/gwaw jee wahng lwaw
Internet access/\textit{wăngluò liánjié}/lwaw lyan jyeh
Internet service provider/\textit{wăngshàng fúwù tíg}/lwaw shahng foo tee goong shahng
introduce/\textit{jièshào}/jyeh shaow
item/\textit{xiàngmù}/shyahng moo

\textbf{J}

Japan/\textit{Rìběn}/ir bun
Japanese dollar/\textit{Rì yuán}/ir ywan
jewelry/\textit{zhūbāo}/joo baow

\textbf{K}

key/\textit{yàoshi}/yaow shir
know (how to do something)/\textit{huì}/hway
know (information)/\textit{zhídào}/jir daow
know (someone)/\textit{rènshi}/run shir
kilometer (Chinese equivalent)/\textit{lí}/lee

\textbf{L}

landing/\textit{zhuólù}/jwaw loo
laptop/\textit{shòutíshi}/show tee shir
last month/\textit{shàngge yuè}/shahng yweh
last week/\textit{shàngge xīngqī}/shahng guh sheeng chee
last year/\textit{qùnián}/chyew nyan
laundry service/\textit{xīyī fúwù}/she ee foo woo
law/\textit{fálù}/fah lyew
lawyer/\textit{lùshì}/lyew shir
leave/\textit{lǐkāi}/lee kye
leave a message/\textit{liúhuà}/lyoe hwah
leave the house; to set off/\textit{chūfā}/choo fah
left/\textit{zuō}/dzaww
let; to allow/\textit{ràng}/rahng
life vests/\textit{jiūshēngyī}/jyoe shung ee
like/\textit{xǐhuān}/she hwahn

\textbf{M}

magazine/\textit{zázhì}/dzah jir
mainland (China)/\textit{dàlù}/dah loo
make a legal decision/\textit{pànjué}/pahn jweh
make a reservation (seats)/\textit{dìng wèi}/deeng way
make a reservation (room, tickets, and so on)/\textit{yùdìng}/yew deeng
manager/\textit{jīnglǐ}/jeeng lee
Mandarin/\textit{guóyǔ; pútōnghuà}/gwaw yew
(term used in Taiwan); poo toong hwah
(term used in mainland China)
many/\textit{duō}/dwaw
many thanks/\textit{gānxiè}/gahn shyeh
map/\textit{dìtú}/dee too
marry/\textit{jiéhūn}/jyeh hwun
master; cook/\textit{shīfù}/shir foo
May/\textit{wúyuè}/woo yweh
meat/\textit{ròu}/row
meeting/\textit{huìyì}/hway ee
menu/\textit{cāidān}/tsyeh dahn
message/\textit{xīnxi}/sheen she
midnight/\textit{bànyè}/bahn yeh
mine; my/\textit{wǒde}/waw duh
### Appendix B: English-Chinese Mini-Dictionary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>minute; one cent</td>
<td>分/fèn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>星期一/xīngqīyī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more</td>
<td>更/gèng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morning (6 a.m. to noon)</td>
<td>早上/zhǎoshàng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most</td>
<td>最/zuì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>妈妈/māmā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>movie</td>
<td>电影/diànyīng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>museum</td>
<td>博物馆/bówùguǎn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>music</td>
<td>音乐/yīnyuè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>napkin</td>
<td>纸巾/zhǐ jīn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need</td>
<td>需要/xūyào</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negotiate</td>
<td>谈判/tánpàn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
<td>新/shīn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspaper</td>
<td>报纸/bào zhǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next</td>
<td>下/xià</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next month</td>
<td>下月/xià yuè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next to</td>
<td>旁边/bàng duì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next week</td>
<td>下周/xià zuò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next year</td>
<td>下年/xià nián</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noodles</td>
<td>面条/miàntiáo</td>
</tr>
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<td>not bad; really good</td>
<td>不错/bù cuò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not</td>
<td>不/bù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now</td>
<td>现在/xiànzài</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number</td>
<td>数字/shù zì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nurse</td>
<td>护士/hùshì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of course</td>
<td>当然/dāngrán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>office</td>
<td>办公室/bàogōng shì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often</td>
<td>常常/cháng cháng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh my goodness!</td>
<td>我的好/wǒ hǎo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overdone</td>
<td>搞完/gāo wán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on time</td>
<td>按时/zhèng shí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on vacation</td>
<td>假期/jià qì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>一/yī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one-way ticket</td>
<td>机票/jī piào</td>
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<tr>
<td>only</td>
<td>只有/zhǐ yǒu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>打开/dá kāi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open the door</td>
<td>打开门/dá kāi mén</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposite</td>
<td>对面/dì miàn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>order (food)</td>
<td>订单/dàng wǎn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other; anything else</td>
<td>其它/qí tā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside</td>
<td>外/wài</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of course</td>
<td>当然/dāngrán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>office</td>
<td>办公室/bàogōng shì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often</td>
<td>常常/cháng cháng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh my goodness!</td>
<td>我的好/wǒ hǎo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overdone</td>
<td>搞完/gāo wán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on time</td>
<td>按时/zhèng shí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on vacation</td>
<td>假期/jià qì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>一/yī</td>
</tr>
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### N

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>napkin</td>
<td>纸巾/zhǐ jīn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need</td>
<td>需要/xūyào</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspaper</td>
<td>报纸/bào zhǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next</td>
<td>下/xià</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next month</td>
<td>下月/xià yuè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next to</td>
<td>旁边/bàng duì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next week</td>
<td>下周/xià zuò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next year</td>
<td>下年/xià nián</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noodles</td>
<td>面条/miàntiáo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not bad; really good</td>
<td>不错/bù cuò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not</td>
<td>不/bù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now</td>
<td>现在/xiànzài</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number</td>
<td>数字/shù zì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nurse</td>
<td>护士/hùshì</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### O

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>of course</td>
<td>当然/dāngrán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>office</td>
<td>办公室/bàogōng shì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often</td>
<td>常常/cháng cháng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh my goodness!</td>
<td>我的好/wǒ hǎo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overdone</td>
<td>搞完/gāo wán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on time</td>
<td>按时/zhèng shí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on vacation</td>
<td>假期/jià qì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>一/yī</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part V: Appendixes

pray; week/libài/lee bye
PRC dollar/rénmínbi/run meen bee
presentation/yānshì/yan shir
president (of company)/zhòngcái/dzoong tse
pretty/hǎokān/how kahn
price/jiàgé/jyah guh
problem/wèntî/one tee
professor/jiàoshòu/jyaow show
public bus/gōnggòng qíchè/goong goong chee chuh
public telephone/gōngyòng diànhuà/goong yoong dyan hwah

return (come back)/huílái/hway lye
rat/s; what a shame/zāogāo/dzaow gaow
read; to see/kàn/kahn
really; truly/zhēn/juhn
receipt/shòujì/show jyew
receive/shōudào/show daow
receipt desk/fàndiàn qiántái/fahn dyan chyan tye
receptionist/qiántái fūwūyuán/chyan tye foo woo ywan
refund/tuikuān/tway kwah
remot control/yáokòng qì/yaoow koong chee
rent/zūfēi/dzoow fay
rent/chūzū/choo dzoo
reside/zhù/joo
resolve; solve/jiējué/jye jweh
rest/xiūxī/shyo she
restaurant/cànghān/tsahn gwahn
restaurant/fàndiàn/fahn dyan

same/yíyàng/ee yahng
Saturday/xīngqīlǐù/sheeng chee lyo
scary/kēpà/kuh pah
schedule/shíjìnbāo/shir jyan byaow
school/xuéxiào/shweh shyaow
search/jiānsuǒ/jian swaw
seat belt/ānquándài/ahn chwan dye
secretary/mìshū/mee shoo
see a doctor/kānbìng/kahn beeng
see you later/yíhūr jiàn/ee hwah jyan
self/zìjì/dzuh jee
sell/mài/my
send/sòng/soong
server/fúwūqì/foo woow chee
several; how many/jì/jee
shoes/xīzi/shyeh dzuh
short/āi/eeye
should/yǐnggāi/eeng guy
sightsee/yóulǎn/yow lahn
Singapore dollar/Xīng bì/sheeng bee
skirt/qúnzi/chwun dzuh
sleep/shuíjiào/shway jyaow
slide projector/huàndèngjī/hwahn duhng jee
slow/màn/mahn
small/xiǎo/shyaow
small talk/xiánliáo/shyan lyaow
soap/féizào/fay dzaow
software/ruānjìàn/ruh wahn jyan
son/érzi/are dzuh
soup/táng/taahng
speak/shuó/shwaw
special/tèse/tuh suh
spouse (used only in the PRC)/ài rén/eye run
start/kāishǐ/kye shir
store/shāngdiàn/shahng dyan
straight/zhí/jir
strange/qíguài/chee gwye
street/jiē/jyeh
student/xuéshì/shweh shung
subway/dìtiē/deh tyeh
suggest; suggestion/jiànyì/jyan ee
suite/tàojiān/tah jyan
Sunday/xīngqì/xieeng chee suh
sunglasses/tàiyáng yǎnjìng/tye yahng yan jeng
supermarket/chāo jí shìchāng/chaow jee shir chaung

T

table/zhuōzhǐ/jwahng dzuh
taiwan/Tâi wān/tyeh wah
take a vacation/fàng jià/fahng jyah
take medicine/chī yào/chir yahw
take off (airplane)/qīfēi/chee fay
take pictures/zhàoxiàng/jaow shyahng
talk/jiāng/yahng
taxi/chūzhù/choo dzoo chuh
tea/chá/chah
teach/jiāo/jyauw
teacher/lǎoshì/laow shir
telephone/diànhuà/dyan huwah
telephone number/diànhuà hàomā/dyan huwah how mah
tell/gàosù/gaow soo
thanks/xièxiè/shyeh shyeh
that/nà/nah
that's awful!/zāo gào/daow gahw
tyeh; them/tāmen/tah gahw
thief/zéi/dzay
thing/dōngxi/doong mun
talk/gàosù/gaow
thirsty/kē/kuh

Thursday/xīngqì/xieeng chee suh
ticket/piào/pyaow
time/shíhou/shir ho
time (midnight to dawn)/qīngzǎo/cheeng dzaow
time; size medium/zhōng/joong
tip/xiāofēi/shyaow fay
tired/lèi/lay
today/jǐntiān/jin tyan
together/yìqí/ee chee
toilet/pìào/pyaw

towel/máojíng/maow jeen

toilet paper/wèishēngzhǐ/way shung jeen

tomorrow/míntiān/meeng tyan
too bad; unfortunately/kēxī/kuh she
too much/tài/tye
toothbrush/yáshù/yah shwah
tour/lǚyóu/lyew yoh
tour group/guǎngguǎng tuán/gwahng gwahng tuahn
towel/máojíng/maow jeen
trade show/mào yì zhān xǐāohuì/maow ee jahn shyahng huwah

train station/huǒché zhàn/ huwah chuh jahn
transfer/zhuān/jwan
transparency/tóuyǐngpiàn/toe eeng pyan
transportation/jiāotòng/jyauw toong
travel/lūxìng/lyew sheeng
travel agency/lūxǐngshè/lyew sheeng shuh
tavel agent/lūxìng dàilìrén/lyew sheeng dí lee run
traveler’s checks/lūxǐng zhipiào/lyew sheeng jįr pyaow
Tuesday/xīngqì/lyew chee are
TV/diànsì/dyan shir

U

U.S. dollar/Měiyuán/may ywan
umbrella/yūsān/yew sahn
upstairs/lóushàng/lou shahng
use/yòng/yoom
user name/yònghù xìngmíng/yoong hoo sheeng meeng
usually; often/píngcháng/peeng chahng

V

vacant/kòngwèi/koong way
vacation day/jiàrì/jyah ir
vegetarian dishes/sùcài/soo tsey
video recorder/lùxiàngjī/loo shyahng jee
Vietnam/Yuènán/yweh nahn
visa/qiànzhèng/ceh ywan juhung
voice/shēngyín/shung een
voicemail/yōu shēng yǒujiàn/yo shung yo jyan

Y

yes; is/shì/shir
yesterday/zuótiān/dzaww tyan
you/nǐ/nee
you (plural)/nǐmén/nee mun
you (polite)/nín/neen
you’re welcome/bú kèqi/boo kuh chee
young/níánqīng/nyan cheeng

W

wait/děng/duhng
walk/zǒu/dzoe
wallet/qiánbāo/cep ywan baow
want; medicine/yào/yaw
warm/nuānhuó/nwan hwaw

wash/xǐ/she
we; us (informal)/zánmén/dzahn mun
we; us/wǒmén/waw mun
wear/chuān/chwahn
weather/tiānqì/tyahng chee
Web site/wǎngzhàn/wahng jähn
Wednesday/xīngqìsān/sheeng chee sahn
weekend/zhōumò/jee maw
welcome/huānyíng/hwahn yeeng
Western food/xīcān/she tsahn
what/shénme/shummuh
where/nār/nar
which/nǎ/nah
who; whom/shéi/shay
why/wéishénme/way shummuh
wife/qízi/chee dzuh
wife (used mostly in Taiwan)/tàitài/ti yee
win/yīng/eeng
wine; alcohol/jiǔ/jyoe
withdraw money/qū qián/ceh ywan chyan
work; job/gōngzuò/goong dzwaw
work out/jiàoshēn yǔndōng/jyan shun yewn doong

Part V: Appendixes
Appendix C

Answer Key

The following are all of the answers to the Fun & Games quizzes.

Chapter 2

wǔ, qǐ, shí, sānshí, liùshí, jiǔshí

Chapter 3

hǎo, míngzi, Dégúórén, bàofēngxué, jiàn

1. Hǎo jiǔ méi jiàn.
2. Wān ān.
4. Nǐr de huà.
5. Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ.

Chapter 4

yīshēng: doctor
lǎoshī: teacher
fēixíngyuán: pilot
zúqíú duíyuán: soccer player

Chapter 5

A. píngguǒ (apple)
B. júzi (orange)
C. shēngcài (lettuce)
D. fānqié (tomato)
E. hú luóbo (carrot)
F. yángcōng (onion)
G. xīlánhuā (broccoli)

Chapter 6
A. Zhūbāo diàn: jewelry store
B. Cài shìchǎng: food market
B. Huādiàn: flower shop
D. Yàofāng: drugstore
E. Wánjù diàn: toy store

Chapter 7
9:15 a.m.: zǎoshàng jiǔ diăn yīkè
next month: xiàge yuè
midnight: bànyè
two weeks ago: liǎngge xīngqī yīqián
4:30 p.m.: xiàwǔ sì diăn bàn

Chapter 8
A. dā pǐngpōngqiú
B. tán gāngqín
C. dā tàijīquán
D. chuī chángdí
E. pá shān

Chapter 9
Just a moment.: Shāodēng
Is she at home?: Tā zài ma?
Hello.: Wéi?
Sorry, you dialed the wrong number.: Duìbùqǐ, nǐ bōcuòle hàomā.
Please leave a message.: Qīng nǐ liú yīge huà.
Chapter 10

1. yūshì: bathroom
2. wòshì: bedroom
3. fàntīng: dining room
4. tānzi: blanket
5. yángtái: balcony
6. zhèntóu: pillow
7. bèizi: quilt
8. shūzhūō: desk
9. shāfā: sofa

Chapter 11

A. zìdòng tíkuānjī (ATM machine)
B. chūnàyuán (bank teller)
C. yíngháng (bank)
D. hùzhào (passport)
E. xìnyòng kǎ (credit card)
F. qiánbāo (wallet)

Chapter 12

Xuéxiào zài běibìān (or běimíànn). The school is to the north.
Yóujú zài dōngbìān (or dōngmíànn). The post office is to the east.
Yíngháng zài nánbìān (or nánmíànn). The bank is to the south.
Fángzi zài xībìān (or xīmíànn). The house is to the west.

Chapter 13

1. fángjiān
2. kèmān
3. qīchuíáng
4. zhāngdān
5. tuīfáng
Chapter 14

A. fēijī
B. huǒchē
C. dīdī
D. gōnggōng qìchē
E. chūzū chē

Chapter 15

1. shīērlán
2. liù yuè bā hào
3. fó miào
4. yáshuā
5. Kāi wān xiào.

Chapter 16

1. gēbō: arm
2. jiānbāng: shoulder
3. shōuzhǐ: finger
4. tuǐ: leg
5. bózi: neck
6. xiōngqiāng: chest
7. yānjīngh: eye
8. ērduō: ear
9. bízi: nose
Appendix D

About the CD

The following is a list of tracks that appear on the book’s audio CD.

Chapter 1

Track 1: Practicing Chinese initials
Track 2: Practicing Chinese tones

Chapter 2

Track 3: People watching
Track 4: Deciding where to go to dinner

Chapter 3

Track 5: Introducing friends
Track 6: Meeting someone new

Chapter 4

Track 7: Finding out what time it is
Track 8: Discussing professions

Chapter 5

Track 9: Meeting at a restaurant
Track 10: Shopping at the food market

Chapter 6

Track 11: Shopping for the right clothing size
Track 12: Deciding on the right color

Chapter 7

Track 13: Planning to see a movie
Track 14: Visiting the museum
Chapter 8

Track 15: Discussing the scenery
Track 16: Going to a basketball game

Chapter 9

Track 17: Calling a friend
Track 18: Leaving a message

Chapter 10

Track 19: Starting a presentation
Track 20: Contacting a realtor

Chapter 11

Track 21: Looking for a place to exchange money
Track 22: Opening a savings account

Chapter 12

Track 23: Getting directions to the embassy
Track 24: Getting directions to the post office

Chapter 13

Track 25: Making a hotel reservation
Track 26: Discovering there’s no vacancy at a hotel

Chapter 14

Track 27: Checking in at the airport
Track 28: Speaking to a customs agent

Chapter 15

Track 29: Making vacation plans
Track 30: Working with a travel agent

Chapter 16

Track 31: Arriving at the doctor’s office
Track 32: Getting a doctor’s diagnosis
Index

abstract nouns, 27
accent, 217
accidents, 293
acrobatics, 138
acupuncture, 293
address, 75, 76
adjectives
  overview, 31–32
  pronunciation, 31
  weather description, 58–59
word order, 30, 31–32
adverbs, 37–38
advertising, 186
ailments
  body parts, 281
  description, 283–284
  diagnosis, 288–290
  doctor, 282–290
  medical history, 287–288
  medications, 281
overview, 280
treatment options, 290–293
air pollution, 285
airplane travel
  boarding process, 249–251
  check in, 246
  customs, 252–254, 253–254
delays, 246
emergency procedures, 250
medications, 281
music, 250
passport, 272
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 247, 248, 251,
  253–254
airport
  boarding process, 249–251
  check in, 246
  customs, 252–254
delays, 246
overview, 245
passport, 272
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 247, 248, 251,
  253–254
alcohol, 150, 305
alley market, 110
American Express (credit card), 208
American food, 82–84
anatomy, 281
anger, 56, 304
animals
  Chinese zodiac, 266–267
  idiomatic expressions, 20–21
answering machine, 172–174
antique shopping, 124–125
Anyang (city), 162
apartment. See housing
art
  hobbies, 159
  museum, 143
quick progress in Chinese, 302
business.  See also job
cards, 182
discussions, 185–187
e-mail, 189–190
equipment and supplies, 177–179
Internet use, 187–188
meetings, 180–184, 186
overview, 177
phone call, 169–170
presentations, 183, 184
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 179, 184, 186–187

• C •
c initial sound, 14
cab
  bill paying, 256
driving directions, 222
hailing tips, 222, 255
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 223, 256–257
tipping, 211–212
calligraphy, 302
calling card, 172
camel trek, 162
car
  accident, 293
  rental, 254
Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 43
cardinal point, 227–228, 230
cash.  See money
cashing checks, 205–206
CD
  overview, 3, 6
  quick progress, 299
tone exercise, 24
track listing, 343–344
celebration
body language, 23
Chinese New Year, 93
travel plans, 266–268
cell phone, 166–167
character, Chinese, 12–13
chatting
  address and phone number, 75, 76
  common family words, 70–71
  conversation starters, 67–69
  goodbye, 62, 63
  hometown inquiries, 60–61
  housing, 75–76
  introductory questions, 69–70
  job topics, 72–74
  overview, 54, 67
  response to compliments, 62
  restaurant staff, 94–95
  Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 68–69, 71, 76
  weather topics, 58–60
children, 70, 159
Children’s Palace (children’s activity center), 159
Chinese character, 12–13
Chinese Cooking For Dummies (Yan, Martin), 93
Chinese New Year (holiday), 93, 266, 307
chopsticks, 81, 304
clasping hands, 23
classifiers
clothing, 115
counting guidelines, 45
days, 132
halves, 47
months, 132
ordinals, 48, 226–227
overview, 27–28
Clear and Bright Festival, 268
client, 170
clothing
classifiers, 115
shopping tips, 115–123
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 116–117, 120, 123
club, 150
coins, 200, 201
colors, 122–123
common good, 63
common nouns, 27
comparisons, 104, 118–120, 158
complex ideograph, 12
compliments
  food, 100–101
  proper response, 62, 217, 303
compound vowels, 16–18
computer
  e-mail, 189–190
  Internet, 187–188, 301
shopping tips, 125–126
Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 40–41
use in China, 188
concert, 148–149
condo. See housing
congratulations, 307
conjugation, 26
consideration, 80
contact information, 75, 76
conversation
  address and phone number, 75, 76
  common family words, 70–71
  conversation starters, 67–69
  goodbye, 62, 63
  hometown inquiries, 60–61
  housing, 75–76
  introductory questions, 69–70
  job topics, 72–74
  overview, 54, 67
  response to compliments, 62
  restaurant staff, 94–95
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 68–69, 71, 76
weather topics, 58–60
cooking, 300
cost, 104, 126–127, 238
counting, 44–48, 49
country, 60, 63, 269
courteous expressions
  basic phrases, 21
  food inquiries, 80
  greetings, 55
  introductions, 53
  response to compliment, 303
  restaurant orders, 94
  table manners, 85
creativity, 302
credit cards, 207–208
crime, 293, 294
culture
  acceptable behavior, 56
  common good, 63
  language learning, 10
  response to compliments, 62, 217, 303
  tea offering, 100
  curiosity, 302
  currency, 199–204
  customs, 252–254

• D •
d initial sound, 14
day, 129–131, 132
daytime hours, 135–137
de particle, 40
definite article, 30–31
department store, 109
deposit, of money, 210
diagnosis, 288–290
dialect, 10–11, 313
dictionary
  Chinese characters, 13
  Chinese-English, 321–329
  English-Chinese, 330–338
  pronunciation, 13
dim sum, 98–99, 101–102
dime, 206
dining out. See restaurant
dinner banquet, 182
dinner invitation, 84
diplomacy, 9–10, 185
direct object, 241
directions, travel
cardinal point, 227–228
exercises, 230
ordinals, 226–227
overview, 215
questioning techniques, 216–221
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 217–218, 220–221, 228–229
tips for giving, 221–223
distance, 224–226
doctor, 282–290
dollar, 127, 200–202
Dragon Boat Festival, 268
drawing, 159
drinking and eating. See eating

• E •
east, 227–228, 230
eating. See also food; restaurant
courteous phrases, 80–81
respectful expressions, 310, 312
types of meals, 79
utensils, 81, 304
wok cooking, 300
electronics, 125–126
e-mail, 189–190
emergency situations. See also medical care
air travel, 250
call for help, 279–280
police, 293
pronunciation, 280
emotion, 56, 304
employment. See job
English translation, 2
entertainment
bars and clubs, 150
concerts, 148–149
exercises, 164
historical sites, 145–146
movies, 137–138, 139, 146–147
museums, 143–144
overview, 129, 153
performing arts, 138–141
sports, 153, 161–164
etiquette
acceptable behavior, 56
body language, 23
business greeting, 181
fight for bill, 305
food inquiries, 80
friendly greeting, 55
introductions, 53
pronoun use, 27
question asking, 309
response to compliment, 217, 303
table manners, 84–85, 310
tea offering, 100
toast before drinking, 305
evening, 56, 135–137
exchanging money, 202–204
exercises
answer key, 339–342
cardinal points, 230
counting, 49
entertainment, 164
food, 107
furnishings, 196
greetings, 64
hobby, 164
hotels, 244
introductions, 64
money, 213
phone calls, 176
shopping, 128
sports, 164
transportation, 264
travel, 278
exporting goods, 124
Fabric, 122
Family
   Common good, 63
   Common words, 70–71
   Introductions, 52–53
   Talkin' the Talk dialogues, 36, 71
Festival, 268
Film
   Genres, 146–147
   Overview, 146
   Questions for information, 139
   Quick progress in Chinese, 301
   Talkin' the Talk dialogues, 137–138, 147
Final sound, 16–18
Finances
   Banking, 208–210
   Check cashing, 205–206
   Credit cards, 207–208
   Currencies, 199–202
   Exercises, 213
   Hotel reservation, 232
   Money exchange, 202–204
   Overview, 199
   Shopping, 205
   Sources of money, 202
   Tipping, 211–212
   Travel, 205
First person, 26
First tone, 18, 19
Folk festival, 268
Food. See also eating; restaurant
   American, 82–84
   Chinese New Year celebration, 93
   Compliments, 100–101
   Dim sum, 98–99
   Favorites, 92–93
   Greeting, 80
   Market, 102–106, 300
   Meat, 89
   Outdoor market, 102–106
   Overview, 79
   Refusal before acceptance, 306
   Regional cuisine, 85–86
   Repeated offering, 306
   Respectful expressions, 310, 312
   Room service, 238
   Seasonings and sauces, 93
   Service, 84, 85
   Shortages, 81
   Table manners, 84–85
   Talkin' the Talk dialogues, 87–88, 101–102
   Vegetables, 91–92
   Wok cooking, 300
Forbidden City (historical site), 145
Formal language, 27, 53
Fourth tone, 18, 19
Friend
   Greetings, 55
   Introductions, 51–54
   Phone call, 168
   Quick progress in Chinese, 302
   Talkin' the Talk dialogues, 54
Friendship Store (state-run store), 127
Fun & Games exercises
   Answer key, 339–342
   Cardinal points, 230
   Counting, 49
   Entertainment, 164
   Food, 107
   Furnishings, 196
   Greetings, 64
   Hobby, 164
   Hotels, 244
   Introductions, 64
   Money, 213
   Phone calls, 176
   Shopping, 128
sports, 164
transportation, 264
travel, 278
furnishings, 193–196

• G •
g initial sound, 14
gallery, 143
games, 154
gängbi (Hong Kong dollars), 201
ge classifier, 28
gender-specific noun, 26
gesturing, 23, 300
Ghost Market (shopping area), 124
gift, 305, 306
given name, 53, 304
globalization, 1
goodbye, 62, 63
grammar, 25, 26
Great Wall (historical site), 145
Green tea, 100
greetings
  answering machine, 173
  basic phrases, 21
  body language, 23
  business meeting, 55, 181–182
evening, 56
exercise, 64
first name, 304
food, 80
introductions, 51–54
morning, 56
new friend, 55
overview, 51, 54
popular expressions, 52, 55–56
respect, 55
stranger, 55
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 57, 63
group travel, 275

Guangdong province, 86, 98
Guānhuà language, 10–11
gymnastics, 161

• H •
half-third tone, 19
Han people, 10
hand clasping, 23
hand shaking, 23
Hànyǔ language, 10, 11
hardware store, 110
Hepatitis B vaccine, 285
herbal remedy, 293
historical sites, 145–146
hobby
  art, 159
  exercises, 164
  music, 159–160
  overview, 153–155
holiday, 93, 266–268
hometown, 60–61
Hong Kong (city)
  banking hours, 210
  currency, 201
dim sum, 98
  medical care, 282
  subway system, 261
hospital. See medical care
hot-air ballooning, 162
hotel
  card, 256
  check-in process, 235–236
  check-out process, 241–242
  exercises, 244
  housing option, 234
  overview, 231
phone call, 169–170
room reservation, 231–234
services, 237–241
hotel (continued)
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 233, 236, 239–240, 242
 tipping, 211–212
 wake-up call, 236
hour, 135–137
housing
 chatting, 75–76
 furnishings, 193–196
 hotel versus apartment, 234
 purchase, 190–193
 Huáng Shān (Yellow Mountain), 157
 humiliation, 303
 humility, 217, 303
 Hunan provinces, 85
 hunger, 80

• I •
 ice cream, 206
 ideograph, 12
 idiom, 19–21
 illness
 body parts, 281
 description, 283–284
 diagnosis, 288–290
 doctor, 282–290
 medical history, 287–288
 medications, 281
 overview, 280
 treatment options, 290–293
 immunizations, 285
 indefinite article, 30–31
 indirect object, 241
 initial sound, 13–16
 instrument, musical, 160–161
 insult, 56
 Internet use, 187–188, 301
 interrogative pronoun, 42–43
 introduction, 51–54, 57, 64
 introductory questions, 69–70
 investment, 208
 invitation, dinner, 84

• J •
j initial sound, 13
 Jade Buddha Temple (historical site), 145–146
 jasmine tea, 100
 jewelry store, 110
 job. See also business
 chatting about, 72–74
 location, 73
 phone communication, 169–171
 Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 74
 justice, 294

• K •
Kái wǎn xiào (Just kidding.), 308
 Kaige, Chen (movie director), 301
 Kèjiā language, 11
 kung-fu movie, 301

• L •
 Labor Day (holiday), 267
 language learning, 10, 299–302
 Lantern Festival, 268
 lawyer, 294
 Lee, Bruce (actor), 301
 leisure activities
 bars and clubs, 150
 concerts, 148–149
 exercises, 164
 historical sites, 145–146
 movies, 137–138, 139, 146–147
museums, 143–144
overview, 129, 153
performing arts, 138–141
sports, 153, 161–164
lesson, language, 301
liquid measurement, 103
literal translation, 2
location word, 220
logograph, 12
luggage, 273–274

• M •

ma particle, 41
májiàng (mah-jong), 154
Mandarin Chinese
definition, 9
grammatical benefits, 26
overview, 10
manners, 84–85
marriage, 70, 73
martial arts, 154–155
MasterCard (credit card), 208
material noun, 27
meal, 79
measurement, 103–104
meat, 85, 89
medical care. See also emergency situation
body parts, 281
diagnosis, 288–290
doctor, 282–290
Hong Kong, 282
medical history, 287–288
medication, 281
overview, 280
treatment options, 290–293
medical history, 287–288
medical symptoms, 283–284
medication, 281, 290–291
meeting, 180–184, 186
-men suffix, 27, 30
menu
popular choices, 92–93
questions, 82
sauces and seasonings, 93
sections, 88–89
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 89–90, 96–97
vegetarian items, 91–92
message, phone, 172–174
metric system, 103, 104
Mid-autumn Festival, 268
midnight, 136
Mín language, 11
Ming Temple (historical site), 145
Ming, Yao (basketball player), 153
minute, 135–137
money
banking, 208–210
check cashing, 205–206
credit cards, 207–208
currencies, 199–202
exchange, 202–204
exercises, 213
hotel reservation, 232
overview, 199
shopping, 205
sources, 202
tipping, 211–212
travel, 205
month, 132–133
morning, 56, 135–137
morpheme, 14
mountain, 157
movie
genres, 146–147
overview, 146
questions for information, 139
quick progress in Chinese, 301
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 137–138, 147
museums, 143–144
Museum of Ancient Chinese Sex
Culture, 143
music
concert, 148–149
festivals, 268
hobbies, 159–160
plane travel, 250

• N •

name
asking for, 53
greeting, 55, 304
National Day (holiday), 267
nature
disasters, 270
overview, 156–157
Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 29, 158
travel destinations, 270
negotiation, price, 126–127
neutral tone, 19
New Year’s Day (holiday), 266
night market, 126
nightlife, 150
nighttime hours, 135–137
nodding, 23
noon, 136
north, 227–228, 230
nose, pointing to, 23
nouns
gender-specific, 26
number, 29, 95
possessives, 40
references to specific objects, 30–31
Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 29
types, 27–30
numbers
approximations, 290
asking how much, 48
classifier, 27–28
clothing size, 115–117
counting to 100,000, 44–47
days, 132
halves, 47
measure words, 87
months, 132
nouns, 29, 95
ordinal, 48, 226–227
telling time, 135–137
word order, 32

• O •

object, 26, 241
occupation. See job
occupational title, 55, 181–182
office. See business
Olympics (sporting event), 161
O-negative blood, 280
opera, 139, 300
ordinal number, 48, 226–227
outdoor food market, 102–106, 300

• P •
packing, 273–274
painting, 159
pair, of objects, 28
parent, 70
particle
de, 40
definition, 26
ma, 41
Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 40–41
parts of speech
adjectives, 31–32
adverbs, 37–38
articles, 30–31
nouns, 26, 27–30
overview, 26
particles, 26, 40
verbs, 26, 32–37
passport, 272
payment
check writing, 206
fight over bill, 305
hotel checkout, 241, 242
respectful expression, 312
restaurant meal, 99–100
shopping purchase, 127
taxi ride, 256
Peking Opera, 139, 300
penny, 206
pepper, 86
performing arts, 138–141, 300
phone
assistance, 166
business call, 169–171
call to friend, 168
calling card, 172
cell, 166–167
exercises, 176
messages, 172–174
number, 75, 76
overview, 165
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 168, 170–171, 174
tips for making calls, 167–172
types, 165
wake-up call, 236
phonetic compound, 12
phrases, popular
basic phrases, 21
bus travel, 22
congratulations, 307
conversation starters, 67–68
goodbye, 62, 63
greetings, 52, 55–56
most popular, 307–314
overview, 19–21
travel, 308
physical contact, 56
pinyin language, 2, 13–14
plane travel
boarding process, 249–251
check in, 246
customs, 252–254, 253–254
delays, 246
emergency procedures, 250
medications, 281
music, 250
passport, 272
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 247, 248, 251, 253–254
plural noun, 29, 95
pointing, 23, 56
police, 293
pollution, 285
popular expressions
bus travel, 22
congratulations, 307
conversation starters, 67–68
goodbye, 62, 63
greetings, 52, 55–56
most popular, 307–314
overview, 19–21
travel, 308
possessive, 40
potential complement, 225
practice, 9
prescription medication, 281, 290–291
presentation, 183, 184
pronouns
adjectives, 31
formal language, 27
interrogative, 42–43
overview, 27
pronunciation
basic sounds, 13–19
bù, 38
dictionary, 13
medical emergency, 280
practice, 9
proper nouns, 27
Pudong (area in Shanghai), 193
pǔtōnghuà language, 10, 11

• Q •
q initial sound, 13
question asking
air travel, 246
antique shopping, 124
call for help, 280
conversation starters, 67–69
customs, 252–253
food inquiries, 80
historical sites, 145
hometown inquiries, 60–61
how much, 48, 104
introductions, 53
menu choices, 82
methods of asking, 41–43
money exchange, 202–203
movie information, 139
nightlife, 150
office supplies, 178
phone use, 166
price negotiation, 126–127
respectful expression, 309
restaurant orders, 94–95
restroom location, 99
shopping help, 113–114
store hours, 110
Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 43
train travel, 261
travel directions, 216–221
travel distance, 225, 226

• R •
radical, 13
raw food, 103
real estate. See housing
recipe, 300
recreation
bars and clubs, 150
concerts, 148–149
exercises, 164
historical sites, 145–146
movies, 137–138, 139, 146–147
museums, 143–144
overview, 129, 153
performing arts, 138–141
sports, 153, 161–164
refund, 127
rental car, 254
reservation, hotel, 231–234
respect
acceptable behavior, 56
body language, 23
business greeting, 181
fight for bill, 305
food inquiries, 80
friendly greeting, 55
introductions, 53
pronoun use, 27
question asking, 309
response to compliment, 217, 303
table manners, 84–85, 310
tea offering, 100
toast before drinking, 305
restaurants. See also eating; food
bill paying, 99–100
chat with wait staff, 94–95
common words, 86
menu, 82, 88–93
ordering example, 89–90
ordering procedure, 94–95
restroom location, 99
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 39, 89–90, 96–97
tipping, 211–212
restrooms, 99
romanization system, 2, 13–14
room reservation, 231–234
room service, 211, 238

safety, 294
sauce, 93
schedule, 180–181
seafood, 85, 86
seasons
  listing, 133
  vacation plans, 265–266
  weather, 59
seasoning, 93
second person, 26
second tone, 18, 19
sentence
  giving directions, 228
  word order, 26, 30–31
serving food, 84, 85, 304
sex, 143
shaking hands, 23
shame, 303
Shang dynasty, 12
Shanghai (city), 85, 138, 150
Shanghai Museum, 143
Shen, Xu (lexicographer), 12
shop front, 110
shopping
  antiques, 124–125
  browsing, 112–113
  clothes, 115–123
  electronics, 125–126
  exercise, 128
  food market, 102–106, 300
  location, 111
overview, 109
payment, 127, 205–208
price negotiation, 126–127
request for help, 113–114
store hours, 110
store types, 109–110
shouting, 56, 303
sickness
  body parts, 281
  description, 283–284
  diagnosis, 288–290
  doctor, 282–290
  medical history, 287–288
  medications, 281
overview, 280
  treatment options, 290–293
singular noun, 29, 95
size, clothing, 115–117
small talk
  address and phone number, 75, 76
  common family words, 70–71
  conversation starters, 67–69
  goodbye, 62, 63
  hometown inquiries, 60–61
  housing, 75–76
  introductory questions, 69–70
  job topics, 72–74
overview, 54, 67
  response to compliments, 62
restaurant staff, 94–95
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 68–69, 71, 76
weather topics, 58–60
smoking, 56, 249
soccer, 162
social status, 53, 181
soft sleeper, 260
south, 227–228, 230
speaking rate, 14
speed, of speech, 14
spending money, 205–208
spit, 56
sports
  exercises, 164
  overview, 153
Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 163
types, 161–162
staring, 56
stores
  browsing, 112–113
  hours, 110
  request for help, 113–114
types, 109–110
stranger, 55
street vendor, 110
stringed instrument, 160
subject, 26
subway system, 260, 261
superlative, 118–119
surname
  asking for, 53
  business greeting, 182, 304
  friendly greeting, 55, 304
swimming, 161
syllable, 14, 102
symptoms, medical, 283–284

• T •
table manners, 84–85, 94, 310
Tàijíquán (martial art), 154–155
Taiwan (country), 201, 210, 267–268
Talkin’ the Talk dialogues
  address and phone number, 76
  air travel, 247–248, 251
  banking, 209
  birthdays, 133–134
  bus travel, 22, 69, 259
  business call, 170–171
  business discussions, 186–187
cars, 43
clothing colors, 123
clothing comparisons, 120
clothing size, 116–117
computers, 40–41
concerts, 148–149
customs, 253–254
dim sum, 101–102
dinner location, 39, 87–88
doctor, 282–283
e-mail, 190
family, 36, 71
food market, 105–106
goodbyes, 62, 63
greetings, 57, 63
historical sites, 145–146
hometown inquiries, 61
hotel check in, 236
hotel checkout, 242
hotel reservation, 233
hotel services, 239–240
housing purchase, 191–192
Internet use, 188
introductions, 54, 57
job conversation, 74
martial arts, 155
medical diagnosis, 289
medical symptoms, 285–286
medical treatment, 291
meeting location, 223
menu request, 96–97
money exchange, 203–204
movie plans, 137–138, 147
museums, 143–144
nature description, 29, 158
office supplies, 179
packing tips, 274
people-watching, 34–35
performing arts, 140–141
phone call to friend, 168
phone messages, 174
presentations, 184
restaurant order, 89–90
shopping help, 113–114
shopping location, 111
shopping payment, 206–207
index
travel directions
  cardinal point, 227–228
  exercises, 230
  ordinals, 226–227
  overview, 215
  questioning techniques, 216–221
  Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 217–218,
    220–221, 228–229
  tips for giving, 221–223
  trip. See travel

• U •

utensils, 81, 304

• V •

vacation
  exercises, 278
  getting lost, 229
  medications, 281
  money, 205
  nature observations, 156–157
  overview, 129
  packing tips, 273–274
  passport, 272
  possible destinations, 269–272
  season, 265–266
  Talkin’ the Talk dialogues, 271–272,
    275–276
  travel agent, 275–276
  travel distance, 224–226
  vaccines, 285
  vegetables, 91–92
  vegetarian dishes, 91–92
  verbs
    aspect markers, 33–34, 283
    common verbs, 32
    conjugation, 26, 32
    emphasis, 179
    listing, 317–320
  musical instruments, 160–161
  syllables, 102
  Talkin’ the Talk dialogue, 34–35, 36
  tense, 26
  “to be”, 33
  “to have”, 35–36
  “to want”, 37
  word order, 26, 30–31
  videotape, 183
  visa, 272
  Visa credit card, 208
  voicemail, 172–174
  vowels, 16–18

• W •

wait staff, 94–95
wake-up call, 236
warriors, terra-cotta, 145
water, 238
weather, 58–60, 265
week, 130–131
weekend, 130–131
west, 227–228, 230
Western food, 82–84
“where” questions, 216–221
wind instruments, 160–161
wine, 150, 305
withdrawal, cash, 210
wok, 300
word order
  adjectives, 30, 31–32
  articles, 30–31
  giving directions, 228
  nouns, 30–31
  number, 32
  object, 26, 241
  overview, 26
  verbs, 26, 30–31
work. See job
Wú language, 11
x initial sound, 14
Xi'an warriors (historical site), 145
Xiāng language, 11
xīn táibì (New Taiwan dollars), 201
xīng bì (Singapore dollars), 202

Yan, Martin (Chinese Cooking For Dummies), 93
year, 266–267
yelling, 56, 303
Yellow Mountain, 157
Yimou, Zhang (movie director), 301
yuán (people's money), 200–201
Yuan, Qu (poet), 268
Yuè language, 11

z initial sound, 14
Zedong, Mao (leader of Chinese Communist Party), 73
zh initial sound, 14
Zhejiang provinces, 85
Zhōngwén language, 10, 11
zodiac, 266–267
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