

# Character Builder 您好嗎？

The basic unit of the Chinese language is the *zi* (字), i.e. a Chinese word. Each *zi* has a written form (called a character, made up of strokes), a sound (made up of consonant and vowel) and a meaning (or multiple meanings). When we speak or write Chinese, we string *zi* together to form terms, phrases and sentences.

## This week: Words about hiking

越

Pronunciation: *yue* (Putonghua, 4<sup>th</sup> tone), *yuet* (Cantonese, 6<sup>th</sup> tone)  
Basic meaning: cross, pass, over-take

越 = 越過 (*yue guo* = pass~over). Athletes giving 卓越 (*zhuo yue* = outstanding~excel = excellent) performance may 超越 (*chao yue* = go-beyond~pass = surpass) past records. Aggressive executives 越過上級 (*yue guo shang ji* = pass~over~high~grade = go over boss's head) to get things done.

Seeing green-light, pedestrians 越過 (*yue guo* = crossing) streets/railway-lines. Runners in 越野賽 (*yue ye sai* = cross~country~race) 翻山越嶺 (*fan shan yue ling* = turn-over~hills~cross-over~ranges). Race-car champion 駛越 (*shi yue* = drives~past) final post to win. Birds easily 飛越 (*fei yue* = fly~over) rooftops/cities. 越洋 (*yue yang* = cross~ocean) flights take long hours.

Jews celebrate 逾越節 (*Yu Yue Jie* = over~cross~festival = Feast of the Passover) in March-April.

by Diana Yue