

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 travelling

飛

Pronunciation: *fei* (Putonghua, 4th tone), *fei* (Cantonese 1st tone)
Basic meaning: fly

飛機 (*fei ji* = fly~machine) = airplanes: 客機 (*ke ji* = guests~plane = passenger-plane), 貨機 (*huo ji* = cargo~plane), 戰機 (*zhan ji* = war-plane = fighter). 機師 (*ji shi* = plane~master) = pilot. 機場 (*ji chang* = plane~field) = airfield/airport. 坐機 (*zuo ji* = sit~plane = travelling by plane) requires 機票 (*ji piao* = plane~tickets).

航天工業 (*hang tian gong ye* = sail~sky~engineering~business) = airplane industry. Boeing is 波音 (transliteration “*bo yin*”), Airbus is 空中巴士 (*kong zhong* transliteration “*ba shi*” = air~middle~bus).

Flight departure is 起飛 (*qi fei* = begin~fly). Hard landing is 硬著陸 (*ying zhao lu* = hard~touch~ground). Soft landing is 軟著陸 (*ran zhao lu* = soft~touch~ground).

by Diana Yue