

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

宿

Pronunciation: *su* (Putonghua, 1st tone), *suk* (Cantonese 1st tone)

Basic meaning: reside, stay, sleep, dormant, residence

宿 = 留宿 (*liu su* = stay~sleep) = staying the night somewhere: 酒店 (*jiu dian* = wine~shops = hotels), 汽車旅館 (*qi che lu guan* = steam~car~travel~house = motels), 旅舍 (*lu she* = travel~lodge = hostels), 民宿 (*min su* = people~sleep = English “bed-and-breakfast” = Japanese “minshuku”). 宿費 (*su fei* = sleep~fees) means staying rates.

Students 寄宿 (*ji su* = attach~sleep = live in dormitories/hostels). Homeless people 露宿街頭 (*lu su jie tou* = exposed~sleep~street-head/surface = sleep/live without shelter).

宿 also means dormant/resident: 宿敵 (*su di* = long-term~enemy), 宿疾 (*su ji* = dormant/long-term~illness). 星宿 (*xing xiu* = star~residence/mansion) are stars in their constellations. 宿命論 (*su ming lun* = star~life/fate~theory) means belief in predestined fate.