

# 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.

In Putonghua (the spoken form of Modern Standard Chinese) each *zi* is pronounced in one of four tones:

1<sup>st</sup> tone: 1 = diacritical mark — pitch: 5 to 5, highest prolonged

2<sup>nd</sup> tone: 2 = diacritical mark / pitch: 3 to 5, middle to high

3<sup>rd</sup> tone: 3 = diacritical mark U pitch: 2 to 1 to 4, low to lowest to high

4<sup>th</sup> tone: 4 = diacritical mark \ pitch: 5 to 1, highest to lowest)

To pronounce each *zi* below, follow its pinyin and the given tone number. Light-sound words, which have no definite pitch, carry no diacritical mark and are marked by 0.

This week: Words about Chinese recipes



Putonghua pronunciation: *rou4*

Cantonese pronunciation: *yuk6*

Meanings: meat, pork

Many Chinese recipes use “肉”, i.e. 豬肉 (*zhu1 rou4* = pig-meat = pork), e.g. 叉燒 (*cha1 shao1* = fork-burn/roast = barbecued-pork):

Soak 1 公斤 (*gong1 jin1* = common-catty = kilo) of 豬柳肉 (*zhu1 liu3 rou4* = pig-fillet-meat) in mixture of 生抽 (*sheng1 chou1* = raw-draw = light-brown soy-sauce), 老抽 (*lao3 chou1* = old-draw = dark-brown soy-sauce), 梅醬 (*mei2 jiang4* = plum-sauce/jam), 蜜糖 (*mi4 tang2* = honey-sugar = honey), 酒 (*jiu3*, wine), 胡椒粉 (*hu2 jiao1 fen3* = pepper-power). 醃 (*ye4* = marinade) for 3 hours.

Brown pork in 油鑊 (*you2 huo4* = oiled wok). 噴水 (*pen1 shui3* = spray-with-water), cover wok, heat for 15 minutes. 切片 (*qie4 pian4* = cut-into-slices), serve warm or cold.