

# 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 auto-racing

路

Pronunciation: *lu* (Putonghua, 4<sup>th</sup> tone), *lo* (Cantonese, 6<sup>th</sup> tone)  
Basic meaning: road

賽車道 (*sai che dao* = race-car-roads = race circuits) have 直路 (*zhi lu* = straight~road), 彎角 (*wan jiao* = bends~corners), 坡度 (*po du* = slope~degree = gradients), smooth/rough 路面 (*lu mian* = road~surfaces).

In 越野賽 (*yue ye sai* = across~countryside~racing = cross country rallies) cars go on 泥路 (*ni lu* = mud/dirt~roads), cross 崎嶇地貌 (*qi qu di mao* = hilly~uneven~land~shape/features = hilly/rough terrain).

Cars 加速 (*jia su* = increase~speed), 減速 (*jian su* = reduce~speed), 超前 (*chao qian* = over~forward = overtake) each other. In 末段 (*mo duan* = last~section = the last section/lap), winner 領先 (*ling xian* = lead~before = leads), dashes to 終點 (*zhong dian* = final-dot = finishing point).

by Diana Yue