

# 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 housing markets

地

Pronunciation: *di* (Putonghua, 4<sup>th</sup> tone), *dei* (Cantonese, 6<sup>th</sup> tone)  
Basic meaning: land

地 = land. 農地 (*nong di* = farm-land), 工地 (*gong di* = work-land = construction site). 地方 (*di fang* = land-square/direction) = place/spot. 地區 (*di qu* = land-region) = region/district.

Landowners are 地主 (*di zhu* = land-master). Property-owners are 業主 (*ye zhu* = property-master). 房地產 (*fang di can* = houses-land-assets) = 不動產 (*bu dong can* = im-movable-assets = fixed assets). 地段 (*di duan* = land-section) = lot. 地點 (*di dian* = land-spot) = location. 中介人 (*zhong jie ren* = middle-refer-person = agents) handle property sales.

土地肥沃 (*tu di fei wo* = earth-land-fat-rich) describes fertile soil/land. 地大物博 (*di da wu bo* = land-big-objects-far-ranging) describes resource-rich big countries e.g. Australia, China.

by Diana Yue