

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:

1st tone: 1 = diacritical mark — pitch: 5 to 5, highest prolonged

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

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

4th 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 hunting



Putonghua pronunciation: *lie4*

Cantonese pronunciation: *lip6*

Meanings: hunt, pursue, seize

獵 (radical 犳 = 狗 *gou3*, dog/hound) = hunt. 獵人 (*lie4 ren2* = hunt-er) takes 獵槍 (*lie4 qiang1* = hunting-gun), 獵犬 (*lie4 qüan3* = hunting-dog/hound), 獵鷹 (*lie4 ying1* = hunting-eagle/hawk/falcon) to 獵獸 (*lie4 shou4* = hunt-animals). 盜獵 (*dao4 lie4* = steal-hung = poaching) is illegal.

狩獵 (*shou4 lie4* = winter-hunt-hunt = hunting) was royal sport: Englishmen 獵狐 (*lie4 hu2* = hunted-foxes), Manchurians 獵虎 (*lie4 hu3* = hunted-tigers), 獵鹿 (*lie4 lu4* = hunted-deer) in 獵場 (*lie4 chang2* = hunting-fields = hunting grounds).

獵艷 (*lie4 yan4* = hunt-beauty) describes guys looking for pleasure with women. 獵奇 (*lie4 qi2* = hunt-strange) = tales about extraordinary/supernatural happenings. Star-gazers watch 獵戶座 (*lie4 hu4 zuo4* = hunt-er-base/constellation = Orion).