

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 wound treatment



Putonghua pronunciation: *ti3*

Cantonese pronunciation: *tai2*

Meanings: body

身 = 身體 (*shen1 ti3* = body~body) has 頭 (*tou2*, head), 身軀 (*shen1 qu1* = body~trunk), 四肢 (*si4 zhi1* = four~limbs): 臂 (*bi4*, arm), 手 (*shou3*, hand), 腿 (*tui3*, leg), 足 (*zu2*, foot). 四體不勤 (*si4 ti3 bu4 qin2* = four~limbs~not~diligent) describes lazybone who never does manual work.

天體者 (*tian1 ti3 zhe3* = heaven/nature~body~person = nudist) goes around 裸體 (*luo3 ti3* = bare~body = naked). 體育 (*ti3 yu4* = body~education = sports), 運動 (*yun4 dong4* = revolve~move = exercise) improve our 體格 (*ti3 ge2* = body~frame = build/health), 體力 (*ti3 li4* = body~strength).

Everyone goes through 生老病死 (*sheng1 lao3 bing4 si3* = birth~ageing~illness~death). 屍體 (*shi1 ti3* = corpse~body) = dead body.