

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

傷

Putonghua pronunciation: *shang1*

Cantonese pronunciation: *seung1*

Meanings: injure, wound, harm, lament

Active verb 傷 = 傷害 (*shang1 hai4* = injure~harm). Passive verb 傷 = 受傷 (*shou4 shang1* = receive~injury = wounded/injured). 傷口 (*shang1 kou3* = wound~mouth) = open wound. 傷痕 (*shang1 hen2* = wound~mark) = scar. 內傷 (*nei4 shang1* = internal~wound) = injury in bones/organs.

救傷車 (*jiu4 shang1 che1* = save~wounded-car = ambulance) rushes 傷者 (*shang1 zhe3* = wounded~person) to hospital. Doctor examines 傷勢 (*shang1 shi4* = wounded~condition): 輕傷 (*qing1 shang1* = slightly~wounded)? 重傷 (*zhong4 shang1* = heavily~wounded)? Earthquakes cause 傷亡 (*shang1 wang2* = injuries~deaths).

Excessive sex/drinking 傷身 (*shang1 shen1* = harm~body = undermines health). Deceased's family 傷心 (*shang1 xin1* = wound~heart = are sad/heartbroken), 傷逝 (*shang1 shi4* = sad/lament~pass-away = lament passing of deceased/things/ years).

by Diana Yue