

# 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 swindlers

瞞

Pronunciation: *man* (Putonghua, 2<sup>nd</sup> tone), *moon* (Cantonese, 4<sup>th</sup> tone)  
Basic meaning: hide information from

瞞 (radical 目 *mu* = eye) = 隱瞞 (*yin man* = vanish-withhold-from) = conceal truth/facts. 瞞過 (*man guo* = withhold-from~pass) someone = successfully avoid telling him. 隱瞞病情 (*yin man bing qing* = vanish~withhold-from~ill~situation) = not telling patient/others how ill patient is.

Cheats 瞞騙 (*man pian* = withhold~cheat = lie to, mislead) others, 瞞上欺下 (*man shang qi xia* = hide~above~deceive~below = hide facts from superiors, misinform subordinates). 兩頭瞞 (*liang tou man* = two-heads~withhold) describes C acting between A and B and lying to both.

Crooks 瞞神弄鬼 (*man shen nong gui* = deceive~gods~trick~ghosts = fool/cheat everyone). But 謊話 (*huang hua* = lie~words = lies) get 拆穿 (*chai chuan* = pulled-down~slashed through = seen through) finally.