

# 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 dressmaking

結

(radical 纟 = 絲 *si* = silk)

Pronunciation: *jie* (Putonghua, 2<sup>nd</sup> tone), *git* (Cantonese, 3<sup>rd</sup> tone)

Basic meaning: tie, knot, end, gel, form

結 means knot/ending/form. Sewing finishes with 打結 (*da jie* = hit~knot = tying knots). 解開死結 (*jie kai si jie* = untie~open~dead-knot) means break up a deadlocked situation. 結束 (*jie shu* = tie-knot~bind) means end. 結業 (*jie ye* = end~work) means terminate business or finish schooling. 結論 (*jie lun* = end~treatise) means conclusion.

Lovers 結婚 (*jie hun* = tie-the-knot~marry). Good friends 結拜 (*jie bai* = tie-wave-locked-hands = swear brotherly/sisterly alliance). 心結 (*xin jie* = heart~knot) means unspoken grudge. 結怨 (*jie yuan* = tie~offence/grudge) means become enemies.

Water 結冰 (*jie bing* = become~ice). Plants 結果 (*jie guo* = yield~fruit = noun "result"), 結實 (*jie shi* = yield-grain = adjective "solid/stout"). Jellies 凝結 (*ning jie* = concentrate~gel/solidify).