

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 romantic love

悦

Putonghua pronunciation: *yüe4*

Cantonese pronunciation: *yuet6*

Meanings: fondness, pleasure, gladness

悦 (radical ↑ = 心 *xin1*, heart) = 愉悦 (*yü2 yüe4* = glad~pleased = cheerfulness), 喜悦 (*xi3 yüe4* = joy~happiness). 悦耳 (*yüe4 er3* = please~ears) = nice-sounding. 悦目 (*yüe4 mu4* = please~eyes) = nice-looking. 不悦 (*bu4 yüe4* = not~pleased) = dismayed. 大悦 (*da4 yüe4* = big~pleasure) = highly pleased.

和顏悦色 (*he2 yan2 yüe4 se1* = mild-countenance~pleasant-expression) = warm/kind expression. 心悦誠服 (*xin1 yüe4 cheng2 fu2* = heart~glad~honestly~accept = sincerely admires winner's superiority). King 寵悅 (*chong3 yüe4* = favors/dotes-on~loves) concubine, 悅納 (*yüe4 na4* = gladly~accepts) her suggestions.

Couple 兩情相悅 (*liang3 qing2 xiang1 yüe4* = two~feeling~mutually~love = love each other), do things to 取悅 (*qü3 yüe4* = achieve~pleasure = please) each other.

by Diana Yue