

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 feeling good

悦

Putonghua pronunciation: *yüe4*

Cantonese pronunciation: *yuet6*

Meanings: fondness, pleasure, please, fond of

悦 (radical ↑ = 心 *xin1*, heart) means feeling 喜悦 (*xi3 yüe4* = joy~pleasure): 大悦 (*da4 yüe4* = big/very~pleased), 不悦 (*bu4 yüe4* = not~pleased = dismayed). 和顏悅色 (*he2 yan2 yüe4 se1* = warm~countenance~pleased~color) = kind/friendly-looking.

悦 also means pleasing: 悅目 (*yüe4 mu4* = please~eyes = pretty-looking), 悅耳 (*yüe4 er3* = please~ears = sweet-sounding).

Lackey 取悅 (*qü3 yüe4* = obtain~fondness = curries favor with) boss to win 寵悅 (*chong3 yüe4* = doting~fondness). 賞心悅目 (*shang3 xin1 yüe4 mu4* = enjoy~heart~please~eyes) describes glamorous/entertaining scenery/show.

Couple in love 兩情相悅 (*liang3 qing2 xiang1 yüe4* = two/both~love~mutually~fond). 女為悅己者容 (*nü3 wei4 yüe4 ji3 zhe3 rong2* = woman~for~like~self~person~visage) describes woman donning best look/attire for admirer's eyes.