

# 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:

- 1<sup>st</sup> tone: 1 = diacritical mark — pitch: 5 to 5, highest prolonged
- 2<sup>nd</sup> tone: 2 = diacritical mark / pitch: 3 to 5, middle to high
- 3<sup>rd</sup> tone: 3 = diacritical mark U pitch: 2 to 1 to 4, low to lowest to high
- 4<sup>th</sup> 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 donations

拒

Putonghua pronunciation: *jū4*

Cantonese pronunciation: *kui5*

Meanings: refuse, decline, resist, oppose

拒 (radical 扌 = 手 *shou3*, hand) means 拒絕 (*jū4 jūe2* = refuse-cur-off = refuse): 婉拒 (*wan3 jū4* = gently-turn-down), 拒婚 (*jū4 hun1* = refuse/reject-marriage-proposal). Haughty person 拒人於千里之外 (*jū4 ren2 yū1 qian1 li3 zhi1 wai4* = refuse-person/others-at-thousand-miles-'s-away = is extremely aloof/unfriendly).

抗拒 (*kang4 jū4* = resist-refuse) = resist. Running thug 拒捕 (*jū4 bu4* = resists-police-arrest). Resistance army 拒敵 (*jū4 di2* = resists/fights-enemy). Small shareholder 力拒 (*li4 jū4* = violently-opposes/resists) buy-out offer.

Greedy institution 來者不拒 (*lai2 zhe3 bu4 jū4* = come-person-no-refuse = takes all offers/donations). Clean executive 謝絕饋贈 (*xie4 jūe2 kui4 zeng4* = refuse-cut-off-offer-of-gifts = says no to gifts), 拒不受賄 (*jū4 bu4 shou4 kui4* = refuses-to-accept-bribes).

by Diana Yue