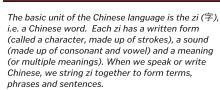
Character Builder







In Putonghua (the spoken form of Modern Standard Chinese) each zi is pronounced in one of four tones:

 1^{st} 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 marine life



Putonghua pronunciation: *ke2*Cantonese pronunciation: *hok3*Meanings: she**ll**

Animals' bodies are protected by 皮 (*pi2*, skin), 毛 (*mao2*, hair/fur), 甲 (*jia3*, carapace/armor), 殼 (*k*e2, shell), 鱗 (*lin2*, scales). Fish have 魚鱗 (*yu2 lin2* = fish-scales). Nuts have 硬殼 (*ying4 ke2* = hard-shells).

Shellfish are 海產 (hai3 chan3 = sea-products). 甲殼類 (jia3 ke2 lei4 = armor-shell-species = crustaceans) include 蟹 (xie4, crabs), 蝦 (xia1, shrimps/prawns), 龍蝦 (long2 xia1 = dragon-shrimp = lobsters). 貝類 (bei4 lei4 = seashell-species) include 蚌 (bang4, clams), 蜆 (xian4, basket clams), 鮑魚 (bao4 yu2 = abalone), 牡蠣 (mu3 li4 = oysters), 扇貝 (shan4 bei4 = fan-seashell = scallops).

金蟬脱殼 (jin1 chan2 tuo1 ke2 = gold-cicada-disconnect-shell) means cicada molting or strategy of slipping away cleverly from eyes/control of opponent.

by Diana Yue