

# Character Builder 您好學? 呀

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 bank accounts

存

Putonghua pronunciation: *cun2*

Cantonese pronunciation: *chuen4*

Meaning: exist, remain, deposit, keep, hoard

存 (radical 子 *zi3*, son) means 存在 (*cun2 zai4* = exist-is): 存留 (*cun2 liu2* = exist-remain), 存量 (*cun2 liang4* = remaining-quantity), 倖存 (*xing4 cun2* = fortunately-survive), 存在主義 (*cun2 zai4 zu3 yi4* = exist-is-principal-meaning) = existentialism.

Museums 保存 (*bao3 cun2* = preserve-keep) relics/artifacts. Grains need 庫存 (*ku4 cun2* = warehouse-storage). Computer's 存儲器 (*cun2 chu2 qi4* = keep-store-machine = memory/storage device) handles 存檔 (*cun2 dang3* = keeping-files).

Bank customer 存錢 (*cun2 qian2* = deposits-money). 存摺 (*cun2 zhe2* = deposits-folder/booklet = bankbook) shows 結存 (*jie2 cun2* = conclude-deposit = balances) of 定期存款 (*ding4 qi1 cun2 kuan3* = fix-period-deposit-money = fixed deposits), 外幣存款 (*wai4 bi4 cun2 kuan3* = foreign-currency-deposit-money = FOREX deposits).

by Diana Yue