

# 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.

## This week: Words about fruit

果

= 菓

Pronunciation: *guo* (Putonghua, 3<sup>rd</sup> tone), *gwoh* (Cantonese, 2<sup>nd</sup> tone)

Basic meaning: fruit

果園 (*guo yuan* = fruit~gardens = orchards) contain 果樹 (*guo shu* = fruit~trees). 蘋果 (*ping guo* = apples), 橙 (*cheng* = oranges), 桃 (*tao* = peaches), 芒果 (*mang guo* = mangoes), 蕉 (*jiao* = bananas), 葡萄 (*pu tao* = grapes) are 水果 (*shui guo* = water~fruit = table fruit). 合桃 (*he tao* = combined~peach = walnuts) are 硬殼果 (*ying he guo* = hard~shell~fruits = nuts).

Chefs make 果撻 (*guo ta* = fruit~tarts~transliterated), 果醬 (*guo jiang* = fruit~mesh/paste = jams).

Hard work yields 勞動的果實 (*lao dong de guo shi* = toil~move~'s~fruit~grain = labor's reward).

Buddhism preaches 因果報應 (*yin guo bao ying* = cause~fruit/result~repay~echo/reply = cause~effect~repay/karma = good/evil acts lead to good/bad fates).

by Diana Yue