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 museums**

藏 = 收藏 (shou cang = gather-keep) = collect, collectors are 收藏家 (shou cang jia = gather-keep-master). 藏品 (cang pin = keep-object) = collection. 寶藏 (bao cang = treasure-collection) = treasure. 珍藏郵票 (zhen cang you piao = precious-collection-postage-stamps) = philatelic collection. 拍賣行 (pai mai hang = hit/bang-sell-company) = auction house.

家藏 (jia cang = family-keep) = family heirloom. 館藏 (guan cang = house-collection) = museum collection. 御藏 (yu cang = emperor-collection) = palace/royal collection. An objet d’rt’s provenance is its 來源 (lai yuan = come-source = origin) and 收藏史 (shou cang shi = collection-history/record).

深藏不露 (shen cang bu lu = deep-hide-no-expose) describes someone who does not reveal his likes/dislikes/views/knowledge.

**Pronunciation:** cang (Putonghua, 2nd tone), chong (Cantonese 4th tone)

Basic meaning: gather, collect, keep, hide

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