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 housing markets

地 = land. 農地 (nong di = farm-land), 工地 (gong di = work-land = construction site). 地方 (di fang = land-square/direction) = place/spot. 地區 (di qu = land-region) = region/district.

Landowners are 地主 (di zhu = land-master). Property-owners are 業主 (ye zhu = property-master). 房地產 (fang di can = houses-land-assets) = 不動産 (bu dong can = im-movable-assets = fixed assets). 地段 (di duan = land-section) = lot. 地點 (di dian = land-spot) = location. 中介人 (zhong jie ren = middle-refer-person = agents) handle property sales.

土地肥沃 (tu di fei wo = earth-land-fat-rich) describes fertile soil/land. 地大物博 (di da wu bo = land-big-objects-far-ranging) describes resource-rich big countries e.g. Australia, China.

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