Pin Yin

Transliteration of Chinese sounds
many letters correspond to English usage
however
q = ch sound
x = sh (hissing) sound
zh = j sound
z = hard ts sound
c = soft ts sound
written as combination words even though characters are separate
Example
Putong hua
普通话
Greetings : Ni hao

Ni hao = Are you well? Lit. “you good?”
You are asking whether someone is doing well. It is equivalent to “How are you?”
The answer is usually “ni hao”.
If you wanted to answer you could say:
Wo hen hao = Fine. I am doing well.
lit. “I very good”
If things are not going well you could say
bu hao = not well/not good.
The good news about the Chinese language

1. No plural forms
   Wo = I
2. No gender forms
   Ni = you
   Ta = he/she
   Women = we
   Nimen = y’all
   Tamen = they
More good news about the Chinese language

3. No verb forms! Time is determined from context.
   
   Wo qu = I go  
   Wo ming tian qu = I tomorrow go  
   Wo zuo tian qu = I yesterday go  

4. There are standard helper verbs
   
   Wo qu le = I went  
   Wo yao qu = I will go  
   Wo hui qu = I may go  
   Wo neng qu = I can go
Even more good news about the Chinese language

5. Numbers are very logical

0 = ling
1 = yi
2 = er
3 = san
4 = si
5 = wu
6 = liu
7 = qi
8 = ba
9 = jiu
10 = shi
Even more good news about the Chinese language

5. Numbers are very logical
   100 = bai
   1000 = qian
   10,000 = wan

Now you know everything.

Examples:
   17 = ten seven = shi qi
   21 = two ten one = er shi yi
   301 = san bai ling yi
   2008 (year) = er ling ling ba (nian)
All right there is one catch

5. The number 2 is “liang” in front of any noun including
   100 = bai (百)
   1000 = qian (千)
   10,000 = wan (万)

   Example,
   liang bai = 200 (两百)
   liang qian = 2000 (两千)
   liang wan = 20,000 (两万)
   liang ge ren = two people (两个人)
Some good and some bad news about the Chinese language

6. No definite article
   che (车) = car, the car
   however, there is an indefinite article
   yi liang che (一辆车) = a car
   liang is a measure word that refers to vehicles
   there are demonstrative pronouns (this, that)
   zhe liang che = this car (这辆车)
   na liang che = that car (那辆车)
   and adjectives
   lan se che = blue car, the blue car (蓝色车)
The bad news about the Chinese language

1. Tones. There are four tones.
   I. Flat II. Rising III. Falling/Rising IV. Falling

2. Most Chinese words are homonyms
   Example: shi
   shi has more than 60 meanings
   Even shi4 which is the fourth tone of shi has more than 30 meanings
尸 [shi1] /corpse/
失 [shi1] /to lose/to miss/to fail/
虱 [shi1] /louse/
尸 [shi1] /corpse/
施 [shi1] /surname/distribute (alms)/to do/to execute/to carry out/
师 [shi1] /a division (milit.)/teacher/master/expert/model/
狮 [shi1] /lion/
诗 [shi1] /poem/poetry/verse/
湿 [shi1] /moist/wet/
著 [shi1] /Achillea sibirica/
十 [shi2] /ten/
什 [shi2] /tenth/
石 [shi2] /rock/stone/
拾 [shi2] /pick up/ten (fraudproof)/
食 [shi2] /animal feed/eat/food/
时 [shi2] /O'clock/time/when/hour/season/period/
埘 [shi2] /hen roost/
实 [shi2] /real/true/honest/really/solid/
蚀 [shi2] /eat up slowly/eclipse/
识 [shi2] /to know/knowledge/
莳 [shi2] /Peuceclanum gravelens/to plant/
鲥 [shi2] /shad/Ilisha elongata/
史 [shi3] /history/
矢 [shi3] /arrow/dart/
豕 [shi3] /hog/swine/
使 [shi3] /to make/to cause/to enable/to use/to employ/messenger/
始 [shi3] /begin/
屎 [shi3] /stool/feces/
驶 [shi3] /hasten/proceed to/sail a vessel/
士 [shi4] /scholar/warrior/knight/
士 [shi4] /scholar/warrior/knight/
氏 [shi4] /clan name/maiden name/
仕 [shi4] /an official/
市 [shi4] /market/city/
示 [shi4] /to show/reveal/
式 [shi4] /type/form/pattern/style/
事 [shi4] /matter/thing/item/work/affair/
侍 [shi4] /attend on/
室 [shi4] /room/
恃 [shi4] /rely upon/
拭 [shi4] /wipe/
是 [shi4] /is/are/am/yes/to be/
柿 [shi4] /persimmon/
舐 [shi4] /to lick/lap/
逝 [shi4] /depart/die/
视 [shi4] /to look at/to regard/to inspect/
势 [shi4] /conditions/influence/tendency/
嗜 [shi4] /addicted to/fond of/
弑 [shi4] /murder a superior/
筮 [shi4] /divine by stalk/
置 [shi4] /to install/to place/to put/
试 [shi4] /to test/to try/experiment/examination/test/
轼 [shi4] /crossbar in carriage front/
饰 [shi4] /adorn/ornaments/
誓 [shi4] /oath/vow/to swear/to pledge/
适 [shi4] /to fit/to suit/
噬 [shi4] /devour/to bite/
螫 [shi4] /to sting/
释 [shi4] /explain/to release/

To save resource, we only display 30 results at most for each query.
How is it possible to communicate in Chinese?

The idea of having so many meanings for one word seems impossible to us. Do you really need to know all of those meanings?

Chinese people know which meaning is intended from context.

Wo shi = I am

Clearly, this shi does not mean rock but it means “am”. The word rock is usually a compound word.

Wo shi yan shi = I am a rock
How is it possible to communicate in Chinese?

An attribute is expressed using the universal preposition “de”

Wo shi cheng shi de de = I am honest
cheng shi = honest

Since honest is an adjective it takes the connecting word “de”

Example:

Wo shuo putong hua = I speak Mandarin
Wo shuo putong hua shuo de bu hao = I do not speak Mandarin well
“Where do you come from?”
This is an obvious thing to ask and is typically asked early on in any conversation.

Ni shi na guo ren?
You are which country person?

Ni shi nali de ren?
You are where from person?

Wo shi mei guo ren
Common topics

“What is your name?”
Ni jiao shenme mingzi?
You called what name?
Wo jiao __________.
I (am) call(ed) __________.
I am studying in China.
Wo xuexi zai zhongguo.
More bad news: measure words

Any time a word is preceded by a preposition or number it also uses a measure word. We have this too, but it is not as developed.

English
geese
a flock of geese
that flock of geese
flock is a measure word for geese, sheep etc.
More bad news: measure words

In Chinese everything has a measure word:

- shu = book, yi ben shu = a book
- xue = snow, yi chang xue = a (field of) snow
- che = car, yi liang che = a car
- lu = road, yi tiao lu = a road
- cheng shi = city, yi ge cheng shi = a city

“ge” is the most common (almost universal) measure word. Many Chinese people use it even when it is not formally correct.

Example,

yi ge che = a car
Mandarin = Putong Hua

The dominant language in media, government and now a means of communication for most Chinese. However, most people have a native dialect/language that is different from putong hua. Thus, their pronunciation may differ.

Example,
I am an American
wo shi mei guo ren (putong hua)
ngo zi mei go zen (hangzhou hua)
Search dog (sou gou)

- This program converts pin yin text to characters
- It allows you to scan the characters associated with a pin yin sound
- It is like a plug-in that can be used with any other program on your computer.
On this page you will choose a style and download the installation program
An example of how to use it

sou'gou

1. 搜狗  2. 搜购  3. 搜  4. 搜  5. sougoupinyin

Click to add notes
The result is sou gou in characters

搜狗