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by Wendy Abraham



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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the memory of my Nady mama and Papa, Julia and Joseph Abraham, whose incredible love and time spent with their grandchildren left a lasting imprint on our lives and has been a great source of strength throughout the years.

Their nicknames for me when I was just a child (“Monkey” and “China Doll”) can only be attributed to some long-lost Hungarian Jewish gypsy roots in our family, for how else could they have known so long ago that I was, indeed, born in the Year of the Monkey, and that my life would be so deeply connected to all things Chinese.

Author's Acknowledgments

It all started with dinner at Woo Fong Restaurant in Bayside, Queens, where I grew up. Although the place no longer exists, it's the first distinct memory I have of falling in love with China — more specifically, with spring rolls and the little old proprietress in her golden **qipáo** who took me under her wing when I was barely 4 years old. It was the beginning of a love affair with the Chinese culture, and later with the Chinese language, which has yet to end.

My first order of thanks, therefore, goes to my mother and father for introducing me to my first Chinese meal. To my father, George, for inspiring me with his own great love of language learning (currently centered on Egyptian hieroglyphics) and for always pushing me to study, study, study.

To my mother, Marilyn, for her unwavering support through thick and thin and for her reminders to relax and enjoy life in between all the studying. (No surprise then that her choice of foreign language in high school was Italian.)

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Right up there with Woo Fong Restaurant was *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness* — that 1958 classic that had Ingrid Bergman, the missionary, saving all those orphans in northern China during the Sino-Japanese War. Acknowledgments to those who played a part in my early childhood exposure to all things Chinese can't be made until that film's name has been solemnly uttered. In addition to clinching my passion for China, it made me want to adopt a hundred orphans from Xi'an, and it began my great love affair with the movies.

First in line for childhood recognition is my beloved aunt, Carol Rothenstein, who regularly schlepped a gaggle of us cousins down to New York City's Chinatown and plied us with all manner of colorful Chinese knick-knacks to take home.

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From my days at Hunter College, where I distinguished myself by being the only Jewish kid to try to join the Chinese Students Association, I'm proud to have hung out with the likes of Jon Ho, Winnie Chin, Mon Lan Jee, Nora Lee, Karen Lee, and our classmate Conmay, whose untimely death while we were all undergrads bonded us for one brief but memorable moment. Jon and Winnie in particular have remained good, loyal friends, and I'm grateful for their fun (Jon) and calming (Winnie) presence this past year. Mention of Hunter College in the '70s wouldn't be complete if it didn't also include a serious note of thanks to my very first Chinese language teacher, professor Yu-shih Chen, whom we all loved.

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About the Author

Wendy Abraham is the Associate Director of the Stanford Center for Buddhist Studies and the Asian Religions & Cultures Initiative. She has taught courses on Chinese language, Chinese literature, and Asian cultures at Hunter College, Georgetown University, New York University, and Stanford University, where she's currently pursuing her second doctorate in modern Chinese literature. She spent a year researching Shang Dynasty oracle bones in Taiwan, which sparked her deep interest in the development of China's written language. Wendy has directed Chinese language programs for American students in Beijing and Shanghai and has interpreted for high-level arts delegations from China. Her first doctoral dissertation from Teachers College (Columbia University) was on the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng, a subject about which she has written widely and continues to lecture frequently throughout the United States. She also created Jewish Historical Tours of China, bringing people to visit Shanghai and Kaifeng on educational trips. Her interest in all things Chinese continues unabated.

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Introduction

Globalization has made familiarity with other people, cultures, and languages not only preferable in the 21st century, but also essential. With the help of the Internet, reaching out and touching someone on the other side of the earth has become as easy as the click of a mouse. And yet, nothing quite beats the excitement of a face-to-face encounter with someone who hails from the other side of the globe in his or her own language. Communication in cyberspace doesn't even come close.

Whether you're an inveterate traveler, going overseas for business, about to study overseas, interested in frequenting Chinatown, befriending a Chinese-speaking classmate or coworker, or just plain curious about China, *Chinese For Dummies* can help you get acquainted with enough Chinese to carry on a decent conversation on any number of topics. You won't become fluent instantly, of course, but this book helps you greet a stranger, buy a plane ticket, and order some food. This book also gives you some invaluable cultural tips so that you can not only rattle off those newly acquired words and phrases, but also back them up with the right behavior at the right time.

I designed this book to help guide you toward the successful use of one of the most difficult languages on earth. Chinese should also just be plain fun to learn.

About This Book

The good news is that you can use *Chinese For Dummies* anytime, anywhere. No mandatory class sessions, no exams, and no homework assignments to dread. Need to get to a new city for a business meeting? Just turn to the chapter on travel to find out how to haggle for a plane ticket, determine the price, and get to the airport on time. Have to make a sudden trip to the doctor? Turn to the chapter on your health and figure out in advance how to tell your caregivers exactly what ails you.

The beauty of this book is that it can be all things to all people. You don't have to memorize Chapter 5 before moving on to Chapter 6, if what Chapter 6 deals with is what you really need. Each chapter provides you with different bits of information about the Chinese language and highlights different parts

of Chinese grammar. Read as much or as little as you want, as quickly or as slowly as you like. Whatever interests you is what you should focus on. And remember: You're discovering a language that simultaneously represents one of the world's oldest civilizations and one of its fastest growing economies in the 21st century.

Conventions Used in This Book

Pay attention to a couple of conventions that can help you navigate this book's contents:

- ✓ Chinese terms are set in **boldface** to make them stand out.
- ✓ Pronunciations and meanings appear in parentheses immediately after the Chinese terms. The pronunciations are in *italics*.

This book uses the *pīnyīn* (*literally*: spelling the way it sounds) romanization system of Chinese words. What does that mean? Well, if you go to China, you see signs in Chinese characters all around, but if you look for something in English, you may be hard pressed to find it. Whatever signs you see in roman letters will be of *pīnyīn*, the romanization system developed by the Communists in the 1950s, so seeing *pīnyīn* in this book is good practice for you.

Another thing you should keep in mind as you begin to understand Chinese is that many of the English translations you see in this book aren't exactly literal. It's more important to know the gist of what you hear or see instead of what individual words in any given phrase mean. For example, if you translate "horse horse tiger tiger" literally into Chinese, you have the phrase meaning "so so." You're not actually talking about animals. Whenever I give a literal translation, I preface it with "*literally*" in italics.

The following elements you find in *Chinese For Dummies* help to reinforce the new terms and phrases you're studying:

- ✓ **Talkin' the Talk dialogues:** Nothing beats seeing and hearing an actual conversation to learn Chinese, so I intersperse dialogues throughout this book. They come under the heading "Talkin' the Talk." They show you the Chinese words, the pronunciations, and the English translations, and I often put cultural dos and don'ts into context, which should come in handy.

Dialogues with a CD icon beside them appear on the CD that comes with this book so you can practice the sentences after you hear how they should sound. With the tonal nature of the Chinese language, this feature is indispensable as you learn Chinese.

- ✔ **Words to Know blackboards:** Memorizing key words and phrases is very useful in language learning. The words and phrases on the blackboard-like boxes are the ones I think are most important in the preceding section or sections, so they appear on a chalkboard with the heading “Words to Know.”
- ✔ **Fun & Games activities:** Working through word games can be a fun way to review the words and phrases you encounter in each chapter. This element of *Chinese For Dummies* is a great way to gauge your progress and tease your brain at the same time. Look for these activities at the end of each chapter.

Foolish Assumptions

Some of the foolish assumptions I made about you while writing *Chinese For Dummies* are:

- ✔ You don’t know any Chinese, except for maybe a couple of words you picked up from a good kung-fu movie or the word “tofu,” which you picked up while grocery shopping.
- ✔ Your goal in life isn’t to become an interpreter of Chinese at the U.N.; you just want to pick up some useful words, phrases, and sentence constructions to make yourself understood in a Chinese-speaking environment.
- ✔ You have no intention of spending hours and hours memorizing Chinese vocabulary and grammar patterns.
- ✔ You basically want to have fun while speaking a little Chinese.

How This Book Is Organized

This book is divided by topic into parts, chapters, and appendixes. Each part focuses on one aspect of the Chinese language, and the chapters cover different useful topics, such as how to dine at a restaurant, how to handle emergencies, or how to plan a vacation. The following sections tell you what types of information you can expect to find in each part.

Part I: Getting Started

This part familiarizes you with some basics of Chinese: how to pronounce words, how to create the proper pitch (also known as tone) for each word, and so on. Because Chinese is a tonal language, if you pronounce a word with an incorrect tone, you may say a whole different word. Sometimes the only way to know whether you've said something you didn't intend is by the look on the listener's face, so you should pay particular attention to the tones as you speak.

Part II: Chinese in Action

In this part, you really begin to use Chinese. Instead of focusing strictly on grammar, this part helps guide you through everyday situations that you encounter while meeting people, eating at restaurants, going shopping, or yakking on the phone.

Part III: Chinese on the Go

This part of the book gives you the tools you need to use Chinese in any number of practical settings. You find out how to change money, how to ask for and give directions, how to book a room at a hotel, and how to tell a doctor what ails you. It covers all aspects of travel into Chinese-speaking parts of the world. Whether your travels take you all the way to Shanghai or just to your cubicle at work is up to you.

Part IV: The Part of Tens

Ever wish you could distill the Chinese culture into 10 simple rules of what to do and what not to do? Well, Part IV is a collection of simple phrases you can use, popular Chinese expressions, and reminders of what not to do in a Chinese setting that you should always keep in the back of your mind as you interact with the Chinese. You not only sound more like a native Chinese speaker when you open your mouth, but you also start internalizing some of the cardinal cultural rules and taboos for social settings that the average student of the Chinese language may never discover.

Part V: Appendixes

This part contains helpful references that you may want to refer to occasionally as you snoop through the rest of the chapters. Appendix A contains a useful verb table, which can help in any setting. Appendix B is a handy mini-dictionary of both Chinese to English and English to Chinese. Feel free to check this section when you encounter unfamiliar words on a need-to-know basis. Appendix C contains the answers to the Fun & Games exercises at the end of each chapter. Finally, Appendix D provides a list of the tracks that appear on the audio CD. This appendix comes in handy when you're ready to hear a selection of the Talkin' the Talk dialogues from the book.

Icons Used in This Book

Cute little icons appear in the left-hand margins, next to sidebars, and adjacent to some of the introductions to the Talkin' the Talk sections throughout this book. These beacons shed light on what kind of information you're looking at and can help you locate certain types of information in a hurry. The six icons used in this book are:



The bull's-eye appears wherever I've highlighted a great idea to help make your study of Chinese easier.



This icon, appropriately showing a string around a finger, should serve as a reminder about particularly important information concerning Chinese.



The bomb should act as a stop sign in your mind. It warns you about things to avoid saying or doing so that you don't make a fool of yourself overseas or with a new Chinese-speaking acquaintance.



This icon clues you in on fascinating bits of information about China and Chinese culture. Knowledge of a culture goes hand in hand with knowledge of a foreign language, so these icons help light the way as you embark on your journey.



This icon highlights various rules of grammar that may be out of the norm. Even though this book doesn't focus primarily on grammar, your successful execution of the language can only be enhanced by paying attention to little grammatical rules as they pop up.



The audio CD that comes with this book gives you the chance to hear native Chinese speakers so you can better understand the way Chinese really sounds. This proves especially helpful because of all the tones you have to keep in mind. This icon indicates the basic sounds and Talkin' the Talk dialogues you can find on the CD.

Where to Go from Here

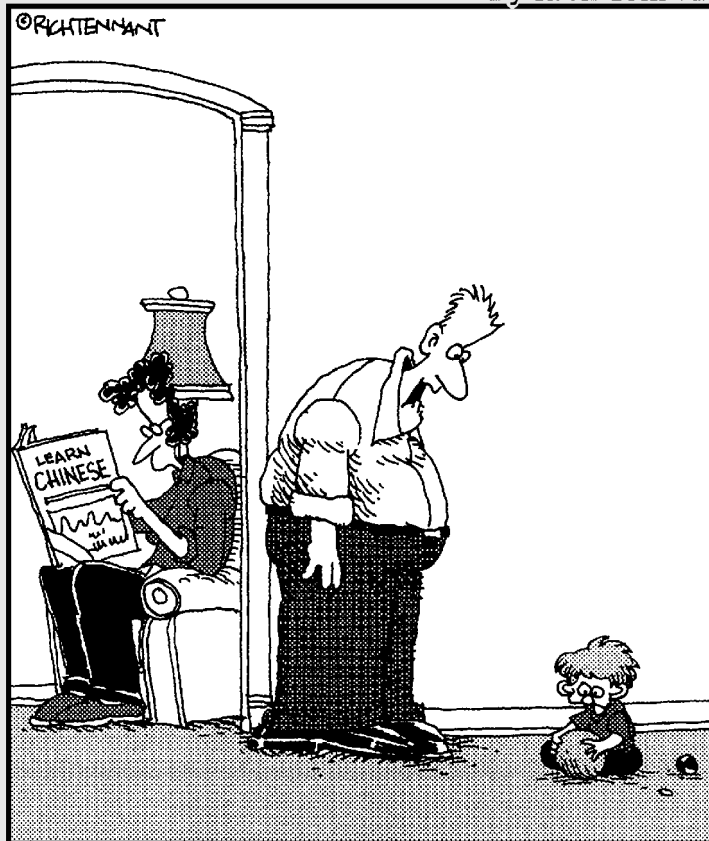
Chinese is often considered one of the toughest languages in the world to master. Don't worry. The good news is that you're not trying to master it. All you want to do is be understandable when you open your mouth so that you don't ask for the mens' room when you really want the ladies' room. All you have to do now is keep listening to and repeating the words and phrases you find in this book. Turn to whichever chapter piques your curiosity, listen to the accompanying audio CD at home or in your car, and keep practicing your favorite Chinese phrases when you're with your family and friends in Chinatown.

Part I

Getting Started

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



"You mean, 'wo', 'ta', 'baba', and 'mama' are all words in the Mandarin dialect? My gosh, Alice, our baby's been speaking Chinese the last few weeks!"

In this part . . .

part I warmly welcomes you to the Chinese language. I give you the lowdown on all the essentials of Chinese: how to pronounce Chinese sounds (and tones) like a native, how to string Chinese words together so that they make sense, how to count in Chinese, and how to communicate in Chinese with all the cultural trimmings. **Wōmen kāishǐ ba!** (*waw mun kye shir bah*; Let's begin!)

Chapter 1

Getting to Know a Little Chinese

In This Chapter

- ▶ Getting a handle on basic Chinese sounds
 - ▶ Reading to communicate
 - ▶ Sounding fluent
 - ▶ Perfecting the four basic tones
 - ▶ Practicing Chinese idioms
 - ▶ Understanding basic Chinese phrases and gestures
-

Time to get your feet wet with the basics of Chinese. This chapter gives you guidelines that help you pronounce words in standard Mandarin (the official language of both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan) like a native speaker and helps you get a handle on the four tones that distinguish Mandarin Chinese. After you have the basics down, I show you how to construct basic Chinese phrases.

But before you dive in, here's a bit of advice: Don't be intimidated by all the tones! The best thing you can do when learning a foreign language is to not worry about making mistakes the minute you open your mouth. Practice speaking Chinese first to your dog or cat, and then work your way up to a couple of goldfish or a niece or nephew under the age of 10. When you finally get the nerve to rattle off a few phrases to your local Chinatown grocer, you'll know you've made it. And when you visit China for the first time, you discover how incredibly appreciative the Chinese are of anyone who even remotely attempts to speak their language. All the hours you spent yakking away with the family pet start to pay off, and you'll be rewarded greatly. Still have doubts? You'll be amazed at how much you can say after snooping through *Chinese For Dummies*.



Encountering the Chinese culture is just as important as exploring the Chinese language. In fact, you can't quite master the language without absorbing a little of the culture by osmosis. Just making the effort to speak Chinese is an act of positive diplomacy. Don't worry about how you sound when you open your mouth — you're contributing to international friendship no matter what comes out.

Grasping Chinese Dialects

Give yourself a big pat on the back right now. Yup, right now — before you even begin to utter one iota of Chinese. If you don't do it now, you may be too shocked later on when it sinks in that you've taken on a language that has hundreds (yes, hundreds) of dialects — each one mutually incomprehensible to speakers of the other ones. Practically every major town, and certainly every province, in China has its own regional dialect that folks grow up learning (see Table 1-1). Of the seven major dialects, Shanghainese, Taiwanese, and Cantonese are the ones you may have heard of before.

And then there's Mandarin, dialect of the masses. Mandarin Chinese is spoken by more people on earth than any other language today. Pretty much a quarter of humanity uses it, given China's immense population. So just why was this particular dialect chosen to become the official dialect taught in all schools throughout China, regardless of whatever additional dialects people speak at home or in their communities?



With only four tones, **Guānhuà** (*guan hwah*; Mandarin; *literally*: the language of the officials, who were also known as Mandarins) has served as the hybrid language of China since the 15th century, because it was based on the educated speech of the region around Beijing. Instead of referring to it as **Guānhuà**, mainlanders in China now call it **Pūtōnghuà** (*poo toong hwah*; the common language). People in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and in overseas Chinese communities call it **Guóyǔ** (*gwaw yew*; the national language). You may also hear it referred to as **Zhōngwén** (*joong one*; the language of the Chinese people) and **Hànyǔ** (*hahn yew*; the language of the Han people), because the Chinese have often referred to themselves as descendants of the Han dynasty (206 BCE to 220 CE), one of the golden eras of Chinese history. Because Chinese is the language of ethnic Chinese and China's minority groups, the more all-encompassing term **Zhōngwén** is preferred.

<i>Dialect</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Region Where Spoken</i>
Pǔtōnghuà / Guóyǔ (Mandarin)	poo toong hwah / gwaw yew	North of the Yangzi River, but taught in schools everywhere; official language of the People's Republic of China and spoken all over Taiwan
Wú	woo	Shanghai, southeastern Anhui, and much of Zhejiang
Xiāng	shyahng	Hunan
Gàn	gahn	Jiangxi, southern Anhui, and southeastern Hubei
Kèjǐā (Hakka)	kuh jyah	Scattered parts of eastern and southwestern Guangxi and in northern Guangdong (Canton)
Yuè (Cantonese)	yweh	Southeastern Guangxi, Guangdong (Canton), and Hong Kong
Mǐn	meen	Fujian, southern Zhejiang, northeastern Guangdong, Hainan, and Taiwan



The term **Pǔtōnghuà** (*literally*: the common language) is used to refer to Mandarin in the People's Republic of China, and the term **Guóyǔ** (*literally*: the national language) is the term used for Mandarin in Taiwan. If you simply say **Hànyǔ** (the language of the Han people), however, you can use it anywhere.

The Written Word: Yikes! No Alphabet!

I bet you're beginning to wonder just how the Chinese have managed to communicate with each other for the better part of five millennia if their spoken language comes in so many distinct forms and dialects. The answer lies in (drum roll) . . . the written word.



Early bare-bones Chinese writing

The earliest specimens of Chinese writing appeared on oracle bones, dating from China's first archaeologically proven dynasty, the Shang (circa 1766 to 1122 BCE). Written on ox scapulae or tortoise shells, the writing was used for divination purposes by shamans who asked

questions on behalf of the king. Only about a thousand or so characters have been identified on oracle bones, but the findings show that the written language had already attained a solid foundation in China by the second millennium, BCE.

Say you see two Chinese people sitting next to each other on a train traveling from Canton to Shanghai. If the Cantonese speaker reads the newspaper out loud, the guy from Shanghai won't have a clue what he's saying. But if they both read the same newspaper article to themselves, they could understand what's going on in the world. That's because Chinese characters are uniform all across the country.

Chinese words are written in beautiful, often symbolic configurations called *characters*. Each character is a word in and of itself, and sometimes it's a part of a compound word. It makes no difference if you write the characters from right to left, left to right, or top to bottom, because you can read and understand them in any order. If you see a Chinese movie in Chinatown, you can often choose between two types of subtitles: English, which you read from left to right, and Chinese characters on another line, which you read from right to left. (They can also go from left to right, so be careful.) You may go cross-eyed for a while trying to follow them both.

During the Han dynasty, a lexicographer named Xu Shen identified six ways in which Chinese characters reflected meanings and sounds. Of these, four were the most common:

- ✓ **Pictographs:** These characters are formed according to the shape of the objects themselves, such as the sun and the moon. They show the meaning of the character rather than the sound.
- ✓ **Ideographs:** These characters represent more abstract concepts. The characters for "above" and "below," for example, each have a horizontal line representing the horizon and another stroke leading out above or below the horizon.
- ✓ **Complex ideographs:** Combinations of simpler characters.
- ✓ **Phonetic compounds:** Also called logographs, these compound characters are formed by two graphic elements — one hinting at the meaning of the word and the other providing a clue to the sound. Phonetic compounds account for over 80 percent of all Chinese characters.

No matter which type of characters you see, you won't find any letters stringing them together like you see in English. So how in the world do Chinese people consult a Chinese dictionary? (How did you know I could read your mind?) In several different ways.

Because Chinese characters are composed of several (often many) strokes of the writing brush, one way to look up a character is by counting the number of strokes and then looking up the character under the portion of the dictionary that notes characters by strokes. But to do so, you have to know which radical to check under first. Chinese characters have 214 *radicals* — parts of the character that can help identify what the character may signify, such as three dots on the left hand side of the character representing water. Each radical is itself composed of a certain number of strokes, so you have to first look up the radical by the number of strokes it takes to write it, and after you locate that radical, you start looking once more under the number of strokes left in the character *after* that radical to locate the character you wanted to look up in the first place.

You can always just check under the pronunciation of the character (if you already know how to pronounce it), but you have to sift through every single character with the same pronunciation. You also have to look further under the various tones to see which one of all the words pronounced the same way comes with the first, second, third, or fourth tone you want to locate. And because there are so many homonyms in Chinese, this task isn't as easy as it may sound (no pun intended).

I bet you feel really relieved that you're only focusing on spoken Chinese and not the written language.

Pinyin Spelling: Beijing, Not Peking

To spell the way it sounds . . . that's the literal meaning of **pīnyīn**. For decades, Chinese had been transliterated in any number of ways. Finally, in 1979, the People's Republic of China officially adopted **pīnyīn** as its official romanization system. After the adoption, U.S. libraries and government agencies diligently changed all their prior records from other romanization systems into **pīnyīn**.

You should keep in mind the following quick facts about some of the initial sounds in Mandarin when you see them written in the relatively new **pīnyīn** system:

- ✓ **J:** Sounds like the “g” in “gee whiz.” An “i” often follows a “j.” “**Jī kuài qián?**” (*jee kwee chyan*) means “How much money?”
- ✓ **Q:** Sounds like the “ch” in “cheek.” You never see it followed by a “u” like in English, but an “i” always follows it in Chinese, possibly before another vowel or a consonant. **Qīngdǎo** (*cheeng daow*) beer used to be spelled “ch'ing tao” or “Tsingtao.”

- ✓ **X:** The third letter that's often followed by an "i." It sounds like the "sh" in "she." One famous Chinese leader, **Dèng Xiǎopíng** (*dung shyaw peeng*), boasted this letter in his name.
- ✓ **Zh:** Unlike "j," which often precedes a vowel to make it sound like you're opening your mouth, "zh" is followed by vowels, which make it sound like your mouth is a bit more closed. Take **Zhōu Ēnlái** (*joe un lye*), for example, the great statesman of 20th-century China. When you say his name, it should sound like Joe En-lye.
- ✓ **Z:** Sounds like a "dz." You see it in the name of the PRC's first leader, **Máo Zédōng** (*maow dzuh doong*), which used to be spelled Mao Tse-tung.
- ✓ **C:** Pronounced like "ts" in such words as **cài** (*tsye*; food) or **cèsuǒ** (*tsuh saw*; bathroom).
- ✓ **B, D, and G:** In the past, the sounds made by these three letters were represented by P, T, and K, respectively. In the past, if the corresponding initial sounds were *aspirated* (had air coming out of the speaker, like in the words "pie," "tie," and "kite"), they would've been written as "p'," "t'," and "k'." Today, the letters "P," "T," and "K" represent the aspirated sounds.

Sounding Off: Basic Chinese Sounds

Don't worry about sounding like a native speaker the first time you utter a Chinese syllable — after all, who does? But the longer you procrastinate becoming familiar with the basic elements of Chinese words, the greater your fear of this unique language may become. After you begin to practice the sounds (and eventually the tones) out loud, you may wonder if you'll ever come close to sounding like Bruce Lee in a kung-fu movie or even your local Chinatown grocer. Hearing Chinese spoken at a normal speed is definitely intimidating at the beginning, so you should enjoy taking plenty of baby steps and reveling in the praise from waiters who appreciate all your effort the next time you frequent a Chinese restaurant.



The main thing to remember about the Chinese language is that each *morpheme* (the smallest unit of meaning in a language) is represented by one syllable, which in turn consists of an initial sound and a final sound, topped off by a tone. This applies to each and every syllable. Without any one of these three components, your words may be incomprehensible to the average Chinese person. For example, the syllable "**mā**" is comprised of the initial "m" and the final "a," and you pronounce it with what's called a first tone. Together, the parts mean "mother." If you substitute the first tone for a third tone, which is written as "**mǎ**," you say the word "horse." So be careful not to call your mother a horse when you practice the initials, finals, and tones. The following sections break up the three parts and give each their due.



Before you can participate in sports or play games, you must become familiar with all the rules. The same goes for practicing a new language. Do your best to understand the basic rules of pronunciation, and keep practicing over and over to begin feeling comfortable speaking the language.

Starting off with initials

In Chinese, initials always consist of consonants. Table 1-2 lists the initials you encounter in the Chinese language.



Listen to these sounds on the CD as you practice pronouncing initials.

Table 1-2 Chinese Initials		
<i>Chinese Letter</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>English Example</i>
b	baw	bore
p	paw	paw
m	maw	more
f	faw	four
d	duh	done
t	tuh	ton
n	nuh	null
l	luh	lull
g	guh	gull
k	kuh	come
h	huh	hunt
j	gee	gee
q	chee	cheat
x	she	she
z	dzuh	“ds” in suds
c	tsuh	“ts” in huts
s	suh	sun

(continued)

Table 1-2 (continued)

<i>Chinese Letter</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>English Example</i>
zh	jir	germ
ch	chir	churn
sh	shir	shirt
r	ir	“er” in bigger
w	wuh	won
y	yuh	yup



The initials **-n** and **-r** in Table 1-2 can also appear as finals, so don't be surprised if you see them there.

Ending with finals

Chinese boasts many more consonants than vowels. In fact, the language has only six vowels all together: **a**, **o**, **e**, **i**, **u**, and **ü**. If you pronounce the vowels in sequence, your mouth starts off very wide and your tongue starts off very low. Eventually, when you get to **ü**, your mouth becomes much more closed and your tongue ends pretty high. You can also combine the vowels in various ways to form compound vowels. Table 1-3 lists the vowels and some possible combinations.

Table 1-3**Chinese Vowels**

<i>Chinese Vowel</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>English Example</i>
a	ah	hot
ai	i	eye
ao	ow	chow
an	ahn	on
ang	ahng	thong
o	aw	straw
ong	oong	too + ng
ou	oh	oh

<i>Chinese Vowel</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>English Example</i>
e	uh	bush
ei	ay	way
en	un	fun
eng	ung	tongue
er	ar	are
i	ee	tea
ia	ya	gotcha
iao	yaow	meow
ie	yeh	yet
iu	yo	leo
ian	yan	cheyenne
iang	yahng	y + angst
in	een	seen
ing	eeng	going
iong	yoong	you + ng
u	oo	too
ua	wa	suave
uo	waw	war
ui	way	way
uai	why	why
uan	wan	want
un	one	one
uang	wahng	wan + ng
ueng	wung	one + ng
ü	yew	ewe
üe	yweh	you + eh
üan	ywan	you + wan
ün	yewn	you + n



Tone marks in **pīnyīn** always appear above the vowel, but if you see a couple of vowels in a row, the tone mark appears above the first vowel in that sequence. One exception is when you see the vowels **iu** and **ui** together. In that case, the tone mark falls on the second vowel.

Sometimes vowels appear without initial consonant accompaniment, but they still mean something. The word **ǎi**, meaning “short” (of stature), is one example.

Perfect pitch: Presenting . . . the four tones

Mee meeeee (cough cough)! Pardon me. I’m getting carried away with warming up before I get into the four tones. Just think of the tones this way: They can be your best friends when it comes to being understood in Chinese, and they’re the hip part of this ancient language.

If you combine all the possible initial sounds of Chinese with all the possible permutations of the final sounds, you come up with only about 400 sound combinations — not nearly enough to express all the ideas in your head. If you add the four basic tones of Mandarin to the mix, the number of possible permutations increases fourfold. Tones are also a great way to reduce the number of homophones in Chinese. Even so, any given syllable with a specific tone can often have more than one meaning. Sometimes the only way to decipher the intended meaning is to see the written word.

Mandarin has only four tones. The best way to imagine what each of the four tones sounds like is to visualize these short descriptions:

- ✓ **First tone:** High level. The first tone is supposed to be as high as your individual pitch range can be, without wavering. It appears like this above the letter a: **ā**.
- ✓ **Second tone:** Rising. The second tone sounds like you’re asking a question. It goes from the middle level of your voice to the top. It doesn’t automatically indicate that you’re asking a question, however — it just sounds like you are. It appears like this above the letter a: **á**.
- ✓ **Third tone:** Falling and then rising. The third tone starts in the middle level of your voice range and then falls deeply before slightly rising at the end. It looks like this above the letter a: **ǎ**.
- ✓ **Fourth tone:** Falling. The fourth tone sounds like you’re giving someone an order (unlike the more plaintive-sounding second tone). It falls from the high pitch level it starts at. Here’s how it looks above the letter a: **à**.

One third tone after another

Here's something interesting about tones: When you have to say one third tone followed by another third tone out loud in consecutive fashion, the first one actually becomes a second tone. If you hear someone say “**Tā hěn hǎo**” (*tah hun how*; she's very well), you may not realize that both “**hěn**” and “**hǎo**” individually are third tone syllables. It sounds like “**hěn**” is a second tone and “**hǎo**” is a full third tone.

Half-third tones

Whenever a third tone is followed by any of the other tones — first, second, fourth, or even a neutral tone — it becomes a *half-third tone*. You only pronounce the first half of the tone — the falling half — before you pronounce the other syllables with the other tones. In fact, a half-third tone barely falls at all. It sounds more like a level, low tone (kind of the opposite of the high level first tone). Get it?

Neutral tones

A fifth tone exists that you can't exactly count amongst the four basic tones, because it's actually toneless, or neutral. You never see a tone mark over a fifth tone, and you say it only when you attach it to grammatical particles or the second character of repetitive syllables, such as **bàba** (*bah bah*; father) or **māma** (*mah mah*; mother).

Tonal changes in yī and bù

Just when you think you're getting a handle on all the possible tones and tone changes in Chinese, I have one more aspect to report: The words **yī** (*ee*; one) and **bù** (*boo*; not or no) are truly unusual in Chinese, in that their tones may change automatically depending on what comes after them. You pronounce **yī** by itself with the first tone. However, when a first, second, or third tone follows it, **yī** instantly turns into a fourth tone, such as in **yìzhāng zhǐ** (*ee jahng jir*; a piece of paper). If a fourth tone follows **yī**, however, it automatically becomes a second tone, such as in the word **yíyàng** (*ee yahng*; the same). I know this all sounds very complicated, but when you get the hang of tones, pronunciation becomes second nature. Just keep listening to the accompanying CD. These concepts will sink in quicker than you expect.

Adding Idioms and Popular Expressions to Your Repertoire

Even though Chinese seems like it has absolutely nothing in common with English when you listen to it, especially in terms of pronunciation and tones, it uses distinctive *idioms* (groups of words whose collective meanings differ

from their individual parts) to express specific ideas or situations, just like in English. If you try to translate these idioms word for word, however, you won't get very far.

For example, if you suddenly announced to your Chinese college roommate “**Wǒ huì lā yíge quán yègē**” (*waw hway lah ee guh chwan yeh guh*; literally: I'm going to pull an all-nighter), he would be clueless and would begin to question what he was thinking when he agreed to room with a foreigner. Similarly, you'd be just as confused if he broke out with “**Wǒ huì kāi yè chē**.” (*waw hway kye yeh chuh*; literally: I'm going to ride the night train.) Both of you mean the same thing, of course, but he'd start imagining just how heavy something called an all-nighter is to actually pull, and you'd worry about which city he's going to end up in the next morning. You may even be tempted to join him instead of studying for your exam.

The Chinese language has thousands of idiomatic expressions known as **chéngyǔ** (*chung yew*). Most of these **chéngyǔ** originated in anecdotes, fables, fairy tales, or ancient literary works, and some of the expressions are thousands of years old. The vast majority consist of four characters, succinctly expressing morals behind very long, ancient stories. Others are more than four characters. Either way, the Chinese pepper these pithy expressions throughout any given conversation.

Here are a few **chéngyǔ** you frequently hear in Chinese:

- ✔ **Mò míng qí miào.** (*maw meeng chee meow*; literally: No one can explain the wonder and mystery of it all.) This saying describes anything that's tough to figure out, including unusual behavior.
- ✔ **Yī shēn zuò zé.** (*ee shun dzwaw dzuh*; To set a good example.)
- ✔ **Yì mó yí yàng.** (*ee maw ee yahng*; exactly alike)
- ✔ **Quán xīn quán yì.** (*chwan sheen chwan ee*; literally: entire heart, entire mind)
- ✔ **Àn bù jiù bān.** (*ahn boo jyoe bahn*; To take one step at a time.)
- ✔ **Hú shuō bā dào.** (*hoo shwaw bah daow*; literally: To talk nonsense in eight directions.) To talk nonsense.
- ✔ **Huǒ shàng jiā yóu.** (*hwaw shahng jyah yo*; To add fuel to the fire; to aggravate the problem.)
- ✔ **Yì zhēn jiàn xiǎ.** (*ee jun jyan shyeh*; To hit the nail on the head.)
- ✔ **Yì jǔ liǎng dé.** (*ee jyew lyahng duh*; To kill two birds with one stone.)
- ✔ **Rù xiāng suí sú.** (*roo shyahng sway soo*; When in Rome, do as the Romans do.)

Another fact you quickly become aware of when you start speaking with **chéngyǔ** is that the expressions are sometimes full of references to animals. Here are some of those:

- ✔ **gǒu zhàng rén shì** (*go jahng run shir*; literally: the dog acts fierce when his master is present; to take advantage of one's connections with powerful people)
- ✔ **guà yáng tóu mài gǒu ròu** (*gwah yahng toe my go roe*; literally: to display a lamb's head but sell dog meat; to cheat others with false claims)
- ✔ **dǎ cǎo jǐng shé** (*dah tsaow jeeng shuh*; literally: to beat the grass to frighten the snake; to give a warning)
- ✔ **duì niú tán qín** (*dway nyo tahn cheen*; literally: to play music to a cow; to cast pearls before swine)
- ✔ **xuán yá lè mǎ** (*shywan yah luh mah*; literally: to rein in the horse before it goes over the edge; to halt)
- ✔ **huà shé tiān zú** (*hwah shuh tyan dzoo*; literally: to pain a snake and add legs; to gild the lily; to do something superfluous)
- ✔ **hǔ tóu shé wěi** (*hoo toe shuh way*; literally: with the head of a tiger but the tail of a snake; to start strong but end poorly)
- ✔ **chē shuǐ mǎ lóng** (*chuh shway mah loong*; literally: cars flowing like water and horses creating a solid line looking like a dragon; heavy traffic)

Mastering Basic Phrases

If you make it a habit to use the following short Chinese phrases whenever you get the chance, you can master them in no time. You'll also shock everyone around you — especially if they don't speak Chinese. It doesn't matter. You know what you're saying, at least. So the next time you meet up with a Chinese waiter or take your clothes to a Chinese laundry down the block, you can impress the heck out of everyone. Try these phrases:

- ✔ **Nǐ hǎo!** (*nee how*; Hi; How are you?)
- ✔ **Xièxiè.** (*shyeh shyeh*; Thank you.)
- ✔ **Bú kèqì.** (*boo kuh chee*; You're welcome; Don't mention it.)
- ✔ **Méi shì.** (*may shir*; It's nothing; Don't mention it.)
- ✔ **Hǎo jíle.** (*how jee luh*; Great; Fantastic.)
- ✔ **Duì le.** (*dway luh*; That's right.)
- ✔ **Gōngxǐ gōngxǐ!** (*goong she goong she*; Congratulations!)
- ✔ **Duìbuqǐ.** (*dway boo chee*; Excuse me.)
- ✔ **Suàn le.** (*swan luh*; Forget it; Nevermind.)
- ✔ **Méiyǒu guānxi.** (*mayo gwan she*; It doesn't matter.)
- ✔ **Děng yíxià.** (*dung ee shyah*; Wait a minute.)

Talkin' the Talk

David and Rachel talk about practicing some Chinese expressions while they wait for a bus in Taipei.

- David: **Rachel! Wǒ yǐjīng huì shuō Zhōngwén le.**
Rachel! Waw ee jeeng hway shwaw joong one lah.
 Rachel! I already know how to speak Chinese.
- Rachel: **Děng yíxià. Nǐ yíding hú shuō bā dào. Nǐ zěnmē huì Zhōngwén ne?**
Dung ee shyah. Nee ee deeng who shwaw bah daow.
Nee dzummuh hway joong one nuh?
 Wait a minute. You're definitely talking nonsense.
 How could you possibly speak Chinese?
- David: **Duì le. Wǒ měige xīngqī chī Zhōngguó fàn de shíhòu, yìbiān chīfàn, yìbiān gēn fúwùyuán xuéxí Zhōngwén. Yǐjīng huì shuō hěn duō chéngyǔ le. Yì jǔ liǎng dé.**
Dway luh. Waw may guh sheeng chee chir joong gwaw fahn duh shir ho, ee byan chir fahn, ee byan gun foo woo ywan shyweh she joong one. Ee jeeng hway shwaw hun dwaw chung yew luh. Ee jyew lyahng duh.
 That's right. Every week when I eat Chinese food, on the one hand I eat, and on the other hand I study Chinese with the waiters. I already know lots of idioms. I kill two birds with one stone.
- Rachel: **Nà, nǐ yǐ shēn zuò zé. Wǒ xiàge xīngqī gēn nǐ yìqǐ qù chīfàn, hǎo bù hǎo?**
Nah, nee ee shun dzwaw zuh. Waw shyah guh sheeng chee gun nee ee chee chyew chir fahn, how boo how?
 Well, in that case you're setting a good example. Next week I'll go with you to eat, okay?
- David: **Hǎo jīle.**
How jee luh.
 Great.
-



Communicating with body language

Ever think you know what certain couples are saying or thinking just by observing their gestures and body language? Well, people can make the same observations in China. Although the gestures are different, they contain important clues as to social status between people, their emotions, and so on. Observe Chinese people wherever you can to see if you notice any of the following gestures:

- ✔ **Pointing to one's own nose:** You may find this hard to believe, but Chinese people often point to their own noses, often touching them, when they refer to themselves by saying the word "wǒ" (wǎw; I). The Chinese are probably just as curious as to why Westerners point to their hearts.
- ✔ **Nodding and bowing slightly:** When greeting older people, professors, or others in

positions of power or prestige, people lower their heads slightly to acknowledge them and show respect. Unlike the Japanese, who bow deeply, the Chinese basically bow with their heads in a slight fashion.

- ✔ **Shaking hands:** People of vastly different status generally don't give each other a handshake, but it's common among friends and business colleagues.
- ✔ **Bowing with hands clasped:** If you see hand clasping and bowing going on at the same time, you know the participants have something to celebrate. It indicates conveying congratulations or greeting others during special festival occasions. Their hands are held at chest level and their heads are slightly bowed (and they often have big smiles on their faces).



Fun & Games



Listen to the accompanying CD to see if you can imitate the following words, which are only distinguished by their tones. (Be on the lookout: Any given sound with the same accompanying tone may have several other meanings, distinguishable only by context or by seeing the appropriate written character.) Good luck!

- ✓ **mā**; mother
- ✓ **má**; hemp
- ✓ **mǎ**; horse
- ✓ **mà**; to scold
- ✓ **fēi**; to fly
- ✓ **féi**; fat
- ✓ **fěi**; bandit
- ✓ **fèi**; lungs
- ✓ **qīng**; clear
- ✓ **qíng**; affection
- ✓ **qǐng**; please
- ✓ **qìng**; celebrate
- ✓ **zhū**; pig (or pearl)
- ✓ **zhú**; bamboo
- ✓ **zhǔ**; master
- ✓ **zhù**; to reside

Chapter 2

The Nitty Gritty: Basic Chinese Grammar and Numbers

In This Chapter

- ▶ Getting the hang of the parts of speech
 - ▶ Discovering how to ask questions
 - ▶ Focusing on numbers
-

Maybe you're one of those people who cringe at the mere mention of the word *grammar*. Just the thought of all those rules on how to construct sentences can put you into a cold sweat.

Hey, don't sweat it! This chapter could just as easily be called "Chinese without Tears." It gives you some quick and easy shortcuts on how to combine the basic building blocks of Chinese (which, by the way, are the same components that make up English) — nouns to name things, adjectives to qualify the nouns, verbs to show action or passive states of being, and adverbs to describe the verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. After you know how to combine these parts of any given sentence, you'll be able to express your ideas and interests spanning the past, present, and future.

When you speak English, I bet you don't sit and analyze the word order before opening your mouth to say something. Well, the same can hold true when you begin speaking Chinese. You probably didn't even know the word for grammar before someone taught you that it was the framework for analyzing the structure of a language. Instead of overwhelming you, this chapter makes understanding Chinese grammar as easy as punch.

If you be patient with yourself, have fun following the dialogues illustrating basic sentences, and listen to them on the accompanying CD, you'll do just fine.

The Basics of Chinese Parts of Speech

Admit it. Most of us took the better part of our first two years of life to master the basics when it came to forming English sentences. With this book, you can whittle this same skill in Chinese down to just a few minutes. Just keep reading this chapter. I promise it will save you a lot of time in the long run.

The basic word order of Chinese is exactly the same as in English. Hard to imagine? Just think of it this way: When you say “I love spinach,” you’re using the subject (I), verb (love), object (spinach) sentence order. It’s the same in Chinese. Only in Beijing, it sounds more like **Wǒ xīhuān bōcài** (*waw she hwahn baw tsyé*).

And if that isn’t enough to endear you to Chinese already, maybe these tidbits of information will:

- ✔ You don’t need to conjugate verbs.
- ✔ You don’t need to master verb tenses. (Don’t you just love it already?)
- ✔ You don’t need to distinguish between singular and plural nouns.
- ✔ There’s no such thing as gender-specific nouns.
- ✔ The same word can be both the subject and the object.

How could such news not warm the hearts of all those who’ve had grammar-phobia since grade school? The way you can tell how one part of a Chinese sentence relates to another is generally by the use of particles and what form the word order takes. (Particles, for those of you presently scratching your heads, can be found at the beginning or end of sentences and serve mainly to distinguish different types of emphatic statements but can’t be translated in and of themselves.)



Some interesting characteristics of the Chinese language include the fact that there’s no such thing as first, second, or third person (for example, “I eat” versus “he eats”); no such thing as active or passive voices (for example, “hear” versus “be heard”); and no such thing as past or present (“I like him” versus “I liked him”). In addition, Chinese language has only two aspects — complete and continuous — whereas English has all sorts of different aspects: indefinite, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous, and so on. (Examples include ways of distinguishing between “I eat,” “I ate,” “I will eat,” “I said I would eat,” “I am eating,” and so on.) *Aspects* are what characterize the Chinese language in place of tenses. They refer to how a speaker views an event or state of being.

Nouns

Chinese is just chock-full of nouns:

- ✓ Common nouns that represent tangible things, such as **háizi** (*hi dzuh*; child) or **yè** (*yeh*; leaf)
- ✓ Proper nouns for such things as names of countries or people, like **Fǎguó** (*fah gwaw*; France) and **Zhāng Xiānshēng** (*jahng shyan shung*; Mr. Zhang)
- ✓ Material nouns for such nondiscrete things as **kāfēi** (*kah fay*; coffee) or **jīn** (*jin*; gold)
- ✓ Abstract nouns for such things as **zhèngzhì** (*juhng jir*; politics) or **wénhuà** (*one hwah*; culture)

Pronouns

Pronouns are easy to make plural in Chinese. Here's what you need to know: Just add the plural suffix **-men** to the three basic pronouns:

- ✓ **Wǒ** (*waw*; I/me) becomes **wǒmen** (*waw mun*; we/us).
- ✓ **Nǐ** (*nee*; you) becomes **nǐmen** (*nee mun*; you [plural]).
- ✓ **Tā** (*tah*; he/him, she/her, it) becomes **tāmen** (*tah mun*; they/them).



Sometimes instead of the term **wǒmen** for “us,” you hear the term **zánmen** (*dzah mun*). This word is used in very familiar settings when the speaker wants to include the listener in an action, like when you say **Zánmen zǒu ba** (*dzah mun dzoe bah*; let's go).



When speaking to an elder or someone you don't know too well and the person is someone to whom you should show respect, you need to use the pronoun **nín** (*neen*) instead of the more informal **nǐ** (*nee*). On the other hand, if you're speaking to several people who fit that description, the plural remains **nǐmen** (*nee men*).

Classifiers

Classifiers are sometimes called measure words, even though they don't really measure anything. They actually help classify particular nouns. For example, the classifier **běn** (*bun*) can refer to books, magazines, dictionaries, and just about anything else that's printed and bound like a book. You might hear **Wǒ yào yìběn shū** (*waw yaow ee bun shoo*; I want a book) just as easily as you hear **Wǒ yào kàn yìběn zázhì** (*waw yaow kahn ee bun dzah jir*; I want to read a magazine).

Classifiers are found in between a number (or a demonstrative pronoun such as “this” or “that”) and a noun. They’re similar to English words such as “herd” (of elephants) or “school” (of fish). Although English doesn’t use classifiers too often, in Chinese you find them wherever a number is followed by a noun, or at least an implied noun (such as “I’ll have another one,” referring to a cup of coffee, for example).



Because you have so many potential classifiers to choose from in Chinese, the general rule of thumb is: When in doubt, use **ge** (*guh*). It’s the all-purpose classifier and the one used the most in the Chinese language. You usually can’t go wrong by using **ge**. If you’re tempted to leave a classifier out altogether because you’re not sure which one is the right one, don’t give in to the temptation! You may not be understood at all.

Chinese has lots of different classifiers because they’re each used to refer to different types of things. For example, Table 2-1 lists classifiers for natural objects. Here are some other examples:

- ✓ **gēn** (*gun*): Used for anything looking like a stick, such as a string or even a blade of grass
- ✓ **zhāng** (*jahng*): Used for anything with a flat surface, such as a newspaper, table, or bed
- ✓ **kē** (*kuh*): Used for anything round and tiny, such as a pearl

Table 2-1 Some Typical Classifiers for Natural Objects

<i>Classifier</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Use</i>
duǒ	dwaw	flowers
kē	kuh	trees
lì	lee	grain (of rice, sand, and so on)
zhī	jir	animals, insects, birds
zuò	dzwaw	hills, mountains



Whenever you have a pair of anything, you can use the classifier **shuāng** (*shwahng*). That goes for **yì shuāng kuàizi** (*ee shwahng kwey dzuh*; a pair of chopsticks) as well as for **yì shuāng shǒu** (*ee shwahng show*; a pair of hands). Sometimes a pair is indicated by the classifier **duì** (*dway*), as in **yí duì ěrhuan** (*ee dway are hwahn*; a pair of earrings).

Singular and plural: It's a nonissue

Chinese makes no distinction between singular and plural. If you say the word **shū** (*shoo*), it could mean “book” just as easily as “books.” The only way you know whether it’s singular or plural is if a number followed by a classifier precedes the word **shū**, as in **Wō yǒu sān běn shū** (*waw yo sahn bun shoo*; I have three books).



One way to indicate plurality after personal pronouns **wǒ** (*waw*; I), **nǐ** (*nee*; you), and **tā** (*tah*; he, she, or it) and human nouns such as **háizi** (*hi dzuh*; child) or **xuéshēng** (*shweh shuhng*; student) is by adding the suffix **-men** at the end. It acts as the equivalent of adding an “s” to nouns in English.

Talkin' the Talk

Susan and Michael are looking at a beautiful field.

Susan: **Zhè de fēngjǐng zhēn piàoliàng!**
Jar duh fung jeeng juhn pyaow lyahng.
 This scenery is really beautiful!

Michael: **Nǐ kàn! Nà zuò shān yǒu nàmmē duō shù, nàmmē duō huā.**
Nee kahn! Nah dzwaw shahn yo nummuh dwaw shoo, nummuh dwaw hwah.
 Look! That mountain has so many trees and flowers.

Susan: **Duì le. Nèi kē shù tèbié piàoliàng. Zhè duǒ huā yě hěn yǒu tèshè.**
Dway luh. Nay kuh shoo tuh byeh pyaow lyahng. Jay dwaw hwah yeah hun yo tuh suh.
 You're right. That tree is particularly beautiful. And this flower is also really unique.

Michael: **Nà kē shù shàng yě yǒu sān zhī niǎo.**
Nah kuh shoe lee yeah yo sahn jir nyaow.
 That tree also has three birds in it.



If a number and a measure word already appear in front of a pronoun or human noun, such as **sān ge háizi** (*sahn guh hi dzuh*; three children), don't add the suffix **-men** after **háizi** because plurality is already understood.



Never attach the suffix **-men** to anything not human. People will think you're nuts if you start referring to your two pet cats as **wǒde xiǎo māomen** (*waw duh shyaw maow mun*). Just say **Wǒde xiǎo māo hěn hǎo, xiè xiè** (*waw duh shyaw maow hun how, shyeh shyeh*; My cats are fine, thank you), and that should do the trick.

Definite versus indefinite articles

If you're looking for those little words in Chinese you can't seem to do without in English, such as "a," "an," and "the" — articles, as grammarians call them — you'll find they simply don't exist in Chinese. The only way you can tell if something is being referred to specifically (hence, considered definite) or just generally (and therefore, indefinite) is by the word order. Nouns that refer specifically to something are usually found at the beginning of the sentence, before the verb:

- ✓ **Shū zài nàr.** (*shoo dzye nar*; The book(s) are there.)
- ✓ **Háizimen xǐhuān tā.** (*hi dzuh mun she hwahn tah*; The children like her.)
- ✓ **Pánzi zài zhuōzishàng.** (*pahn dzuh dzye jaw dzuh shahng*; There's a plate on the table.)

Nouns that refer to something more general (and are therefore "indefinite") can more often be found at the end of the sentence, after the verb:

- ✓ **Nǎr yǒu huā?** (*nar yo hwah*; Where are some flowers; Where is there a flower?)
- ✓ **Nǎr yǒu huā.** (*nar yo hwah*; There are some flowers over there; There's a flower over there.)
- ✓ **Zhèige yǒu wèntí.** (*jay guh yo one tee*; There's a problem with this; There are some problems with this.)



There are some exceptions to these rules: If you find a noun at the beginning of a sentence, it may actually refer to something indefinite if the sentence makes a general comment (instead of telling a whole story), like when you see the verb **shì** (*shir*; to be) as part of the comment:

Xióngmāo shì dòngwù. (*shyoong maow shir doong woo*; Pandas are animals.)

Same thing goes if an adjective comes after the noun, such as

Pútáo hěn tián. (*poo taow hun tyan*; Grapes are very sweet.)

Or if there's an auxiliary verb:

Xiǎo māo huì zhuā lǎoshǔ. (*shyaow maow hway jawh laow shoo*; Kittens can catch mice.)

Or a verb indicating that the action occurs habitually:

Niú chī cǎo. (*nyo chir tsaow*; Cows eat grass.)

Nouns that are preceded by a numeral and a classifier, especially when the word **dōu** (*doe*; all) exists in the same breath, are also considered definite:

Sìge xuéshēng dōu hěn cōngmíng. (*suh guh shweh shung doe hun tsoong meeng*; The four students are all very smart.)

If the word **yǒu** (*yo*; to exist) comes before the noun and is then followed by a verb, it can also mean the reference is indefinite:

Yǒu shū zài zhuōzishàng. (*yo shoo dzye jaw dzuh shahng*; There are books on top of the table.)

If you see the word **zhè** (*juh*; this) or **nà** (*nah*; that), plus a classifier used when a noun comes after the verb, it indicates a definite reference:

Wǒ yào mǎi nà zhāng huà. (*waw yaow my nah jahng hwah*; I want to buy that painting.)

Adjectives

As you learned in grade school (you were paying close attention, weren't you?), adjectives describe nouns. The question is where to put them. The general rule of thumb in Chinese is, if the adjective is pronounced with only one syllable, it appears immediately in front of the noun it qualifies:

- ✔ **lǜ chá** (*lyew chah*; green tea)
- ✔ **cháng zhītiáo** (*chahng jir tyaow*; long stick)

If the adjective has two syllables, though, the possessive particle **de** (*duh*) comes between it and whatever it qualifies:

- ✔ **gānjìng de yīfu** (*gahn jeeng duh ee foo*; clean clothes)
- ✔ **cāozá de wǎnhuì** (*tsaow dzah duh wahn hway*; noisy party)

And if a numeral is followed by a classifier, those should both go in front of the adjective and what it qualifies:

- ✓ **yí jiàn xīn yīfu** (*ee jyan shin ee foo*; a [piece of] new clothing)
- ✓ **sān běn yǒuyìsī de shū** (*sahn bun yo ee suh duh shoo*; three interesting books)



One unique thing about Chinese is that when an adjective is also the predicate, appearing at the end of a sentence, it follows the subject or the topic without needing the verb **shì** (*shir*; to be):

- ✓ **Tā de fángzi hěn gānjìng.** (*tah duh fahng dzuh hun gahn jeeng*; His house [is] very clean.)
- ✓ **Nà jiàn yīfu tài jiù.** (*nah jyan ee foo tye jyoe*; That piece of clothing [is] too old.)

Verbs

Good news! You never have to worry about conjugating a Chinese verb in your entire life! If you hear someone say **Tāmen chī Yìdàlì fàn** (*tah men chir ee dah lee fahn*), it could mean “They eat Italian food” just as easily as it could mean “They are eating Italian food.” Table 2-2 lists some common verbs.

<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
chī	chir	to eat
kàn	kahn	to see
mǎi	my	to buy
mài	my	to sell
rènshi	run shir	to know (a person)
shì	shir	to be
yào	yaow	to want/to need
yǒu	yo	to have
zhīdào	jir daow	to know (a fact)
zǒu lù	dzoe loo	to walk
zuò fàn	dzwaw fahn	to cook

To be or not to be: The verb shì

Does the Chinese verb **shì** (*shir*) really mean “to be”? Or is it not to be? It is indeed similar to English in usage because it’s often followed by a noun that defines the topic, such as **Tā shì wōde lǎobǎn** (*tah shir waw duh laow bahn*; He’s my boss) or **Nà shì yǐjū huài huà** (*nah shir ee guh hwyeh hwah*; That’s a bad word).



Be careful not to put the verb **shì** in front of an adjective unless you really mean to make an emphatic statement. In the course of normal conversation, you might say **Nà zhǐ bǐ tài guì** (*nah jir bee tye gway*; That pen [is] too expensive). You wouldn’t say **Nà zhǐ bǐ shì tài guì** (*nah jir bee shir tye gway*) unless you really want to say “That pen IS too expensive!” in which case you’d emphasize the word **shì** when saying it.



To negate the verb **shì**, put the negative prefix **bù** in front of it. “**Shì bú shì?**” (*shir boo shir*; Is it or isn’t it?) “**Zhè bú shì táng cù yú**” (*jay boo shir tahng tsoo yew*; This isn’t sweet and sour fish).

Feeling tense? Le, quò, and other aspect markers

Okay, you can relax now. There’s nothing to get tense about with Chinese because verbs don’t indicate tenses all by themselves. That’s the job of *aspect markers*. Those are little syllables that indicate whether an action has been completed, is continuing, has just begun, and just about everything in between.

Take the syllable **le** (*luh*), for example. It can indicate an action has been completed if it’s used as a suffix to a verb:

- ✔ **Nǐ mǎi le hěnduō shū.** (*nee my luh hun dwaw shoo*; You bought many books.)
- ✔ **Tā dài le tāde yǔsǎn.** (*tah dye luh tah duh yew sahn*; He brought his umbrella.)

And if you want to turn it into a question, just add **méiyǒu** at the end. It automatically negates the action completed by **le**:

- ✔ **Nǐ mǎi le hěnduō shū méiyǒu?** (*nee my luh hun dwaw shoo mayo*; Have you bought many books; Did you buy many books?)
- ✔ **Tā dài le tāde yǔsǎn méiyǒu?** (*tah dye luh tah duh yew sahn mayo*; Did he bring his umbrella?)

There’s also **guò** (*gwaw*). It basically means that something has been done at one point or another even though it’s not happening right now:

- ✔ **Tā qù guò Měiguó.** (*ta chyew gwaw may gwaw*; He has been to America.)
- ✔ **Wǒmen chī guò Fǎguó cài.** (*waw mun chir gwaw fah gwaw tsye*; We have eaten French food before.)

If an action is happening just as you speak, you use the aspect marker **zài** (*dzye*):

- ✓ **Wōmen zài chīfàn.** (*waw mun dzye chir fahn*; We are eating.)
- ✓ **Nǐ māma zài zuòfàn.** (*nee mah mah dzye dzwaw fahn*; Your mother is cooking.)



When using the aspect marker **zài**, you can also add the word **zhèng** (*juhng*) in front of it to add emphasis. It can be translated as “to be right in the middle of” doing something.

If something is or was happening continually and resulted from something else you did, just add the syllable **zhe** (*juh*) to the end of the verb to say things like

- ✓ **Tā dài zhe yíge huáng màozi.** (*tah dye juh ee guh hwahng maow dzuh*; He’s wearing a yellow hat.)
- ✓ **Nǐ chuān zhè yí jiàn piàoliàng de chènshān.** (*nee chwan juh ee jyan pyaow lyahng duh ee foo*; You’re wearing a pretty shirt.)

Another way you can use **zhe** is when you want to indicate two actions occurring at the same time:

Tā zuò zhe chīfàn. (*tah dzwaw juh chir fahn*; She is/was sitting there eating.)

Talkin’ the Talk



Carol and Joe have fun people-watching on the streets of Shanghai.

Carol: **Nǐ kàn! Nàge xiǎo háizi dài zhe yíge hěn qíguài de màozi, shì bú shì?**
Nee kahn! Nah guh shyaow hi dzuh dye juh ee guh hun chee gwye duh maow dzuh, shir boo shir?
 Look! That little kid is wearing a really strange hat, isn’t she?

Joe: **Duì le. Tā hái yìbiān zǒu, yìbiān chàng gē.**
Dway luh. Tah hi ee byan dzoe, ee byan chahng guh.
 Yeah. She’s also singing while she walks.

Carol: **Wǒ méiyǒu kàn guò nàmme kě’ài de xiǎo háizi.**
Waw mayo kahn gwaw nummuh kuh eye duh shyaow hi dzuh.
 I’ve never seen such a cute child.

Joe: Zài Zhōngguó nǐ yǐjīng kàn le tài duō kě'ài de xiǎo háizi.
Dzye joong gwaw nee ee jeeng kahn luh tye dwaw kuh eye duh shyaow hi dzuh.
 You've already seen too many adorable little kids in China.

Words to Know

kě'ài	kuh eye	cute; adorable
shì bú shì?	shir boo shir	Isn't that so?
qíguài	chee gwye	strange
chàng gē	chahng guh	to sing

The special verb: Yǒu (to have)

Do you **yǒu** (*yo*) a computer? No?! Too bad. Everyone else seems to have one these days. How about a Ferrari? Do you **yǒu** one of those? If not, welcome to the club. People who have lots of things use the word **yǒu** pretty often. It means “to have”:

- ✔ **Wǒ yǒu yí wàn kuài qián.** (*waw yo ee wahn kwye chyan*; I have \$10,000.)
- ✔ **Wǒ yǒu sānge fángzi — yíge zài Ōuzhōu, yíge zài Yàzhōu, yíge zài Měiguó.** (*waw yo sahn guh fahng dzuh — ee guh dzye oh joe, ee guh dzye yah joe, ee guh dzye may gwaw*; I have three homes — one in Europe, one in Asia, and one in America.)

Another way **yǒu** can be translated is “there is” or “there are”:

- ✔ **Yǒu hěn duō háizi** (*yo hun dwaw hi dzuh*; There are many children), as opposed to **Wǒ yǒu hěn duō háizi.** (*waw yo hun dwaw hi dzuh*; I have many children.)
- ✔ **Shūzhuōshàng yǒu wǔ zhāng zhǐ.** (*shoo jwaw shahng yo woo jahng jir*; There are five pieces of paper on the desk.)



To negate the verb **yǒu**, you can't use the usual negative prefix **bù**. Instead, you must use another term indicating negation, **méi**:

- ✓ **Méiyǒu hěn duō hái zi.** (*mayo hun dwaw hi dzuh*; There aren't many children.)
- ✓ **Shūzhuōshàng méiyǒu wǔ zhāng zhǐ.** (*shoe jwaw shahng may yo woo jahng jir*; There aren't five pieces of paper on the desk.)

Talkin' the Talk

Ramona and Linda talk about each other's families.

Ramona: **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu xiōngdì jiěmèi?**
Nee yo mayo shyoong dee jyeh may?
 Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Linda: **Wǒ yǒu liǎngge mèimei. Méiyǒu dìdì yě méiyǒu gēge. Nǐ ne?**
Waw yo lyahng guh may may. Mayo dee dee yeah mayo guh guh. Nee nuh?
 I have two younger sisters. I don't have any younger or older brothers. How about you?

Ramona: **Wǒ méiyǒu mèimei. Zhǐ yǒu yíge dìdì.**
Waw mayo may may. Jir yo ee guh dee dee.
 I don't have any younger sisters. Just one younger brother.

Linda: **Yǒu hái zi ma?**
Yo hi dzuh mah?
 Are there any children? (Do you have any children?)

Ramona: **Yǒu. Yǒu sānge hái zi.**
Yo. Yo sahn guh hi dzuh.
 Yes. I have three children.

Words to Know

wǒ yǒu	waw yo	I have
nǐ méiyǒu	nee mayo	you don't have
xiōngdì jiěmèi	shyong dee jyeh may	brothers and/or sisters
háizi	hi dzuh	child/children

Asking for what you want: The verb yào

Ever since the 7-foot-6-inch basketball superstar from China, Yao Ming, came on the scene, the verb **yào** has gotten some great advance publicity in the United States. The character for his name isn't written quite the same as the verb "yào," but at least everyone knows how to pronounce it already: *yow!*

Yào is one of the coolest verbs in Chinese. When you say it, you usually get what you want. In fact, the mere mention of the word **yào** means that you want something:

- ✔ **Wǒ yào yí bēi kāfēi.** (*waw yaow ee bay kah fay*; I want a cup of coffee.)
- ✔ **Wǒ yào gēn nǐ yìqǐ qù kàn diànyǐng.** (*waw yaow gun nee ee chee chyew kahn dyan yeeng*; I want to go to the movies with you.)

You can also give someone an order with the verb **yào**, but only if it's used with a second-person pronoun:

- ✔ **Nǐ yào xiǎoxīn!** (*nee yaow shyaow sheen*; You should be careful!)
- ✔ **Nǐ yào xǐ shǒu.** (*nee yaow she show*; You need to wash your hands.)

Adverbs

Adverbs serve to modify verbs or adjectives and always appear in front of them. The most common ones you find in Chinese are **hěn** (*hun*; very) and **yě** (*yeah*; also).

If you want to say that something is not just **hǎo** (*how*; good), but that it's *very* good, you say it's **hěn hǎo** (*hun how*; very good). If your friend wants to put his two cents in and say that something else is also really good, he says “**Zhèige yě hěn hǎo**” (*jay guh yeah hun how*; This is also very good) because **yě** always comes before **hěn**.



The adverb **yě** always comes not only before the adverb **hěn** but also before the negative prefix **bù**.

Bù and méiyǒu: Total negation

Boo! Scare you? Don't worry. I'm just being negative in Chinese. That's right, the word **bù** is pronounced the same way a ghost might say it (*boo*) and is often spoken with the same intensity.

Bù can negate something you've done in the past or the present (or at least indicate you don't generally do it these days), and it can also help negate something in the future:

- ✔ **Tā xiǎo de shíhòu bù xǐhuān chī shūcài.** (*tah shyaw duh shir ho boo she hwahn chir shoo tsye*; When he was young he didn't like to eat vegetables.)
- ✔ **Wǒ búyào chàng gē.** (*waw boo yaow chahng guh*; I don't want to sing.)
- ✔ **Wǒ bú huà huà.** (*waw boo hwah hwar*; I don't paint.)
- ✔ **Diànyǐngyuàn xīngqīliù bù kāimén.** (*dyan yeeng ywan sheeng chee lyo boo kye mun*; The movie theatre won't be open on Saturday.)



The negative prefix **bù** is usually spoken with a fourth (falling) tone. However, when it precedes a syllable with another fourth tone, it becomes a second (rising) tone instead, as in such words as **búqù** (won't/didn't/doesn't go) and **búyào** (don't/didn't/won't want). (For more about tones, see Chapter 1.)

Méiyǒu is another negative prefix that also goes before a verb. It refers only to the past, though, and means either something didn't happen or at least didn't happen on a particular occasion:

- ✔ **Wǒ méiyǒu kàn nèi bù diànyǐng.** (*waw mayo kahn nay boo dyan yeeng*; I didn't see that movie.)
- ✔ **Zuótiān méiyǒu xiàyǔ.** (*dzwaw tyan mayo shyah yew*; It didn't rain yesterday.)

If the aspect marker **guò** is at the end of the verb **méiyǒu**, it means it never happened (up until now) in the past. By the way, you'll sometimes find that **méiyǒu** is shortened just to **méi**:

- ✓ **Wǒ méi qù guò Fǎguó.** (*waw may chyew gwaw fah gwaw*; I've never been to France.)
- ✓ **Wǒ méi chī guò Yīndù cài.** (*wo may chir gwaw een doo tsye*; I've never eaten Indian food.)

Talkin' the Talk



Harvey, Stella, and Laurie discuss where to go for dinner.

Harvey: **Nǐmen jīntiān wǎnshàng yào búyào qù fànguǎn chīfàn?**
Nee mun jin tyan wahn shahng yaow boo yaow chyew fahn gwahn chir fahn?
 Do you both want to go to a restaurant tonight?

Stella: **Nà tài hǎole. Dāngrán yào.**
Nah tye how luh. Dahng rahh yaow.
 That's a great idea. Of course I'd like to go.

Laurie: **Wǒ búyào. Wǒ méiyǒu qián.**
Waw boo yaow. Waw mayo chyan.
 I don't want to. I have no money.

Harvey: **Wǒ yě méiyǒu qián, dànshì méiyǒu guānxi. Wǒ zhīdào yíge hěn hǎo, hěn piányi de Zhōngguó fànguǎn.**
Waw yeah mayo chyan, dahn shir mayo gwahn she.
Waw jir daow ee guh hun how, hun pyan yee duh joong gwaw fahn gwan.
 I don't have any money either, but it doesn't matter. I know a great but very inexpensive Chinese restaurant.

Laurie: **Hǎo ba. Zánmen zǒu ba.**
How bah. Dzah men dzoe bah.
 Okay. Let's go.

Words to Know

jīntiān wǎnshàng	jīn tyan wahn shahng	tonight
tài hǎole	tye how luh	that's great
dāngrán	dahng rahn	of course
dànshì	dahn shir	but; however
zǒu ba	dzoe bah	let's go

Getting possessive with the particle *de*

The particle **de** is ubiquitous in Chinese. Wherever you turn, there it is. **Wōde tiān!** (*waw duh tyan*; My goodness!) Oops . . . there it is again. It's easy to use. All you have to do is attach it to the end of the pronoun, such as **nīde chē** (*nee duh chuh*; your car), or other modifier, such as **tā gōngsī de jīnglǐ** (*tah goong suh duh jeeng lee*; his company's manager), and — *voilà* — it indicates possession.



The particle **de** acts as an apostrophe “s” (’s) in English when it’s not attached to a pronoun. It also makes the process of modification exactly the opposite of the French possessive “de” or the English “of,” with which you may be tempted to compare it.

Talkin' the Talk

Lorna asks Ali about her computer.

Lorna: **Nīde diànnǎo yǒu méiyǒu yīntèwǎng?**
Nee duh dyan now yo mayo een tuh wahng?
 Does your computer have Internet?

Ali: **Kěxi méiyǒu. Nīde ne?**
Kuh she mayo. Nee duh nuh?
 Unfortunately not. How about yours?

- Lorna: **Dāngrán yǒu.**
Dahng rahn yo.
Definitely.
- Ali: **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu yíge shǒutishi?**
Nee yo mayo ee guh show tee shir?
Do you have a laptop?
- Lorna: **Táishì, shǒutishi, liǎngge dōu yǒu.**
Tye shir, show tee shir, lyahng guh doe yo.
I have both a desktop and a laptop.

Words to Know

wǒ méiyǒu	waw mayo	I don't have
kǎixi	kuh she	too bad; unfortunately
yīntèwǎng	een tuh wahng	Internet
táishì	tye shir	desktop
shǒutíshì	show tee shir	laptop

Asking Questions

There are a couple of easy ways to ask questions in Chinese. Hopefully you're so curious about the world around you these days that you're itching to ask lots of questions once you know how.

The question particle “ma”

By far the easiest way to ask a question is simply to end any given statement with a “**ma**.” That automatically makes it into a question. For example, **Tā chīfàn** (*tah chir fahn*; He's eating/he eats) becomes **Tā chīfàn ma?** (*tah chir fahn mah*; Is he/does he eat?) **Nǐ shuō Zhōngwén** (*nee shwaw joong one*; You speak Chinese) becomes **Nǐ shuō Zhōngwén ma?** (*nee shwaw joong one mah*; Do you speak Chinese?)

Alternate choice questions using *bù* in between repeating verbs

The second way you can ask a question is to repeat the verb in its negative form. The English equivalent is to say something like “Do you eat, not eat?” This format can be used for only a yes or no question, though. For example:

- ✓ **Nǐ shì búshì Zhōngguó rén?** (*nee shir boo shir joong gwaw run*; Are you Chinese?)
- ✓ **Tā yào búyào hái zi?** (*tah yaow boo yaow hi dzuh*; Does he want children?)
- ✓ **Tāmen xǐhuān bùxǐhuān chī Zhōngguó cài?** (*tah men she hwahn boo she hwahn chir joong gwaw tsye*; Do they like to eat Chinese food?)

Interrogative pronouns

The last way to ask questions in Chinese is to use interrogative pronouns. The following are pronouns that act as questions in Chinese:

- ✓ **shéi** (*shay*; who/whom)
- ✓ **shéi de** (*shay duh*; whose)
- ✓ **shénme** (*shummuh*; what)
- ✓ **nǎ** (*nah* + classifier; which)
- ✓ **nǎr** (*nar*; where)
- ✓ **shénme dìfāng** (*shummah dee fahng*; where)



Don't confuse **nǎ** with **nǎr**. That one extra letter makes the difference between saying “which” (**nǎ**) and “where” (**nǎr**).

Figuring out where such interrogative pronouns should go in any given sentence is easy. Just put them wherever the answer would be found. For example:

- ✓ Question: **Nǐ shì shéi?** (*nee shir shay*; Who are you?)
- ✓ Answer: **Nǐ shì wǒ péngyǒu.** (*nee shir waw puhng yo*; You are my friend.)
- ✓ Question: **Tāde nǚpéngyǒu zài nǎr?** (*tah duh nyew puhng yo dzye nar*; Where is his girlfriend?)
- ✓ Answer: **Tāde nǚpéngyǒu zài jiālǐ.** (*tah duh nyew puhng yo dzye jyah lee*; His girlfriend is at home.)

This also goes for the verb-bù-verb pattern. All you have to do to answer that type of question is omit either the positive verb or the negative prefix and the verb following it:

- ✓ Question: **Nǐ hǎo bù hǎo?** (*nee how boo how*; How are you? Literally: Are you good or not good?)
- ✓ Answer: **Wǒ hǎo** (*waw how*; I'm okay) or **Wǒ bùhǎo** (*waw boo how*; I'm not okay).



A way of asking “who” or “which person” without sounding rude or too familiar is to use the term **něi wèi**: *literally*, “which person.” For example, **Nǐ yéye shì něi wèi?** (*nee yeh yeh shir nay way*; Which one is your grandfather?)



You'll often find interrogative pronouns at the beginning of sentences if they're followed by the verb **yǒu** (yo; to exist), such as **Shéi yǒu wǒde bǐ?** (*shay yo waw duh bee*; Who has my pen?)

Talkin' the Talk

Ruth asks Seymour what he thinks of her new car.

- Ruth: **Nǐ xǐhuān bùxǐhuān wǒde xīn qìchē?**
Nee she hwahn boo she hwahn waw duh shin chee chuh?
 Do you like my new car?
- Seymour: **Shéi bùxǐhuān zhè liàng chē? Tā hěn piàoliàng!**
Shay boo she hwahn jay lyahng chuh? Tah hun pyaow lyahng!
 Who wouldn't like this car? It's really beautiful!
- Ruth: **Kěnéng yǒu yìxiē péngyǒu yǐwéi tài guì.**
Kuh nung yo ee shyeh puhng yo ee way tye gway.
 Maybe some friends would think it's too expensive.
- Seymour: **Nà yǒu shénme guānxi?**
Nah yo shumuh gwahn she?
 What difference does that make? (Who cares?)
- Ruth: **Duì le. Nǎr yǒu gèng hǎo de qìchē?**
Dway luh. Nar yo guhng how duh chee chuh?
 You're right. Where could you find a better car?
- Seymour: **Méiyǒu gèng hǎo de qìchē. Nǐde yùnnqì búcuò!**
Mayo guhng how duh chee chuh. Nee duh yewn chee boo tswaw!
 There isn't a better car around. You're really lucky!

Words to Know

xǐhuān	she hwahn	to like
qìchē	chee chuh	car
búcuò	boo tswaw	not bad; really good
yǒu shénme guānxi	yo shummuh gwahn she	What difference does it make?

Counting in Chinese

Figuring out things like how to specify the number of pounds of meat you want to buy at the market, how much money you want to change at the airport, or how much that cab ride from your hotel is really going to cost can be quite an ordeal if you don't know the basic words for numbers.

Numbers from 1 to 10

Learning to count from 1 to 10 in Chinese is as easy as **yī** (*ee*; one), **èr** (*are*; two), **sān** (*sahn*; three). Table 2-3 lists numbers from 1 to 10.

<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
líng	leeng	0
yī	ee	1
èr	are	2
sān	sahn	3
sì	suh	4
wǔ	woo	5
liù	lyo	6

<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
qī	chee	7
bā	bah	8
jiǔ	jyoe	9
shí	shir	10



If the number two comes before a classifier (see the section “Classifiers” earlier in this chapter), use the word **liǎng** rather than **èr**. So you would say that you have **liǎng běn shū** (*lyahng bun shoo*; two books) rather than **èr běn shū** (*are bun shoo*).



Practice saying these numbers by listening to the accompanying CD at bed-time, and you’ll be counting sheep in Chinese in no time.

Numbers from 11 to 99

After the number 10, numbers are created by saying the word 10 followed by the single digit that, when added to it, will combine to create numbers 11 through 19. It’s real easy. For example, 11 is **shíyī** (*shir ee*) — literally, 10 plus 1. Same thing goes for 12, and so on through 19. Table 2-4 lists numbers from 11 to 19.

<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
shíyī	shir ee	11 (literally 10 + 1)
shí’èr	shir are	12 (literally 10 + 2)
shísān	shir sahn	13
shísì	shir suh	14
shíwǔ	shir woo	15
shíliù	shir lyo	16
shíqī	shir chee	17
shíbā	shir bah	18
shíjiǔ	shir jyoe	19

When you get to 20, you have to literally think “two 10s” — plus whatever single digit you want to add to that up until 9 for 21 through 29, as shown in Table 2-5.

<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
èrshí	are shir	20 (literally two 10s)
èrshíyī	are shir ee	21 (two 10s + 1)
èrshí'èr	are shir are	22
èrshísān	are shir sahn	23
èrshísì	are shir suh	24
èrshíwǔ	are shir woo	25
èrshíliù	are shir lyo	26
èrshíqī	are shir chee	27
èrshíbā	are shir bah	28
èrshíjiǔ	are shir jyoe	29

The same basic idea goes for **sānshí** (*sahn shir*; 30; *literally*: three 10s), **sìshí** (*suh shir*; 40), **wǔshí** (*woo shir*; 50), **liùshí** (*lyo shir*; 60), **qīshí** (*chee shir*; 70), **bāshí** (*bah shir*; 80), and **jiǔshí** (*jyoe shir*; 90). What could be easier?

Numbers from 100 to 9,999

After the number 99, you can no longer count by tens.

- ✓ 100 is **yì bǎi** (*ee bye*).
- ✓ 1,000 is **yì qiān** (*ee chyan*).

Chinese people count all the way up to **wàn** (*wahn*; ten thousand) and then repeat up to **yì** (*ee*; a hundred million), unlike in English, where counting goes up to a thousand before being repeated all the way to a million.



Numbers are represented with the higher units of value first. So the number 387 is **sān bǎi bā shí qī** (*sahn bye bah shir chee*). The number 15,492 is **yí wàn wǔ qiān sì bǎi jiǔ shí èr** (*ee wahn woo chyan suh bye jyoe shir are*).



The number one (**yī**) changes its tone from the first (high) to the fourth (falling) tone when followed by a first (high) tone, as in **yì qiān** (*ee chyān*; 1,000), by a second (rising) tone, as in **yì nián** (*ee nyan*; one year), and by a third (low dipping) tone, as in **yì bǎi** (*ee bye*; 100). And it changes to the second (rising) tone when followed by a fourth (falling) tone, as in **yí wàn** (*ee wahn*; 10,000). It remains its original first tone mark only when people count numbers: one, two, three, and so on.

Numbers from 10,000 to 100,000 and beyond

Here are the big numbers:

- ✓ 10,000 is **yí wàn** (*ee wahn*; literally: one unit of ten thousand).
- ✓ 100,000 is **shí wàn** (*shir wahn*; literally: ten units of ten thousand).
- ✓ 1,000,000 is **yì bǎi wàn** (*ee bye wahn*; literally: one hundred units of ten thousand).
- ✓ 100,000,000 is **yí yì** (*ee ee*; one hundred million).



Numbers play an interesting role in everyday speech in China. Sometimes you'll hear someone say emphatically **Nǐ qiānwàn búyào xìn tāde huà** (*nee chyān wahn boo yaow sheen tah duh hwah*; No matter what, you're not to believe what he says!) **Qiān** means one thousand, and **wàn** means ten thousand, but when you put those two words together in front of the negative prefix **bù**, you emphasize a point even more. Another phrase that has been heard often in the Chinese past is the partial phrase **wàn suì!** (*wahn sway*; long live). After that phrase, the person may add the name of someone in power, so you hear something like **Máo zhǔxí wàn suì!** (*maow joo she wahn sway*; Long live Chairman Mao!) These days if you use this expression, you're kind of parodying a phrase taken extremely seriously just a few short decades ago.

How 'bout those halves?

So what happens if you want to add a half to anything? You might be asking yourself this about now. Well, the word for half is **bàn** (*bahn*), and it can either come at the beginning, such as in **bàn bēi kělè** (*bahn bay kuh luh*; a half a glass of cola), or after a number and classifier but before the object to mean “and a half,” such as in **yí ge bàn xīngqī** (*ee guh bahn sheeng chee*; a week and a half).

Ordinal numbers

If you want to indicate the order of something, add the word **dì** (*dee*) before the numeral:

<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
dì yī	dee ee	first
dì èr	dee are	second
dì sān	dee sahn	third
dì sì	dee suh	fourth
dì wǔ	dee woo	fifth
dì liù	dee lyo	sixth
dì qī	dee chee	seventh
dì bā	dee bah	eighth
dì jiǔ	dee jyoe	ninth
dì shí	dee shir	tenth

If a noun follows the ordinal number, a classifier needs to go in between them, such as **dì bā ge xuéshēng** (*dee bah guh shweh shuhng*; the eighth student) or **dì yī ge háizi** (*dee ee guy hi dzuh*; the first child).

Asking how many or how much

There are two ways to ask how much something is or how many of something there are. You can either use the question word **duōshǎo** (*dwaw shaow*), when referring to something for which the answer is probably more than 10, or **jǐ (ge)** (*jee guh*), when referring to something for which the answer is probably going to be less than 10:

- ✓ **Nàge qìchē duōshǎo qián?** (*nah guh chee chuh dwaw shaow chyan*; How much is that car?)
- ✓ **Nǐ xiǎo nǚ'ér jīnnián jǐ suì?** (*nee shyaw nyew are jin nyan jee sway*; How old is your little girl this year?)



Fun & Games

Count to 10 and then to 100 in multiples of 10 by filling in the blanks with the correct numbers. Turn to Appendix C for the answers.

yī

èr

sān

sì

liù

bā

jiǔ

èrshí

sìshí

wǔshí

qīshí

bāshí

yìbǎi

.....

Chapter 3

Introductions and Greetings: Nǐ Hǎo!

In This Chapter

- ▶ Introducing yourself and others
 - ▶ Greeting and chatting with family, friends, and colleagues
-

Nǐ hǎo! (*nee how*; Hello!; How are you?) Those are probably the two most important words you need to know to start a conversation with your Chinese neighbors, with your Chinese in-laws coming into town, with a Chinese classmate, or with airport personnel upon your arrival in China. When you say them, you take the first step in making new friends and establishing contact with just about anybody.

In this chapter, I show you how to start your new connection off with just the right words. The only other thing you have to do is smile. That's something all people understand, no matter what country they're from.

Making Introductions

Nothing beats making new friends at a **wǎnhuì** (*wahn hway*; party), a **xīn gōngzuò** (*sheen goong dzwaw*; new job), on the **ditiě** (*dee tyeh*; subway), or just **zài lùshàng** (*dzye loo shahng*; on the street). You may meet someone right after reading this chapter who becomes a good friend for life. This section gives you a head start in making a good first impression. Go ahead and practice these greetings to get ready for anything.

Acquainting yourself

When you make Chinese acquaintances or travel abroad, you soon discover that a little knowledge of even a few key expressions in their native language goes a long way in creating good will between your two cultures. Chinese people in particular are very appreciative of anyone who takes the time to learn their intricate and difficult language, so your efforts will be rewarded many times over.

You have options other than **nǐ hǎo** (*nee how*; hi; how are you) when you first meet someone, such as **Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ** (*hun gaow sheeng jyan daow nee*; Glad to meet you) or **Wǒ hěn róngxìng** (*waw hun roong sheeng*; I'm honored to meet you). Go ahead and tell the person your **míngzi** (*meeng dzuh*; name) and take the conversation from there.

Don't know what to say after the first **nǐ hǎo**? Here are a few examples of common opening lines to get you started:

- ✓ **Qǐng ràng wǒ jièshào wǒ zìjǐ.** (*cheeng rahng waw jyeh shaow waw dzuh jee*; Please let me introduce myself.)
- ✓ **Wǒ jiào _____. Nǐ ne?** (*waw jyaow ____ nee nuh*; My name is _____. What's yours?)
- ✓ **Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?** (*nee jyaow shumuh meeng dzuh*; What's your name?)
- ✓ **Wǒ shì Měiguórén.** (*waw shir may gwaw run*; I'm an American.)

Introducing your friends and family

You can help your friends make even more friends if you start introducing them to each other. All you have to do is say **Qǐng ràng wǒ jièshào wǒ de péngyǒu, Carl.** (*cheeng rahng waw jyeh shaow waw duh puhng yo, Carl*; Let me introduce my friend, Carl.) In addition to introducing your **péngyǒu** (*puhng yo*; friend), you can also introduce these important people:

- ✓ **māma** (*mah mah*; mother)
- ✓ **bàba** (*bah bah*; father)
- ✓ **tàitai** (*tye tye*; wife)
- ✓ **zhàngfu** (*jahng foo*; husband)
- ✓ **lǎoshī** (*laow shir*; teacher)

- ✓ **tóngwū** (*toong woo*; roommate)
- ✓ **tóngxué** (*toong shweh*; classmate)
- ✓ **wǒde péngyǒu** (*waw duh puhng yo*; my friend)
- ✓ **nán péngyǒu** (*nahn puhng yo*; boyfriend)
- ✓ **nǚ péngyǒu** (*nyew pung yo*; girlfriend)
- ✓ **tóngshì** (*toong shir*; colleague)
- ✓ **lǎobǎn** (*laow bahn*; boss)



When introducing two people to each other, always introduce the one with the lower social status and/or age to the person with the higher social status. The Chinese consider it polite.

Asking people for their names

Many situations call for informal greetings like **Wǒ jiào Sarah. Nǐ ne?** (*waw jyaow Sarah. nee nuh*; My name is Sarah. And yours?) or **Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?** (*nee jyaow shummu meeng dzuh*; What's your name?), but you can show a greater level of politeness and respect by asking **Nín guì xìng?** (*neeng gway sheeng*; literally: What's your honorable surname?) But if you're asking this of someone who's younger than you or lower in social status, you can easily just say **Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?** (*nee jyaow shumma meeng dzuh*; What's your name?) Even though **míngzi** usually means “given name,” when you ask this question, it may elicit an answer of first and last name. Keep practicing these different opening lines to ask who people are and you're bound to make friends quickly (or you're bound to get to know a lot of Chinese names at least).



If someone asks **Nín guì xìng**, don't use the honorific **guì** when you answer, referring to yourself. Your new acquaintance would consider you too boastful. Such a response is like saying “My esteemed family name is Smith.” The best way to answer is to say **Wǒ xìng Smith.** (*waw sheeng Smith*; My family name is Smith.)



If a guy tells you his name in Chinese, you can be sure the first syllable he utters will be his surname, not his given name. So if he says his name is **Lǐ Shimín**, for example, his family name is **Lǐ** and his given name is **Shimín**. You should keep referring to him as **Lǐ Shimín** (rather than just **Shimín**) until you become really good friends. If you want to address him as **Xiānshēng** (*shyan shuhng*; Mr.), or if you're addressing a female as **Xiǎojiě** (*shyaow jyeh*; Miss), you put that title after his or her last name and say **Lǐ Xiānshēng** or **Lǐ Xiǎojiě**. Even though the Chinese language has words for Mr., Miss, and Mrs. (**Tàitài**; *tye tye*), it has no equivalent term for “Ms.” At least not yet.

Talkin' the Talk



Sylvia introduces her friends, Irene and Mel, to each other.

Sylvia: **Irene, qǐng ràng wǒ jièshào wǒde péngyǒu Mel.**
Irene, cheeng rahng waw jyeh shaow waw duh puhng yo Mel.
 Irene, allow me to introduce my friend Mel.

Irene: **Nǐ hǎo. Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ.**
Nee how. Hun gaow sheeng jyan daow nee.
 Hi. Nice to meet you.

Mel: **Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ. Wǒ shì Sylvia de tóngxué.**
Hun gaow sheeng jyan daow nee. Waw shir Sylvia duh toong shweh.
 Good to meet you. I'm Sylvia's classmate.

Irene: **Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ.**
Hun gaow sheeng jyan daow nee.
 Nice to meet you.

Mel: **Nǐmen zénme rènshì?**
Nee mun zummuh run shir?
 How do you happen to know each other?

Irene: **Wǒmen shì tóngshì.**
Waw men shir toong shir.
 We're co-workers.

Greeting and Chatting

When you **dǎ zhāohu** (*dah jaow who*; extend greetings), you're sure to maintain and possibly even improve your connections with others. This goes for starting the day right with your **àirén** (*eye run*; spouse), showing respect for your **lǎoshī** (*laow shir*; teacher), keeping on the good side of your **lǎobǎn** (*laow bahn*; boss), or paving the way for that deal with your new **shēngyì hé lhuǒ rén** (*shuhng yee huh hwaw run*; business partner).

After the opening greeting, stick around to chat for a bit so you can get to know each other better. You can make new friends and find out more about each other through small conversations. This section gives you the important phrases to know.

Addressing new friends and strangers

In your hometown or home country, you may have plenty of **lǎo péngyǒu** (*laow puhng yo; old friends*), but in any other city or country, you need to get off on the right foot by addressing people the way they're used to being addressed. You can get chummier as time goes by, but try to avoid sounding too friendly or presumptuous too soon.

It's always safe to greet people in professional settings by announcing their last name followed by their title, such as **Wáng Xiàozhǎng** (*wahng shyaow jahng; President [of an educational institution] Wang*) or **Jīn Zhūrèn** (*jeen joo run; Director Jin*). Here are some other examples of occupational titles:

- ✓ **bùzhǎng** (*boo jahng; department head or minister*)
- ✓ **fùzhūrèn** (*foo joo run; assistant director*)
- ✓ **jiàoshòu** (*jyaow show; professor*)
- ✓ **jīnglǐ** (*jeeng lee; manager*)
- ✓ **lǎoshī** (*laow shir; teacher*)

If you don't know someone's title, you can safely address the person by saying his or her family name and then either **Xiānshēng** (*shyan shuhng; Mr.*) or **Xiǎojiě** (*shyaow jyeh; Miss*).



One of the perks of getting to know someone's family in China is that the person often instructs his or her young children to address an older person as **shúshu** (*shoo shoo; uncle*) or **āyí** (*ah yee; aunt*). It makes you feel like you're part of the family in a new country.



Sometimes people add the terms **lǎo** (*laow; old*) or **xiǎo** (*shyaow; young*) in front of the last name and omit the first name completely. It indicates a comfortable degree of familiarity and friendliness that can only develop over time. But make sure you know which one to use — **lǎo** is for someone who's older than you, and **xiǎo** is for someone who's younger than you. Sometimes these names can sound kind of funny to non-Chinese. If someone's surname is pronounced **Yáng** (*yahng*), which sounds like the word for goat, you may end up sounding like you're calling the person an old goat when you become good friends.

Conversing around the clock

You can always say **nǐ hǎo** (*nee how; hi; how are you*) when you meet someone, but at certain times of the day, you can use specific ways to express your greetings.



A word about culturally acceptable behavior

The Chinese are very friendly people and sometimes don't hesitate to come up to a foreigner on the street in order to practice their English. This can be a great chance to practice your Chinese as well. You have all sorts of cultural differences to get used to, however, so don't be surprised if a person you meet for the first time starts asking you about your salary or the cost of that cute sweater you're wearing. Subjects that are taboo as conversation pieces in the United States aren't off limits in China. (**Note:** Try not to inquire about a person's political views or love life unless you know the person really well, or you may hit a brick wall.)

In general, Chinese people are loath to show negative emotions in public. Anger and disappointment or disapproval are major no-nos. Try to do the same when you're in a Chinese setting, because you may run the risk of insulting someone unintentionally. To do so means that you make them lose face — a cardinal sin if you want to get along in China. The last thing you want to do is insult, yell at, or otherwise embarrass anyone publicly, so keep a lid on any negative reactions you may have. You earn respect by controlling your emotions.

You may be surprised that many Chinese have no compunction about performing certain bodily

functions in public. The Chinese don't consider it rude, for example, to belch, spit, or even pass gas in front of others. And because there's no such thing as a nonsmoking area, most smokers don't even think to ask if you mind them lighting up near you. In addition to all these things that tend to offend foreigners, you may find people pointing or even staring at you — especially in smaller towns and villages, which rarely get foreign visitors. These behaviors are considered perfectly acceptable, so don't let them get your dander up. Just go with the flow and offer a polite smile in return.

The Chinese have a different idea about keeping a certain polite physical distance when speaking to someone. It isn't uncommon to find someone standing or sitting pretty close to you, no matter how much you keep trying to inch away. And if you find two friends of the same sex walking arm in arm or holding hands, don't jump to any conclusions. It just means that they're friends.

Note: Avoid slaps on the back to Chinese people you don't know well, no matter how excited you are to meet them. And when dealing with members of the opposite sex, any physical contact with folks you don't know too well will be misinterpreted, so try to avoid it.

In the morning when you meet family, friends, co-workers, or fellow students in class, you can say **zǎo** (*dzaow*; good morning) or **zǎo ān** (*dzaow ahn*; good morning; *literally*: early peace).

In the evening or before you go to sleep, you can say **wǎn ān** (*wahn ahn*; good night). Just as **zǎo** means *early*, **wǎn** means *late*. So if someone says **Nǐ lái de tài wǎn** (*nee lye duh tye wahn*) or **Nǐ lái de tài zǎo** (*nee lye duh tye dzaow*), he means “You came too late” or “You came too early.”

Talkin' the Talk



Ricky and Norman are good friends who meet in front of school one morning. Norman introduces Ricky to a new student named Lǐ.

- Norman: **Zǎo. Nǐ zěnmē yàng?**
Dzaw. Nee dzummuh yahng?
 Good morning. How's it going?
- Ricky: **Hěn hǎo, xièxiè. Nǐ ne?**
Hun how, shyeh shyeh. Nee nuh?
 Very well, thanks. And you?
- Norman: **Wǒ yě hěn hǎo. Zhè wèi shì wǒmen de xīn tóngxué.**
Waw yeah hun how. Jay way shir waw mun duh sheen tong shweh.
 I'm good, too. This is our new classmate.
- Ricky: **Nǐ hǎo. Qǐng wèn, nǐ xìng shénme?**
Nee how. Cheeng one, nee sheeng shummu?
 Hi. What's your (sur)name?
- Lǐly: **Wǒ xìng Lǐ. Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?**
Waw sheeng Lǐ. Nee jyaow shummu meeng dzuh?
 My last name is Lǐ. What's your (first) name?
- Ricky: **Wǒ jiào Ricky. Nǐ xué shénme?**
Waw jyaow Ricky. Nee shweh shummu?
 My name is Ricky. What do you study?
- Lǐly: **Wǒ xué lìshǐ. Nǐ ne?**
Waw shweh lee shir. Nee nuh?
 I study history. How about you?
- Ricky: **Wǒ xué kuàijì.**
Waw shweh kwye jee.
 I study accounting.

Words to Know

míngzi	meeng dzuh	first name
xìng	sheeng	last name
tóngxué	toong shweh	classmate
xué	shweh	to study
yǔyīnxué	yew een shweh	linguistics
lìshǐ	lee shir	history
gōngchéng	goong chuhng	engineering
kuàiji	kwye jee	accounting

Talking about the weather

Talking about the **tiānqì** (*tyan chee*; weather) is always a safe topic in any conversation. In fact, it's kind of the universal ice breaker. If the skies are blue and all seems right with the world, you can start by saying “**Jìntiān de tiānqì zhēn hǎo, duì bú duì?**” (*jìn tyan duh tyan chee juhn how, dway boo dway*; The weather today is sure nice, isn't it?) Here are some adjectives to describe temperature and humidity:

- ✓ **lěng** (*lung*; cold)
- ✓ **liángkuài** (*lyahng kwee*; cool)
- ✓ **mēnrè** (*mun ruh*; muggy)
- ✓ **nuǎnhuó** (*nwan hwaw*; warm)
- ✓ **rè** (*ruh*; hot)



If the weather is hot, you can use the word **rè** to describe it. But if your food is spicy, which you sometimes refer to as “hot” in English, you can't use **rè** to describe it. You have to say it's **là** (*lah*) instead. And if your food is too hot (in terms of temperature) to even put into your mouth, you say it's **tàng** (*tahng*).

The **sìjì** (*suh jee*; four seasons) — **dōngtiān** (*doong tyan*; winter), **chūntiān** (*chwun tyan*; spring), **xiàtiān** (*shyah tyan*; summer), and **qiūtiān** (*chyō tyan*; fall) — all have their charms. They also all have their distinctive characteristics when it comes to the weather, which you can express with the following words in any conversation:

- ✓ **bàofēngxuě** (*baow fuhng shweh*; blizzard)
- ✓ **dàfēng** (*dah fuhng*; gusty winds)
- ✓ **duōyún** (*dwaw yewn*; cloudy)
- ✓ **fēng hěn dà** (*fuhng hun dah*; windy)
- ✓ **léiyǔ** (*lay yew*; thunderstorm)
- ✓ **qínglǎng** (*cheeng lahng*; sunny)
- ✓ **qíngtiān** (*cheeng tyan*; clear)
- ✓ **xià máomáoyǔ** (*shyah maow maow yew*; drizzle)
- ✓ **xiàwù** (*shyah woo*; fog)
- ✓ **xiàxuě** (*shyah shweh*; snow)
- ✓ **xiàyǔ** (*shyah yew*; rainy)
- ✓ **yīntiān** (*yeen tyan*; overcast)

Talkin' the Talk

Jean and Bill discuss the weather in Harbin, one of the coldest places in northern China.

- Jean: **Hā'ěrbīn dōngtiān hěn lěng. Chángcháng xiàxuě.**
Hah are been doong tyan hun lung. Chahng chahng shyah shweh.
 Harbin is very cold in the winter. It snows often.
- Bill: **Zhēnde ma?**
Jun duh mah?
 Really?
- Jean: **Zhēnde. Yě yǒu bàofēngxuě. Xiàtiān hái hǎo. Bǐjiào nuǎnhuó.**
Jun duh. Yeh yo baow fuhng shweh. Shyah tyan hi how. Bee jyaow nwan hwaw.
 Really. There are also blizzards. Summertime is okay, though. It's relatively warm.

Bill: **Lěng tiān kényǐ qù huáxuě, hái kényǐ qù liǔbīng.**
Nèmme Hā'ěrbin dōngtiān de shíhòu hěn hào wán.
Lung tyan kuh yee chyew hwah shweh, hi kuh yee chyew lyo beeng. Nummah hah are been doong tyan duh shir ho hun how wahn.
 In cold weather, you can go skiing or ice skating. So Harbin during the winter is a lot of fun.

Finding out where people are from

It's natural to wonder where people are from when you first meet them. Maybe they hail from your hometown. Maybe your new friend's mother and your father went to the same high school way back when. Either way, whatever motivates you to pose the question, you ask it by saying “**Nǐ shì nǎr de rén?**” (*nee shir nar duh ren*; Where are you from?)



To answer this question, you replace the word **nǐ** (*nee*; you) with **wǒ** (*waw*; I) and put the name of wherever you're from where the word **nǎr** is.



People in Taiwan say **nǎlǐ** (*nah lee*) rather than **nǎr** (*nar*) for the word “where.” **Nǎr** indicates a northern accent and is used primarily by people from mainland China.

Here's a list of countries that may come up in conversation:

- ✓ **Fǎguó** (*fah gwaw*; France)
- ✓ **Měiguó** (*may gwaw*; America)
- ✓ **Rìběn** (*ir bun*; Japan)
- ✓ **Ruìdiǎn** (*rway dyan*; Sweden)
- ✓ **Ruìshì** (*rway shir*; Switzerland)
- ✓ **Yìdàlì** (*ee dah lee*; Italy)
- ✓ **Yuènnán** (*yweh nahn*; Vietnam)
- ✓ **Zhōngguó** (*joong gwaw*; China)

Talkin' the Talk

Cynthia has just introduced herself to Adrienne at their mutual friend's house. Cynthia asks Adrienne where she is from.

Cynthia: **Adrienne, nǐ shì nǎr de rén?**
Adrienne, nee shir nar duh run?
 Adrienne, where are you from?

Adrienne: **Wǒ shì Jiāzhōu rén. Nǐ ne?**
Waw shir jyah joe run. Nee nuh?
 I'm from California. How about you?

Cynthia: **Wǒ búshì Měiguó rén. Wǒ shì Yīngguó Lúndūn láide.**
Waw boo shir may gwaw run. Waw shir eeng gwaw lwun dun run.
 I'm not American. I'm from London, England.

Adrienne: **Nà tài hǎole.**
Nah tye how luh.
 That's great.

Words to Know

Jiāzhōu	jyah joe	California
Měiguó rén	may gwaw run	American
Yīngguó	eeng gwaw	England
Nà tài hǎole	nah tye how luh	That's great

Taking (a.k.a. rejecting) compliments

Chinese people are always impressed whenever they meet a foreigner who has taken the time to learn their language. So when you speak **Zhōngwén** (*joong one*; Chinese) to a **Zhōngguó rén** (*joong gwaw run*; Chinese person), he may very well say **Nǐ de Zhōngwén tài hǎo le**. (*nee duh joong one tye how luh*; Your Chinese is fantastic.) Instead of patting yourself on the back, however, you should be slightly self-deprecating in your response (see Chapter 18 for more things you should never do). Don't give in to the temptation to accept the compliment easily and say **xiè xiè** (*shyeh shyeh*; thanks), because that implies that you agree wholeheartedly with the complimentary assessment. Instead, try one of the following replies. Each of them can be roughly translated as “It’s nothing” or the equivalent of “No, no, I don’t deserve any praise”:

- ✔ **guò jiǎng guò jiǎng** (*gwaw jyahng gwaw jyahng*)
- ✔ **ná lǐ ná lǐ** (*nah lee nah lee*)
- ✔ **nǎr de huà** (*nar duh hwah*)

Saying goodbye

When it comes time to say goodbye, you can always say **zài jiàn** (*dzye jyan*; goodbye). If you’re just leaving for a little while and plan to be back soon, you can say **yǐhuǐ jiàn** (*ee hwahr jyan*; see you in a bit). And if you won’t see someone until the next day, you can say **míngtiān jiàn** (*meeng tyan jyan*; see you tomorrow). For a quick “see you later,” you can say **huítóu jiàn** (*hway toe jyan*). Here’s a list of other phrases you can use to say goodbye:

- ✔ **huítóu jiàn** (*hway toe jyan*; see you later)
- ✔ **míngnián jiàn** (*meeng nyan jyan*; see you next year)
- ✔ **míngtiān jiàn** (*meeng tyan jyan*; see you tomorrow)
- ✔ **xiàgè líbài jiàn** (*shyah guh lee bye jyan*; see you next week)
- ✔ **xīngqī’èr jiàn** (*sheeng chee are jyan*; see you on Tuesday)
- ✔ **yǐhuǐ jiàn** (*ee hwahr jyan*; see you soon)
- ✔ **yí lù píng’ān** (*ee loo peeng ahn*; have a good trip)
- ✔ **zài jiàn** (*dzye jyan*; goodbye)



The importance of the common good

In China, the collective always comes before the individual. The Chinese are certainly not as self-centered as Westerners and generally subordinate their individual desires in favor of the greatest common good, whether the “common good” refers to the good of the family, the class at school, or co-workers. You even see this mentality in the way envelopes are addressed — the country first, followed by the province, the city, the street address, and then,

on the last line, the person’s name to whom it is addressed. And even on that last line, the person’s name is written with the family name first and the given name last. The same holds true for the way people refer to where they’re from — the larger unit always comes before the smaller. That’s why a person would say, for example, that he’s from **Yīngguó Lúndūn** (*eeng gwaw lwun dun*; England, London) rather than London, England, as you say in English.

Talkin’ the Talk

Christopher runs into his history professor in the morning after the conclusion of class.

Christopher: **Lǎoshī zǎo.**
Laow shir dzaow.
Good morning, Professor.

Professor: **Zǎo. Nǐ hǎo.**
Dzaow. Nee how.
Good morning. Hello.

Christopher: **Jīntiān de tiānqì hěn hǎo, duì búduì?**
Jin tyan duh tyan chee hun how, dway boo dway?
The weather today is great, isn’t it?

Professor: **Duì le. Hěn hǎo.**
Dway luh. Hun how.
Yes, it is. It’s very nice.

Christopher: **Nèmme, míngtiān shàngkè de shíhòu zài jiàn.**
Nummuh, meeng tyan shahng kuh duh shir ho dzye jyan.
So, I’ll see you again in class tomorrow.

Professor: **Hǎo. Míngtiān jiàn.**
How. Meeng tyan jyan.
Okay. See you tomorrow.



Fun & Games

Here's a list of words that got loose. See if you can put them back where they belong in the following text and dialogue.

míngzi, bàofēngxuě, jiàn, Déguó rén, hǎo

Zǎo. Nǐ _____. Wǒde _____ jiào John. Wǒ shì _____. Jīntiān de tiānqì hěn hǎo. Méiyǒu _____. Huítóu _____.

The answers are in Appendix C.

Match the situation with the appropriate expression. You can find the answers in Appendix C.

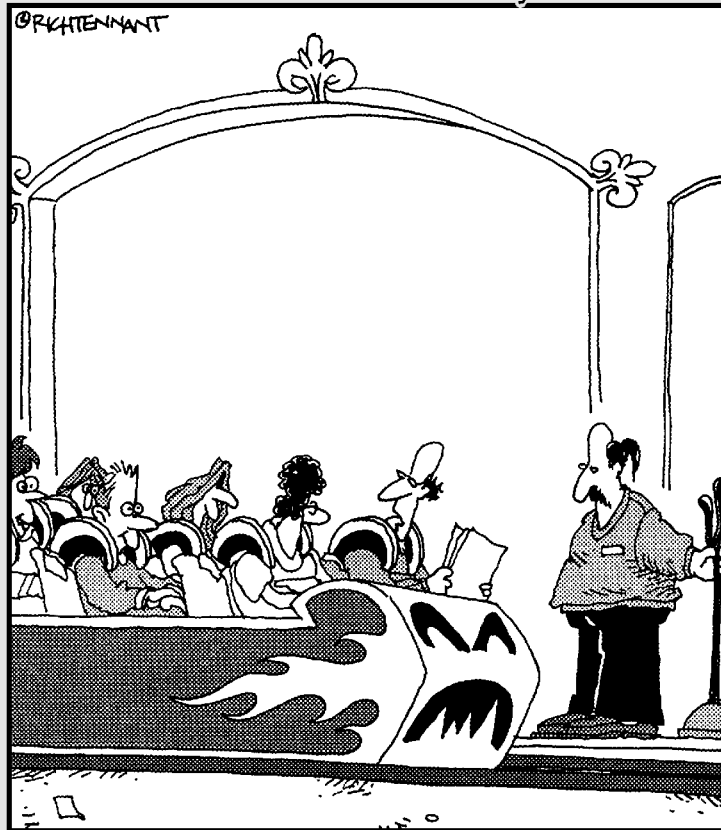
- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. You see someone again after a long time. | a. Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ. |
| 2. You see your friend in the evening. | b. Yí lù píng'ān. |
| 3. You see your teacher in the morning. | c. Hǎo jiǔ méi jiàn. |
| 4. Someone compliments you on your new hair style. | d. Wǎn ān. |
| 5. Someone introduces you to his brother. | e. Zǎo. |
| 6. Your best friend is about to board a plane for France. | f. Nǎr de huà. |

Part II

Chinese in Action

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



"I'll be screaming in Chinese throughout the ride.
It helps me affect the proper inflections."

In this part . . .

This part helps you jump right in to everyday activities: shooting the breeze with friends, eating, drinking, shopping 'til you drop, working at the office, hanging out at home, and just plain ol' enjoying your spare time. I cover it all so that you can do it in Chinese. Choose your favorite topic and start putting your Chinese into action!

Chapter 4

Getting to Know You: Making Small Talk

In This Chapter

- ▶ Exchanging friendly banter with someone you just met
- ▶ Yakking on the job
- ▶ Sharing information about your home

Small talk can really break the ice when you're interacting with someone you've just met or barely know. It's how you get to know someone, have a brief chat with the man on the plane sitting next to you, or get acquainted with the folks you'll be working with. This chapter helps you master a few key phrases and questions you can use to establish a relationship.

Xiánliáo (*shyan lyaow*) means “small talk” in Chinese. **Xiántán** (*shyan tahn*) is “to chat” . . . either term does the trick.

Establishing a Connection

A surefire way of initiating a conversation is to ask someone a question. Here are some basic question words to keep in mind as you approach the moment of acquaintance:

- ✓ **Shéi** (*shay*; Who?)
- ✓ **Shénme?** (*shummuh*; What?)
- ✓ **Zài nǎr?** (*dzye nar*; Where?)
- ✓ **Shénme shíhòu?** (*shummuh shir ho*; When?)
- ✓ **Wèishénme?** (*way shummuh*; Why?)
- ✓ **Zěnme?** (*dzummuh*; How?)
- ✓ **Duō jiǔ?** (*dwaw jyoe*; For how long?)

Here are a few examples of how to use these question words in simple sentences — sometimes you can also use some of them on their own, just as in English:

- ✓ **Tā shì shéi?** (*tah shir shay*; Who is he/she?)
- ✓ **Nǐ yào shénme?** (*nee yaow shummu*; What would you like?)
- ✓ **Jǐ diǎn zhōng?** (*jee dyan joong*; What time is it?)
- ✓ **Cèsuǒ zài nǎr?** (*tsuh swaw dzye nar*; Where's the bathroom?)
- ✓ **Nǐ shénme shíhòu chīfàn?** (*nee shummu shir ho chir fahn*; When do you eat?)
- ✓ **Nǐ wèishénme yào qù Zhōngguó?** (*nee way shummu yaow chyew joong gwaw*; Why do you want to go to China?)
- ✓ **Nǐ zěnmē yàng?** (*nee zummuh yahng*; How's it going?)
- ✓ **Nǐ yǐjīng zài zhèr duō jiǔ le?** (*nee ee jeeng dzye jar dwaw jyoe luh*; How long have you been here already?)
- ✓ **Xiànzài jǐ diǎn zhōng?** (*shyan dzye jee dyan joong*; What time is it now?)

You can also use the following responses to the questions in the preceding list if someone happens to approach you. These statements are the basics of small talk and really come in handy when you're learning a foreign language:

- ✓ **Wǒ bùdǒng.** (*waw boo doong*; I don't understand.)
- ✓ **Wǒ bùzhīdào.** (*waw boo jir daow*; I don't know.)
- ✓ **Wǒ bùrènshi tā.** (*waw boo run shir tah*; I don't know him/her.)
- ✓ **Duìbùqǐ.** (*dway boo chee*; Excuse me.)
- ✓ **Hěn bàoqiàn.** (*hun baow chyan*; I'm so sorry.)

Talkin' the Talk



Molly doesn't have a watch and wants to know what time it is. She asks a man on the street.

Molly: **Duìbùqǐ. Qǐngwèn, xiànzài jǐdiǎn zhōng?**
Dway boo chee. Cheeng one, shyan dzye jee dyan joong?
 Excuse me. May I ask, what time is it?

Man: **Xiànzài yīdiǎn bàn.**
Shyan dzye ee dyan bahn.
 It's 1:30.

- Molly: **Hǎo. Xièxiè nǐ.**
How. Shyeh shyeh nee.
Great. Thank you.
- Man: **Bú kèqì.**
Boo kuh chee.
You're welcome.
- Molly: **Máfan nǐ, sì lù chēzhàn zài nǎr?**
Mah fahn nee, suh loo chuh jahn dzye nar?
Sorry to trouble you again, but where's the #4 bus stop?
- Man: **Chēzhàn jiù zài nàr.**
Chuh jahn jyoe dzye nar.
The bus stop is just over there.
- Molly: **Hǎo. Xièxiè.**
How. Shyeh shyeh.
Okay. Thanks.
- Man: **Méi wèntí.**
May one tee.
No problem.

Words to Know

Xiànzài jǐ diǎn zhōng?	shyan dzye jee dyan joong	What time is it?
chēzhàn	chuh jahn	bus stop
méi wèntí	may one tee	no problem

Posing simple introductory questions

The following is a list of simple questions you can use when you meet people. (To find out how to respond, or to talk about yourself, flip back to Chapter 3.)

- ✔ **Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?** (*nee jyaow shummu meeng dzuh*; What's your name?)
- ✔ **Nǐ niánjì duō dà?** (*nee nyan jee dwaw dah*; How old are you?)
- ✔ **Nǐ zhù zài nǎr?** (*nee joo dzye nar*; Where do you live?)
- ✔ **Nǐ jiéhūn le méiyǒu?** (*nee jyeh hwun luh mayo*; Are you married?)
- ✔ **Nǐ yǒu hái zi ma?** (*nee yo hi dzuh mah*; Do you have children?)
- ✔ **Nǐ zuò shénme gōngzuò?** (*nee dzwaw shummu goong dzwaw*; What kind of work do you do?)
- ✔ **Nǐ huì jiǎng Zhōngwén ma?** (*nee hway jahng joong one mah*; Do you speak Chinese?)
- ✔ **Nǐ xǐhuān kàn diànyǐng ma?** (*nee she hwahn kahn dyan yeeng mah*; Do you like to see movies?)
- ✔ **Nǐ shénme shíhòu zǒu?** (*nee shummu shir ho dzoe*; When are you leaving?)
- ✔ **Jīntiān de tiānqì zěnme yàng?** (*jeen tyan duh tyan chee zummuh yahng*; How's the weather today?)

Chatting about family

If you want to talk about your family when answering questions or making small talk, you need to know these common words:

- ✔ **àirén** (*eye run*; spouse — used mostly in mainland China [as opposed to Taiwan])
- ✔ **tàitai** (*tye tye*; wife — used mostly in Taiwan)
- ✔ **qīzi** (*chee dzuh*; wife)
- ✔ **zhàngfu** (*jahng foo*; husband)
- ✔ **fùmǔ** (*foo moo*; parents)
- ✔ **xiōngdì jiěmèi** (*shyoong dee jyeh may*; brothers and sisters)
- ✔ **mǔqīn** (*moo cheen*; mother)
- ✔ **fùqīn** (*foo cheen*; father)
- ✔ **háizi** (*hi dzuh*; children)
- ✔ **érzi** (*are dzuh*; son)
- ✔ **nǚ'ér** (*nyew are*; daughter)

- ✔ **zǔfù** (*dzoo foo*; grandfather)
- ✔ **zǔmǔ** (*dzoo moo*; grandmother)
- ✔ **sūnzi** (*swun dzuh*; grandson)
- ✔ **sūnnǚ** (*swun nyew*; granddaughter)

Talkin' the Talk

Lǐ Huá meets her daughter's classmate, Beverly, and she asks about Beverly's family.

Lǐ Huá: **Beverly, nǐ yǒu méiyǒu xiōngdì jiěmèi?**
Beverly, nee yo mayo shyoong dee jyeh may?
 Beverly, do you have any brothers or sisters?

Beverly: **Wǒ yǒu yíge jiějie. Tā shíwǔ suì. Bǐ wǒ dà liǎngsuì.**
Waw yo ee guh jyeh jyeh. Tah shir woo sway. Bee waw dah lyahng sway.
 I have an older sister. She's 15. She's two years older than me.

Lǐ Huá: **Tā yě huì jiǎng Zhōngwén ma?**
Tah yeah hway jyahng joong one mah?
 Can she also speak Chinese?

Beverly: **Búhuì. Tā zhǐ huì Yīngyǔ.**
Boo hway. Tah jir hway eeng yew.
 No. She only speaks English.

Lǐ Huá: **Nǐde fùmǔ zhù zài nǎr?**
Nee duh foo moo joo dzye nar?
 Where do your parents live?

Beverly: **Wǒmen dōu zhù zài Běijīng. Wǒ bàba shì wàijiāoguān.**
Waw mun doe joo dzye bay jeeng. Waw bah bah shir why jyaow gwan.
 We all live in Beijing. My father is a diplomat.

Lǐ Huá: **Nà tài hǎo le.**
Nah tye how luh.
 That's great.

Words to Know

jiǎng	jyahng	to talk
zhù	joo	to live
wàijiāoguān	why jyaow gwahn	diplomat
Yīngyǔ	eeng yew	English
Zhōngwén	joong one	Chinese

Making Small Talk on the Job

The kind of job you have can say plenty about you. It can also be a great topic of conversation or spice up an otherwise dull exchange. To ask someone about his or her **gōngzuò** (*goong dzwaw*; work), you can say, “**Nǐ zuò shénme gōngzuò?**” (*nee dzwaw shummuh goong dzwaw*; What kind of work do you do?) You may even try to guess and say, for example, “**Nǐ shì lǎoshī ma?**” (*nee shir laow shir mah*; Are you a teacher?)

The following are some occupations you or the person you’re talking with may hold:

- ✓ **lǎoshī** (*laow shir*; teacher)
- ✓ **jiàoshòu** (*jyaow show*; professor)
- ✓ **lǚshī** (*lyew shir*; lawyer)
- ✓ **yīshēng** (*ee shung*; doctor)
- ✓ **hùshì** (*who shir*; nurse)
- ✓ **biānjí** (*byan jee*; editor)
- ✓ **kuàijì** (*kwey jee*; accountant)
- ✓ **shuǐnuǎngōng** (*shway nwan goong*; plumber)
- ✓ **diàngōng** (*dyan goong*; electrician)
- ✓ **yǎnyuán** (*yan ywan*; actor)
- ✓ **zhǔguǎn** (*joo gwan*; CEO)

- ✔ **fēixíngyuán** (*fay sheeng ywan*; pilot)
- ✔ **chéngwùyuyuán** (*chuhng woo ywan*; flight attendant)
- ✔ **hǎiguān guānyuán** (*hi gwan gwan ywan*; customs agent)
- ✔ **lièchēyuán** (*lyeh chuh ywan*; train conductor)
- ✔ **jiēxiànyuán** (*jyeh shyan ywan*; telephone operator)
- ✔ **qiántái fúwùyuyuán** (*chyan tye foo woo ywan*; receptionist)
- ✔ **kèfáng fúwùyuyuán** (*kuh fahng foo woo ywan*; housekeeper)
- ✔ **chūnàyuán** (*choo nah ywan*; bank teller)
- ✔ **yóudìyuán** (*yo dee ywan*; mail carrier)
- ✔ **cáifeng** (*tsye fung*; tailor)

The following are some useful job terms and job-related expressions:

- ✔ **bàn rì gōngzuò** (*bahn ir goong dzwaw*; part-time work)
- ✔ **quán rì gōngzuò** (*chwan ir goong dzwaw*; full-time work)
- ✔ **shīyè** (*shir yeh*; unemployed)
- ✔ **miànshì** (*myan shir*; interview)
- ✔ **jīnglǐ** (*jeeng lee*; manager)
- ✔ **gùyuán** (*goo ywan*; employee)
- ✔ **gùzhǔ** (*goo joo*; employer)



In China, your **dānwèi** (*dahn way*; work unit) is an important part of your life. (This term refers to your place of work, which can be anywhere in the country. Your **dānwèi** is the group that's responsible for both taking care of you and being responsible for any missteps you happen to make.) In fact, when people ask you to identify yourself over the phone, they often say “**Nǐ nǎr?**” (*nee nar*; literally: Where are you from?) to find out what **dānwèi** you belong to. Under Chairman Mao Zedong (the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, who founded the People's Republic of China in 1949), people were assigned jobs right out of high school and didn't even think of marrying until they knew the location of their assignment. They could've been given a job in the northern hinterlands of China, and their fiancées could've been sent south — only to see each other once a year during the Chinese New Year. The **dānwèi** continues to provide housing for its employees and also enforces government policies, such as the one-child-per-family policy. You need the unit's permission to get married, have a child, or receive any government benefits.

Talkin' the Talk



Yáng and Xiǎo Liú discuss their respective professions, which are quite different from each other. Xiǎo Liú is a nurse in a city located in Henan Province, not far from the famed Shaolin Temple.

- Xiǎo Liú: **Yáng, nǐ zuò shénme gōngzuò?**
Yahng, nee dzwaw shummuuh goong dzwaw?
 Yang, what kind of work do you do?
- Yáng: **Wǒ shì lánqiú duìyuán.**
Waw shir lahn chyo dway ywan.
 I'm a basketball player.
- Xiǎo Liú: **Nà hěn yǒuyisi.**
Nah hun yo ee suh.
 That's very interesting.
- Yáng: **Nǐ ne?**
Nee nuh?
 How about you?
- Xiǎo Liú: **Wǒ shì hùshì. Wǒ zài Kāifēng dìyī yīyuàn gōngzuò.**
Waw shir hoo shir. Waw dzye Kye fung dee ee ee ywan goong dzwaw.
 I'm a nurse. I work at Kaifeng's No. 1 Hospital.
- Yáng: **Nán bùnnán?**
Nahn boo nahn?
 Is it difficult?
- Xiǎo Liú: **Bùnnán. Wǒ hěn xǐhuān wǒde zhíyè.**
Boo nahn. Waw hun she hwahn waw duh jir yeh.
 It's not difficult. I really like my profession.

Words to Know

zhīyè	jīr yeh	profession
nán	nahn	difficult
xǐhuān	she hwahn	to like; to enjoy
yīyuàn	ee ywan	hospital
gōngzuò	goong dzwaw	to work
hùshī	hoo shir	nurse

Talking About Where You Live

After folks get to know each other through small talk, they may exchange addresses and phone numbers to keep in touch. That introductory question covered earlier in this chapter, “**Nǐ zhù zài nǎr?**” (*nee joo dzye nar*; Where do you live?), may pop up. You may also want to ask a few of these questions:

- ✔ **Nǐde dìzhǐ shì shénme?** (*nee duh dee jir shir shummu*; What’s your address?)
- ✔ **Nǐde diànhuà hàomǎ duōshǎo?** (*nee duh dyan hwah how mah dwaw shaow*; What’s your phone number?)
- ✔ **Nǐ shénme shíhòu zài jiā?** (*nee shummu shir ho dzye jyah*; When will you be at home?/When are you home?)

You may also talk about your home from time to time. These words and phrases can come in handy:

- ✔ **Wǒmen zhù de shì fángzi.** (*waw mun joo duh shir fahng dzuh*; We live in a house.)
- ✔ **Tā zhù de shì gōngyù.** (*tah joo duh shir goong yew*; She lives in an apartment.)
- ✔ **Tāmen yǒu yíge yuànzi.** (*tah mun yo ee guh ywan dzuh*; They have a yard.)
- ✔ **Nǐ yǒu yíge huāyuán.** (*nee yo ee guh hwah ywan*; You have a garden.)

- ✔ **Wǒ zhù zài chénglǐ.** (*waw joo dzye chuhng lee*; I live in the city.)
- ✔ **Wǒ zhù zài jiāowài.** (*waw joo dzye jyaow why*; I live in the suburbs.)
- ✔ **Wǒ zhù zài nóngcūn.** (*waw joo dzye noong tswun*; I live in the country.)

In addition to your **diànhuà hàomǎ** (*dyan hwah how mah*; phone number) and your **dìzhǐ** (*dee jir*; address), most people also want to know your **diànzǐ yóuxiāng dìzhǐ** (*dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir*; e-mail address). And if you find yourself in a more formal situation, it may be appropriate to give someone your **míngpiàn** (*meeng pyan*; business card). (To find out how to pronounce numbers, see Chapter 2.)

Talkin' the Talk

Beverly meets Alison at a conference in Wuhan and thinks she would be a great partner for her electronics project.

Beverly: **Zhè shì wǒde míngpiàn. Yǒu dìzhǐ, diànhuà hàomǎ, hé diànzǐ yóuxiāng dìzhǐ.**
Jay shir waw duh meeng pyan. Yo dee jir, dyan hwah how mah, huh dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir.
 Here's my business card. It has my street address, phone number, and e-mail address.

Alison: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
 Thanks.

Beverly: **Kěshì wǒde diànhuà hàomǎ biàn le. Xiànzài shì (650) 721-0000.**
Kuh shir waw duh dyan hwah how mah byan luh.
Shyan dzye shir lyo woo leeng, chee are ee, leeng leeng leeng leeng.
 But my telephone number has changed. It's now (650) 721-0000.

Alison: **Hǎo. Xièxiè.**
How. Shyeh shyeh.
 Okay. Thanks.

Beverly: **Yǒu kōng, qǐng gěi wǒ dǎ diànhuà.**
Yo koong, cheeng gay waw dah dyan hwah.
 When you have a chance, please give me a call.

Alison: **Yíding huì.**
Ee deeng hway.
 I certainly will.

Words to Know

<i>dǎ diànhuà</i>	<i>dah dyan hwah</i>	<i>to make a phone call</i>
<i>diànhuà hàomǎ</i>	<i>dyan hwah how mah</i>	<i>telephone number</i>
<i>gǎibiàn</i>	<i>gye byan</i>	<i>to change</i>
<i>míngpiàn</i>	<i>meeng pyan</i>	<i>business card</i>
<i>diànzǐ yóuxiāng dìzhǐ</i>	<i>dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir</i>	<i>e-mail address</i>



Fun & Games

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Match these people with the words that identify their professions. Check out Appendix C for the answers.

yīshēng

soccer player

lǎoshī

doctor

fēixíngyuán

pilot

zúqiú duìyuán

teacher

.....

Chapter 5

Eating and Drinking: Gānbēi!

In This Chapter

- ▶ Eating, Chinese style
 - ▶ Ordering and conversing in restaurants
 - ▶ Paying for your meal
 - ▶ Shopping for groceries
-

You may think you already know what Chinese food is all about, but if you suddenly find yourself a guest in a Chinese friend's home or the guest of honor at a banquet for your company's new branch in Shanghai, you may want to keep reading. This chapter not only helps you communicate when you're hungry or thirsty, go grocery shopping, and order food in a restaurant, but also gives you some useful tips on how to be both a wonderful guest and a gracious host when you have only one shot at making a good impression.

Feeling hungry yet? Allow me to whet your appetite by inviting you to take a closer look at world-renowned Chinese cuisine. No doubt you're already familiar with a great many Chinese dishes, from chow mein and chop suey, to sweet and sour pork, to that delicious favorite of all Chinese fare, dim sum.

Exploring Chinese food and Chinese eating etiquette is a great way to discover Chinese culture. You can also use what you discover in this chapter to impress your date by ordering in Chinese the next time you eat out.

All About Meals

If you feel hungry when beginning this section, you should stop to **chī** (*chir*; eat) **fàn** (*fahn*; food). In fact, **fàn** always comes up when you talk about meals in China. Different meals throughout the day, for example, are called

- ✔ **zǎofàn** (*dzaow fahn*; breakfast)
- ✔ **wǔfàn** (*woo fahn*; lunch)
- ✔ **wǎnfàn** (*wahn fahn*; dinner)

For centuries, Chinese people greeted each other not by saying “**Nǐ hǎo ma?**” (*nee how ma; How are you?*), but by saying “**Nǐ chīfàn le méiyǒu?**” (*nee chir fahn luh mayo; literally: “Have you eaten?”*)



In China, **fàn** actually means some kind of grain or starch-based staple. You can have **mǐfàn** (*mee fahn; rice*), which can be **chǎo fàn** (*chaow fahn; fried white rice*) or **bái mǐfàn** (*bye mee fahn; boiled white rice*); **miàntiáo** (*myan tyaw; noodles*); **màntóu** (*mahn toe; steamed bread*); **bāozi** (*baow dzuh; steamed buns*); or **jiǎozi** (*jyaow dzuh; dumplings*). As you can see, you have many types of **fàn** to choose from.

Satisfying your hunger

If you're hungry, you can say **wǒ hěn è** (*waw hun uh; I'm very hungry*) and wait for a friend to invite you for a bite to eat. If you're thirsty, just say **wǒde kǒu hěn kě** (*waw duh ko hun kuh; literally: my mouth is very dry*) to hear offers for all sorts of drinks. You may not get a chance to even utter these words, however, because Chinese rules of hospitality dictate offering food and drink to guests right off the bat.

You have a couple of subtle ways to get across the idea that you're hungry so you don't appear too forward. You can say

- ✓ **Nǐ è ma?** (*nee uh mah; Are you hungry?*)
- ✓ **Nǐ è bú è?** (*nee uh boo uh; Are you hungry?*)
- ✓ **Nǐ hái méi chī wǎnfàn ba.** (*nee hi may chir wahn fahn bah; I bet you haven't had dinner yet.*)

By checking to see if the other person is hungry first, you display the prized Chinese sensibility of consideration for others, and you give yourself a chance to gracefully get out of announcing that you, in fact, are really the one who's dying for some Chinese food. If you want, you can always come right out and say that you're the one who's hungry by substituting **wǒ** (*waw; I*) for **nǐ** (*nee; you*).



If you hear the sound **ba** (*bah*) at the end of a sentence, you can probably interpret it as “I bet,” as in **Nǐ hái méi chī wǎnfàn ba** (*nee hi may chir wahn fahn bah; I bet you haven't had dinner yet*), or as “let's,” as in **Wǒmen qù chīfàn ba** (*waw men chyew chir fahn bah; Let's go have dinner*). One little utterance serves to soften the sound of making a request (or a command).

You can say something like **Nǐ xiān hē jiǔ** (*nee shyan huh jyoe; Drink wine first*), but you sound nicer and friendlier if you say **Nǐ xiān hē jiǔ ba** (*nee shyan huh jyoe bah; Better drink some wine first; Why not have some wine first?*)?

When an acquaintance invites you for dinner, he may ask, **Nǐ yào chǐ fàn háishì yào chǐ miàn?** (*nee yaow chir fahn hi shir yaow chir myan*; Do you want to eat rice or noodles?) Naturally, your host doesn't just serve you a bowl of rice or noodles, because he wants to know what basic staple to prepare before he adds the actual **cài** (*tsye*; the various dishes that go with the rice or noodles).



The many varieties of **cài** have made China the envy of the culinary world. Centuries of subsistence-level existence have taught the Chinese not to waste one morsel of an animal, mineral, or vegetable when they can use the morsel as food. Chronic shortages of food at various points in Chinese history have lent credence to the saying “Necessity is the mother of invention.” The Chinese say it another way, however: They eat “anything with legs that’s not a table and anything with wings that’s not an airplane.” Either way, you get the idea.

Sitting down to eat

Once you’ve chosen what you’d like to order and it’s actually been served and sits staring you in the face on the table, you’ll probably want to know what utensils to use in order to eat the meal. Don’t be shy about asking for a good old fork and knife, even if you’re in a Chinese restaurant. It’s a myth that Chinese people all eat with chopsticks anyway. Table 5-1 presents a handy list of utensils you’ll want to know how to say at one point or another.

Table 5-1 Utensils and Eating Accoutrements		
<i>Chinese Word</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word</i>
yáqiān	yah chyan	toothpick
chāzi	chah dzuh	fork
dāozi	daow dzuh	knife
tiáogēng	tyaow gung	spoon
bēizi	bay dzuh	cup
pánzi	pahn dzuh	plate
wǎn	wahn	bowl
cānjīnzhǐ	tsahn jeen jir	napkin



Do you prefer meat *háishì* (*hi shir*; or) fish?

When you can choose between more than one item on a Chinese menu, you can use the alternative question structure for interrogative expressions by placing the word **háishì** (*hi shir*; or) between the two choices. If you use the term

“or” in affirmative sentences, however — such as when you say she’s arriving either today or tomorrow — you should use the word **huò** (*hwaw*) or **huò zhe** (*hwaw juh*) instead.

Even though Chinese food is so varied and great you could have it three meals a day forever, once in a while you might really find yourself hankering for a good old American hamburger or a stack of French fries. In fact, you may be surprised to find places like McDonald’s and Kentucky Fried Chicken in Asia when you least expect to. Table 5-2 lists some items you can order when you’re in need of some old fashioned comfort food, and Table 5-3 lists common beverages.

Table 5-2		Western Food
<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
hànbǎobāo	hahn baow baow	hamburger
règǒu	ruh go	hot dog
zhá shǔtiáo	jah shoo tyaow	French fries
zhá jī	jah jee	fried chicken
zhá yángcōng quān	jah yahng tsoong chwan	onion rings
bīsā bǐng	bee sah beeng	pizza
káo tǔdòu	cow too doe	baked potato
tǔdòuní	too doe nee	mashed potatoes
yìdàlì shì miàntiáo	ee dah lee shir myan tyaow	spaghetti
yáng pái	yahng pye	lamb chops
zhū pái	joo pye	pork chops
sānmíngzhì	sahn meeng jir	sandwich
shālā zìzhùguì	shah lah dzuh joo gway	salad bar
shālā jiàng	shah lah jyahng	salad dressing

Table 5-3		Beverages
<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
jiūdān	jyoe dahn	wine list
píjiǔ	pee jyoe	beer
gān hóng pūtáojiǔ	gahn hoong poo taow jyoe	dry red wine
kuāngquánshuǐ	kwahng chwan shway	mineral water
guǒzhī	gwaw jir	fruit juice
niúǎi	nyoe nye	milk
kāfēi	kah fay	coffee
chá	chah	tea
níngmén qìshuǐ	neeng muhng chee shway	lemonade
kělè	kuh luh	soda

Talkin' the Talk

Marilyn and Ramona have a hankering for some Western food during a trip to Beijing. They discuss what to eat among the types of food they've been missing while on their tour of China.

Marilyn: **Ramona, wǒmen zhōngyú qù chī Xīcān la!**
Ramona, waw mun joong yew chyew chir she tsahn lah!
 Ramona, let's go have some Western food finally!

Ramona: **Nà shì yīge hǎo zhùyì.**
Nah shir ee guh how joo ee.
 That's a great idea.

Marilyn: **Yījīng yīge duō xīngqī wǒ méiyǒu chī yīge hànǎobāo le. Wǒ hěn xiǎng Xīcān.**
Ee jeeng ee guh dwaw sheeng chee waw mayo chir ee guh hahn baow baow lah. Waw hun shyahng she tsahn.
 It's already been over a week since I've had a ham-burger. I really miss Western food.

- Ramona: **Nǐ xiǎng chī shénme cài? Fǎguó cài, Yìdàlì cài, Mòxīgē cài háishi Yìndù cài? Zhè zhǒng fànguǎn wǒmen de lǚguǎn dōu yǒu.**
Nee shyahng chir shummu tsye? Fah gwaw tsye, ee dah lee tsye, maw she guh tsye hi shir een doo tsye? Jay joong fahn gwahn waw mun duh lyew gwahn doe yo.
 What kind of food do you want to eat? French food, Italian food, Mexican food, or Indian food? Our hotel has all these kinds of restaurants.
- Marilyn: **Nǐ shuō duìle. Zhè zhǒng cài dōu bǐ chī yíge hànǎobāo hǎo. Wǒmen qù chī Yìndù cài ba. Kěshì wǒ búyào chī làde.**
Nee shwaw dway luh. Jay joong tsye doe bee chir ee guh hahn baow baow how. Waw men chew chir een doo tsye bah. Kuh shir waw boo yaow chir lah duh.
 You're right. All these kinds of food beat eating a hamburger. Let's go have Indian food then. But I don't want to eat anything spicy.
- Ramona: **Hǎo. Wǒ tóngyi, wǒ yě búyào chī làde cài. Zǒu ba, yǐjīng kuài liù diǎn le.**
How. Waw toong ee, waw yeah boo yaow chir lah duh tsye. Dzo bah, ee jeeng kwye lyoe dyan lah.
 Fine. I agree, I also don't like to eat spicy food. Let's go, it's already 6 o'clock.



The word **xiǎng** (*shyahng*) in Chinese can mean “to think” and “to miss.” So you may hear someone say, **Wǒ xiǎng wǒ hěn xiǎng jiā.** (*waw shyahng waw hun shyahng jya*; I think I really miss home.)

Practicing proper table manners

When you receive an invitation to someone's home, always remember to bring a small gift and to toast others before you take a drink yourself during the meal (see Chapter 18 for a list of things never to do). The Chinese have no problem slurping their soup or belching during or after a meal, by the way, so don't be surprised if you witness both at a perfectly formal gathering. And to remain polite and in good graces, you should always make an attempt to serve someone else before yourself when dining with others; otherwise, you run the risk of appearing rude and self-centered.

Don't be hesitant to use some of these phrases at the table:

- ✔ **Màn chí** or **màn màn chí!** (*mahn chir* or *mahn mahn chir*; Bon appetite!)
This phrase literally means “Eat slowly,” but it’s loosely translated as “Take your time and enjoy your food.”
- ✔ **Zìjǐ lái.** (*dzuh jee lye*; I’ll help myself.)
- ✔ **Gānbēi!** (*gahn bay*; Bottoms up!)
- ✔ **Duō chí yìdiǎr ba!** (*dwaw chir ee dyar bah*; Have some more!)
- ✔ **Wǒ chībǎo le.** (*waw chir baow luh*; I’m full.)



Whenever a dining partner begins to serve you food, as is the custom, you must always feign protest with a few mentions of **zìjǐ lái** (*dzuh jee lye*; I’ll help myself) so you don’t appear to assume that someone *should* be serving you. In the end, you should permit the person to follow proper etiquette by serving you portions from each dish if you’re the guest.



And whatever you do, don’t use a **yáqiān** (*yah chyan*; toothpick) without covering your mouth. One of the ultimate dining faux pas is to make your teeth visible during toothpick use.

Getting to Know Chinese Cuisines



You may have already discovered that different regions of China specialize in different types of cuisine. Each province has its own specialties, cooking style, and favorite ingredients. Some corner the market on spicy food, and others showcase rather bland food. But no matter where you go, you’re sure to discover a new taste bud or two along the way.

Northern Chinese food, found in places like Beijing, is famous for all sorts of meat dishes. You find plenty of beef, lamb, and duck (remember Peking Duck?). To garnish the meat, garlic and scallions are added for good measure. Northern cooking is bland because of the lack of excessive condiments, so don’t expect anything overtly salty, sweet, or spicy.

Shanghai dining, as well as that of the neighboring Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, represents Eastern cuisine. Because these places are close to the sea and boast many lakes, you can find an infinite variety of seafood in this part of China. Fresh vegetables, different kinds of bamboo, and plenty of soy sauce and sugar are also hallmarks of this region’s cuisine.

Food from Sichuan and Hunan provinces is considered Western Chinese cuisine. Western food is common in Chinese restaurants in the United States.

Because this part of China is hot and humid, hot peppers and salt are commonly found here. Not only is the food considered fiery, but also some famous revolutionaries who've hailed from this part of China, such as Mao Zedong.

Southern Chinese cuisine hails from Guangdong (formerly known as Canton) province, as well as from Fujian and Taiwan. Like Shanghai cuisine, it offers plentiful amounts of seafood, fresh fruits, and vegetables. One of the most famous types of food from Guangdong that you've no doubt heard of is **dim sum** (*deem sum*), which in standard Mandarin is pronounced **diǎn xīn** (*dyan sheen*).

Dining Out

Whether you eat in a friend's home or in a fancy Chinese restaurant, you need to know how to ask for some basic utensils and how to refer to items already on the table.

You ask for something politely by saying **Qǐng nǐ gěi wǒ . . .** (*cheeng nee gay waw*; Would you mind please getting me a . . .)

You can also say **Máfan nǐ gěi wǒ . . .** (*mah fahn nee gay waw*; May I trouble you to please get me a . . .)

Here are some items you commonly encounter or need to ask for when dining out:

- ✔ **yíge wǎn** (*ee guh wahn*; a bowl)
- ✔ **yíge pánzi** (*ee guh pahn dzuh*; a plate)
- ✔ **yíge bēizi** (*ee guh bay dzuh*; a glass)
- ✔ **yíge tiáogēng** (*ee guh tyaow guhng*; a spoon)
- ✔ **yíge dāozi** (*ee guh daow dzuh*; a knife)
- ✔ **yíge chāzi** (*ee guh chah dzuh*; a fork)
- ✔ **yì zhāng cānjīn** (*ee jahng tsahn jeen*; a napkin)
- ✔ **yì gēn yáqiān** (*ee gun yah chyan*; a toothpick)
- ✔ **yíge shī máojīn** (*ee guh shir maow jeen*; a wet towel)
- ✔ **yíge rè máojīn** (*ee guh ruh maow jeen*; a hot towel)
- ✔ **yì shuāng kuàizi** (*ee shwahng kwey dzuh*; a pair of chopsticks)



When in doubt, use the measure word **ge** (*guh*) in front of the noun you want to modify by a numeral or a specifier, such as “this” (**zhè**; *jay*) or “that” (**nà**; *nah*). As you can see from the previous list, the word for “a” always begins with **yī** (*ee*), meaning the number 1 in Chinese. In between **yī** and the noun is the measure word. For chopsticks, it’s **shuāng** (*shwahng*), meaning pair; for napkin, it’s **zhāng** (*jahng*), used for anything with a flat surface (such as paper, a map, or even a bed); and a toothpick’s measuring word is **gēn** (*gun*), referring to anything resembling a stick, such as rope, a thread, or a blade of grass. Chinese has many different measure words, but **ge** (*guh*) is by far the most common.

Talkin’ the Talk

Livia and Charlotte meet after work in New York and decide where to eat.

Livia: **Charlotte, nǐ hǎo!**
Charlotte, nee how!
Charlotte, hi!

Charlotte: **Nǐ hǎo. Hǎo jiǔ méi jiàn.**
Nee how. How jyoe may jyan.
Hi there. Long time no see.

Livia: **Nǐ è bú è?**
Nee uh boo uh?
Are you hungry?

Charlotte: **Wǒ hěn è. Nǐ ne?**
Waw hun uh. Nee nuh?
Yes, very hungry. How about you?

Livia: **Wǒ yě hěn è.**
Waw yeah hun uh.
I’m also pretty hungry.

Charlotte: **Wǒmen qù Zhōngguóchéng chī Zhōngguó cài, hǎo bù hǎo?**
Waw men chyew joong gwaw chuhng chir joong gwaw tsye, how boo how?
Let’s go to Chinatown and have Chinese food, okay?

- Livia: **Hǎo. Nǐ zhīdào Zhōngguóchéng nǎ jiā cānguǎn hǎo ma?**
How. Nee jir daow joong gwaw chuhng nah jya tsahn gwahn how ma?
 Okay. Do you know which restaurant in Chinatown is good?
- Charlotte: **Běijīng kǎo yā diàn hǎoxiàng bú cuò.**
Bay jeeng cow ya dyan how shyang boo tswaw.
 The Peking Duck place seems very good.
- Livia: **Hǎo jīle. Wǒmen zǒu ba.**
How jee luh. Waw men dzoe bah.
 Great. Let's go.

Words to Know

Nǐ è bú è?	nee uh boo uh	Are you hungry?
Zhōngguó cài	joong gwaw tsye	Chinese food
cānguǎn	tsahng gwahn	restaurant



Nǐ hǎo (*nee how*), which appears in the preceding Talkin' the Talk dialogue, can be translated as either "hi," "hello," or "how are you?"

Understanding what's on the menu

Are you a vegetarian? If so, you'll want to order **sùcài** (*sue tsye*; vegetable dishes). If you're a died-in-the-wool carnivore, however, you should definitely keep your eye on the kind of **hūncài** (*hwun tsye*; meat or fish dishes) listed on the **càidān** (*tsye dahn*; menu). Unlike the **fàn** (*fahn*; rice) or **miàn** (*myan*; noodles) you may order, which come in individual bowls for everyone at the table, the **cài** (*tsye*; dishes) you order arrive on large plates, which you're expected to share with others.

You should become familiar with the basic types of food on the menu in case you have only Chinese characters and pīnyīn romanization to go on. Having the knowledge allows you to immediately know which section to focus on (or, likewise, to avoid).

Take meat, for example. In English, the words for “pork,” “beef,” and “mutton” have no hints of the words for the animals themselves, such as **zhū** (*joo*; pig), **niú** (*nyoe*; cow), or **yáng** (*yahng*; lamb). Chinese is much simpler. Just combine the word for the animal and the word **ròu** (*row*), meaning “meat,” after it, such as **zhū ròu** (*joo row*; pork), **niú ròu** (*nyoe row*; beef), or **yáng ròu** (*yahng row*; mutton). Voilà! You have the dish.

Table 5-4 shows the typical elements of a **càidān** (*tsye dahn*; Chinese menu).

<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
kāiwèicài	kye way tsye	appetizer
ròu lèi	row lay	meat dishes
jī lèi	jee lay	poultry dishes
hǎixiān	hi shyan	seafood dishes
sùcài	soo tsye	vegetarian dishes
tāng	tahng	soup
diǎnxīn	dyan sheen	dessert
yǐnliào	een lyaow	drinks

Talkin' the Talk



Gerry, Jean, and Leslie meet at a restaurant in Shanghai after work, and a host greets them on the way in.

Host: **Jī wèi?**
Jee way?
 How many are in your party?

Leslie: **Sān wèi.**
Sahn way.
 There are three of us.

The host shows them to their table. The three must now decide what to order for their meals.

- Host: **Qǐng zuò zhèr. Zhè shì càidān.**
Cheeng dzwaw jar. Jay shir tsye dahn.
 Please sit here. Here's the menu.
- Leslie: **Nǐ yào chī fàn háishì yào chī miàn?**
Nee yaow chir fahn hi shir yaow chir myan?
 Do you want to eat rice or noodles?
- Gerry: **Liǎngge dōu kěyǐ.**
Lyahng guh doe kuh yee.
 Either one is fine.
- Jean: **Wǒ hěn xǐhuān yāoguǒ jīdīng. Nǐmen ne?**
Waw hun she hwan yaow gwaw jee deeng. Nee men nuh?
 I love diced chicken with cashew nuts. How about you guys?
- Gerry: **Duìbùqǐ, wǒ chī sù. Wǒmen néng bù néng diǎn yìdiǎr dòufu?**
Dway boo chee, waw chir soo. Waw mun nung boo nung dyan ee dyar doe foo?
 Sorry, I'm a vegetarian. Can we order some tofu?
- Jean: **Dāngrán kěyǐ.**
Dahng rahn kuh yee.
 Of course we can.
- Leslie: **Bù guǎn zěnmē yàng, wǒmen lái sān píng jiǔ, hǎo bù hǎo?**
Boo gwahn dzummuh yahng, waw mun lye san peeng jyoe, how boo how?
 No matter what, let's get three bottles of beer, okay?
- Gerry: **Hěn hǎo!**
Hun how!
 Very good!
-

Words to Know

bù guǎn zěnmē yàng	boo gwahn dzummah yahng	no matter what
fànguǎn	fahn gwahn	restaurant
gāojí jiǔlóu	gaow jee jyoe low	fancy restaurant
xiǎochīdiàn	shyaow chir dyan	snack shop
Zhōngcān	joong tsahn	Chinese food
Xīcān	she tsahn	Western food
kuàicān	kwye tsahn	fast food
kāfēitīng	kah fay teeng	café
píjiǔ	pee jyoe	beer

Vegetarian's delight

If you're a vegetarian, you may feel lost when looking at a menu filled with mostly pork (the staple meat of China), beef, and fish dishes. Not to worry. As long as you memorize a couple of the terms shown in Table 5-5, you won't go hungry.

Table 5-5 Vegetables Commonly Found in Chinese Dishes

<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
biǎndòu	byan doe	string bean
bōcài	baw tsye	spinach
dòufu	doe foo	bean curd
fānqié	fahn chyeh	tomato
gāilán	gye lahn	Chinese broccoli
mógū	maw goo	mushroom

(continued)

Table 5-5 (continued)		
<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
qiézi	chyeH dzuh	eggplant
qīngjiāo	cheeng jyaow	green pepper
tǔdòu	too doe	potato
xīlánhuā	she lahn hwah	broccoli
yáng báicài	yahng bye tsye	cabbage
yùmǐ	yew me	corn
zhúsǔn	joo swoon	bamboo shoot

When you have a good understanding of the vegetables that go into Chinese dishes, you, oh proud vegetarian, can start to order specialized vegetarian dishes at all your favorite restaurants. Table 5-6 shows some vegetarian dishes good for a night on the town or for preparing dinner for friends.

Table 5-6 Vegetarian Dishes		
<i>Chinese Words</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Words</i>
dànhuā tāng	dahn hwah tahng	egg drop soup
gānbiān sījìdòu	gahn byan suh jee doe	sautéed string beans
hóngshāo dòufu	hoong shaow doe foo	braised bean curd in soy sauce
suān là tāng	swan lah tahng	hot-and-sour soup
yúxiāng qiézi	yew shyang chyeH dzuh	spicy eggplant with garlic

Some favorite Chinese dishes

You may be familiar with many of the following dishes if you've ever been in a Chinese restaurant:

- ✔ **Běijīng kǎo yā** (*bay jeeng cow yah*; Peking roast duck)
- ✔ **chūnjuǎn** (*chwun jwan*; spring roll)
- ✔ **dànhuā tāng** (*dahn hwah tahng*; egg drop soup)
- ✔ **dòufu gān** (*doh foo gahn*; dried beancurd)

- ✔ **gàilán niúròu** (*guy lahn nyoe row*; beef with broccoli)
- ✔ **gōngbǎo jīdǐng** (*goong baow jee deeng*; diced chicken with hot peppers)
- ✔ **háoyóu niúròu** (*how yo nyoe row*; beef with oyster sauce)
- ✔ **hóngshāo dòufu** (*hoong shaow doe foo*; braised beancurd in soy sauce)
- ✔ **húntūn tāng** (*hwun dwun tahng*; wonton soup)
- ✔ **shuàn yángrou** (*shwahn yahng row*; Mongolian hot pot)
- ✔ **suān là tāng** (*swan lah tahng*; hot-and-sour soup)
- ✔ **tángcù yú** (*tahng tsoo yew*; sweet-and-sour fish)
- ✔ **yān huángguā** (*yan hwahng gwah*; pickled cucumber)

Sauces and seasonings

The Chinese use all kinds of seasonings and sauces to make their dishes so tasty. Check out *Chinese Cooking For Dummies* by Martin Yan for much more info. Here are just a few of the basics:

- ✔ **jiāng** (*jyahng*; ginger)
- ✔ **làyóu** (*lah yo*; hot sauce)
- ✔ **yán** (*yan*; salt)
- ✔ **máyóu** (*mah yo*; sesame oil)
- ✔ **jiàngyóu** (*jyahng yo*; soy sauce)
- ✔ **cù** (*tsoo*; vinegar)



Chowing down on the Chinese New Year

On the eve of the Chinese lunar New Year, known as **chú xī** (*choo she*), the Chinese eat a big **niányèfàn** (*nyan yeh fahn*; New Year's Eve dinner). The dinner almost always includes a whole cooked **yú** (*yew*; fish), because the word for fish rhymes with the word for abundance (**yú**), even though the written characters for the words look quite different. In some of the poorer parts of northern China, people often eat **jiǎozi** (*jyaow dzuh*; dumplings) rather than fish because their shape resembles traditional **yuánbāo** (*ywan baow*; gold ingots) used in

pre-modern times by people of means. These people hope that the prosperity and abundance of such wealthy families will also come into their lives through the eating of the **jiǎozi** (*jyaow dzuh*). Southerners often eat **fā cài** (*fah tsye*; a kind of stringy black vegetable), which rhymes with **fā cái** (*fah tsye*), although you pronounce the words in different tones. **Fā cái** means to get wealthy and prosper; in fact, the most common greeting on New Year's day is **gōngxī fā cái!** (*goong she fah tsye*; Congratulations and may you prosper!)

Placing an order and chatting with the wait staff



I bet you're used to everyone ordering one dish for themselves, right? Well, in China, diners almost always share dishes by putting them on common platters smack in the middle of the table where everyone can pick and choose. You get used to ordering with the whole group in mind, not just yourself — just one more example of how the collective is always considered before the individual in Chinese culture.

Chinese table etiquette dictates that everyone decides together what to order. The two main categories you must decide upon are the **cài** (*tsye*; food dishes) and the **tāng** (*tahng*; soup). Feel free to be the first one to ask **Wōmen yīnggāi jiào jǐge cài jǐge tāng?** (*waw men eeng gye jyaow jee guh tsye jee guh tahng*; How many dishes and how many soups should we order?) Ideally, one of each of the five major tastes should appear in the dishes you choose for your meal to be a “true” Chinese meal: **suān** (*swan*; sour), **tián** (*tyan*; sweet), **kǔ** (*koo*; bitter), **là** (*lah*; spicy), and **xián** (*shyan*; salty).

I know it can be hard to choose what to eat from all the fantastic choices staring back at you from most any Chinese menu; after all, the Chinese perfected the art of cooking long before the French and Italians appeared on the scene. But when you finally hit on something you like, you have to figure out how to tell the waiter what you want to **chī** (*chir*; eat), whether you like **là** (*lah*; spicy) food or not, if you want to avoid **wèijīng** (*way jeeng*; MSG), what kind of **píjiǔ** (*pee jyoe*; beer) you want to **hē** (*huh*; drink), and that you want to know what kind of **náshǒu cài** (*nah show tsye*; house specialty) the restaurant has going today.

Here are some questions your waiter or waitress is likely to ask you:

- ✔ **Nimen yào shénme cài?** (*nee men yaow shummu tsye*; What would you like to order; *literally*: What kind of food would you like?)
- ✔ **Nimen yào hē diǎr shénme?** (*nee men yaow huh dyar shummu*; What would you like to drink?)
- ✔ **Yào jǐ píng píjiǔ?** (*yaow jee peeng pee jyoe*; How many bottles of beer do you want?)

And here are some phrases that come in handy when you need to give an answer:

- ✔ **Wōmen yào yíge suān là tāng.** (*waw men yaow ee guh swan lah tahng*; We'd like a hot-and-sour soup.)

- ✔ **Wǒ bù chī là de.** (*waw boo chir lah duh*; I don't eat spicy food.)
- ✔ **Qǐng bié fàng wèijīng, wǒ guòmǐn.** (*cheeng byeh fahng way jeeng, waw gwaw meen*; Please don't use any MSG, I'm allergic.)

When addressing a waiter or waitress, you can call them by the same name: **fúwùyuán** (*foo woo ywan*; service personnel). In fact, “he,” “she,” and “it” all share the same Chinese word, too: **tā** (*tah*). Isn't that easy to remember?

- ✔ **Qǐng gěi wǒ càidān.** (*cheeng gay waw tsye dahn*; Please give me the menu.)
- ✔ **Nǐ gěi wǒmen jièshào cài hǎo ma?** (*nee gay waw men jyeh shaow tsye how ma*; Can you recommend some dishes?)
- ✔ **Dà shǐfu nǎshǒu cài shì shénme?** (*dah shir foo nah show tsye shir shummu*; What's the chef's specialty?)
- ✔ **Yú xīnxiān ma?** (*yew shin shyan mah*; Is the fish fresh?)
- ✔ **Wǒ bú yuànyì chī hǎishēn.** (*waw boo ywan yee chir hi shun*; I don't want to try sea slugs.)
- ✔ **Nǐmen yǒu kuàngquán shuǐ ma?** (*nee men yo kwahng chwan shway mah*; Do you have any mineral water?)
- ✔ **Wǒ bú yào là de cài.** (*waw boo yaow lah duh tsye*; I don't want anything spicy.)
- ✔ **Wǒ bù néng chī yǒu táng de cài.** (*waw boo nuhng chir yo tahng duh tsye*; I can't eat anything made with sugar.)
- ✔ **Wǒ bù chī zhūròu.** (*waw boo chir joo row*; I don't eat pork.)
- ✔ **Qǐng cā zhuōzi.** (*cheeng tsah jaw dzuh*; Please wipe off the table.)
- ✔ **Qǐng bǎ yǐnliào sòng lái.** (*cheeng bah yin lyaow soong lye*; Please bring our drinks.)
- ✔ **Wǒ méi jiào zhèige.** (*waw may jyaow jay guh*; I didn't order this.)



Regular nouns in Chinese make no distinction between singular and plural. Whether you want to talk about one **píngguǒ** (*peeng gwaw*; apple), two **júzi** (*jyew dzuh*; oranges), or both **píngguǒ hé júzi** (*peeng gwaw huh jyew dzuh*; apples and oranges), the fruits always sound the same in Chinese. On the other hand, if you want to refer to human beings, you can always add the suffix **men** (*mun*). The word for “I” or “me” is **wǒ** (*waw*), but “we” becomes **wǒmen** (*waw men*). The same goes for **nǐ** (*nee*; you) and **tā** (*tah*; he, she, and it). “They” becomes **nǐmen** (*nee mun*) or **tāmen** (*tah mun*). If you want to refer to a specific number of apples, however, you don't use “men” as a suffix. You can either say **píngguǒ** (*peeng gwaw*) for apple (or apples) or **liǎngge píngguǒ** (*lyahng guh peeng gwaw*), meaning two apples. Got it?

Talkin' the Talk

Tom and Wendy go to a Chinese restaurant that specializes in Hunan and Sichuan cuisine — the two spiciest cuisines of China. They hail the waiter to ask for a menu.

Tom: **Wōmen néng bùnéng kànkàn càidān?**
Waw mun nung boo nung kahn kahn tsye dahn?
 May we see the menu?

Waiter: **Dāngrán kěyǐ.**
Dahng rahn kuh yee.
 Of course you may.

A few minutes later, the two diners still can't decide what to order, so they call over the waiter once again.

Waiter: **Nǐmen xiǎng diǎn shénme cài?**
Nee men shyang dyan shummah tsye?
 What dishes would you like to order?

Tom: **Qǐng wèn, nǐmen de nǎshǒu cài shì shénme?**
Cheeng one, nee mun duh nah show tsye shir shummah?
 Excuse me, may I ask what your house specialty is?

Waiter: **Mápō dòufu hé Chángshā jī dōu yǒumíng.**
Mah paw doe foo huh chahng shah jee doe yo meeng.
 Sichuan beancurd and Changsha chicken are both very famous.

Wendy: **Tīngshuō mápō dòufu hěn là. Duìbùqǐ, kěshì wǒ bùchī là de. Yǒu méiyǒu biéde cài?**
Teeng shwaw mah paw doe foo hun lah. Dway boo chee, kuh shir waw boo chir lah duh. Yo mayo byeh duh tsye?
 I've heard the Sichuan beancurd is very spicy. I'm sorry, but I don't like spicy food. Do you have any other kinds of dishes?

Waiter: **Dāngrán yǒu. Jièlán jī hé xiā lóng hú dōu bú là. Hǎo bùhǎo?**
Dahng rahn yo. Jyeh lahn jee huh shyah loong hoo doe boo lah. How boo how?
 Of course we do. Chicken with broccoli and shrimp with lobster sauce are both relatively mild. How about those?

Wendy: **Hěn hǎo. Xièxiè.**
Hun how. Shyeh shyeh.
 Very good. Thank you.

- Tom: **Qǐng língwài gěi wǒmen làjiāo jiàng. Wǒ hěn xīhuān chī làde.**
Cheeng leeng wye gay waw men lah jyaow jyahng. Waw hun she hwan chir lah duh.
 Please also bring us some hot pepper sauce. I love spicy food.
- Waiter: **Hái yào biéde ma?**
Hí yaow byeh duh ma?
 Would you like anything else?
- Tom: **Qǐng língwài lái yíge chǎo qīngcài.**
Cheeng leeng wye lye ee guh chaow cheeng tsye.
 Please also bring a sautéed green vegetable.
- Waiter: **Hǎo. Xièxiè.**
How. Shyeh shyeh.
 Very good. Thank you.

Words to Know

Wǒ hěn è	waw hun uh	I'm very hungry
Wǒde kǒu hěn kě	waw duh ko hun kuh	I'm thirsty
náshǒu cài	nah show tsye	house specialty
tuījiàn	tway jyan	recommend
yán	yan	salty
suān	swan	sour
là	lah	spicy
tián	tyan	sweet
yóu	yo	greasy
wèijīng	way jeeng	MSG
guòmǐn	gwaw meen	allergic
kuàizi	kwey dzuh	chopsticks

Dipping into some dim sum

Dim sum is probably the most popular food of Chinese in the United States and of people in Guangdong Province and all over Hong Kong, where you can find it served for breakfast, lunch, and sometimes dinner. Vendors even sell dim sum snacks in subway stations.

The dish's main claim to fame is that it takes the shape of mini portions, and it's often served with tea to help cut through the oil and grease afterwards. You have to signal the waiters when you want a dish of whatever is on the dim sum cart they push in the restaurant, however, or they just pass on by. Dim sum restaurants are typically crowded and noisy, which only adds to the fun.

Part of the allure of dim sum is that you get to sample a whole range of different tastes while you catch up with old friends. Dim sum meals can last for hours, which is why most Chinese people choose the weekends to have dim sum. No problem lingering on a Saturday or Sunday.

Because dim sum portions are so small, your waiter often tallies the total by the number of plates left on your table. You can tell the waiter you want a specific kind of dim sum by saying: **Qǐng lái yì dié _____**. (*cheeng lye ee dyeh _____*; please give me a plate of _____). Fill in the blank with one of the tasty choices I list in Table 5-7.

Table 5-7 Common Dim Sum Dishes		
<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
guō tiē	gwaw tyeh	fried pork dumplings
xiǎolóng bāo	shyaow loong baow	steamed pork buns
xiā jiǎo	shyah jyaow	shrimp dumplings
xiā wán	shyah wahn	shrimp balls
niúròu wán	nyoe row wahn	beef balls
yùjiǎo	yew jyaow	deep fried taro root
dàntǎ	dahn tah	egg tarts
luóbō gāo	law baw gaow	turnip cake

<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
niàng qīngjiāo	nyahng cheeng jyaow	stuffed peppers
chūnjuǎn	chwun jwan	spring rolls
dòushā bāo	doe shah baow	sweet bean buns

Finding the restrooms

After you have a bite to eat, you may be in need of a restroom. The need may be dire if you're smack in the middle of a 12-course banquet in Beijing and already have a couple of glasses of **máotái** (*maow tye*), the stiffest of all Chinese drinks, under your belt.

Now all you have to do is garner the energy to ask “**Cèsuǒ zài nǎr?**” (*tsuh swaw dzye nar*; Where's the restroom?) if you're in mainland China or “**Cèsuǒ zài nǎlǐ**” (*tsuh swaw dzye nah lee*) if you're in Taiwan. You can also ask “**Nǎlǐ kěyǐ xǐ shǒu?**” (*nah lee kuh yee she show*; Where can I wash my hands?)



No matter what way you ask for directions to the restroom, don't forget to take some toilet paper with you before you leave the hotel if you're in mainland China, because many public restrooms don't supply it there. In most cases, the pictures on the bathroom doors are self-explanatory, but you may also see the pīnyīn for male (**nán**; *nahn*) and female (**nǚ**; *nyew*) before the word **cèsuǒ**. Those are the words you want to pay attention to above all else.

You can also find the word **cèsuǒ** in the term for graffiti: **cèsuǒ wénxué** (*tsuh swaw one shweh*; literally: bathroom literature). How apropos.

Finishing your meal and paying the bill

Once you're through sampling all possible permutations of Chinese cuisine (or French or Italian, for that matter), you won't be able to just slink away unnoticed out the front door and on into the sunset. Time to pay the bill, my friend. Hopefully it was worth the expense. Here are some phrases you should know when the time comes:

- ✓ **jiézhàng** (*jyeh jahng*; to pay the bill)
- ✓ **fēnkāi suàn** (*fun kye swahn*; to go Dutch)
- ✓ **Wǒ qǐng kè**. (*waw cheeng kuh*; It's on me.)

- ✔ **Qǐng jiézhàng.** (*cheeng jyeh jahng*; The check, please.)
- ✔ **Zhàngdān yǒu cuò.** (*jahng dahn yo tswaw*; The bill is incorrect.)
- ✔ **Bāokuò fúwùfèi.** (*baow kwaw foo woo fay*; The tip is included.)
- ✔ **Qǐng kāi shōujù.** (*cheeng kye show jyew*; Please give me the receipt.)
- ✔ **Wǒ kěyǐ yòng xìnyòng kǎ ma?** (*waw kuh yee yoong sheen yoong kah mah*; May I use a credit card?)

All the Tea in China

You encounter about as many different kinds of tea as you do Chinese dialects. Hundreds, in fact. To make ordering or buying this beverage easier, however, you really need to know only the most common kinds of tea:

- ✔ **Lǜ chá.** (*lyew chah*; Green tea) Green tea is the oldest of all the teas in China, with many unfermented subvarieties. The most famous kind of Green tea is called **lóngjǐng chá** (*loong jeeng chah*), meaning Dragon Well tea. You can find it near the famous West Lake region in Hangzhou, but people in the south generally prefer this kind of tea.
- ✔ **Hóng chá.** (*hoong chah*; Black tea) Even though **hóng** means red in Chinese, you translate this phrase as Black tea instead. Unlike Green tea, Black teas are fermented and enjoyed primarily by people in the Fujian Province.
- ✔ **Wūlóng chá.** (*oo loong*; Black Dragon tea) This kind of tea is semi-fermented. It's a favorite in the Guangdong and Fujian provinces and in Taiwan.
- ✔ **Mòlì huā chá.** (*maw lee hwah chah*; Jasmine) This kind of tea is made up of a combination of Black, Green, and Wūlóng teas, in addition to some fragrant flowers like jasmine or magnolia thrown in for good measure. Most northerners are partial to Jasmine tea, probably because the north is cold and this type of tea raises the body's temperature.



Tea is always offered to guests the minute they enter a Chinese home. The hosts aren't just being polite; the offering of tea shows respect to the guest and presents a way to share something that all parties can enjoy together. It may be considered rude not to at least take a sip. Chinese custom says that a host only fills the teacup to 70 percent of its capacity. The other 30 percent is supposed to contain friendship and affection. Isn't that a nice concept?



You often use the adjective **hǎo** (*how*; good) with a verb to create an adjective that means "good to." Here are a couple of examples:

- ✔ **hǎohē** (*how huh*; tasty; literally: good to drink)
- ✔ **hǎochī** (*how chir*; tasty; literally: good to eat)
- ✔ **hǎowán** (*how wahn*; fun, interesting; literally: good to play)
- ✔ **hǎokàn** (*how kahn*; pretty, interesting; literally: good to look at or watch. This can apply to people or even movies.)

You may be tempted to **chī** (*chir*; eat) your soup in a Chinese restaurant, but you should actually **hē** (*huh*; drink) it instead. If it tastes really good, you can say the soup is **hěn hǎohē** (*hun how huh*; very tasty), just like anything else you may have ordered to drink.

Talkin' the Talk

George, Susan, and Rhoda are all eating dim sum during their trip to Hong Kong, a place famous for dim sum restaurants.

- George: **Nǐ chī guò dim sum ma?**
Nee chir gwaw deem sum mah?
Have you ever had dim sum before?
- Rhoda: **Méiyǒu. Zhè shì dì yī cì.**
Mayo. Jay shir dee yee tsh.
No. This is the first time.
- Susan: **Wèidào zěnme yàng?**
Way daow dzummuh yahng?
How does it taste?
- Rhoda: **Hǎo jīle.**
How jee luh.
It's great.
- George: **Nǐ xǐ bùxǐhuān chī dim sum?**
Nee she boo she hwahn chir deem sum?
Do you like dim sum?
- Susan: **Yíding. Hěn xǐhuān.**
Ee deeng. Hun she hwahn.
Absolutely. I like it very much.
- Rhoda: **Nǐ zuì xǐhuān chī de dim sum shì shénme?**
Nee dzway she hwahn chir duh deem sum shir shummu?
What's your favorite dim sum dish?

Susan: **Nà hěn nán shuō. Bú shì guōtiē jiù shì xià jiǎo ba. Dim sum wǒ dōu xǐhuān chī.**
Nah hun nahn shwaw. Boo shir gwaw tyeh jyoe shir shyah jyaow bah. Deem sum waw doe she hwahn chir.
 It's difficult to say. If not pork dumplings then definitely shrimp dumplings. I love all dim sum dishes.



If you want to ask if someone has ever done something, use the word **guò** (*gwaw*) directly after the verb to get your point across. **Nǐ qù guò Měiguó méiyǒu?** (*nee chew gwaw may gwaw mayo; Have you ever been to America?*) **Nǐ chī guò Yìdàlì fàn ma?** (*nee chir gwaw ee dah lee fahn ma; Have you ever eaten Italian food?*) So, have you ever used the particle **guò**?



Some verbs in Chinese have two syllables. **Yào** (*yaow; to want*) is not one of them. **Xǐhuān** (*she hwan; to like or to want*), on the other **shǒu** (*show; hand*), is an example. When Chinese people speak quickly, they may leave out the second syllable in a few bisyllabic verbs and even a few auxiliary verbs the first time they come up in the “verb-**bù**-verb” pattern (“**bù**” between two verbs automatically creates a question). So instead of saying “**Tā xǐhuān bùxǐhuān hē jiǔ?**” (*tah she hwan boo she hwan huh jyoe; Does he or she like to drink wine?*), you may hear someone say “**Tā xǐ bùxǐhuān hē jiǔ?**” (*tah she boo she hwan huh jyoe*)

Taking Your Chinese to Go

Restaurants are great, but once in a while you may want to mingle with the masses as people go about buying food for a home-cooked family dinner. Outdoor food markets abound in China and are great places to see how the locals shop and what they buy. And what better way to try out your Chinese? You can always point to what you want and discover the correct term for it from the vendor.

In addition to clothes, books, and kitchen utensils, outdoor markets may offer all sorts of food items:

- ✓ **Ròu** (*row; meat*): **niúròu** (*nyoe row; beef*), **yáng ròu** (*yahng row; lamb*), or **jǐròu** (*jee row; chicken*)
- ✓ **Yú** (*yew; fish*): **xiā** (*shyah; shrimp*), **pángxiè** (*pahng shyeh; crab*), **lóngxiā** (*loong shyah; lobster*), or **yóuyú** (*yo yew; squid*)
- ✓ **Shuǐguǒ** (*shway gwaw; fruit*): **píngguǒ** (*peeng gwaw; apples*) or **júzi** (*jyew dzuh; oranges*)



Chinese people generally don't eat any raw food. The idea of a raw salad bar is truly foreign to them. In fact, **shēngcài** (*shung tsye*; lettuce) literally translates as raw food, and the Chinese generally consider it fit only for farm animals.

Sizing up weights and measures

The metric system is standard in both mainland China and Taiwan. The basic unit of weight is the **gōngkè** (*goong kuh*; gram), so you usually buy fruits and vegetables in multiples of that measure. The standard liquid measurement is the **shēng** (*shung*; liter). One liter equals about 1.06 quarts. Table 5-8 gives you a list of weights and measures.

Table 5-8		
Weights and Measures		
<i>Chinese Word</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word</i>
pǐntuō	peen twaw	pint
bàng	bahng	pound
kuātuō	kwah twaw	quart
àngsi	ahng suh	ounce
jiālún	jyah lwun	gallon
gōngkè	goong kuh	gram
jīn; gōngjīn	jeen; goong jeen	kilogram
háokè	how kuh	milligram
shēng	shung	liter
línmǐ	lee mee	centimeter
gōnglǐ	goong lee	kilometer
mǐ	mee	meter
yīnglǐ	eeng lee	mile
mǎ	mah	yard
yīngcùn	eeng tswun	inch
yīngchǐ	eeng chir	foot



Although the Chinese use the metric system, more often than not you encounter traditional measurement terms that predate the metric system, such as the words **cún** (*tswun*) for “inch” and **chǐ** (*chir*) for “foot.”

Making comparisons



When you want to compare people or objects, you generally put the word **bǐ** (*bee*; compared to) between two nouns, followed by an adjective: A **bǐ** B (Adjective). This means A is more ____ than B.

Here are a few examples:

- ✓ **Píngguǒ bǐ júzi hǎochǐ.** (*peeng gwaw bee jyew dzuh how chir*; Apples are tastier than oranges.)
- ✓ **Zhèige fànguǎr bǐ nèige fànguǎr guì.** (*jay guh fahn gwar bee nay guh fahng gwar gway*; This restaurant is more expensive than that one.)
- ✓ **Tā bǐ nǐ niánqīng.** (*tah bee nee nyan cheeng*; She’s younger than you.)

How much is that thousand-year-old egg?

When you’re ready to buy some merchandise after making all the necessary comparisons, here are two simple ways to ask how much the products cost:

- ✓ **Duōshǎo qián?** (*dwaw shaow chyan*; How much money is it?)
- ✓ **Jīkuài qián?** (*jee kwey chyan*; literally: How many dollars does it cost?)

The only difference between the two questions is the implied amount of the cost. If you use the question word “**duōshǎo**” (*dwaw shaow*), you want to inquire about something that’s most likely greater than \$10.00. If you use “**jī**” in front of **kuài** (*kwey*; the term for dollars), you assume the product costs less than \$10.00.

You can also use **jī** in front of **sui** (*sway*; years) when you want to know how old a child under 10 is. You say, “**Tā jī sui?**” (*tah jee sway*; How old is he [or she]?)

Talkin' the Talk



At the local open-air market in Kaifeng, Lindsey and Adam eye some vegetables and discuss the price with the older man selling them in his stall. **Shīfu** (*shir foo*) is a term used to indicate someone providing a service, and indicates more respect due to age than the term **fúwùyuán** (*foo woo ywan*), meaning any kind of attendant.

- Lindsey: **Shīfu, qǐng wèn, nǐ yǒu méiyǒu bōcài?**
Shir foo, cheeng one, nee yo mayo baw tsye?
 Sir, may I ask, do you have any spinach?
- Shīfu: **Dāngrán. Yào jǐjīn?**
Dahng rahn. Yaow jee jeen?
 Of course. How many kilograms would you like?
- Adam: **Wǒmen mǎi sānjīn, hǎo bùhǎo?**
Waw men my sahn jeen, how boo how?
 Let's get three jin, okay?
- Lindsey: **Hǎo. Sānjīn ba.**
How. Sahn jeen bah.
 Okay. It'll be three jin then.
- Shīfu: **Méi wèntí. Yījīn sān kuài qián. Nèmme, yíigòng jiǔ kuài.**
May one tee. Ee jeen sahn kwye chyán. Nummuh, ee goong jyoe kwye.
 No problem. It's \$3 a jin. So, that will be \$9 altogether.
- Adam: **Děng yíxià. Bōcài bǐ gàilán guì duōle. Wǒmen mǎi gàilán ba.**
Dung ee shyah. Baw tsye bee guy lahn gway. Waw mun my guy lahn bah.
 Wait a minute. Spinach is more expensive than Chinese broccoli. Let's buy Chinese broccoli then.
- Shīfu: **Hǎo. Gàilán liǎngkuài yījīn. Hái yào sānjīn ma?**
How. Guy lahn lyahng kwye ee jeen. Hi yaow sahn jeen mah?
 Okay. Chinese broccoli is \$2 a jin. Do you still want three jin?

- Lindsey: **Shì de.**
Shir duh.
Yes.
- Shifu: **Nà, sānjīn yígòng liù kuài.**
Nah, sahn jeen ee goong lyo kwye.
In that case, three jin will be \$6.00.
- Adam: **Hǎo. Zhè shì liù kuài.**
How. Juh shir lye kwye.
Okay. Here's \$6.00.
- Shifu: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you.
- Adam: **Xièxiè. Zàijiàn.**
Shyeh shyeh. Dzye jyan.
Thanks. Good bye.
- Shifu: **Zàijiàn.**
Dzye jyan.
Good bye.

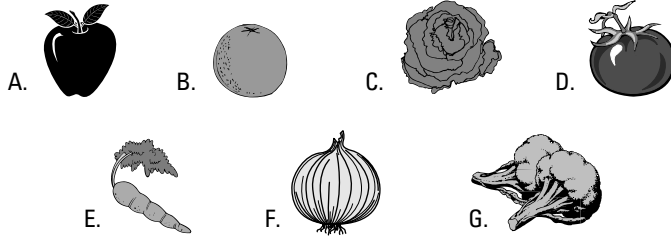
Words to Know

<i>chāojí shìchǎng</i>	<i>chow jee shir chahng</i>	supermarket
<i>shìchǎng</i>	<i>shir chahng</i>	market
<i>shòuhuòtān</i>	<i>show hwaw tahn</i>	stall
<i>cánshāzhě</i>	<i>təahn shah juh</i>	butcher
<i>záhuòshāng</i>	<i>dzah hwaw shahng</i>	grocer
<i>shìpǐn záhuò</i>	<i>shir peen dzah hwaw</i>	groceries
<i>zhǐ dài</i>	<i>jir dye</i>	a paper bag



Fun & Games

Identify these fruits and vegetables and write their Chinese names below. Check out Appendix C for the answers.



- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____



Chapter 6

Shopping Made Easy

In This Chapter

- ▶ Checking out the stores
- ▶ Looking for clothes and other items
- ▶ Bargaining for a better price

Ever dreamed of shopping till you dropped in a foreign country where the rate of exchange is really great? Or in faraway lands where lively outdoor night markets abound? This chapter helps you navigate both small shops and fancy department stores; get a handle on prices, colors, and merchandise; and in general negotiate the best deal wherever possible.

To **mǎi dōngxi** (*my doong she*; buy things) is one of the most enjoyable pastimes for people the world over. Whether you're just going **guàngshāngdiàn** (*gwahng shahng dyan*; window shopping) or actually about to **mǎi dōngxi** doesn't matter. You can still enjoy looking at all the **shāngpǐn** (*shahng peen*; merchandise), fantasizing about buying that **zuànshí jièzhī** (*dzwan shir jye jir*; diamond ring), and haggling over the **jiàgé** (*jyah guh*; price).

Going to Stores

If you don't have a clue how to begin shopping in China, much less what you want to buy, you might want to start off at one of the many **bǎihuò shāngdiàn** (*bye hwaw shahng dyan*; department stores) that have sprouted up throughout China in the last decade. Here you can get almost anything you're looking for, from **zhūbǎo** (*joo baow*; jewelry) and **huāpíng** (*hwah peeng*; vases) to **yīfu** (*ee foo*; clothing) and **yuèqì** (*yweh chee*; musical instruments).

Department stores aren't the only places you can shop, but they're certainly the easiest because everything is right there within walking distance and you can browse without fighting off vendors trying to push their wares. Or you might be someone who actually enjoys all the haggling that goes on at street fairs and prefers to experience a lively outdoor **cài shìchǎng** (*tsye shir chahng*; food market).



Even though traditional alley markets and shop fronts still exist in China, Western-style shopping malls are quickly putting their imprint on places like Beijing and Shanghai. You can still get the best prices, though, at the many open-air markets and street vendors, which sell traditional arts and crafts and other specialties. Beijing's #1 shopping area is not far from **Tiān'ānmén Square** (*tyan ahn mun*) Square on **Wángfǔjīng** (*wahng foo jeeng*) and **Dōngdān** (*doong dahn*) streets. Or on **Jiànguóménwài Dàjiē** (*jyan gwaw mun why dah jyeh*).

Here are some types of stores and the things you can find in them:

- ✔ **Zài yíge shūdiàn nǐ kěyǐ mǎi shū, zázhi hé bàozhǐ.** (*dzye ee guh shoo dyan nee kuh yee my shoo, dzah jir huh baow jir*; In a bookstore, you can buy books, magazines, and newspapers.)
- ✔ **Zài yíge wǔjīn diàn nǐ kěyǐ mǎi zhuǎnjiē qì, chātóu hé yānwù bàojǐng qì.** (*dzye ee guh woo jeen dyan nee kuh yee my jwan jyeh chee, chah toe huh yan woo baow jeeng chee*; In a hardware store, you can buy adaptors, plugs, and smoke detectors.)
- ✔ **Zài yíge yāncǎo diàn nǐ kěyǐ mǎi xuějiāyān, xiāngyān, yāndǒu hé gèzhǒng gèyàng de yāncǎo.** (*dzye ee guh yan tsaow dyan nee kuh yee my shyweh jyah yan, shyahng yan, yan doe huh guh joong guh yahng duh yan tsaow*; In a tobacco shop, you can buy cigars, cigarettes, pipes, and all kinds of tobacco.)
- ✔ **Zài yíge zhūbǎo diàn nǐ kěyǐ mǎi shǒuzhuó, ěrhuán, xiàngliàn, xiōngzhēn hé jièzhi.** (*dzye ee guh joo baow dyan nee kuh yee my show jwaw, are hwahn, shyahng lyan, shyoong juhn huh jyeh jir*; In a jewelry store, you can buy bracelets, earrings, necklaces, pins, and rings.)

When you finally make up your mind about what to shop for, you may want to call ahead to check out the store's hours. Here are some questions that can be of help:

- ✔ **Nín jǐ diǎn zhōng kāi/guān mén?** (*neen jee dyan joong kye/gwahn mun*; What time do you open/close?)
- ✔ **Nimen wǔdiǎn zhōng yǐhòu hái kāi ma?** (*nee men woo dyan joong ee hoe hi kye mah*; Are you open after 5 p.m.?)
- ✔ **Nimen xīngqītiān kāi bùkāi?** (*nee mun sheeng chee tyan kye boo kye*; Are you open on Sundays?)



Most stores in China are open quite early, around 8 a.m., and don't close until 8 p.m. or even later. If you want a less harried shopping experience, avoid shopping on the weekends, when seemingly a quarter of humanity is out doing the same thing.

Talkin' the Talk

Muriel and Helayne discuss going shopping for the day. Here's how they start out.

- Muriel: **Wǒ jīntiān xiǎng qù mǎi dōngxī.**
Waw jin tyan shyahng chyew my doong she.
 I want to go shopping today.
- Helayne: **Nǐ qù nǎr mǎi dōngxī?**
Nee chyew nar my doong she?
 Where will you go to shop?
- Muriel: **Wǒ yào qù bǎihuògōngsī mǎi yīfu.**
Waw yaow chyew bye hwaw goong suh my ee foo.
 I want to go to the department store to buy some clothes.
- Helayne: **Tīngshuō zài zhèige chénglǐ dōngxī dōu hěn guì.**
Teeng shwaw dzye jay guh chuhng lee doong she doe hun gway.
 I've heard that everything's very expensive in this city.
- Muriel: **Nà bù yídìng. Kàn shì shénme diàn. Yǒude hěn guì, yǒude yìdiǎn dōu búguì.**
Nah boo ee deeng. Kahn shir shummu dyan. Yo duh hun gway, yo duh ee dyan doe boo gway.
 Not necessarily. It depends on the store. Some are really expensive and some aren't expensive at all.
- Helayne: **Hǎo ba. Wǒmen zǒu ba. Wǒmen qù mǎi yīfu.**
How bah. Waw mun dzoe bah. Waw mun chyew my ee foo.
 Great. Let's go. Let's buy some clothes.



Whenever you see the words “**yìdiǎn dōu bú___**” (*ee dyan doe boo ___*) before an adjective, it means *not at all* (*adjective*). It's a great way to emphasize something. You can say something like **Wǒ yìdiǎn dōu búlèi** (*waw ee dyan doe boo lay*; I'm not tired in the least.) or **Tā yìdiǎn dōu búpiàoliàng** (*Tah ee dyan doe boo pyaow lyahng*; She's not at all pretty.) to get your point across.

Words to Know

bǎihuò shāngdiàn	bye hwaw shahng dyan	department store
cài shìchǎng	tsey shir chahng	food market
chàngpiàn diàn	chahng pyan dyan	record store
chāojí shìchǎng	chow jee shir chahng	supermarket
fúzhuāng diàn	foo jwahng dyan	clothing store
lǐpǐn diàn	lee peen dyan	gift shop
shūdiàn	shoo dyan	bookstore
wánjù diàn	wahn jyew dyan	toy store
wǔjīn diàn	woo jeen dyan	hardware store
xiédiàn	shyeh dyan	shoe store
yàofáng	yaow fahng	drugstore
zhūbǎo diàn	joo baow dyan	jewelry store

Just browsing

You may want to call ahead of time to see when the biggest department store in town opens before you decide to stroll on over. It's a nice day outside, you're in a mellow mood, all's right with the world, and all you want to do is just window shop —inside the store. You start out on the **yī céng** (*ee tshung*; first floor), take the **zìdòng lóutī** (*dzuh doong low tee*; escalator) all the way up to the **sān céng** (*sahn tshung*; third floor), and enjoy checking out tons of **shāngpǐn** (*shahng peen*; merchandise) quietly by yourself, when all of a sudden a **shòuhuòyuán** (*show hwaw ywan*; salesperson) sneaks up behind you and says **Nǐ xiǎng mǎi shénme?** (*nee shyahng my shummu*; What would you like to buy?)

At this point, you really just want to be left alone, so you say **Wǒ zhǐ shì kànkàn. Xièxiè.** (*waw jir shir kahn kahn. shyeh shyeh*; I'm just looking. Thanks.)

Asking for help

But what if you really do want help? First, you'd better look around for that salesperson you just told to go away. You may not find too many others nearby when you finally need them. If your luck holds, though, here are some questions you may want to ask:

- ✓ **Néng bùnéng bāngmáng?** (*nung boo nung bahng mahng*; Can you help me?)
- ✓ **Wǒ zhǎo yì běn yǒu guān Zhōngguó lìshǐ de shū.** (*waw jaow ee bun yo gwan joong gwaw lee shir duh shoo*; I'm looking for a book about Chinese history.)
- ✓ **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu Yīngwén de shū?** (*nee yo mayo eeng one duh shoo*; Do you have any books in English?)
- ✓ **Nǎr yǒu wàitào?** (*Nar yo why taow*; Where are the jackets?)
- ✓ **Qǐng nǐ gěi wǒ kànkàn nǐde xīzhuāng.** (*cheeng nee gay waw kahn kahn nee duh she jwahng*; Please show me your [Western] suits.)
- ✓ **Nǐmen mài bùmài guāngpán?** (*nee mun my boo my gwahng pahn*; Do you sell CDs?)
- ✓ **Nǎr yǒu ruǎnjiàn?** (*nar yo rwahn jyan*; Where is the software?)

Talkin' the Talk



Barbara and Kate are in a clothing store. They try to get a **fúwùyuán** (*foo woo ywan*; attendant) to help them locate dresses in their sizes.

Barbara: **Xiǎojiě! Nǐ néng bāng wǒmen ma?**
Shyaow jyeh! Nee nung bahng waw men mah?
 Miss! Can you help us?

Fúwùyuán: **Kéyǐ. Qǐng děng yíxià.**
Kuh yee. Cheeng dung ee shyah.
 Yes. Just a moment.

After the store attendant puts some boxes away, she returns to help Barbara and Kate.

Fúwùyuan: **Hǎo. Nǐmen yào mǎi shénme?**
How. Nee men yow my shummu?
 Okay. What did you want to buy?

Barbara: **Nǎr yǒu qúnzi?**
Nar yo chwun dzuh?
 Where are the skirts?

Fúwùyuan: **Qúnzi jiù zài nàr.**
Chwun dzuh jyo dzye nar.
 The skirts are just over there.

Barbara and Kate walk over to the skirt section.

Kate: **Zhè tiáo hóng qúnzi duōshǎo qián?**
Jay tyaow hoong chwun dzuh dwaw shaow chyan?
 How much is this red skirt?

Fúwùyuan: **Nà tiáo qúnzi èrshíwǔ kuài qián.**
Nah tyaow chwun dzuh are shir woo kwye chyan.
 That skirt is \$25.

Barbara: **Nà tài guile! Nǐ néng bùnéng dǎ zhé?**
Nah tye gway luh! Nee nung boo nung dah juh?
 That's too expensive! Can you give me a discount?

Fúwùyuan: **Kěnéng.**
Kuh nung.
 Perhaps.

Barbara: **Nǐ néng gěi wǒ duōdà de zhékòu?**
Nee nung gay waw dwaw dah duh juh ko?
 How much of a discount can you give me?

Fúwùyuan: **Bǎi fēn zhī shí, hǎo bùhǎo?**
Bye fun jir shir, how boo how?
 How's 10 percent?

Barbara: **Nà tài hǎo le. Xièxiè.**
Nah tye how luh. Shyeh shyeh.
 That's great. Thanks.

Words to Know

bǎi fēn zhī shí	bye fun jir shir	10 percent
bǎi fēn zhī shíwǔ	bye fun jir shir woo	15 percent
dǎ zhé	dah juh	to give a discount
Duōshǎo qián?	dwaw shaow chyan	How much is it?
fúwùyuan	foo woo ywan	attendant
shīfu	shir foo	Sir
xiǎojiě	shyaow jyeh	Miss



You can use two classifiers when it comes to clothing: **jiàn** and **tiáo**. Classifiers are the words used in between a number or the words *this* or *that* and the clothing you're talking about. **Jiàn** is used when you're talking about clothing worn on the upper part of the body, and **tiáo** is used for clothes worn on the lower part. So you'd say **yíjiàn chènshān** (*ee jyan chun shahn*; one shirt) or **sāntiáo kùzi** (*sahn tyaow koo dzuh*; three pairs of pants).

Shopping for Clothes

Going shopping for clothes is an art — one requiring lots of patience and fortitude, not to mention lots of new vocabulary if you're going to do it in Chinese. You need to know how to ask for your own size, how to see whether something is available in a different color or fabric, and in general how to compare apples and oranges (or at least skirts and shirts).

What's your size?

If you ask for clothing in the **dàxiǎo** (*dah shyaow*; size) you're used to quoting in the United States when you're in Taiwan or mainland China, you'll be in for a surprise. The numbers you generally throw out when talking to salespeople in the United States are vastly different from the ones you'll have to get used to using when dealing with Chinese sizes.

Here are some useful phrases you might want to know:

- ✔ **Nín chuān duō dà hào?** (*neen chwan dwaw dah how*; What size are you?)
- ✔ **Dàxiǎo búduì.** (*dah shyaw boo dway*; It's the wrong size.)
- ✔ **Hěn héshēn.** (*hun huh shun*; It fits really well.)
- ✔ **Zài Měiguó wǒde chǐcùn shì wǔ hào.** (*dzye may gwaw waw duh chir tswun shir woo how*; In America I wear a size 5.)

Instead of using the word **dàxiǎo** (*dah shyaw*; size), you can say things like

- ✔ **Wǒ chuān sānshíqī hào.** (*waw chwahn sahn shir chee how*; I wear a size 37.)
- ✔ **Nín chuān jǐ hào de chènshān?** (*neen chwahn jee how duh chun shahn*; What size shirt do you wear?)
- ✔ **Wǒ chuān xiǎohào.** (*waw chwahn shyaw how*; I wear a size small.)

Of course, you can always guess your approximate size just by indicating you'd like to see something in one of the following categories:

- ✔ **xiǎo** (*shyaw*; small)
- ✔ **zhōng** (*joong*; medium)
- ✔ **dà** (*dah*; large)

Talkin' the Talk

Julia approaches a salesperson at the Friendship Store in Beijing. She's unsure of what size to ask for because the measurement systems are different in China than they are in the United States.

- Julia: **Xiǎojiě!**
Shyaw jyeh!
Miss!
- Fúwùyuán: **Nǐ hǎo. Xiǎng mǎi shénme?**
Nee how. Shyahng my shumuh?
Hello. What would you like to buy?
- Julia: **Wǒ xiǎng mǎi yíjiàn jiákè.**
Waw shyahng my ee jyan jyah kuh.
I'm looking for a jacket.
- Fúwùyuán: **Hǎo ba. Nǐ chuān jǐ hào?**
How bah. Nee chwahn jee how?
Very well. What size are you?

- Julia: **Wǒ bùzhīdào. Měiguó de hàomǎ hé Zhōngguó de hàomǎ hěn bù yíyàng.**
Waw boo jir daow. May gwaw duh how ma huh joong gwaw duh how ma hun boo ee yahng.
 I don't know. American sizes are quite different from Chinese sizes.
- Fúwùyuán: **Wǒ gūji nǐ chuān xiǎohào.**
Waw goo jee nee chwahn shyaow how.
 I would estimate you wear a size small.
- Julia: **Hǎo ba. Nà, máfán nǐ gěi wǒ kànkàn xiǎohào de jiákè. Xièxiè.**
How bah. Nah, mah fahn nee gay waw kahn kahn shyaow how duh jyah kuh. Shyeh shyeh.
 That sounds about right. Would you mind showing me the small size jackets, then? Thank you.

Words to Know

<i>chǐcùn</i>	<i>chir tswun</i>	<i>measurement</i>
<i>dàhào</i>	<i>dah how</i>	<i>large</i>
<i>jiādàhào</i>	<i>jyah dah how</i>	<i>extra-large</i>
<i>kuān</i>	<i>kwan</i>	<i>wide</i>
<i>sōng</i>	<i>soong</i>	<i>loose</i>
<i>wǒ bùzhīdào</i>	<i>waw boo jir daow</i>	<i>I don't know</i>
<i>xiǎohào</i>	<i>shyaow how</i>	<i>small</i>
<i>zhǎi</i>	<i>jye</i>	<i>narrow</i>
<i>zhōnghào</i>	<i>joong how</i>	<i>medium</i>

Comparing quality: Good, better, best

When you want to let loose with a superlative in order to say something is absolutely the best — or, for that matter, the worst — always keep this one little word in mind: **zuì** (*dzway*) which means the most (it's the equivalent of the suffix *-est*).

Zuì is a word just waiting for something to follow it; otherwise it won't have much meaning. Here are some superlatives you may need to use from time to time:

- ✓ **zuì lèi** (*dzway lay*; the most tired)
- ✓ **zuì màn** (*dzway mahn*; the slowest)
- ✓ **zuì máng** (*dzway mahng*; the busiest)
- ✓ **zuì qíguài** (*dzway chee gwe*; the strangest)
- ✓ **zuì yǒumíng** (*dzway yo meeng*; the most famous)
- ✓ **zuì yǒuqián** (*dzway yo chyan*; the richest)

If you just want to say that something is better than something else, or “more” something, rather than the best necessarily, you use the word **gèng** (*guhng*) before an adjective. You can consider these the equivalent of the suffix *-er*. Another word that has the meaning of *more* or *-er* is **yìdiǎn** (*ee dyan*; or *ee dyan*). While the term **gèng** comes before an adjective, the term **yìdiǎn** must appear after it. Instead of saying **gèng kuài** (*guhng kwe*; faster), for example, you'd say **kuài yìdiǎn** (*kwe ee dyan*) to mean *faster*.

Here are some examples:

- ✓ **gèng cōngmíng** (*guhng tsoong meeng*; smarter)
- ✓ **gèng guì** (*guhng gway*; more expensive)
- ✓ **piányī yìdiǎn** (*pyan yee ee dyan*; cheaper)
- ✓ **gèng kuài** (*guhng kwe*; faster)
- ✓ **gèng màn** (*guhng mahn*; slower)
- ✓ **hǎo** (*how*; good)
- ✓ **gèng hǎo** (*guhng how*; better)
- ✓ **zuì hǎo** (*dzway how*; best)
- ✓ **duǎn yìdiǎn** (*dwahn ee dyan*; shorter)
- ✓ **cháng yìdiǎn** (*chahng ee dyan*; longer)

- ✔ **xiǎo yìdiǎn** (*shyaow ee dyan*; smaller)
- ✔ **dà yìdiǎn** (*dah ee dyan*; larger)
- ✔ **gèng piányì** (*gung pyan yee*; cheaper)

Comparing two items

The simplest way to compare two items is by using the coverb (the part of speech akin to a preposition) **bǐ** (*bee*; compared with) in between the two things you're comparing, followed by an adjective. If you say **A bǐ B hǎo** (*A bee B how*) you're saying *A is better than B*.

Here are some ways to make comparisons with **bǐ**:

- ✔ **Tā bǐ wǒ lǎo.** (*tah bee waw laow*; She's older than me.)
- ✔ **Zhèige wūzi bǐ nèige dà.** (*jay guh woo dzuh bee nay guh dah*; This room is bigger than that one.)
- ✔ **Hóngde bǐ huángde hǎo.** (*hoong duh bee hwahng duh how*; The red one is better than the yellow one.)

One way to convey similarity between two things is to use the coverbs **gēn** (*gun*) or **hé** (*huh*) in between the two things being compared, followed by the word **yíyàng** (*ee yahng*; the same) and then the adjective. So if you say **A gēn B yíyàng dà** (*A gun B ee yahng dah*), you're saying that A and B are equally large or as big as each other. You can also just say **A gēn B yíyàng**, meaning A and B are the same. Here are some other things you can say with this sentence pattern:

- ✔ **Gēge hé dìdì yíyàng gāo.** (*guh guh huh dee dee ee yahng gaow*; My older brother is as tall as my younger brother.)
- ✔ **Māo gēn gǒu yíyàng tiáopí.** (*maow gun go ee yahng tyaow pee*; Cats are just as naughty as dogs.)
- ✔ **Wǒ gēn nǐ yíyàng dà.** (*waw gun nee ee yahng dah*; You and I are the same age.)

So what if you want to make a negative comparison, such as *I'm not as tall as him*? For that you'd have to use the following sentence pattern:

A **méiyǒu** B **nèmmè** adjective

The means “A is not as (adjective) as B.” You can see this pattern in action in the following sentences:

- ✔ **Shāyú méiyǒu jīnyú nèmme kě'ài.** (*shah yew mayo jeen yew nummuh kuh eye*; Sharks are not as cute as goldfish.)
- ✔ **Yīngwén méiyǒu Zhōngwén nèmme nán.** (*eeng one mayo joong one nummuh nahn*; English is not as difficult as Chinese.)
- ✔ **Māo de wěiba méiyǒu tùzi de wěiba nèmme cū.** (*maow duh way bah mayo too dzuh duh way bah nummuh tsoo*; Cats' tails aren't as thick as the tails of rabbits.)

Talkin' the Talk

Olivia and Lěilí go shopping and check out some traditional Chinese women's dresses known as **qípáo** (*chee paow*). Those are the ankle-length dresses with high necks, and a high slit up the side of one leg.

- Olivia: **Zhèi jiàn qípáo zěnmeyàng?**
Jay jyan chee paow dzummuh yahng?
What do you think of this traditional Chinese dress?
- Lěilí: **Wǒ juéde hěn hǎo.**
Waw jweh duh hun how.
I think it looks great.
- Olivia: **Zhēnde ma?**
Jun duh mah?
Really?
- Lěilí: **Zhēnde. Kěshì jīnsède méiyǒu hóngde nèmme piàoliàng.**
Jun duh. Kuh shir jeen suh duh mayo hong duh nummuh pyaow lyahng.
Reallly. But the gold one isn't as pretty as the red one.
- Olivia: **Jīnsède hé hóngde yíyàng guì ma?**
Jeen suh duh huh hong duh ee yahng gway mah?
Are the gold one and the red one the same price?
- Lěilí: **Méiyǒu. Jīnsède bǐ hóngde piányi.**
Mayo. Jeen suh duh bee hong duh pyan yee.
No. The gold one is less expensive than the red one.
- Olivia: **Nà, wǒ jiù mǎi jīnsède.**
Nah, waw jyoe my jeen suh duh.
In that case I'll buy the gold one.

What are you wearing? *Chuān* versus *dài*

Dài (*dye*) and **chuān** (*chwan*) both mean *to wear*, but they're used for different types of things you put on your body. In English, you can say you're "wearing" everything from hats to socks to skirts or even a necklace. In Chinese, though, you can only **dài** things like **màozi** (*maow dzuh*; hats), **yǎnjìng** (*yan jeeng*; glasses), and **xiézi** (*shyeh dzuh*; shoes) — in other words, articles more akin to accessories rather than actual clothing, but you **chuān** things like **qúnzi** (*chewn dzuh*; skirts) and **dàiyī** (*dah ee*; coats).

Here are some things you can **chuān**:

- ✔ **bèixīn** (*bay sheen*; vest)
- ✔ **chángkù** (*chahng koo*; pants; also referred to simply as **kùzi**)
- ✔ **chángxiù** (*chahng shyow*; long sleeve)
- ✔ **chènshān** (*chun shahn*; blouse)
- ✔ **dàiyī** (*dah ee*; coat)
- ✔ **duǎnkù** (*dwan koo*; shorts)
- ✔ **duǎnxiù** (*dwahn shyow*; short sleeve)
- ✔ **jiákè** (*jyah kuh*; jacket)
- ✔ **kùzi** (*koo dzuh*; pants)
- ✔ **nèiyī** (*nay ee*; underwear)
- ✔ **niúzǎikù** (*nyo dzye koo*; blue jeans)
- ✔ **qúnzi** (*chewn dzuh*; skirt)
- ✔ **tuōxié** (*twaw shyeh*; slippers)
- ✔ **wàzi** (*wah dzuh*; socks)
- ✔ **yǔyī** (*yew ee*; raincoat)
- ✔ **gāogēnxiě** (*gaow gun shyeh*; high heels)

Here are some things you can't **chuān** but you can **dài**:

- ✔ **lǐngdài** (*leen dye*; necktie)
- ✔ **shǒubiǎo** (*show byaow*; wristwatch)
- ✔ **shǒutào** (*show taow*; gloves)
- ✔ **zhūbǎo** (*joo bao*; jewelry)

Asking about the color

When you go shopping for **yīfu** (*ee foo*; clothes), you have a chance to compare all the different **yánsè** (*yan suh*; colors) they come in and choose the one that looks the best on you. Do you generally prefer **dānsè** (*dahn suh*; solid colors) or **huā** (*hwah*; patterned) shirts? How about **hēi** (*hey*; black) hats or **fēnhóng** (*fun hoong*; pink) skirts? Whatever your clothing preferences are, after you know how to express your heart's desire with the correct word, you can be sure to ask for what you like.

The following is a list of handy words the next time you go shopping either for clothes or for material to create your own. **Shénme yánsè** (*shummuh yan suh*; what color) is your favorite from the list below? Don't be shy to speak up about your preferences. If someone wants you to wear pink with purple polka dots to a wedding, you can always politely just say, "**Yánsè búduì**" (*yan suh boo dway*; the color is wrong) and leave it at that.

- ✓ **bái** (*bye*; white)
- ✓ **fēnhóng** (*fun hoong*; pink)
- ✓ **hēi** (*hey*; black)
- ✓ **hóng** (*hoong*; red)
- ✓ **huáng** (*hwahng*; yellow)
- ✓ **júhóng** (*jyew hoong*; orange)
- ✓ **lán** (*lahn*; blue)
- ✓ **zǐ** (*dzuh*; purple)
- ✓ **dānsè** (*dahn suh*; solid color)
- ✓ **dàn yìdiǎn** (*dahn ee dyan*; lighter)
- ✓ **duànzi** (*dwahn dzuh*; satin)
- ✓ **huā** (*hwah*; patterned)
- ✓ **kāishīmǐ** (*kye shir mee*; cashmere)
- ✓ **liàozi** (*lyaow dzuh*; fabric)
- ✓ **shēn yìdiǎn** (*shun ee dyan*; darker)
- ✓ **sīchóu** (*suh cho*; silk)
- ✓ **yángmáo** (*yahng maow*; wool)

Talkin' the Talk



Laurel goes shopping for sweaters with her husband John and asks him to weigh in on which color looks best on her.

Laurel: **Zhèi jiàn máoyī nǐ juéde zěnmeyàng?**
Jay jyan maow ee nee jweh duh dzummuh yahng?
 What do you think of this sweater?

John: **Nèi jiàn máoyī tài xiǎo. Yánsè yě búpiàoliàng.**
Nay jyan mow ee tye shyaow. Yan suh yeh boo pyaow lyahng.
 That sweater is too small. The color doesn't look good either.

Laurel: **Nǐ xǐhuān shénme yánsè?**
Nee she hwahn shummuh yan suh?
 What color do you like?

John: **Wǒ xǐhuān hóngde. Búyào nèige hēide.**
Waw she hwahn hoong duh. Boo yaow nay guh hey duh.
 I like the red one. You shouldn't get the black one.

Laurel: **Hǎole. Nà, wǒ jiù mǎi hóngde ba.**
How luh. Nah, waw jyo my hoong duh bah.
 Okay. In that case I'll buy the red one.



When the possessive particle **de** is attached to an adjective and there's no noun following it, it can be translated as *the one which is (adjective)*, as in **hóngde** (*hoong duh*; the red one), **dà de** (*dah duh*; the big one), **tián de** (*tyan duh*; the sweet one), and so on.

Shopping for Other Items

Of course clothes aren't the only things in the world to shop for (although I know some would beg to differ with me). How about some antiques or hi tech toys? The possibilities are endless in this consumer-oriented world of ours.

Hunting for antiques

One of the best places in the world to go searching for **gǔdǒng** (*goo doong*; antiques) is — you guessed it — China. **Gǔdǒng diàn** (*goo doong dyan*; antique shops) abound in major cities near large stores and in small alleyways. You can buy everything from 200-year-old **diāokè pǐn** (*dyaow kuh peen*; carved objects) to 100-year-old **bí yān hú** (*bee yan who*; snuff bottles). You can find all sorts of rare things.

After you find the perfect antique item, though, you need to deal with all the possible export restrictions, like for porcelain that is older than 200 years or some types of rare wood products. You have to have a red wax seal put on the item in order to legally take it out of China. The cultural artifacts bureau of the city in which you buy the item must apply the seal.



Slightly southwest of **Tiān'ānmén Square** in **Beijing** lies **Liúlǐchǎng** (*lyoe lee chahng*), an area considered the best in the city for antiques and other traditional arts and crafts. In **Shanghai**, the **Dōngtái** (*doong tye*) antiques market is the one to look for, not far from **Huáihǎi Lù** (*hwye hi loo*). There's even a Ghost Market in the Old Town Bazaar where folks go for weekend antique shopping. The Ghost Market is so named because of the ungodly hour the vendors begin setting up shop — a time before sunrise when only ghosts can check out what's on sale. If you purchase antiques in China, you need to have a red wax seal applied by the local cultural artifacts bureau before you can legally take it out of the country. Even though you're dealing with antiques, you're still allowed to haggle over the price, so don't be shy trying to get the best deal possible.

Here are some words and phrases that should come in handy when hunting for antiques:

- ✓ **Zhèi shì něige chádài de?** (*jay shir nay guh chaow dye duh*; Which dynasty is this from?)
- ✓ **Néng dài chūguó ma?** (*nung dye choo gwaw mah*; Can it be taken out of China?)
- ✓ **Nǐde gǔdǒng dìtǎn zài nǎr?** (*nee duh goo doong dee tahn dzye nar*; Where are your antique carpets?)
- ✓ **Kéyǐ bùkényǐ jiā zhúnǚ chūguó de huǒqǐ yìn?** (*kuh yee boo kuh yee jyah jwun shyew choo gwaw duh hwaw chee yeen*; Can you put the export seal on it?)
- ✓ **Zhèige duōshǎo nián?** (*jay guh dwaw shaow nyan*; How old is this?)
- ✓ **Něige chádài de?** (*nay guh chaow dye duh*; Which dynasty is it from?)

- ✔ **bí yān hú** (*bee yan who*; snuff bottles)
- ✔ **dēnglóng** (*dung loong*; lantern)
- ✔ **diāokè pǐn** (*dyaow kuh peen*; carved objects)
- ✔ **fóxiàng** (*faw shyahng*; Buddhas)
- ✔ **gǔdǒng diàn** (*goo doong dyan*; antique shop)
- ✔ **gǔdǒng jiājù** (*goo doong jyah jyew*; antique furniture)
- ✔ **gùizi** (*gway dzuh*; chest)
- ✔ **jìbài yòng de zhuōzi** (*jee bye yoong duh jwaw dzuh*; altar table)
- ✔ **jīngtàilán** (*jeeng tye lahn*; cloisonné)
- ✔ **píngfēng** (*peeng fung*; screen)
- ✔ **shénxiàng** (*shun shyahng*; idol)
- ✔ **shūfǎ** (*shoo fah*; calligraphy)
- ✔ **xiōngzhēn** (*shyoong juhn*; brooch)
- ✔ **xiùhuā zhìpīn** (*shyow hwah jir peen*; embroidery)
- ✔ **yù** (*yew*; jade)

Buying high-tech and electronic things



New electronic gadgets appear on the market every two minutes these days, or so it seems. Just when you think you've gotten the latest model of something, another one comes out with great fanfare. Below is a list of the most commonly used (and most commonly bought) items you might be in need of — even while reading *Chinese For Dummies*. Now you'll know how to ask for what you want when you walk in that store.

- ✔ **chuánzhēn jī** (*chwahn juhn jee*; fax machine)
- ✔ **dǎyìnjī** (*dah yeen jee*; printer)
- ✔ **diànnǎo shèbèi** (*dyan now shuh bay*; computer equipment)
- ✔ **diànshì jī** (*dyan shir jee*; TV)
- ✔ **gèrén diànnǎo** (*guh run dyan now*; PC)
- ✔ **guāngpán** (*gwahng pahn*; CD)
- ✔ **shǔbiāo** (*shoo byaow*; mouse)
- ✔ **jiàn pán** (*jyan pahn*; keyboard)

- ✓ **jìsuàn jī** (*jee swan jee*; computer)
- ✓ **kǎlāōukèi jī** (*kah lah okay jee*; karaoke machine)
- ✓ **ruǎnjiàn** (*rwahn jyan*; software)
- ✓ **sǎomiáoyí** (*saow myaow ee*; scanner)
- ✓ **shèxiàng jī** (*shuh shyahng jee*; camcorder)
- ✓ **shǒutíshì** (*show tee shir*; laptop)
- ✓ **xiǎnshìqì** (*shyan shir chee*; monitor)
- ✓ **yìngjiàn** (*eeng jyan*; computer hardware)
- ✓ **zūhé yīnxiǎng** (*dzoo huh yeen shyahng*; stereo system)

Getting a Good Price and Paying

Folks the world over want to get good deals on their purchases. At least they should. This section helps you discover the joys (and pitfalls) of haggling in Chinese.

Negotiating prices at the night market

Among the more fun things to do in Taiwan and mainland China is visit one of the many lively night markets that abound. There, you can find anything from clothing and jewelry to antiques and food. Because the Chinese love to **mǎi dōngxì** (*my doong she*; shop) and **tǎojià huánjià** (*taow jyah hwahn jyah*; haggle), you'll have plenty of company on your sojourns.

You should always assume that prices are negotiable in an open air market. You can always ask one of the following and see what happens:

- ✓ **Néng bùnéng piányì yìdiǎr?** (*nung boo nung pyan yee ee dyar*; Can you sell it more cheaply?)
- ✓ **Néng bùnéng shǎo yìdiǎr?** (*nung boo nung shaow ee dyar*; Can you lower the price?)

Or you can always play hardball and say something like **Zěnme zhèmma guì ah?** (*dzuh muh juh muh gway ah*; Why is this so expensive?) in an exasperated voice, start walking away and see what happens. (Bet they come back with a lower price.)

These haggling-related phrases are also worth knowing:

- ✔ **Nimen shōu bù shōu Měiyuán?** (*nee men show boo show may ywan*; Do you accept U.S. dollars?)
- ✔ **Zhèige duōshǎo qián?** (*jay guh dwaw shaow chyan*; How much is this?)
- ✔ **Dǎ zhé, hǎo bùhǎo?** (*dah juh, how boo how*; How about giving me a discount?)
- ✔ **Kéyǐ jiǎng jià ma?** (*kuh yee jyahng jyah mah*; Can we negotiate the price?)



If you see something called a **Yǒuyí Shāngdiàn** (*yo ee shahng dyan*; Friendship Store) be aware that it is one of the ubiquitous state-run stores in China, so prices are generally fixed. However, bargaining is the norm everywhere else. Beware of goods with no prices marked on them! If you ask about them, you'll probably be quoted a price far different than that charged to the locals. Often you'll be able to have 5 to 10 percent taken off any price quoted verbally, so try to practice bargaining before you set foot in a street market.

Paying for your purchase (or demanding a refund)

When you finish checking out all the merchandise, haggling (or not) over the price, and deciding on just what to **mǎi** (*my*; buy), you'll probably start reaching for your **qiánbāo** (*chyan baow*; wallet) to see whether you should take out your **xìnyòng kǎ** (*sheen yoong kah*; credit card) or some **xiàncián** (*shyan chyan*; cash) or, if you got a really good deal, just some **língqián** (*leeng chyan*; small change). When you **fùqián** (*foo chyan*; pay), you might also want to get a **shōujù** (*show jyew*; receipt).

If you end up being **bùyúkuài** (*boo yew kwee*; unhappy) about your purchase, one of these phrases may come in handy when you try to **tuì** (*tway*; return) your **huò** (*hwaw*; merchandise):

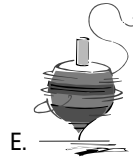
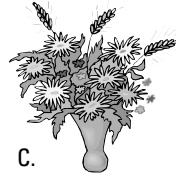
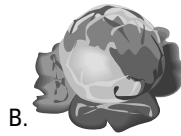
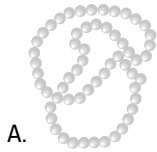
- ✔ **Wǒ yāoqiú tuìkuǎn.** (*waw yaow chyow tway kwahn*; I want a refund.)
- ✔ **Wǒ yào tuì huò.** (*waw yaow tway hwaw*; I would like to return this.)
- ✔ **Qǐng nǐ bǎ qián jìrù wǒde xìnyòng kǎ.** (*cheeng nee bah chyan jee roo waw duh sheen yoong kah*; Please refund my credit card.)
- ✔ **Wǒ néng bùnéng jiàn zǒngjīnglǐ?** (*waw nung boo nung jyan dzoong jeeng lee*; May I see the manager?)
- ✔ **Qǐng nǐ bāo qīlái.** (*cheeng nee baow chee lye*; Please wrap these/this.)
- ✔ **Duì wǒ bù héshēn.** (*dway waw boo huh shun*; It doesn't fit me.)



Fun & Games

Take a look at the illustrations below. In what type of store would you find these items? The answers are in Appendix C.

- Zhūbǎo diàn _____
- Cài shìchāng _____
- Huādiàn _____
- Yàofáng _____
- Wánjù diàn _____



Chapter 7

Exploring the Town

In This Chapter

- ▶ Counting down days and time
- ▶ Dropping in on a show
- ▶ Checking out museums and historical sites
- ▶ Taking in a movie or concert
- ▶ Hanging out in bars and clubs

Don't even think of staying around your **lǚguǎn** (*lyew gwahn*; hotel) or house on a beautiful sunny day — especially if you're about to explore a new **chéngshì** (*chuhng shir*; city) in China. You have so much to see and do. You may want to check out a performance of **Jīngjù** (*jeeng jyew*; Peking Opera) or head over to the nearest **bówùguǎn** (*baw woo gwahn*; museum) to take in the latest **yìshù zhǎnlǎn** (*ee shoo jahn lahn*; art exhibit). If you don't know where you're going, you need to know how to ask for **fāngxiàng** (*fahng shyahng*; directions); how to read a **dìtú** (*dee too*; map); and how to get from here to there via **gōnggòngqìchē** (*goong goong chee chuh*; bus), **dìtiě** (*dee tyeh*; subway), or **chūzūchē** (*choo dzoo chuh*; taxi). If you want to look at a train or bus **shíjiānbǎo** (*shir jyan byaow*; schedule), you may ask yourself what day it is **jīntiān** (*jin tyan*; today) and what time it is **xiànzài** (*shyan dzye*; now).

Knowing the Time and Day

So what day is it today? Could it be **xīngqīliù** (*sheeng chee lyo*; Saturday), when you can sleep late and go see a **diànyǐng** (*dyan yeeng*; movie) in the evening with friends? Or is it **xīngqīyī** (*sheeng chee ee*; Monday), when you have to be at work by **jiǔ diǎn zhōng** (*jyo dyan joong*; 9:00) in the morning to prepare for a 10 a.m. **kāi huì** (*kye hway*; meeting)? Or maybe it's **xīngqīwǔ** (*sheeng chee woo*; Friday) and you already have **liǎng zhāng piào** (*lyahng jahng pyaow*; two tickets) for the **jiāoxiǎng yuè** (*jyow shyahng yweh*; symphony) that begins at **wǎnshàng bā diǎn** (*wahn shahng bah dyan*; 8 p.m.).

Talking about days, weeks, months, and more

You may not be a big fan of going to work from **xīngqīyī** (*sheeng chee ee*; Monday) to **xīngqīwǔ** (*sheeng chee woo*; Friday), but when the **zhōumò** (*joe maw*; weekend) comes, you have two days of freedom and fun. Before you know it, though, **xīngqīyī** comes again.

The days of the week

Although Chinese people recognize seven days in the week just as Americans do, the Chinese week begins on **xīngqīyī** (*sheeng chee ee*; Monday) and ends on **xīngqītīān** (*sheeng chee tyan*; Sunday). If you're talking about **zhèige xīngqī** (*jay guh sheeng chee*; this week) in Chinese, you're talking about any time between this past Monday through this coming Sunday. Anything earlier is considered **shàngge xīngqī** (*shahng guh sheeng chee*; last week). Any day after this coming Sunday is automatically part of **xiàge xīngqī** (*shyah guh sheeng chee*; next week). See Table 7-1 for a list of days of the week.

Table 7-1		Days of the Week
Chinese Word	Pronunciation	English Word
xīngqīyī	sheeng chee ee	Monday
xīngqī'èr	sheeng chee are	Tuesday
xīngqīsān	sheeng chee sahn	Wednesday
xīngqīsì	sheeng chee suh	Thursday
xīngqīwǔ	sheeng chee woo	Friday
xīngqīliù	sheeng chee lyo	Saturday
xīngqītīān	sheeng chee tyan	Sunday

So, **jīntiān xīngqījī?** (*jin tyan sheeng chee jee*; What day is it today?) Where does today fit in your weekly routine?

- ✓ **Jīntiān xīngqī'èr.** (*jin tyan sheeng chee are*; Today is Tuesday.)
- ✓ **Wǒ xīngqīyī dào xīngqīwǔ gōngzuò.** (*waw sheeng chee ee daow sheeng chee woo goong dzwaw*; I work from Monday to Friday.)
- ✓ **Wǒmen měige xīngqīyī kāihuì.** (*waw men may guh sheeng chee ee kye hway*; We have meetings every Monday.)
- ✓ **Xiàge xīngqīsān shì wǒde shēngri.** (*shyah guh sheeng chee sahn shir waw duh shung ir*; Next Wednesday is my birthday.)

Talkin' the Talk

Michael and Virginia discover that the weekend is coming up and begin to make plans.

- Michael: **Jīntiān xīngqī jǐ?**
Jin tyan sheeng chee jee?
What day is today?
- Virginia: **Jīntiān xīngqīwǔ.**
Jin tyan sheeng chee woo.
Today is Friday.
- Michael: **Hǎojīle. Míngtiān bùgōngzuò.**
How jee luh. Meeng tyan boo goong dzwaw.
Great. No work tomorrow.
- Virginia: **Duìle. Hòutiān qù jiàotáng.**
Dway luh. Ho tyan chyew jyaow tahng.
That's right. The day after tomorrow I'll go to church.
- Michael: **Hǎo. Wǒ gēn nǐ yìqǐ qù.**
How. Waw gun nee ee chee chyew.
Okay. I'll go with you.

Words to Know

zhèige xīngqī	jay guh sheeng chee	this week
shàngge xīngqī	shahng guh sheeng chee	last week
xiàge xīngqī	shyah guh sheeng chee	next week
zuótiān	dzwaw tyan	yesterday
jīntiān	jīn tyan	today
míngtiān	meeng tyan	tomorrow
hòutiān	ho tyan	the day after tomorrow
qiántiān	chyan tyan	the day before yesterday

The months and seasons

Days don't exist in a vacuum — or even just in a week — and weeks exist within months. So if you don't just want to say today is Monday, but rather Monday, June 1st, you have to say the **yuè** (*yweh*; month) before the day and end with the day of the week:

- ✓ **liùyuè yī hào, xīngqīyī** (*lyo yweh ee how, sheeng chee ee*; Monday, June 1st)
- ✓ **sìyuè èr hào, xīngqītiān** (*suh yweh are how, sheeng chee tyan*; Sunday, April 2nd)

The larger unit of the month always comes before the smaller unit of the date in Chinese:

- ✓ **yīyuè èr hào** (*ee yweh are how*; January 2nd)
- ✓ **sānyuè sì hào** (*sahn yweh suh how*; March 4th)
- ✓ **shí'èryuè sānshí hào** (*shir are yweh sahn shir how*; December 30th)

To ask what today's date is, you simply say **jīntiān jīyuè jīhào?** (*jin tyan jee yweh jee how*; literally: Today is what month and what day?)



Even though you say each month by adding the number of the month in front of the word **yuè** (which means “month”), if you add the classifier **ge** (*guh*) in between the number and the word **yuè**, you say “one month,” “two months,” and so on. For example, **bā yuè** (*bah yweh*) means August (which is the 8th month), but **bā ge yuè** (*bah guh yweh*) means eight months.

The same basic idea goes for saying the days of the week. All you have to do is add the number of the day of the week (Monday: Day #1), preceded by the word **libài** (*lee bye*) or **xīngqī** (*sheeng chee*), meaning “week,” to say the day you mean. The only exception is Sunday, when you have to add the word **tiān** (*tyan*; heaven, or day) in place of a number. **Wōde tiān!** (*waw duh tyan*; My heavens!) Isn't this easy?

I list the months of the year in Table 7-2 and the seasons in Table 7-3.

Table 7-2 Months of the Year and Other Pertinent Terms		
Chinese Word or Phrase	Pronunciation	English Word or Phrase
Yīyuè	ee yweh	January
Èryuè	are yweh	February
Sānyuè	sahn yweh	March
Sìyuè	suh yweh	April

<i>Chinese Word or Phrase</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word or Phrase</i>
Wūyuè	woo yweh	May
Liùyuè	lyo yweh	June
Qīyuè	chee yweh	July
Bāyuè	bah yweh	August
Jiǔyuè	jyo yweh	September
Shíyuè	shir yweh	October
Shíyīyuè	shir ee yweh	November
Shí'èryuè	shir are yweh	December
zhèige yuè	jay guh yweh	this month
shàngge yuè	shahng guh yweh	last month
xiàge yuè	shyah guh yweh	next month
shēngri	shung ir	Birthday

Table 7-3

Seasonal Terms

<i>Chinese Word or Phrase</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word or Phrase</i>
sì jì	suh jee	The four seasons
dōngjì	doong jee	Winter
chūnjì	chwun jee	Spring
xiàjì	shyah jee	Summer
qiūjì	chyo jee	Fall

Talkin' the Talk

Steve asks Xiǎo Lán about her birthday.

Steve: **Xiǎo Lán, nǐde shēngri shì jǐyuè jǐhào?**
Shyaow lahn nee duh shung ir shir jee yweh jee how?
 Xiǎo Lán, when's your birthday?

- Xiǎo Lán: **Wǒde shēngrì shì liùyuè èr hào. Nǐde ne?**
Waw duh shung ir shir lyo yweh are how. Nee duh nuh?
 My birthday is June 2nd. How about yours?
- Steve: **Wǒde shēngrì shì wǔyuè qī hào.**
Waw duh shung ir shir woo yweh chee how.
 My birthday is May 7th.
- Xiǎo Lán: **Nèmme, xiàge xīngqīsān jiù shì nǐde shēngrì! Zhù nǐ chājǐtiān shēngrì kuàilè!**
Nummuh, shyah guh sheeng chee sahn jyo shir nee duh shung ir! Joo nee chah jee tyan shung ir kwye luh!
 In that case, next Wednesday is your birthday! Happy almost birthday!

Words to Know

Zhù nǐ shēngrì kuàilè!	joo nee shung ir kwye luh	Happy Birthday!
jīnnián	jin nyan	this year
qùnián	chyew nyan	last year
míngnián	meeng nyan	next year
měinián	may nyan	every year
hòunián	ho nyan	the year after next
qiánnián	chyan nyan	the year before last
xiàge xīngqīyī	shyah guh sheeng chee ee	next Monday
shàngge xīngqīsì	shahng guh sheeng chee suh	last Thursday

Telling time in Chinese

All you have to do to find out the **shíjiān** (*shir jyan*; time) is take a peek at your **shǒubiǎo** (*show byaow*; watch) or look at the **zhōng** (*joong*; clock) on the wall. These days, even your **jìsuànjī** (*jee swan jee*; computer) or **shǒujī** (*show jee*; cell phone) show the time. And you can always revert to that beloved **luòdìshì dà bǎizhōng** (*lwaw dee shir dah bye joong*; grandfather clock) in your parents' living room. You no longer have any excuse to **chídào** (*chir daow*; be late), especially if you own a **nào zhōng** (*now joong*; alarm clock)!

You can express time in Chinese by using the words **diǎn** (*dyan*; hour) and **fēn** (*fun*; minute). Isn't using **fēn** fun? You can even talk about time in **miǎo** (*meow*; seconds) if you like and sound like a cat. Table 7-4 shows you how to pronounce all the hours on the clock.



You can indicate the hour by saying **3-diǎn** or **3-diǎn zhōng**. **Diǎn** (*dyan*) means “hour,” but it’s also a classifier, and **zhōng** (*joong*) means “clock.” Feel free to use either to say what time it is.

<i>Chinese Phrase</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Phrase</i>
1-diǎn zhōng	ee dyan joong	1 o'clock
2-diǎn zhōng	lyahng dyan joong	2 o'clock
3-diǎn zhōng	sahn dyan joong	3 o'clock
4-diǎn zhōng	suh dyan joong	4 o'clock
5-diǎn zhōng	woo dyan joong	5 o'clock
6-diǎn zhōng	lyo dyan joong	6 o'clock
7-diǎn zhōng	chee dyan joong	7 o'clock
8-diǎn zhōng	bah dyan joong	8 o'clock
9-diǎn zhōng	jyo dyan joong	9 o'clock
10-diǎn zhōng	shir dyan joong	10 o'clock
11-diǎn zhōng	shir ee dyan joong	11 o'clock
12-diǎn zhōng	shir are dyan joong	12 o'clock



When mentioning 12 o'clock, be careful! The way to say noon is simply **zhōngwǔ** (*joong woo*), and the way to say midnight is **bànyè** (*bahn yeh*).

The Chinese are very precise when they tell time. You can't just say **3-diǎn zhōng** (*sahn dyan joong*) when you want to say 3 o'clock. Do you mean to say **qīngzǎo sān diǎn zhōng** (*cheeng dzaow sahn dyan joong*; 3 a.m.) or **xiàwǔ sāndiǎn zhōng** (*shyah woo sahn dyan joong*; 3 p.m.)?

The segment of the day that you refer to needs to come before the actual time itself in Chinese. Here's a list of the major segments of the day:

- ✓ **qīngzǎo** (*cheeng dzaow*; midnight to dawn)
- ✓ **zǎoshàng** (*dzaow shahng*; 6 a.m. to noon)
- ✓ **xiàwǔ** (*shyah woo*; noon to 6 p.m.)
- ✓ **wǎnshàng** (*wahn shahng*; 6 p.m. to midnight)

Here are some samples of combining the segment of the day with the time of day:

- ✓ **wǎnshàng qī diǎn zhōng** (*wahn shahng chee dyan joong*; 7 p.m.)
- ✓ **xiàwǔ sān diǎn bàn** (*shyah woo sahn dyan bahn*; 3:30 p.m.)
- ✓ **qīngzǎo yì diǎn yí kè** (*cheeng dzaow ee dyan ee kuh*; 1:15 a.m.)
- ✓ **zǎoshàng bā diǎn èrshíwǔ fēn** (*dzaow shahng bah dyan are shir woo fun*; 8:25 a.m.)

If you want to indicate half an hour, just add **bàn** (*bahn*; half) after the hour:

- ✓ **3-diǎn bàn** (*sahn dyan bahn*; 3:30)
- ✓ **4-diǎn bàn** (*suh dyan bahn*; 4:30)
- ✓ **11-diǎn bàn** (*shir ee dyan bahn*; 11:30)

Do you want to indicate a quarter of an hour or three quarters of an hour? Just use the phrases **yí kè** (*ee kuh*) and **sān kè** (*sahn kuh*) after the hour:

- ✓ **2-diǎn yí kè** (*lyahng dyan ee kuh*; 2:15)
- ✓ **4-diǎn yí kè** (*suh dyan ee kuh*; 4:15)
- ✓ **5-diǎn sān kè** (*woo dyan sahn kuh*; 5:45)
- ✓ **7-diǎn sān kè** (*chee dyan sahn kuh*; 7:45)



Of course, you have other ways to indicate time in Chinese. On the hour, half hour, and quarter of an hour aren't the only parts of time which exist, after all. For example, instead of saying **qī diǎn wǔshí fēn** (*chee dyan woo shir fun*; 7:50), you can say **bā diǎn chà shí fēn** (*bah dyan chah shir fun*; 10 to 8; literally: 8 o'clock minus 10 minutes). “**Chà**” (*chah*) means “to lack.” Unlike **fēn** (*fun*; minute), **kè** (*kuh*; quarter of an hour), and **bàn** (*bahn*; half), you can use **chà** either before or after **diǎn** (*dyan*; hour).

Here are some other examples of alternative ways to indicate the time:

- ✓ **chà shí fēn wǔ diǎn** (*chah shir fun woo dyan*; 10 to 5)
- ✓ **wǔ diǎn chà shí fēn** (*woo dyan chah shir fun*; 10 to 5)
- ✓ **sì diǎn wǔshí fēn** (*suh dyan woo shir fun*; 4:50)
- ✓ **chà yí kè qī diǎn** (*chah ee kuh chee dyan*; a quarter to 7)
- ✓ **qī diǎn chà yí kè** (*chee dyan chah ee kuh*; a quarter to 7)
- ✓ **liù diǎn sān kè** (*lyo dyan sahn kuh*; 6:45)
- ✓ **liù diǎn sìshíwǔ fēn** (*lyo dyan suh shir woo fun*; 6:45)

When talking about time, you may prefer to say before or after a certain hour. To do so, you use either **yíqián** (*ee chyan*; before) or **yǐhòu** (*ee ho*; after) along with the time, day, month, or anything else. Here are some examples:

- ✓ **xiàwǔ 3-diǎn zhōng yíqián** (*shyah woo sahn dyan joong ee chyan*; before 3:00 p.m.)
- ✓ **qīngzǎo 4-diǎn bàn yǐhòu** (*cheeng dzaow suh dyan bahn ee ho*; after 4:30 a.m.)
- ✓ **sìyuè yíqián** (*suh yweh ee chyan*; before April)
- ✓ **xiàgè xīngqī yǐhòu** (*shyah guh sheeng chee ee ho*; after next week)
- ✓ **wǔyuè sān hào yíqián** (*woo yweh sahn how ee chyan*; before May 3rd)

Talkin' the Talk



Xiǎo Huá and Chén Míng discuss their plans to see a movie.

- Xiǎo Huá: **Wǒmen jīntiān wǎnshàng qù kàn diànyǐng hǎo bùhǎo?**
Waw men jin tyan wahn shahng chyew kahn dyan yeeng how boo how?
 Let's go see a movie tonight, okay?

- Chén Míng: **Bùxíng. Wǒde fùmǔ jīntiān wǎnshàng yídìng yào wǒ gēn tāmen yìqǐ chī wǎnfàn.**
Boo sheeng. Waw duh foo moo jin tyan wahn shahng ee deeng yaow waw gun tah men ee chee chir wahn fahn.
 No can do. My parents are adamant that I have dinner with them tonight.
- Xiǎo Huá: **Nǐmen jǐdiǎn zhōng chīfàn?**
Nee men jee dyan joong chir fahn?
 What time do you eat?
- Chén Míng: **Píngcháng wǒmen liùdiǎn dào qīdiǎn zhōng chīfàn.**
Peeng chahng waw men lyo dyan daow chee dyan joong chir fahn.
 We usually eat from 6 to 7.
- Xiǎo Huá: **Hǎo ba. Nǐ chīfàn yǐhòu wǒmen qù kàn yíbù jiǔdiǎn zhōng yǐqián de piānzi, hǎo bùhǎo?**
How bah. Nee chir fahn ee ho waw men chyew kahn ee boo jyo dyan joong ee chyan duh pyan dzuh, how boo how?
 Okay. How about we see a movie that starts before 9 after you're finished eating?
- Chén Míng: **Hěn hǎo. Yìhuǐr jiàn.**
Hun how. Ee hwar jyan.
 Okay. See you later.

Attending a Performance

Plan on taking in a few **yǎnchū** (*yan choo*; shows) in the near future? You have so much to choose from nowadays. You can check out some **gējù** (*guh jyew*; operas), or, if you prefer, a **bālái** (*bah lay*; ballet) or a **yīnyuèhuì** (*yin yweh hway*; music concert).



Shanghai in particular is pretty famous for its **zájì tuán** (*dzah jee twahn*; acrobatics troupes).



Take a peek at Peking Opera

Have you ever been to **Jīngjù** (*jeeng jyew*; Peking Opera)? This Chinese opera is one of the most beloved art forms in China, with a history of over 200 years. The opera is a great spectacle of music, song, and acrobatics, telling and retelling great works of Chinese history and literature. Performances abound, especially during the traditional festivals when everyone is off of work.

Even though its title is Peking (Beijing) Opera, it actually originated in the Anhui and Hubei provinces. Originally staged for the royal family, it came to Beijing in 1790 and later became familiar to the general public. Thousands of local branches of Chinese Opera exist, each with a unique dialect. Opera is the one art form in a country of over a billion people that appeals to every strata of society.

Before you can attend any performances, however, or even try to catch a **diànyǐng** (*dyan yeeng*; movie), you have to buy a **piào** (*pyaow*; ticket) or two. The following phrases should help you get what you want, or at least understand what you're being told:

- ✔ **Zài nǎr kényǐ mǎidào piào?** (*dzye nar kuh yee my daow pyaow*; Where can I buy tickets?)
- ✔ **Yǒu méiyǒu jīntiān wǎnshàng yǎnchū de piào?** (*yo mayo jin tyan wahn shahng yan choo duh pyaow*; Are there any tickets to tonight's performance?)
- ✔ **Duìbùqǐ, jīntiān wǎnshàng de piào dōu màiwán le.** (*dway boo chee, jin tyan wahn shahng duh pyaow doe my wahn luh*; I'm sorry, tickets for tonight are all sold out.)
- ✔ **Wǒ yào mǎi yì zhāng dàrén piào, liǎng zhāng értóng piào.** (*waw yaow my ee jahng dah run pyaow, lyahng jahng are toong pyaow*; I'd like to buy one adult ticket and two kid's tickets.)



If you want to ask a person if he or she has ever done anything, just add the particle **-guò** (*gaw*) to the verb and use the question word **ma** (*mah*) or **méiyǒu** (*mayo*) at the end. Here are some examples:

- ✔ **Nǐ kànguò Jīngjù ma?** (*nee kahn gwaw jeeng jyew mah*; Have you ever seen Peking Opera?)
- ✔ **Nǐ chīguò xiā méiyǒu?** (*nee chir gwaw shyah mayo*; Have you ever eaten shrimp?)
- ✔ **Nǐ qùguò Měiguó ma?** (*nee chyew gwaw may gwaw mah*; Have you ever been to America?)

To answer any these questions, you can repeat the verb plus **guò** if the answer is yes, or simply say **méiyǒu**, meaning “No, I haven’t.” You can also say **méiyǒu** — *verb* — **guò** if you like.

If you happen to do something **chángcháng** (*chahng chahng*; often) or just **yǒude shíhòu** (*yo duh shir ho*; sometimes), don’t be shy about saying so. You can use these adverbs in both the questions and the answers.

Talkin’ the Talk

Maria, Catherine, and Elizabeth discuss what kind of performance they want to see this evening.

Maria: **Nǐmen jīntiān wǎnshàng xiǎng kàn shénme? Kàn huàjù ma?**
Nee men jin tyan wahn shahng shyahng kahn shum-muh? Kahn hwah jyew mah?
 What do you guys want to see tonight? A play?

Catherine: **Wǒ hěn xiǎng qù kàn wǔshù biǎoyǎn. Zájì biǎoyǎn yě kényǐ.**
Waw hun shyahng chyew kahn woo shoo byaow yan. Dzah jee byaow yan yeah kuh yee.
 I’d really like to see a martial arts performance. Acrobatics would be okay, too.

Elizabeth: **Wǒ xiǎng kàn huàjù.**
Waw shyahng kahn hwah jyew.
 I want to see a play.

Maria: **Nǐmen kànguò Jīngjù ma?**
Nee men kahn gwaw jeeng jyew mah?
 Have you ever seen Peking Opera?

Catherine: **Méiyǒu.**
Mayo.
 No.

Maria: **Nà, wǒmen qù kàn Jīngjù ba! Jīngjù shénme dōu yǒu. Yǒu huàjù, yǒu wǔshù, lián zájì yě yǒu.**
Nah, waw men chyew kahn jeeng jyew bah! Jeeng jyew shummuh doe yo. Hwah jyew yo, woo shoo yo, lyan dzah jee yeah yo.
 In that case, let’s go to see Peking Opera! It has everything. It has a play, it has martial arts, it even has acrobatics.

Elizabeth: **Tài hǎo le!**
Tye how luh!
 That's great!

Maria goes to the theater box office to buy tickets for tonight's Peking Opera performance and speaks with the clerk.

Maria: **Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ xiǎng mǎi sānzhāng jīntiān wǎnshàng de piào.**
Nee how. Waw shyahng my sahn jahng jin tyan wahn shahng duh pyaow.
 Hello. I'd like to buy three tickets to tonight's performance.

Clerk: **Hǎo ba. Jīntiān wǎnshàng de piào chàbùduō dōu mǎiwán le. Zhǐ yǒu èr lóu de zuòwèi.**
How bah. Jin tyan wahn shahng duh pyaow chah boo dwaw doe my wahn luh. Jir yo are lo duh dzwaw way.
 Sure. Tickets for tonight are almost all sold out. We only have second floor seats left.

Maria: **Èr lóu méiyǒu wèntí. Qián pái zuòwèi de piào yǒu méiyǒu?**
Are lo mayo one tee. Chyan pye dzwaw way duh pyaow yo mayo?
 Second floor is no problem. Do you have any front row seats, though?

Clerk: **Yǒu. Yígòng sānshí kuài qián.**
Yo. Ee goong sahn shir kwye chyan.
 Yes. That will be \$30 all together.

Maria gives the clerk \$30, and the clerk gives her the tickets.

Maria: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
 Thank you.

Words to Know

<i>Shénme shíhòu kāiyǎn?</i>	<i>shummuh shir ho kye yan</i>	<i>What time does the show begin?</i>
<i>Shénme shíhòu yǎn wán?</i>	<i>shummuh shir ho yan wahn</i>	<i>What time does the show end?</i>
<i>lóuxià de wèizi</i>	<i>lo shyah duh way dzuh</i>	<i>orchestra seats</i>
<i>lóushàng de wèizi</i>	<i>lo shahng duh way dzuh</i>	<i>balcony seats</i>
<i>piào</i>	<i>pyaow</i>	<i>tickets</i>
<i>yīnyuè tīng</i>	<i>yin yweh teeng</i>	<i>concert hall</i>
<i>jùchǎng</i>	<i>jyew chahng</i>	<i>theatre</i>
<i>lǐtáng</i>	<i>lee tahng</i>	<i>auditorium</i>
<i>mùjiān xiūxi</i>	<i>moo jyan shyo she</i>	<i>intermission</i>
<i>zájì biáoyǎn</i>	<i>dzah jee byaow yan</i>	<i>acrobatic performance</i>
<i>wǔshù biáoyǎn</i>	<i>woo shoo byaow yan</i>	<i>martial arts performance</i>
<i>bālái wǔ</i>	<i>bah lay woo</i>	<i>ballet</i>
<i>gēwǔ</i>	<i>guh woo</i>	<i>song and dance</i>
<i>Yùèjù</i>	<i>yweh jyew</i>	<i>Cantonese opera</i>
<i>Jīngjù</i>	<i>jeeng jyew</i>	<i>Peking opera</i>
<i>dìfāng xì</i>	<i>dee fahng she</i>	<i>local folk opera</i>

From sex to art: Interesting Chinese museums

The Museum of Ancient Chinese Sex Culture, which opened in Shanghai in 1999, displays the private collection of a Shanghai University professor. The collection contains all sorts of sexual artifacts ranging from ancient tomb paintings and erotic devices, exhibits dealing with that old Chinese fetish footbinding, and even furniture for lovemaking.

The Shanghai Museum, which opened at People's Plaza in 1996, is a world-class museum.

Considered China's top museum, it consists of four stories of 11 galleries with audiophones and explanatory signs in English as well as Chinese — a rare feature in any other Chinese museum. Arranged by themes rather than dynasties, it houses everything from ancient bronzes, to Tang and Ming ceramics, to paintings and calligraphy. It has an impressive jade gallery as well.

Exploring Museums and Galleries

Theatre shows and live musical performances aren't the only forms of entertainment you can see to get your fill of **wénhuà** (*one hwah*; culture). One of the nicest, calmest activities to do at your own pace is to visit a **bówùguǎn** (*baw woo gwahn*; museum) or **huàláng** (*hwah lahng*; gallery). You can check out anything from **gǔdàide yìshù pǐn** (*goo dye duh ee shoo peen*; ancient artifacts), to **shānshuǐ huà** (*shahn shway hwah*; landscape painting), to **xiàndài yìshù** (*shyan dye ee shoo*; modern art). Sometimes the best reason to go to a **bówùguǎn** is to buy some **lǐwù** (*lee woo*; gifts) and some cool **zhāotiē** (*jaow tyeh*; posters) for yourself.

Here are some questions you may want to ask in a museum or gallery:

- ✓ **Bówùguǎn jǐdiǎn zhōng kāimén?** (*baw woo gwahn jee dyan joong kye mun*; What time does the museum open?)
- ✓ **Lǐpǐn shāngdiàn shénme shíhòu guānmén?** (*lee peeng shahng dyan shumuh shir ho gwahn mun*; What time does the gift shop close?)
- ✓ **Nimen mài bùmài zhāotiē?** (*nee mun my boo my jaow tyeh*; Do you sell posters?)

Talkin' the Talk



John arrives at the local art museum pretty late in the day, so he approaches the clerk to ask some questions.

John: **Qǐng wèn, nimen jǐdiǎn zhōng guānmén?**
Cheeng one, nee mun jee dyan joong gwahn mun?
 Excuse me, what time do you close?

- Clerk: **Zhèige bówùguǎn wǎnshàng liù diǎn zhōng guānmén.**
Jay guh baw woo gwahn wahn shahng lyo dyan joong gwahn mun.
 This museum closes at 6:00 p.m.
- John: **Xiànzài yǐjīng wǔdiǎn duō le. Wǒ néng bùnéng miǎn-fèi jìnqù?**
Shyan dzye ee jeeng woo dyan dwaw luh. Waw nung boo nung myan fay jeen chyew?
 It's now already after 5. May I enter for free?
- Clerk: **Bùxíng. Hái yào fùqián. Shí kuài yì zhāng.**
Boo sheeng. Hi yaow foo chyan. Shir kwye ee jahng.
 No. You still have to pay. It's 10 dollars a ticket.
- John: **Nà, wǒ míngtiān zài lái, duō huā yìdiǎr shíjiān zài zhèr. Xièxiè.**
Nah, waw meeng tyan dzye lye, dwaw hwah ee dyar shir jyan dzye jar. Shyeh shyeh.
 In that case, I'll come back tomorrow to spend a little more time here. Thanks.

Words to Know

bówùguǎn	baw woo gwahn	museum
huàláng	hwah lahng	gallery
yìshù	ee shoo	art
shǒuyìrén	show ee run	artisan
yìshùjiā	ee shoo jyah	artist
jiézuò	jyeh dzwaw	masterpiece

Visiting Historical Sites

You shouldn't pass up at least one well-coordinated trip to a historical site if you visit China, even if you have only a week for business. Take the **Cháng Chéng** (*chahng chung*; Great Wall), for example. Just north of Beijing, the wall is one of the greatest man-made objects on earth.

And while you're on your way to the Great Wall, you may want to stop off at the **Míng shísān líng** (*meeng shir sahn leeng*; Ming Tombs), which contain the mausoleums of thirteen Ming dynasty (1368-1644) emperors guarded by stone animals and warrior statues.

By far the easiest way to see the major historical sites in China is to join a tour. Here are some phrases that may come in handy:

- ✓ **Lǚxíngshè zài nǎr?** (*lyew sheeng shuh dzye nar*; Where's the travel agency?)
- ✓ **Yǒu méiyǒu shuō Yīngwén de dǎoyóu?** (*yo mayo shwaw eeng one duh daow yo*; Are there any English speaking guides?)
- ✓ **Bàn tiān duōshǎo qián?** (*bahn tyan dwaw shaow chyan*; How much for half a day?)
- ✓ **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu lǚyóu shǒucè?** (*nee yo mayo lyew yo show tsuh*; Do you have a guidebook?)



Some of China's most-visited historical sites include the Great Wall, the Forbidden City in Beijing, and the terra-cotta warriors of Xi'an, where an army of over 6,000 carved warriors and horses stands guard over the tomb of China's first Emperor, Qin Shihuang (*chin shir hwahng*), who dates back to the third century BCE.

Talkin' the Talk

Phil hires a taxi and takes his two children to the Jade Buddha Temple in Shanghai, where he tries to get entrance tickets from the clerk. He's eager to show his children the temple's Song dynasty (960-1279) architecture.

Phil: **Qǐngwèn, zài nǎr kèyǐ mǎi piào?**
Cheeng one, dzye nar kuh yee my pyaow?
 Excuse me, where can I buy tickets for admission?

Clerk: **Jiù zài zhèr.**
Jyo dzye jar.
 You can buy them here.

Phil:	Hǎojíe. Pàojià duōshǎo? <i>How jee luh. Pyaow jyah dwaw shaow?</i> Great. How much is the ticket price?
Clerk:	Yìzhāng shí kuài. <i>Ee jahng shir kwye.</i> Tickets are \$10 each.
Phil:	Xiǎo háizi miǎnfèi ma? <i>Shyaow hi dzuh myan fay mah?</i> Do children get in free?
Clerk:	Bù miǎnfèi, kěshì xiǎo háizi bànpiào. <i>Boo myan fay, kuh shir shyaow hi dzuh bahn pyaow.</i> No, but they're half price.
Phil:	Wǒmen kě bù kěyǐ zhàoxiàng? <i>Waw mun kuh boo kuh yee jaow shyahng?</i> May we take pictures?
Clerk:	Dāngrán kěyǐ. Méiyǒu wèntí. <i>Dahng rahn kuh yee. Mayo one tee.</i> Of course you can. No problem.

Going to the Movies

After a full day of sightseeing, you may want to relax, kick back, and take in a movie. At the movies you can sit and watch what's on the **yín mù** (*yeen moo*; screen) without walking or talking. But what to do when the lights dim and you suddenly realize the film is completely in **Zhōngwén** (*joong one*; Chinese), without any **Yīngwén zì mù** (*eeng one dzuh moo*; English subtitles) whatsoever? You read this book, of course!

What kind of movie do you want to see? Table 7-5 gives you a few genres to choose from:

Table 7-5		Movie Genres
<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
xǐjù piān	she jyew pyan	comedy
gùshi piān	goo shir pyan	drama

<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
àiqíng piān	eye cheeng pyan	romance
dòngzuò piān	doong dzwaw pyan	action
jìlù piān	jee loo pyan	documentary
dònghuà piān	doong hwah pyan	cartoon
kǒngbù piān	koong boo pyan	horror
wǔxiá piān	woo shyah pyan	kung-fu

Talkin' the Talk

Wendy and Tom decide to go to the movies tonight.

Wendy: **Wǒmen jīntiān wǎnshàng qù kàn yíbu diànyǐng ba.**
Waw men jin tyan wahn shahng chyew kahn ee boo dyan yeeng bah.
 Let's go see a movie tonight.

Tom: **Jīntiān yǎn shénme?**
Jin tyan yan shumuh?
 What's playing today?

Wendy: **Yíge Zhāng Yímóu dǎoyǎn de piānzi. Wǒ wàngle nèige míngzi.**
Ee guh jahng ee moe daow yan duh pyan dzuh. Waw wahng luh nay guh meeng dzuh.
 A film directed by Zhang Yimou. I forget the name.

Tom: **Shì shuō Yīngwén de ma?**
Shir shwaw eeng one duh mah?
 Is it in English?

Wendy: **Búshì, kěshì yǒu Yīngwén zìmù.**
Boo shir, kuh shir yo eeng one dzuh moo.
 No, but there are English subtitles.

Words to Know

nán yǎnyuán	nahn yan ywan	actor
nǚ yǎnyuán	nyew yan ywan	actress
dǎoyǎn	daow yan	director
Yīngwén zìmù	eeng one dzuh moo	English subtitles
diànyǐng yuàn	dyan yeeng ywan	movie theater
wàiguópīān	wye gwaw pyan	foreign film
Diànyǐng yuàn zài nǎr?	dyan yeeng ywan dzye nar	Where's the movie theater?

Listening to a Concert

You often hear that the language of music crosses international boundaries. If you're feeling a bit exhausted after practicing Chinese, you can head to a concert in the evening where you can relax. Let the music transport you to another mental space.



At the end of a concert in China, you don't hear anyone yelling "Encore!" What you do hear, however, is "**Zài lái yíge, zài lái yíge!**" (*dzye lye ee guh*, *dzye lye ee guh*; Bring on one more!)

Talkin' the Talk

Susan and George discuss what kind of concert to attend this weekend.

George: **Wǒmen zhèige zhōumò qù yīnyuè tīng tīng Zhōngguó gǔdiǎn yīnyuè.**
Waw men jay guh joe maw chyw een yweh teeng teeng joong gwaw goo dyan een yweh.
This weekend we're going to the concert hall to hear a classical Chinese music concert.

Susan: **Wǒ bùxǐhuān Zhōngguó gǔdiǎn yīnyuè. Wǒ gèng xǐhuān juéshì yīnyuè.**

Waw boo she hwahn joong gwaw goo dyan yeen yweh. Waw gung she hwahn jyweh shir een yweh.
I don't like classical Chinese music. I prefer jazz.

George: **Juéshì yīnyuè tài qíguài. Yáogǔn yuè yě bùxīhuān.**
Jyweh shir een yweh tye chee gwye. Yaow gun yweh yeh boo she hwahn.
Jazz is too strange. I also don't like rock 'n roll.

Susan: **Nǐ dàgài zhǐ xǐhuān jiāoxiǎng yuè nèi lèi de yīnyuè ba.**
Nee dah gye jir she hwahn jyaow shyahng yweh nay lay duh een yweh bah.
You probably only like symphonic music and that sort of thing.

George: **Duì le.**
Dway luh.
Yup.

Words to Know

yīnyuè huì	een yweh hway	concert
dàiwèiyuán	dye way ywan	usher
jiémùdān	jyeh moo dahn	program
Zhōngguó gǔdiǎnyīnyuè	joong gwaw goo dyan yeen yweh	classical Chinese music
gē chàng huì	guh chahng hway	choral recital
shìnèi yuè	shir nay yweh	chamber music
gǔdiǎn yīnyuè	goo dyan een yweh	classical music
míngē	meen guh	folk song
qì yuè	chee yweh	instrumental music
juéshì yīnyuè	jyweh shir een yweh	jazz music
yáogǔn yuè	yaow gun yweh	rock 'n roll
jiāoxiǎng yuè	jyaow shyahng yweh	symphonic music

Hopping Around Bars and Clubs

Are you a night owl who, after a full day of sightseeing and even an evening concert, still has the energy to go bar hopping and carousing around fun clubs? If so, you need to know some common barspeak, especially when you're on vacation in a toddlin' town like Shanghai — or Chicago, for that matter. After all, not everyone you meet or go out with may be fluent in English.



Before the Communist takeover of the mainland in 1949, Shanghai was known as the Paris of the Orient. It has always been the most delightfully decadent city in China and continues to live up to its reputation. Bars, clubs, and all sorts of nightlife abound.

The following phrases may come in handy when you're out exploring the local pubs and dance halls:

- ✔ **Qǐng lái yì píng píjiǔ.** (*cheeng lye ee peeng pee jyoe*; Please bring me a bottle of beer.)
- ✔ **Nǐ xiǎng gēn wǒ tiàowǔ ma?** (*nee shyahng gun waw tyaow woo mah*; Would you like to dance?)
- ✔ **Wǒ néng bùnéng qǐng nǐ hē jiǔ?** (*waw nung boo nung cheeng nee huh jyoe*; May I get you a drink?)
- ✔ **Wǒmen dào nǎr qù tiàowǔ?** (*waw men daow nar chyew tyaow woo*; Where can we go to dance?)
- ✔ **Yǒu méiyǒu rùchǎng fèi?** (*yo mayo roo chahng fay*; Is there a cover charge?)

When you go to a bar with friends, you may ask for some **bǐngzhèn de píjiǔ** (*beeng juhn duh pee jyoe*; cold beer) or maybe some **hóng** (*hoong*; red) or **bái** (*bye*; white) **pútáo jiǔ** (*poo taow jyoe*; wine). And don't forget to ask for some **huāshēngmǐ** (*hwah shung mee*; peanuts) or **tǔdòupiàn** (*too doe pyan*; potato chips) so you don't get too sloshed with all that **píjiǔ**.



Fun & Games

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Matching: Draw a line between the matching pairs.

9:15 a.m.

bànyè

Next month

xiàwǔ sì diǎn bàn

Midnight

xiàge yuè

Two weeks ago

zǎoshàng jiǔ diǎn yīkè

4:30 p.m.

liǎngge xīngqī yīqián

.....

Chapter 8

Enjoying Yourself: Recreation and Sports

In This Chapter

- ▶ Talking about your hobbies
 - ▶ Appreciating Mother Nature
 - ▶ Pretending to be Picasso
 - ▶ Creating your own tunes
 - ▶ Exercising as an athlete
-

After a hard day at work, most people are ready to kick back and relax. But where to begin? Do you feel so consumed by your **gōngzuò** (*goong dzwaw*; work) that you can't seem to switch gears? Get a life! Better yet, get a **yèyú àihào** (*yeh yew eye how*; hobby). Play some **yīnyuè** (*yeen yweh*; music) on your **xiǎotíqín** (*shyaow tee cheen*; violin). Paint a **huà** (*hwah*; picture). Kick a **zúqiú** (*dzoo chyoo*; football) around. Do whatever it takes to make you relax and have some fun. Your outside interests will make you more interesting to be around, and you'll make new friends at the same time — especially if you join a **duì** (*dway*; team). And if you're into **lánqiú** (*lahn chyoo*; basketball), just utter the name **Yao Ming** (*yaow meeng*) and you'll instantly discover hordes of potential language exchange partners from among the many fans of this Shanghai native who made it big as a Houston Rockets superstar.



Yao Ming, the 7-foot 6-inch former Shanghai Mavericks basketball player, earned fame and fortune as an NBA player with the Houston Rockets. With the 2008 Olympics set to take place in Beijing, basketball is sure to be of keen interest to the local spectators. If you find yourself in that city, check out the Sports Bar at the Gloria International Hotel, where basketball takes center stage.

Naming Your Hobbies

Are you someone who likes to collect **yóupiào** (*yo pyaow*; stamps) from different **guójiā** (*gwaw yah*; countries)? Or do you prefer to play **guóji xiàngqí** (*gwaw jee shyahng chee*; chess) in your spare time? How about watching some **niǎo** (*nyaow*; birds) through a pair of **wàngyǎnjìng** (*wahng ywan jeeng*; binoculars) in **Zhōngyāng Gōngyuán** (*joong yahng goong ywan*; Central Park)? Whatever you enjoy doing, your hobbies are always a good conversation piece. Having at least one **yèyú àihào** (*yeh yew eye how*; hobby) is always a good thing. How about getting involved in some of the following?

- ✓ **kàn shū** (*kahn shoo*; reading)
- ✓ **diàoyú** (*dyaow yew*; fishing)
- ✓ **yuányì** (*ywan ee*; gardening)
- ✓ **pēngtiáo** (*pung tyaw*; cooking)

Some of the things you can **dǎ** (*dah*; do or play with), which literally means to strike, hit, or beat, are **qiú** (*chyó*; balls), **tàijíquán** (*tye jee chwan*; commonly referred to just as *Tai Ji*, a slow form of martial arts), and **pú kè** (*poo kuh*; cards). But you can also **wán** (*wahn*; play) ball games as well — including games with little **qiú**, such as **píngpāngqiú** (*peeng pahng chyó*; ping pong). Here are some quick questions using the verb **dǎ** that will help get a conversation started:

- ✓ **Nǐ huì búhuì dǎ tài jí quán?** (*nee hway boo hway dah tiye jee chwahn*; Do you know how to do Tai Ji?)
- ✓ **Nǐ dǎ bùdǎ píngpāngqiú?** (*nee dah boo dah peeng pahng chyó*; Do you play ping pong?)
- ✓ **Nǐ dǎ májiàng ma?** (*nee dah mah jyahng mah*; Do you play mah-jong?)

Both **tàijíquán** and **májiàng** are quintessential Chinese pastimes. In addition to **tàijíquán**, everyone is familiar with other forms of **wǔshù** (*woo shoo*; martial arts), including kung fu — a martial art practiced since the Tang (*tahng*) dynasty back in the eighth century. In fact, you can still see kung fu masters practicing at the Shaolin Temple in Zhengzhou, Henan Province — one great reason for making a trip off the beaten path if you ever visit China.



Tàijíquán is considered an internal martial art and is the most widely practiced form throughout the world. The term **tài jí** (“the Great Ultimate”) refers to the interplay between opposing yet complementary forces in the universe — yin and yang — as the basis of creation. **Quán** means “fist,” emphasizing that this art is a kind of unarmed combat. Very early every morning in China, tons of people flock to local parks to practice this slow-motion form of exercise together.

Talkin' the Talk

Donald and Helga discuss their knowledge of Taijiquan with each other.

Donald: **Nǐ huì búhuì dǎ tàijíquán?**
Nee hway boo hway dah tye jee chwan?
 Do you know how to do Tai Ji?

Helga: **Búhuì. Kěshì wǒ zhīdào tàijíquán shì yì zhǒng hěn liúxíng de jiànshēn yùndòng.**
Boo hway. Kuh shir waw jir daow tye jee chwan shir ee joong hun lyo sheeng duh jyan shun yoon doong.
 No, but I know that Tai Ji is a very popular kind of workout.

Donald: **Duìle. Měitiān zǎoshàng hěn zǎo hěn duō rén yìqǐ dǎ tàijíquán.**
Dway luh. May tyan dzaow shahng hun dzaow hun dwaw run ee chee dah tye jee chwan.
 That's right. Very early every morning, lots of people practice Tai Ji together.

Helga: **Tàijíquán de dòngzuò kànqǐlái hěn màn.**
Tye jee chwan duh doong dzwaw kahn chee lye hun mahn.
 Tai Ji movements look very slow.

Donald: **Yòu shuō duìle! Shēntǐ zǒngshì yào wěndìng. Dòngzuò zǒngshì yào xiétiáo.**
Yo shwaw dway luh! Shun tee dzoong shir yaow one deeng. Doong dzwaw dzoong shir yaow shyeh tyaow.
 Right again! The body is always stable, and the movements are always well coordinated.

Words to Know

tàijíquán	tye jee chwan	Tai Ji
shǒuxíng	show sheeng	hand form
quán	chwan	fist
zhǎng	jahng	palm
dòngzuò	doong dzwaw	movement
yùndòng	yoon doong	exercise
hòutuì	ho tway	step backward
shíbù	shir boo	weighted step
xūbù	shyew boo	unweighted step
hūxī	hoo she	breathe
yídòng	ee doong	shift
liúxíng	lyo sheeng	popular

Exploring Nature

If you're working overseas in China and want to get really far from the madding crowds, or even just far enough away from your **bàngōngshǐ** (*bahn goong shir*; office) to feel refreshed, try going to one of the seven sacred **shān** (*shahn*; mountains) or a beautiful **hǎitān** (*hi tahn*; beach) to take in the **shānshuǐ** (*shahn shway*; scenery), which is sure to include **niǎo** (*nyaow*; birds), **shù** (*shoo*; trees), **yún** (*yewn*; clouds), and the **hǎi** (*hi*; ocean). You may want to **qù lùyíng** (*chyew lyew eeng*; go camping) or set up camp on the beach and have a **yēcān** (*yeh tahn*; picnic) before you **pá shān** (*pah shahn*; climb a mountain).

Here are some things you would see along the way if you were to travel through the Chinese countryside:

- ✔ **bǎotǎ** (*baow tah*; pagoda)
- ✔ **miào** (*meow*; temple)
- ✔ **fómiào** (*faw meow*; Buddhist temple)
- ✔ **dàomiào** (*daow meow*; Daoist temple)
- ✔ **kǒngmiào** (*koong meow*; Confucian temple)
- ✔ **dàotián** (*daow tyan*; rice paddies)
- ✔ **nóngmín** (*noong meen*; farmers)

If you're ever exploring **dàzìrán** (*dah dzuh rahn*; nature) with a friend who speaks Chinese, a few of these words may come in handy:

- ✔ **hé** (*huh*; river)
- ✔ **hú** (*hoo*; lake)
- ✔ **chítáng** (*chir tahng*; pond)
- ✔ **shāndòng** (*shahn doong*; cave)
- ✔ **hǎitān** (*hi tahn*; beach)
- ✔ **àn** (*ahn*; shore)
- ✔ **shāmò** (*shah maw*; desert)
- ✔ **shān** (*shahn*; mountains)
- ✔ **xiǎo shān** (*shyaow shahn*; hills)
- ✔ **hǎi** (*hi*; ocean)



China's sacred mountains

Both Buddhists and Daoists have traditionally built monasteries high on quiet mountaintops or deep inside lush forests to meditate. Nine of China's mountains — five Daoist and four Buddhist — are still considered sacred today, all which remain sites of pilgrimage. **Huáng**

Shān (*hwahng shahn*; Yellow Mountain) is perhaps China's most famous sacred mountain, distinguished by rare pine trees, unusual rock formations, and hot springs, and surrounded by lakes and waterfalls.

Talkin' the Talk



Jack and Nell discover the beauty of the seaside resort of **Běidàihé** (bay dye huh) in northern China.

Jack: **Nǐ kàn! Zhè de fēngjǐng duōme piàoliàng!**
Nee kahn! Jar duh fung jeeng dwaw muh pyaow lyahng!

Look! How gorgeous the scenery here is!

Nell: **Nǐ shuō duìle. Zhēn piàoliàng.**
Nee shwaw dway luh. Jun pyaow lyahng.

You're right. It's truly beautiful.

Jack: **Shénme dōu yǒu. Shān, shēn lán de hǎi, lán tiān.**
Shummuh doe yo. Shahn, shun lahn duh hi, lahn, cheeng tyan.

It has everything. Mountains, deep blue ocean and clear sky.

Nell: **Nǐ shuō duìle. Xiàng tiāntáng yíàng.**
Nee shwaw dway luh. Shyahng tyan tahng ee yahng.

You're right. It's like paradise.

Words to Know

piàoliàng

pyaow lyahng

beautiful

fēngjǐng

fung jeeng

scenery

tiāntáng

tyan tahng

paradise



To indicate a similarity between two ideas or objects, as in the last line of the “Talking the Talk” involving Jack and Nell, use the phrase **xiàng . . . yíàng**. Here are some examples:

- ✓ **xiàng nǐ dìdì yíàng** (*shyahng nee dee dee ee yahng*; like your younger brother)
- ✓ **xiàng qīngwā yíàng** (*shyahng cheeng wah ee yahng*; like a frog)
- ✓ **xiàng fēngzi yíàng** (*shyahng fungdzuh ee yahng*; like a crazy person)



The Shanghai Children's Palace

If you ever visit Shanghai, make time for a visit to the **Shàoniángōng** (*shaow nyan goong*; the Children's Palace), where gifted children take part in an assortment of extracurricular activities in areas such as music, art, dance, and science. Founded in 1953 by Song Qingling, the wife of the Republic of China's founder, Dr. Sun

Yat-sen, the Children's Palace is in a grand old building originally known as Marble Hall. It was built by the Baghdadi Jewish tycoon Elly Kadoorie in 1924 and still boasts grand marble hallways, winding staircases, ornate fireplaces, chandeliers, and French windows.

Tapping into Your Artistic Side

You may pride yourself on having been the biggest jock who ever played varsity football, but I bet you still get teary-eyed when you see a beautiful painting or listen to Beethoven. It's okay, just admit it. You're a regular Renaissance man and you can't help it. No more apologies.

Okay, now you're ready to tap into your more sensitive, artistic side in Chinese. Don't be afraid of expressing your **gǎnqíng** (*gahn cheeng*; emotions). The Chinese will appreciate your sensitivity to their Song (*soong*) dynasty **shānshuǐ huà** (*shahn shway hwah*; landscape painting) or the beauty of a Ming (*meeng*) dynasty **cǐqì** (*tsuh chee*; porcelain).

I bet you have tons of **chuàngzàoxìng** (*chwahng dzaow sheeng*; creativity). If so, try your hand at one of these fine arts:

- ✓ **huà** (*hwah*; painting)
- ✓ **sùmiáohuà** (*soo meow hwah*; drawing)
- ✓ **diāokè** (*dyaow kuh*; sculpting)
- ✓ **shuǐcǎihuà** (*shway tsye hwah*; watercolor)
- ✓ **táoqì** (*taow chee*; pottery)
- ✓ **shūfǎ** (*shoo fah*; calligraphy)

Striking Up the Band

Like kids all over the world, lots of Chinese children take **xiǎo tíqín** (*shyaow tee cheen*; violin) and **gāngqín** (*gahng cheen*; piano) classes — often under duress. They appreciate the forced lessons when they get older, though, and have their own kids.



Traditional Chinese Instruments

If you've heard any traditional Chinese music at a concert or on a CD, you've probably heard one of these Chinese **yuè qì** (*yweh chee*; musical instruments) at one point or another:

- ✓ **pípa** (*pee pah*; a plucked string instrument with a fretted fingerboard that sits on your lap)
- ✓ **gǔzhēng** (*goo juhng*; a long, plucked string instrument that rests on a large stand in front of you)
- ✓ **èrhú** (*are hoo*; a two-stringed bowed instrument)

Do you play a **yuè qì** (*yweh chee*; musical instrument)? It's never too late to learn, you know. You don't have to become a professional **yīnyuèjiā** (*een yweh jyah*; musician) to enjoy playing an instrument. How about trying your hand (or mouth) at one of these?

- ✓ **xiǎo tíqín** (*shyaow tee cheen*; violin)
- ✓ **zhōng tíqín** (*joong tee cheen*; viola)
- ✓ **dà tíqín** (*dah tee cheen*; cello)
- ✓ **gāngqín** (*gahng cheen*; piano)
- ✓ **sākèsìguǎn** (*sah kuh suh gwahn*; saxophone)
- ✓ **chángdí** (*chahng dee*; flute)
- ✓ **nán dīyīn** (*nahn dee een*; double bass)
- ✓ **lǎba** (*lah bah*; trumpet)
- ✓ **chánghào** (*chahng how*; trombone)
- ✓ **dà hào** (*dah how*; tuba)
- ✓ **dānhuángguǎn** (*dahn hwahng gwan*; clarinet)
- ✓ **shuānghuángguǎn** (*shwahng hwahng gwan*; oboe)
- ✓ **gǔ** (*goo*; drums)
- ✓ **shùqín** (*shoo cheen*; harp)
- ✓ **liùxiánqín** (*lyo shyan cheen*; guitar)



The Chinese language has a couple of different verbs that you can use to indicate the practice of various instruments. Those who play stringed instruments should use the verb **lā** (*lah*; to draw, as in draw a bow) before the name of the instrument. For example, you can say that you **lā zhōng tíqín** (*lah joong tee cheen*; play the viola), but you can only **tán** (*tahn*; play) a **gāngqín** (*gahng cheen*; piano). For wind instruments, you have to **chuī** (*chway*; blow) them.

Playing on a Team

No matter where you go in the world, you'll find a national pastime. In America, it's **bàngqiú** (*bahng chyó*; baseball). In most of Europe, it's **zúqiú** (*dzoo chyó*; soccer). And in China, it's **pīngpāngqiú** (*peeng pahng chyó*; ping pong), although now that Yao Ming is on the scene, **lánqiú** (*lahn chyó*; basketball) is getting some attention as well. Here's a list of these and many other popular sports.

- ✓ **yǔmáoqiú** (*yew maow chyó*; badminton)
- ✓ **bàngqiú** (*bahng chyó*; baseball)
- ✓ **lánqiú** (*lahn chyó*; basketball)
- ✓ **shǒuqiú** (*show chyó*; handball)
- ✓ **bīngqiú** (*beeng chyó*; hockey)
- ✓ **pīngpāngqiú** (*peeng pahng chyó*; ping pong)
- ✓ **zúqiú** (*dzoo chyó*; football)
- ✓ **yīngshì zúqiú** (*eeng shir dzoo chyó*; soccer (literally, English-style football))
- ✓ **lěiqiú** (*lay chyó*; softball)
- ✓ **yóuyǒng** (*yo yoong*; swimming)
- ✓ **wǎngqiú** (*wahng chyó*; tennis)
- ✓ **páiqiú** (*pye chyó*; volleyball)

The Olympics is the best known conglomeration of all sorts of sports. **Tīcāo** (*tee tsaow*; gymnastics), such as **zìyóu tīcāo** (*dzih yo tee tsaow*; floor exercises), the **dān gàng** (*dahn gahng*; horizontal bar), the **shuāng gàng** (*shwahng gahng*; parallel bars), the **gāo dī gàng** (*gaow dee gahng*; uneven parallel bars) and the **ān mǎ** (*ahn mah*; pommel horse), are all familiar to viewing audiences around the world.

Yóuyǒng (*yo yoong*; swimming) is also quite popular. Whether you do the **dié yǒng** (*dieh yoong*; butterfly stroke), the **yǎng yǒng** (*yahng yoong*; backstroke), the **cè yǒng** (*tsuh yoong*; side stroke), prefer to swim **wā yǒng** (*wah yoong*; frog-style or breast stroke) or **zìyóu yǒng** (*dzuh yo yoong*; freestyle swimming), don't forget to keep breathing. (And don't forget to wear your **yóuyǒng mào** (*yo yoong maow*; swimming cap). And if you're a **tiàoshuǐ yùndòngyuán** (*tyaow shway yewn doong ywan*; diver), you'd better not **pà gāo** (*pah gaow*; be scared of heights).

Some games require the use of **pīngpāngqiú pāi** (*peeng pahng chyó pye*; ping-pong paddles); others require **wǎngqiú pāi** (*wahng chyó pye*; tennis rackets) or **lánqiú** (*lahn chyó*; basketballs). All games, however, require a sense of **gōngpíng jìngzhēng** (*goong peeng jeeng jung*; fair play).



Soccer season in Beijing is from May to October, but in southern China it goes year-round. As in Europe, soccer is the spectator sport of preference throughout the country. And just as in Europe, passionate fans sometimes boil over into brawling hordes. If you ever find yourself in Shanghai, check out the game at the Hong Kou Stadium. In Beijing, try the Workers' Stadium near the City Hotel.

Here are some useful phrases to know, whether you're an amateur or a professional athlete. At one time or another, you've certainly heard (or said) them all.

- ✔ **Wǒ xiǎng qù kàn qiú sài.** (*waw shyahng chyew kahn chyó sye*; I want to see a ballgame.)
- ✔ **Bīfēn duōshǎo?** (*bee fun dwaw shaow*; What's the score?)
- ✔ **Něixie duì cānjiā bǐsài?** (*nay shyeh dway tsahn jya bee sye*; Which teams are playing?)
- ✔ **Wǒ yíngle.** (*waw yeeng luh*; I won.)
- ✔ **Nǐ shūle.** (*nee shoo luh*; You lost.)
- ✔ **Wǒ zhēn xūyào liànxí.** (*waw jun shyew yaow lyan she*; I really need to practice.)
- ✔ **Wǒ dǎ de bú tài hǎo.** (*waw dah duh boo tye how*; I don't play very well.)

Here's a list of things that happen at sports events. You'll need to know these terms if you want to follow the action:

- ✔ **chuī shàozi** (*chway shaow dzuh*; to blow a whistle)
- ✔ **dǎngzhù qiú** (*dahng joo chyó*; to block the ball)
- ✔ **dé yì fēn** (*duh ee fun*; to score a point)
- ✔ **tījìn yì qiú** (*tee jeen ee chyó*; to make a goal)
- ✔ **fā qiú** (*fah chyó*; to serve the ball)
- ✔ **méi tóuzhòng** (*may toe joong*; to miss the shot)



Today you can find such sports as hot-air ballooning and gliding in Anyang. Kind of amazing when you discover Anyang was the capital of China's very first dynasty, almost two millennia before the Common Era. You can even hook up with a hot-air balloon tour of the Great Wall and the Silk Road. These sports certainly present a good way to cover such great distances without requiring you to have been a Hun on horseback. Speaking of which, if camel treks are your thing, Chinese travel agencies can now even arrange for you to ride with the Mongols, those horsemen who've perfected the art of riding over the centuries.

Talkin' the Talk



Tim and Lacie go to a basketball game together.

Tim: **Bīsài shénme shíhòu kāishǐ?**
Bee sye shummu shir ho kye shir?
 When does the game begin?

Lacie: **Kuài yào kāishǐ le.**
Kwye yaow kye shir luh.
 It's going to start soon.

A few minutes later the game finally begins.

Tim: **Wà! Tā méi tóuzhòng!!**
Wah! Tah may toe joong!
 Wow! He missed the shot!

Lacie: **Méi guānxi. Língwài nèige duìyuán gāng gāng kòulán défēn.**
May gwahn she. Leeng why nay guh dway ywan gahng gahng ko lahn duh fun.
 It doesn't matter. That other player just gained a point with a slam dunk.

Words to Know

tǐyù chǎng	tee yew chahng	stadium
cáipànyuán	tsye pahn ywan	referee
duìfāng	dway fahng	the opposing team
zúqiú chǎng	dzoo chyo chahng	soccer field
píngjú	peeng jyew	tied
fēnshù	fun shoo	the score
jìfēnbǎn	jee fun bahn	scoreboard
fànguī	fahn gway	foul
shàngbàncǎng	shahng bahn chahng	first half of a game
xiàbàncǎng	shyah bahn chahng	second half of a game



Fun & Games

What are the people in the pictures doing? Use the correct verb in your response.
(See Appendix C for the answers.)



A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

Chapter 9

Talking on the Phone

In This Chapter

- ▶ Picking up the phone
- ▶ Understanding cell-phone lingo
- ▶ Talking for fun and for business
- ▶ Dealing with answering machines and voicemail

Although e-mail may be the preferred method of communication these days, you can't duplicate hearing your loved one's **shēngyīn** (*shung yeen*; voice) on the other end of the line or reaching just the right person you need to begin discussing a merger over the computer. All the more reason to know how to use the telephone in addition to surfing the Net.

The art of making a phone call in another language, and even in another country, is just that — an art. To master it, you have to feel comfortable with such basics as using the **diànhuà** (*dyan hwah*; telephone) in the first place. Be sure to check out a few things beforehand, like what **dìqū hàomǎ** (*dee chyew how mah*; area code) to **bō** (*baw*; dial) first. What do you actually say when someone picks up on the other end? This chapter helps you navigate the communication terrain, whether you're in Idaho or China.

Using a Telephone

Before even going near a **diànhuà** (*dyan hwah*; telephone), you may want to become familiar with some common Chinese words and phrases connected to using one. In fact, you see so many different kinds of phones nowadays, you shouldn't have a problem finding out which one best suits your needs:

- ✔ **shǒujī** (*show jee*; cell phone)
- ✔ **wúxiàn diànhuà** (*woo shyan dyan hwah*; cordless phone)
- ✔ **gōngyòng diànhuà** (*goong yoong dyan hwah*; public telephone)

Sometimes you need the help of a **jiēxiànyuán** (*jyeh shyan ywan*; operator) for things like **guójì diànhuà** (*gwaw jee dyan hwah*; international phone calls) or to help you look up a **diànhuà hàomǎ** (*dyan hwah how mah*; telephone number). Of course, you don't need a **jiēxiànyuán** to help you make a **běnsì diànhuà** (*bun shir dyan hwah*; local call) or even a **chángtú diànhuà** (*chahng too dyan hwah*; long-distance call). By and large, you can take care of most anything else on your own. Except, perhaps, a **duìfāng fùfèi diànhuà** (*dway fahng foo fay dyan hwah*; collect call).

Here are some other communication tools you may want to use:

- ✔ **dǎ diànhuà** (*dah dyan hwah*; to make a phone call)
- ✔ **chá diànhuà hàomǎbù** (*chah dyan hwah how mah boo*; look a number up in a phone book)
- ✔ **diànhuà hàomǎ** (*dyan hwah how mah*; telephone number)
- ✔ **diànhuàkǎ** (*dyan hwah kah*; phone card)

If you're like me, you need to ask plenty of basic questions before you figure out what you're doing with a telephone overseas. Here are a couple questions that may come in handy:

- ✔ **Zěnme dǎ diànhuà?** (*dzummuh dah dyan hwah*; How can I place a phone call?)
- ✔ **Zài nǎr keyǐ dǎ diànhuà?** (*dzye nar kuh yee dah dyan hwah*; Where can I make a call?)
- ✔ **Běnsì diànhuà shōufèi duōshǎo qián?** (*bun shir dyan hwah show fay dwaw shaow chyan*; How much is a local phone call?)

Going Mobile with a Cell Phone

The majority of folks in the world don't have telephones in their homes. Can you imagine? That goes for mainland China as well, where a quarter of humanity resides. You can find them everywhere in Taiwan, however, as well as in Singapore and Hong Kong. In big cities across the globe you're apt to see a million people (sometimes literally in places like Shanghai) on the street with their **shǒujī** (*show jee*; cell phone) in tow . . . or, rather, in hand, right next to their **zuǐbā** (*dzway bah*; mouth), yakking away. It's the preferred mode of communication these days.



Although the more well-known cell phone brands have tried to make their mark on the vast Chinese market of cell phone users, home grown brands such as TCL and Ningbo Bird corner the market on their home turf nowadays.

Here are some words that may come in handy now that everyone's using a cell phone or beeper:

- ✓ **hū** (*who*; beep)
- ✓ **hūjī** (*who jee*; beeper)
- ✓ **hūjī hàomǎ** (*who jee how mah*; beeper number)
- ✓ **shǒujī** (*show jee*; cell phone)
- ✓ **shǒujī hàomǎ** (*show jee how mah*; cell phone number)



Cell phones have become so wildly popular that even as recently as 1998, over 10,000 phones were confiscated in northern China after officials discovered that members of high government used them as bribes or gifts for friends and family. They even became the subject of a government anti-corruption campaign.

So now that you have the lowdown on how crucial cell phones appear to be in contemporary China, you're probably itching to make a phone call. On to the basics. . . .

Making a Phone Call

“**Wéi?**” (*way*; hello). You hear this word spoken in the second (or rising) tone a lot on the other end of the line when you make a phone call. It's kind of like testing the waters to see if someone is there. You can reply with the same word in the fourth (or falling) tone so it sounds like you're making a statement, or you can just get right to asking if the person you want to speak with is in at the moment. (For more about the four tones, see Chapter 1.)

A phrase you may hear on the other end of the line in mainland China is “**Nǐ nǎr?**” (*nee nar*; *literally*: where are you?) It asks what **dānwèi** (*dahn way*; work unit) you're attached to. After these first little questions, you may finally be ready to ask for the person you intended to call in the first place.



For decades after the Communist rule took over mainland China in 1949, all Chinese people were assigned a **dānwèi**, which pretty much regulated every aspect of one's life — from where one lived, when one married, and even when one had children. Asking about one's **dānwèi** is still pretty common when answering the phone.

Here are some things you can do before, during, or after your call:

- ✔ **náqǐ diànhuà** (*nah chee dyan hwah*; pick up the phone)
- ✔ **dǎ diànhuà** (*dah dyan hwah*; make a phone call)
- ✔ **shōudào diànhuà** (*show daow dyan hwah*; receive a phone call)
- ✔ **jiē diànhuà** (*jyeh dyan hwah*; answer a phone call)
- ✔ **huí diànhuà** (*hway dyan hwah*; return a phone call)
- ✔ **liú yíge huà** (*lyo ee guh hwah*; leave a message)
- ✔ **guà diànhuà** (*gwah dyan hwah*; hang up)

Calling your friends

Feel like getting in touch with a **péngyǒu** (*puhng yo*; friend) or **tóngshì** (*toong shir*; co-worker) to **liáotiān** (*lyaow tyan*; chat) after class or work? Want to confer with your **tóngxué** (*toong shweh*; classmate) about tomorrow's **kāoshì** (*cow shir*; exam)? Maybe you two are planning a **wǎnhuì** (*wahn hway*; party) over the **zhōumò** (*joe maw*; weekend) and you need to confer about the details. To get the party started, you have to pick up that phone and start talking.

Talkin' the Talk



Margaret calls to see if her friend Luò Chéng is at home and speaks with his father.

Mr. Chéng: **Wéi?**
Way?
Hello?

Margaret: **Qǐngwèn, Luò Chéng zài ma?**
Cheeng won, law chung dzye mah?
May I please speak to Luo Cheng?

Mr. Chéng: **Qǐngwèn, nín shì nǎ yí wèi?**
Cheeng won, neen shir nah ee way?
May I ask who's calling?

Margaret: **Wǒ shì tāde tóngxué, Margaret.**
Waw shir tah duh toong shweh, Margaret.
I'm his classmate, Margaret.

Mr. Chéng: **Hǎo. Shāoděng. Wǒ qù jiào tā.**
How. Shaow dung. Waw chyew jyao tah.
Okay. Just a moment. I'll go get him.

Words to Know

Wéi?	way	Hello?
Wèi.	way	Hello.
Qǐngwèn, nín shì nǎ yí wèi?	cheeng won, neen shir nah ee way	May I ask who's calling?
shāoděng	shaow dung	Just a moment.

Ringinq hotels and places of business

Calling places of business may be a bit different than the more informal call to a friend or co-worker. When you call a **lǚguǎn** (*lyew gwahn*; hotel), **shāngdiàn** (*shahng dyan*; store), or a particular **gōngsī** (*goong suh*; company), you may be asked what **fēnjī hàomǎ** (*fun jee how mah*; extension) you want. If you don't know, you can ask for the same:

Qǐngwèn, fēnjī hàomǎ shì duōshǎo? (*cheeng one, fun jee how mah shir dwaw shaow*; May I ask what the extension number is?)

After you figure out the extension, the **jiēxiànshēng** (*jyeh shyan shung*; operator) will hopefully say:

Wǒ xiànzài jiù gěi nǐ jiē hào. (*waw shyan dzye jyo gay nee jyeh how*; I'll transfer you now.)

Even after all your work thus far, you may find that you **jiē bù tōng** (*jyeh boo toong*; can't connect) or that **méiyǒu rén jiē** (*mayo run jyeh*; no one answers). Maybe the **diànhuàxiàn duànle** (*dyan hwah shyan dwahn luh*; the line has been disconnected). That's really **máfan** (*mah fahn*; annoying), isn't it? Here are some other **máfan** problems you may encounter while trying to make a phone call:

- ✓ **méiyǒu bōhàoyīn** (*mayo baw how yeen*; no dial tone)
- ✓ **nǐ bōcuò hàomǎle** (*nee baw tswaw how mah luh*; you dialed the wrong number)
- ✓ **záyīn** (*dzah yeen*; static)
- ✓ **méi rén jiē diànhuà** (*may run jyeh dyan hwah*; no one answers)

- ✔ **diànhuà huàile** (*dyan hwah hwey luh*; the phone is broken)
- ✔ **zhànxiàn** (*jahn shyan*; the line is busy)
- ✔ **děnghòu** (*dung ho*; be on hold)

If you finally do get through to an employee's office only to discover the person isn't there, you can always leave a **yǒu shēng yóujiàn** (*yo shung yo jyan*; voicemail). When dealing with voicemail, you may have to deal with the following kinds of instructions on a recorded message:

- ✔ **Nín rúguǒ shǐyòng ànjiàn shì diànhuàjī, qǐng àn 3.** (*neen roo gwaw shir yoong ahn jyan shir dyan hwah jee, cheeng ahn sahn*; If you have a touch-tone phone, please press 3 now.)
- ✔ **Nín rúguǒ shǐyòng xuánzhuǎn bōhào jī, qǐng bié guà.** (*neen roo gwaw shir yoong shwan jwan baw how jee, cheeng byeh gwah*; If you have a rotary phone, please stay on the line.)
- ✔ **Yào huí dào zhǔ mùlù qǐng àn jīngzhìhào.** (*yaow hway daow joo moo loo cheeng ahn jeeng dzuh how*; If you want to return to the main menu, please press # (pound) now.)

Phoning a client

If you want to reach your **kèhù** (*kuh hoo*; client) or your **shēng yì huǒ bàn** (*shuhng yee haw ban*; business partner) in today's business world, you just have to pick up that phone. Personally connecting with a phone call is a good way to maintain good **guānxi** (*guan she*; relationships; connections). It's the next best thing to being there.

Sometimes you need a little help from the **mìshū** (*mee shoo*; secretary) to connect to the person you want to reach.

Talkin' the Talk

Jacob enlists the help of Liú Xiǎojiě (Miss Liu), his trusty secretary in Taipei, to help him make a call.

Jacob: **Liú Xiǎojiě, zěnme jiē wàixiàn?**
Lyo shyaw jyeh, dzummuh jyeh why shyan?
 Miss Liu, how can I get an outside line?

Liú Xiǎojiě: **Méi wèntí. Wǒ bāng nǐ dǎ zhèige hàomǎ.**
May one tee. Waw bahng nee dah jay guh how mah.
 Don't worry. I'll help you dial the number.

Jacob: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
Thanks.

Miss Liu gets through and speaks to Mr. Wang's secretary.

Liú Xiǎojiě: **Wéi? Zhè shì Wáng Xiānshēng de bàngōngshì ma?**
Way? Jay shir wahng shyan shung duh bahng goong shir ma?
Hello? Do I have the office of Mr. Wang?

Secretary: **Duì le. Jiù shì.**
Dway luh. Jyo shir.
Yes it is.

Liú Xiǎojiě: **Kéyǐ gěi wǒ jiē tā ma?**
Kuh yee gay waw jyeh tah mah?
Can you connect me with him please?

Secretary: **Duìbùqǐ, tā xiànzài kāihuì. Nǐ yào liúyán ma?**
Dway boo chee, tah shyan dzye kye hway. Nee yaow lyo yan mah?
I'm sorry, he's in a meeting at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?

Liú Xiǎojiě: **Máfan nǐ gàosù tā ABC gōngsī de jīnglǐ Jacob Smith gěi ta dǎ diànhuà le?**
Mah fahn nee gaow soo tah ABC goong suh duh jeeng lee Jacob Smith gay tah dah dyan hwah lah?
May I trouble you to tell him that Jacob Smith, the Manager of ABC Company, called him?

Words to Know

wàixiàn	why shyan	outside line
jīnglǐ	jeeng lee	manager
zǒngcái	dzoong tsye	president
fù zǒngcái	foo dzoong tsye	vice president
zhǔrèn	joo run	director

Using a calling card

Sometimes you may find yourself on the road without a cell phone or **yìngbì** (*yeeng bee*; coins) to make a phone call directly from the nearest **gōngyòng diànhuàtíng** (*goong yoong dyan hwah teeng*; public telephone booth). However, you have a **diànhuàkǎ** (*dyan hwah kah*; phone card) in your pocket, so you decide to try it out.

Sorry, I'm Not Home Right Now . . .

Because people lead such busy lives, more often than not you don't find them in when you try to **gěi tāmen dǎ diànhuà** (*gay tah mun dah dyan hwah*; give them a call). You have no choice but to **liúhuà** (*lyo hwah*; leave a message) on the **lùyīn diànhuà** (*loo yeen dyan hwah*; answering machine). You can always try to **liúhuà** with a real **rén** (*run*; person), too. Sometimes you have to press the **jīngzìjiàn** (*jeen dzuh jyan*; pound key) before leaving a **xìnxì** (*sheen she*; message). In that case, you have to recognize the **jīngzìhào** (*jeeng dzuh how*; pound sign).

Listening to messages that people leave you

If you return home from a long, hard day at work to discover that many callers have **liúle huà** (*lyo luh hwah*; left messages) for you, you may be tempted to **tīng** (*teeng*; listen to) them right away rather than **bùlǐ** (*boo lee*; ignore) them. Relax. Take a hot bath. Have a glass of wine while you cook dinner. After a break you'll be ready to tackle all the messages on that ol' answering machine.

Here's what a typical message sounds like:

Wéi? Jeremy, zhè shì Jason. Zhèige zhōumò wǒmen yìqǐ qù nèige wǎnhuì, hǎo bùhǎo? Yǐnggāi hěn bàng. Yǒu kòng gěi wǒ dǎ diànhuà. Wǒde shǒujī hàomǎ shì (212) 939-9991. Xièxiè.

Way? Jeremy, jay shir Jason. Jay guh joe maw waw men ee chee chyew nay guh wahn hwah, how boo how? Eeng guy hun bahng. Yo koong gay waw dah dyan hwah. Waw duh show jee how mah shir are ee are, jyo sahn jyo, jyo jyo ee. Shyeh shyeh.

Hello? Jeremy, this is Jason. Want to go to that party together this weekend? It should be awesome. When you get a chance give me a call. My cell number is (212) 939-9991. Thanks.

Understanding other people's greeting messages

Here are some common greetings you may hear if you reach an answering machine:

- ✔ **Zhè shì Barry Jones.** (*jay shir Barry Jones*; You have reached Barry Jones.)
- ✔ **Wǒ xiànzài búzài.** (*waw shyan dzye boo dzye*; I'm not in at the moment/I'm away from my desk.)
- ✔ **Sān yuè sì hào zhīqián wǒ zài dùjià.** (*sahn yweh suh how jir chyan waw dzye doo jyah*; I'm on vacation until March 4th.)
- ✔ **Nín rúguǒ xiǎng gēn wǒde zhùshǒu tōnghuà, qǐng bō fēnjī 108.** (*neen roo gwaw shyahng gun waw duh joo show toong hwah, cheeng baw fun jee yaow leeng bah*; If you'd like to speak with my assistant, please dial extension 108.)
- ✔ **Qǐng liú xià nínde míngzi, diànhuà hàomǎ hé jiǎnduǎn de liúyán. Wǒ huì gěi nín huí diànhuà.** (*cheeng lyo shyah neen duh meeng dzuh, dyan hwah how mah huh jyan dwahn duh lyo yan. Waw hway gay neen hway dyan hwah*; Please leave your name, number, and a brief message. I'll get back to you.)

Leaving messages

When you leave a message on an answering machine, be sure to leave clear instructions about what you want the person to do:

- ✔ **Wǒ zài gěi nǐ dǎ diànhuà** (*waw dzye gay nee dah dyan hwah*; I'll call you again.)
- ✔ **Nǐ huí jiā zhǐhòu qǐng gěi wǒ dǎ diànhuà.** (*nee hway jyah jir ho cheeng gay waw dah dyan hwah*; After you get home, please give me a call.)
- ✔ **Bié wàngle huí wǒde diànhuà.** (*byeh wahng luh hway waw duh dyan hwah*; Don't forget to return my call.)

If a live person answers and you have to leave a message, be sure to be polite. Here are some good phrases to keep in mind:

- ✔ **Qǐng gàosù tā wǒ gěi tā dǎ diànhuà le.** (*cheeng gaow soo tah waw gay tah dah dyan hwah luh*; Please tell her I called.)
- ✔ **Máfan nǐ qǐng tā huí wǒde diànhuà?** (*mah fahn nee cheeng tah hway waw duh dyan hwah*; May I trouble you to please have him return my call?)

- ✔ **Qǐng gàosù tā wǒ huì wǎn yìdiǎr lái.** (*cheeng gaow soo tah waw hway wahn ee dyar lye*; Please let him know I'll be a little late.)
- ✔ **Qǐng gěi wǒ zhuǎn tāde liúyánjī?** (*cheeng gay waw jwan tah duh lyo yan jee*; Could you please transfer me to his voicemail?)



Answering machines are still something of an oddity in China, so many Chinese don't know quite what to do when they hear your recorded voice on the other end of the line. Be clear in your message that the caller should leave a name and phone number after the **hū** (who; beep).

Talkin' the Talk



Ruby calls Betty and discovers she's not home. She has to leave a message with her mother.

- Mom: **Wéi?**
Way?
Hello?
- Ruby: **Qǐngwèn, Betty zài ma?**
Cheeng one, Betty dzye mah?
Hello, is Betty there?
- Mom: **Tā búzài. Tā qù yóujú le. Qǐngwèn, nín shì nǎ yí wèi?**
Tah boo dzye. Tah chyew yo jyew luh. Cheeng one, neen shir nah ee way?
She's not home. She went to the post office. May I ask who this is?
- Ruby: **Wǒ shì Ruby, tāde tóngbān tóngxué. Máfan nǐ qǐng gàosù tā wǒ gěi tā dǎ diànhuà le.**
Waw shir Ruby, tah duh toong bahh toong shweh. Mah fahn nee cheeng gaow soo tah waw gay tah dah dyan hwah luh.
I'm Ruby, her classmate. May I trouble you to please tell her I called?
- Mom: **Yíding huì.**
Ee deeng hway.
Certainly.

Words to Know

Máfan nǐ?

mah fahn nee

May I trouble you?

Yídìng huì

ee deeng hway

I certainly will.

Qǐngwèn, nín shì nǎ
yí wèi?

Cheeng one neen shir
nah ee way?

May I ask who
this is?



Fun & Games

Match each of the Chinese phrases to the correct English phrase. Turn to Appendix C for the answers.

English Phrases:

Just a moment.

Is she at home?

Hello.

Sorry, you dialed the wrong number.

Please leave a message.

Chinese Phrases:

Wéi?

Duìbùqǐ, nǐ bōcuò hàomǎle.

Shāoděng

Qǐng nǐ liú yíge huà.

Tā zài ma?

Chapter 10

At the Office and Around the House

In This Chapter

- ▶ Conducting business
 - ▶ Using the Internet
 - ▶ Checking e-mail
 - ▶ Apartment hunting
-

Time to get down to **shēng yì** (*shuhng yee*; business). Your **shēng yì**, that is. Want to know how to manage that job in Jiangsu or how to deal with the head honcho? This chapter will help you do business in Chinese — everything from making a business appointment to conducting a meeting to checking your e-mail on the fly. It also tells you how to look for a new apartment and search for furniture so that you can finally come home and relax after all that work.

Because China has the fastest growing economy in the world, it's no wonder you gravitated to this chapter. Think of it. China is the fastest-growing source of international profits for U.S. companies, with over a billion potential customers. The United States is China's second largest trading partner (after Japan), and has hundreds of satellite offices everywhere from Shanghai to Shenzhen. With hundreds of billions (that's right, billions) of dollars in exports throughout the world, China is most decidedly making its mark.

Your Office Digs

Whether you're a **mìshū** (*mee shoo*; secretary) or the **zhǔxí** (*joo she*; chairman) of the Board, the atmosphere and physical environment of your **bàngōngshì** (*bahn goong shir*; office) is pretty important. It can even help get you through an otherwise tough day. Might as well make it as **shūfu** (*shoo*

foo; comfortable) as possible. Why not put a **zhàopiàn** (*jaow pyan*; photo) of the family **gǒu** (*go*; dog) on your **bàngōngzhuō** (*bahn goong juaw*; desk) for starters? That should put a smile on your face as you start the day.

You don't even have to get up out of your **yǐzi** (*ee dzuh*; chair) to notice all the techie stuff around you. These days, just about any office you work in or visit has the following basic things:

- ✓ **diànhuà** (*dyan hwah*; telephone)
- ✓ **fùyìnjī** (*foo een jee*; copier)
- ✓ **diànnǎo** (*dyan now*; computer)
- ✓ **chuánzhēn** (*chwan jun*; fax)
- ✓ **dǎyìnjī** (*dah een jee*; printer)

Of course, the first thing you might look around for when you get to work in the morning is the **kāfēijī** (*kah fay jee*; coffee machine). In fact, the one part of the day you may look forward to the most is the **xiūxi** (*shyo she*; coffee break).

As you look around your **xiǎogéjiān** (*shyaow guh jyan*; cubicle), I bet you can find all these things:

- ✓ **gāngbǐ** (*gahng bee*; pen)
- ✓ **qiānbǐ** (*chyan bee*; pencil)
- ✓ **dǎng'àn** (*dahng ahn*; file)
- ✓ **huíwénzhēn** (*hway one jun*; paper clip)
- ✓ **dìngshūjī** (*deeng shoo jee*; stapler)
- ✓ **xiàngpíjīn** (*shyahng pee jeen*; rubberband)
- ✓ **bǐjìběn** (*bee jee bun*; notebook)
- ✓ **jiāo dài** (*jyaow dye*; scotch tape)



If you can't find some indispensable item just when you need it, you can always ask someone in the next **xiǎogéjiān** (*shyaow guh jyan*; cubicle). The simplest way to ask is by using the phrase “**Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu ____?**” (*nee yo mayo ____*; Do you have any ____?) Use that phrase as often as you like. Just make sure you can reciprocate whenever your **tóngshì** (*toong shir*; co-worker) needs something as well.

- ✓ **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu gāngbǐ?** (*nee yo mayo gahng bee*; Do you have a pen?)
- ✓ **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu dìngshūjī?** (*nee yo mayo deeng shoo jee*; Do you have a stapler?)

Talkin' the Talk

Mínglěi and Shirley are co-workers in Xi'an. Shirley is about to go into a meeting but can't find her notebook. She quickly checks with her good friend Mínglěi in the next cubicle.

- Shirley: **Mínglěi! Wǒ jíde yào mìng! Kuài yào kāihuì le, kěshì zhǎobúdào wǒde bǐjìběn.**
Meeng lay! Waw jee duh yaow meeng! Kwye yaow kye hway luh, kuh shir jaow boo daow waw duh bee jee bun.
 Minglei! I'm in such a hurry! We're about to have a meeting, and I can't find my notebook.
- Mínglěi: **Wǒ yǒu bǐjìběn. Jiè gěi nǐ.**
Waw yo bee jee bun. Jyeh gay nee.
 I have a notebook. I'll loan it to you.
- Shirley: **Tài hǎo le! Xièxiè.**
Tye how luh! Shyeh shyeh.
 That's great. Thanks.



Whenever you add “-de yào mìng” (*duh yaow meeng*) right after a verb, you add a touch of drama and emphasize whatever the verb is. For example, if you say you're **lèi** (*lay*), that means you're tired. But if you say you're **lèi de yào mìng** (*lay duh yaow meeng*), that means you're absolutely exhausted. If you're not just **máng** (*mahng*; busy), but **máng de yào mìng** (*mahng duh yaow meeng*), you're extremely busy, running around like a chicken without a head. Here are some useful phrases to compare:

- ✓ **Wǒ lěng.** (*waw lung*; I'm cold.)
- ✓ **Wǒ lěng de yào mìng.** (*waw lung duh yaow meeng*; I'm freezing.)
- ✓ **Jǐntiān hǎn rè.** (*jeen tyan hun ruh*; It's very hot today.)
- ✓ **Jǐntiān rè de yào mìng.** (*jeen tyan ruh duh yaow meeng*; It's a real scorcher today.)



If you're going to emphasize a verb by adding **-de yào mìng** after it, you can't also use **hǎn** (*hun*; very) in the same breath. It makes your statement redundant.

Words to Know

jiè	jyeh	to borrow; also to loan
jíde yào mìng	jee duh yaow meeng	in an extreme hurry
bǐjìběn	bee jee bun	notebook
hěn	hun	very

Conducting a Meeting

Congratulations! You've finally set up shop in your new office in Beijing or welcomed your business partners from China and are all set to have your first business meeting. But just what is the **mùdì** (*moo dee*; purpose) of your **huìyì** (*hway ee*; meeting)? Is it to **yǎnshì** (*yan shir*; give a presentation) about a new **chǎnpǐn** (*chahn peen*; product)? Is it to **tánpàn** (*tahn pahn*; negotiate) a **hétóng** (*huh toong*; contract)? How about for the purpose of **shòuxùn** (*show shwun*; training) — either you or your Chinese colleagues? Do you have a specific **yìchéng** (*ee chung*; agenda) in mind already? I hope so. You definitely don't want to look unprepared.

Scheduling and planning a meeting

You might be one of those people who needs to **ānpái huìyì yìchéng** (*ahn pye hway ee ee chung*; schedule a meeting) just to prepare for another meeting. Here are some things you may want to do at such a preliminary meeting:

- ✓ **zhìdìng huìyì yìchéng** (*jir deeng hway ee ee chung*; set an agenda)
- ✓ **tǎolùn wèntí** (*taow lwun one tee*; discuss problems)
- ✓ **jiějué wèntí** (*jyeh jweh one tee*; solve problems)
- ✓ **tuándù jiànshè** (*twan dway jyan shuh*; team building)

What will your role be at these meetings? Will you be the one to **zhǔchí huìyì** (*joo chir hway ee*; lead the meeting) or just **cānjiā huìyì** (*tsahn jya hway ee*; participate in the meeting)? Will you be the **xiétíáorén** (*shyeh tyaow run*; facilitator) of the meeting, trying to elicit as much **fǎnkuì** (*fahn kway*; feedback)

as possible? Or do you always have the unenviable task of contacting everyone in order to **qǔxiāo huìyì** (*chyew shyaw hway ee*; cancel the meeting)?

Suppose you're the one who's **zhǔchí huìyì** (*joo chir hway ee*; leading the meeting) and you want to make sure everyone has a say in matters. Here are some phrases you can use to try and include everyone in the process:

- ✔ **Jack, nǐ hái yǒu shénme xūyào bǔchōng ma?** (*Jack, nee hi yo shummu*
shyew yaow boo choong mah; Jack, do you have anything else to add?)
- ✔ **Wōmen xūyào duì zhèige xiàngmù biāojié ma?** (*waw men shyew yaow*
dway jay guh shyahng moo byaow jweh mah; Do we need to vote on this item?)
- ✔ **Shéi hái yǒu shénme yìjiàn huòzhě wèntí?** (*shay hi yo shummu ee jyan*
hwaw juh one tee; Who still has any comments or questions?)

Making the initial greeting

Suppose you've already had some contacts with your business counterparts on the phone or via e-mail but have never actually met them until now. A mere “nice to meet you” may not suffice, especially if you want to emphasize how very glad you are to finally be speaking face to face. Here are a couple of phrases you can use:

- ✔ **Zōngsuàn jiàn dào nín le, shízài ràng wǒ hěn gāoxìng.** (*dzoong swan*
jyan daow neen luh, shir dzye rahng waw hun gaow sheeng; It's a pleasure to finally meet you.)
- ✔ **Hěn gāoxìng jiàn dào nín bēnrén.** (*hun gaow sheeng jyan daow neen*
bun run; I'm glad to meet you in person.)



Always greet the person who holds the highest rank first before saying hello to others. Hierarchy is important to the Chinese, so try to always be conscious of this or you may unintentionally cause someone to “lose face” by not acknowledging his or her importance in the overall scheme of things. This goes for your side of the equation as well. The leader of your team should enter the room first and then wait to be seated by the host of the meeting.



And one more thing: Try to get a list of the names of your Chinese counterparts in advance so you can practice pronouncing them correctly. That's sure to win a few brownie points right there.

The people you meet with may have one of the following titles:

- ✔ **zhǔxí** (*joo she*; chairman)
- ✔ **zhǔrèn** (*joo run*; director of a department)

- ✔ **dǒngshì** (*doong shir*; director of the board)
- ✔ **jǐnglǐ** (*jeeng lee*; manager)
- ✔ **zǒngcái** (*dzoong tsye*; president)
- ✔ **fù zǒngcái** (*foo dzoong tsye*; vice president)
- ✔ **shǒuxí kuàiji** (*show she kwyee jee*; chief financial officer)
- ✔ **chǎngzhǎng** (*chahng jahng*; factory director)
- ✔ **zǔzhǎng** (*dzoo jahng*; team leader)



In Chinese, last names always come first. When addressing someone with a title, always say the last name first, followed by the title. So if you know someone's name is Li Peijie (Li being the surname), and he's the Director of the company, you address him as **Lǐ Zhǔrèn** (*lee joo run*; Director Li).

Be sure you have business cards ready to give out when you go to China. It is most appreciated if they are in Chinese as well as English. You should always hand and receive each business card with two hands. Feel free to lay out the name cards in the exact same order as those seated so you'll remember who is who.



If you are the guest of honor at a dinner banquet, you're seated facing the entrance to the room. Don't worry if you get confused figuring out where to sit when facing a round table. Your host will make sure to show you to your seat. (See Chapter 5 for more eating tips.)

Starting the meeting

Here are some things to say when you're ready to get the business meeting started:

- ✔ **Zǎoshàng hǎo.** (*dzaow shahng how*; Good morning.)
- ✔ **Huānyíng nín dào wǒmen de bàngōngshì.** (*hwahn eeng neen daow waw mun duh bahn goong shir*; Welcome to our office.)
- ✔ **Zài kāihuì yǐqián, ràng wǒmen zuò yìge zìwǒ jièshào.** (*dzye kye hway ee chyan, rahng waw men dzwaw yee guh dzuh waw jyeh shaow*; Before the meeting begins, let's introduce ourselves.)
- ✔ **Wǒ xiǎng jièshào yíxià huìyì de cānjiāzhě.** (*waw shyahng jyeh shaow ee shyah hway ee duh tsahn jya juh*; I'd like to introduce the conference participants.)
- ✔ **Zánmen kāishǐ ba.** (*dzah mun kye shir bah*; Let's begin.)

Making a presentation

When it's time to give a presentation during the meeting, here are some words that you may want to use:

- ✔ **bǎnzi** (*bahn dzuh*; board) and **fěnbǐ** (*fun bee*; chalk)
- ✔ **huàbǎn** (*hwah bahn*; easel) and **cǎibǐ** (*tsye bee*; marker)
- ✔ **cái liào** (*tsye lyaow*; handouts)
- ✔ **chātú** (*chah too*; illustrations)
- ✔ **biǎogé** (*byaow guh*; charts)
- ✔ **túbiāo** (*too byaow*; diagrams)

Planning to go hi-tech instead? In that case, you may want one of these:

- ✔ **PowerPoint yǎnshì** (*PowerPoint yan shir*; PowerPoint presentation)
- ✔ **huángdēngjī** (*hwahn dung jee*; slide projector) and **píngmù** (*peeng moo*; screen)
- ✔ **tóu yǐng piàn** (*toe yeeng pyan*; transparency)

If you plan on videotaping your presentation, you need a **lùxiàngjī** (*loo shyahng jee*; video recorder), and if the room is pretty big, you may also want to use a **màikèfēng** (*my kuh fung*; microphone).

Ending the meeting

Here are some phrases that may come in handy at the conclusion of the meeting:

- ✔ **Gǎnxiè dàijiā jīntiān chūxí huìyì.** (*gahn shyeh dah jyah jeen tyan choo she hway ee*; Thank you everyone for participating in today's meeting.)
- ✔ **Wōmen xūyào zài kāihui tāolùn zhè jiàn shìqíng ma?** (*waw men shyew yaow dzye kye hway taow lwun jay jyan shir cheeng mah*; Do we need another meeting to continue the discussion?)
- ✔ **Zài líkāi zhīqián, wōmen bǎ xià cì huìyì de rìqī dìng xiàlái ba.** (*dzye lee kye jir chyan, waw mun bah shyah tsuh hway ee duh ir chee deeng shyah lye bah*; Before we leave, let's confirm a date for the next meeting.)

Talkin' the Talk



Catherine and Joseph have introduced themselves to their Chinese counterparts at the ABC Company in Shenzhen. They plan to give a presentation on their new software product a little later on.

Catherine: **Dàjiā hǎo. Zhè cì huìyì de mùdì shì gěi nǐmen jièshào ABC gōngsī de xīn chǎnpǐn — yīzhǒng bào biǎo de ruǎnjiàn.**

Dah jyah how. Jay tsuh hway ee duh moo dee shir gay nee men jyeh shaow ABC goong suh duh sheen chahn peen — ee joong baow byaow duh rwahn jyan.

Hello everyone. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce you all to ABC Company's new product — a type of spreadsheet software.

Joseph: **Měi gè rén dōu yǒu huìyì yìchéng ma?**

May guh run doe yo hway ee ee chung mah?
Does everyone have a copy of the agenda?

Catherine: **Xièxiè, Joseph. Duì le. Dàjiā dōu yǐjīng nǎdào zīliào le ma?**

Shyeh shyeh Joseph. Dway luh. Dah jyah doe ee jeeng nah daow dzuh lyaow luh mah?

Thank you, Joseph. Yes, has everyone already received the materials?

Words to Know

zīliào	dzuh lyaow	material
huìyì	hway ee	meeting; conference
huìyì yìchéng	hway ee ee chung	conference agenda
mùdì	moo dee	purpose
bào biǎo	baow byaow	spreadsheet
ruǎnjiàn	rwahn jyan	software

Discussing Business and Industry

Because China has opened up to the world so quickly since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 (the United States established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic in 1979), U.S. businesses in many areas have set up shop in many parts of the country. Whether your company has an office in mainland China, Taiwan, or Hong Kong, you're sure to find one or more of the industries listed in Table 10-1 represented in those places.

<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English</i>
guǎnggào hé gōngguān	gwahng gaow huh goong gwan	advertising and public relations
qìchē	chee chuh	automotive
yínháng yǔ cáiwù	yeen hahng yew tsye woo	banking and finance
diànnǎo	dyan now	computers
jiànzhào	jyan dzaow	construction
gōngchéng	goong chung	engineering
yúlè	yew luh	entertainment
shízhuāng	shir jwahng	fashion
bǎoxiǎn	baow shyan	insurance
xīnwén	sheen one	journalism
guǎnlǐ zǐxún	gwahn lee dzuh shwun	management consulting
cǎikuāng yú shíyóu	tsye kwahng yew shir yo	mining and petroleum
zhìyào	jir yaow	pharmaceuticals
chūbǎn	choo bahn	publishing
fángdìchǎn	fahng dee chahn	real estate
yùn shū	yewn shoo	shipping

Regardless of what industry you're in, here are some things that you can do to help you decide how to advertise your company and its products or services or to determine how it's going:

- ✔ **xiāofèizhě yánjiū** (*shyaow fay juh yan jyo*; consumer research)
- ✔ **shìchǎng yánjiū** (*shir chahng yan jyo*; market research)
- ✔ **guǎnggào xuānchuán** (*gwahng gaow shwan chwan*; ad campaign)
- ✔ **pǐnpái tuǐguǎng** (*peen pye tway gwahng*; brand-name promotion)
- ✔ **zhíxiāo yùndòng** (*jir shyaow yoon doong*; direct marketing campaign)
- ✔ **diàn tái yú diànshì guǎnggào** (*dyan tie yew dyan shir gwahng gaow*; radio and television ads)
- ✔ **xìnxī guǎnggào** (*sheen she gwahng gaow*; infomercial)
- ✔ **dīngdāng** (*deeng dahng*; jingle)

And here are some things you should have on hand in meetings or at that **màoyì zhǎnxiāohuì** (*maow ee jahn shyaow hway*; trade show):

- ✔ **xiǎocèzǐ** (*shyaow tsuh dzuh*; brochure)
- ✔ **chǎnpǐn mù lù** (*chahn peen moo loo*; catalogue)
- ✔ **túbiāo** (*too byaow*; logo)

Of course, if your product is so good it virtually sells itself, your greatest source of business is undoubtedly going to come from good ol' **kǒuchuán guǎnggào** (*ko chwan gwahng gaow*; word-of-mouth advertising).

Talkin' the Talk

Joel and Peter, two salesmen, visit Guangdong to see if the Flying Peacock Company wants to buy their product. They're in a meeting with the Flying Peacock Company president. They have already gone through the preliminary introductions and small talk.

Joel: **Zhè shì yǒu guān wǒmen chǎnpǐn de xiǎocèzǐ.**
Jay shir yo gwaw mun chahn peen duh shyaow tsuh dzuh.
 Here's a brochure on our product.

Peter: **Wǒmen de chǎnpǐn shì yóu wǒmen zìjǐ de zhuānjiā shèjì de ěrqiě zhèngmíng shì mǎn chénggōng de.**
Waw men duh chahn peen shir yo waw men dzuh jee duh jwan jyah shuh jee duh are chyeh jung meeng shir mahn chung goong duh.
 Our product was designed by our own experts and has proven to be quite successful.

- Joel: **Duì le, kěshì wǒmen yě kényī gēnjù nǐde guīgé lái shèjī chǎnpǐn.**
Dway luh, kuh shir waw men yeah kuh yee gun jyew nee duh gway guh lye shuh jee chahn peen.
 That's correct, but we can also tailor the product to meet your specifications.
- Peter: **Wǒmen de jiàgé yě hěn yǒu jìngzhēnglì.**
Waw mun duh jyah guh yeah hun yo jeeng juhng lee.
 Our prices are also quite competitive.

Words to Know

jiàgé	jyah guh	price
hěn yǒu jìngzhēnglì	hun yo jeeng juhng lee	very competitive
gēnjù nǐde guīgé	gun jyew nee duh gway guh	according to your specifications
chǎnpǐn	chahn peen	product
mǎn chénggōng de	mahn chung goong duh	very successful

Using the Internet

These days you can reach your business partner in Beijing in a matter of seconds through **diànzǐ kōngjiān** (*dyan dzuh koong jyan*; cyberspace). With **shǒutí shì** (*show tee shir*; portable) computers and multiple **jiǎnsuǒ yīnqín** (*jyan swaw yeen cheen*; search engines), it's possible to **jiǎnsuǒ guóji wǎngluò** (*jyan swaw gwaw jee wahng lwaw*; search the Internet) and find just about anything you're looking for. Not sure what you're doing with computers? Forget your **mìmǎ** (*mee mah*; password)? **Jìshù fúwù** (*jee shoo foo woo*; technical support) is only a phone call away. Here are some things you can do nowadays with computers and through the Internet

- ✓ **dǎkāi diànnǎo** (*dah kye dyan now*; turn on the computer)
- ✓ **guāndiào diànnǎo** (*gwahn dyaow dyan now*; turn off the computer)
- ✓ **jìn rù** (*gin roo*; log on)

- ✔ **tuì chū** (*tway choo*; log off)
- ✔ **jiànlì yíge zhànghù** (*jyan lee ee guh jahng hoo*; set up an account)
- ✔ **xiàzài wénjiàn** (*shyah dzye one jyan*; download a file)
- ✔ **chóngxīn kāijī** (*choong sheen kye jee*; reboot)
- ✔ **xuǎnzé yìjiā wǎngshàng fúwù tígōng shāng** (*shwan dzuh ee jya wahng shahng foo woo tee goong shahng*; choose an Internet service provider)
- ✔ **ānzhūāng tiáozhì jiētiáoqì** (*ahn jwahng tyaow jir jyeh tyaow chee*; install a modem)



By the beginning of the 21st century, there were over 10 million PCs and 26 million Internet users in China, even though the government strictly controls its use. Individuals are charged by the minute if they use their own home computers, so folks may not be that keen on checking their e-mail too frequently. If something's really important, you might want to resort to a phone call so you know they'll pick up on the other end of the line.

Talkin' the Talk

Eugene and Sarah discuss the wonders of the Internet.

Eugene: **Yīntèwǎng dàodī shì shénme dōngxi?**
Een tuh wahng daow dee shir shummu doong she?
 Just what exactly is the Internet?

Sarah: **Yīntèwǎng shì yìzhǒng diànnǎo de guójì hùlián wǎng. Tā tígōng xīnxī fúwù.**
Een tuh wahng shir ee joong dyan now duh gwaw jee hoo lyan wahng. Tah tee goong sheen she foo woo.
 The Internet is a kind of interconnected international network that provides information.

Eugene: **Tīngshuō wànwéiwǎng shénme dōu yǒu.**
Teeng shwaw wahn way wahng shummu doe yo.
 I've heard that the World Wide Web has everything.

Sarah: **Duì le. Nǐ yí shàngwǎng jiù kěyǐ liúlǎn hěn duō bùtóng de wǎngzhàn.**
Dway luh. Nee ee shahng wahng jyo kuh yee lyo lahn hun dwaw boo toong duh wahng jahng.
 That's correct. The minute you go online you can browse all sorts of different Web sites.

Words to Know

dàodǐ	daow dee	in the end; after all
yīntèwǎng	een tuh wahng	the Internet
guójì	gwaw jee	international
wànwéiwǎng	wahn way wahng	World Wide Web
shàngwǎng	shahng wahng	to go online
liúlǎn	lyo lahn	browse
liúlǎnqì	lyo lahn chee	browser
fúwùqì	foo woo chee	server
wǎngzhàn	wahng jahn	Web site
wǎngyè	wahng yeh	Web page
wǎngzhǐ	wahng jir	URL
yònghù xìngmíng	yoong hoo sheeng meeng	user name
léishè guāngdié	lay shuh gwahng dyeh	CD-ROM

Checking Your E-Mail

These days your **diànzǐ yóuxiāng dìzhǐ** (*dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir*; e-mail address) is as important as your **míngzì** (*meeng dzuh*; name) and your **diàn-huà hào mǎ** (*dyan hwah how mah*; phone number) when it comes to keeping in touch. It's almost indispensable if you want to do business. Just check your **shōuxìnxīāng** (*show sheen shyahng*; inbox) and you'll probably have received a few more **diànzǐ yóujiàn** (*dyan dzuh yo jyan*; e-mails) while reading this section alone.

Here are some things you can do with e-mail when you have your own account:

- ✓ **fā diànzǐ yóujiàn** (*fah dyan dzuh yo jyan*; send an e-mail)
- ✓ **sòng wénjiàn** (*soong one jyan*; send a file)

- ✔ **zhuǎnfā xìnxi** (*juan fah sheen she*; forward a message)
- ✔ **bǎ wénjiàn fùjiā zài diànzǐ yóujiàn** (*bah one jyan foo jyah dzye dyan dzuh yo jyan*; attach a file to an e-mail)

Talkin' the Talk

Lonnie and Terry discuss how to e-mail each other.

- Lonnie: **Zěnme fā yíge diànzǐ yóujiàn ne?**
Dzummuh fah ee guh dyan dzuh yo jyan nuh?
So how do you send an e-mail?
- Terry: **Shǒuxiān nǐ děi dǎkāi "xīn yóujiàn."**
Show shyan nee day dah kye "sheen yo jyan."
First you have to open up to "new mail."
- Lonnie: **Ránhòu ne?**
Rahn ho nuh?
And then?
- Terry: **Ránhòu tiánhǎo shōujiànren de diànzǐ yóuxiāng dìzhǐ hé yóujiàn de tímù. Xiěhǎo xin, jiu kěyǐ fā le.**
Rahn ho tyan how show jyan run duh dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir huh yo jyan duh tee moo. Shyeh how sheen, jyo kuh yee fah luh.
After that, you have to fill in the recipient's e-mail address and type in the subject. After you're finished writing the message, you can finally send it.

Hunting for an Apartment

Are you one of the hundreds of people considering making a long-term move to China for business purposes? Starting to think about purchasing some **fángdìchǎn** (*fahng dee chahn*; real estate) in the form of a **gōngyùfáng** (*goong yew fahng*; condominium) or a **hézuò gōngyù** (*huh dzwaw goong yew*; co-op) in Beijing or Shanghai? Just a few decades ago, contemplating such a purchase of **cáichǎn** (*tsye chahn*; property) was unthinkable. These days, though, with the enormous influx of foreign investment and joint-venture companies, countless foreigners are beginning to take advantage of the many reputable **fángdìchǎn jǐngjìrén** (*fahng dee chahn jeeng jee run*; realtors) to

help them do just that. And if you've already purchased some **cáichǎn** and now want to **chūzū** (*choo dzoo*; rent) or **zhuǎnzū** (*jwan dzoo*; sublet) a **kòng gōngyù fángjiān** (*koong goong yew fahng jyan*; vacant apartment) to someone else, there are services that help you, the **wùzhǔ** (*woo joo*; owner), find a trustworthy **chéngzūrén** (*chung dzoo run*; tenant). Here are some terms you might want to know when thinking of buying a place in China:

- ✔ **dàilǐ** (*dye lee*; agent)
- ✔ **píngjià** (*peeng jya*; appraisal)
- ✔ **tóubiāo** (*toe byaow*; bid)
- ✔ **jīngjìrén** (*jeeng jee run*; broker)
- ✔ **jiànzhù guǐzé** (*jyan joo gway dzuh*; building code)
- ✔ **ànjiēfèi** (*ahn jyeh fay*; closing costs)
- ✔ **hétóng** (*huh toong*; contract)
- ✔ **xìnyòng bàogào** (*sheen yoong baow gaow*; credit report)
- ✔ **tóukuǎn** (*toe kwahn*; down payment)
- ✔ **gǔběn** (*goo bun*; equity)
- ✔ **lìxī** (*lee she*; interest)
- ✔ **dīyājīn** (*dee yah jeen*; mortgage)

Talkin' the Talk



Iris contacts a realtor about buying a condo in Shanghai.

Iris: **Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ xiǎng zài Shànghǎi mǎi yíge gōngyùfáng.**
Nee how. Waw shyahng dzye Shahng hi my ee guh goong yew fahng.
 Hi. I'm thinking of buying a condo in Shanghai.

Realtor: **Méiyǒu wèntí. Wǒ jiù shì yíge fángdìchǎn jīngjìrén. Hěn yuànyì bāngmáng.**
Mayo one tee. Waw jyo shir ee guh fahng dee chahn jeeng jee run. Hun ywan yee bahng mahng.
 No problem. I'm a real estate broker. I'd be more than happy to help you.

Iris: **Nà tài hǎole. Zài něige dìqū mǎi fángzi zuì hǎo?**
Nah tye haow luh. Dzye nay guh dee chyew my fahng dzuh dzway how?
 That's great. Which area do you consider to be the best to buy some property?

Realtor: Shànghǎi yǒu hěn duō hěn hǎo de fángdìchǎn. Kěnéng zuì qiǎngshǒu de shì Hóngqiáo hé Jīnqiáo. Hěn duō wàiguó bàngōngshì xiànzài zài Pǔdōng. *Shahng hi yo hun dwaw hun how duh fahng dee chahn. Kuh nung dzway chyahng show duh shir hoong chyaow huh jeen chyaow. Hun dwaw why gwaw bahn goong shir shyan dzye dzye poo doong.* Shanghai has many excellent properties. Perhaps the most popular locations are Hongqiao and Jinqiao. Many foreign offices are now in Pudong.

Words to Know

fángdìchǎn jīngjìrén	fahng dee chahn jeeng jee run	realtor
cáichǎn	tsey chahn	property
mǎi yíge gōngyùfáng	my ee guh goong yew fahng	to buy a condo
mài yíge gōngyùfáng	my ee guh goong yew fahng	to sell a condo
hézuò gōngyù	huh dzwaw goong yew	co-op
qiǎngshǒu	chyahng show	popular
dìqū	dee chyew	area; location
línjìn dìqū	leen jeen dee chyew	neighborhood



Be real sure you're using the correct tone when you pronounce the letters "m-a-i" (pronounced *my*) in Chinese. If you say it with a third (dipping) tone, **mǎi**, it means to buy. If you say it with a fourth (falling) tone, however, **mài**, it means to sell. If you're not careful, you may end up selling something you had hoped to live in yourself.



The growth of Pudong

Pudong (“Pu” is short for the Huangpu River and “dong” means East) is the stretch of land east of the Huangpu River in the city of Shanghai. Just a decade ago, this piece of land was indistinguishable from many other backwater Chinese villages. Today it is a city within a city, boasting a population of over 1.5 million on a piece of real

estate larger than the entire country of Singapore. Foreign investment in this part of Shanghai is enormous. In addition to its claim to fame as the fastest growing business area in China, it also boasts Asia’s largest department store, its highest TV tower, and, needless to say, the Shanghai Stock Exchange.



The Chinese language is fascinating and incredibly logical. Although **mǎi** (spoken with a third tone) means to buy and **mài** (spoken with a fourth tone) means to sell, if you put them together and add the word **zuò** (*dzaw*; to do) in front of them, to say **zuò mǎimài** (*dzaw my my*), it means to do business. (To buy and to sell . . . get it?)

Furnishing Your New Digs

Whether you’ve bought a **gōngyùfáng** (*goong yew fahng*; condo) or a **hézuò gōngyù** (*huh dzaw goong yew*; co-op), have rented a **gōngyù fángjiān** (*goong yew fahng jyan*; apartment) or are spending a semester in Xi’an and live in a **sùshè** (*soo shuh*; dormitory), you’ll probably want to start buying some **jiājù** (*jyah jyew*; furniture) or otherwise **zhuāngshì** (*jwahng shir*; decorate) your new digs and put your individual stamp on the place.

How many of the following **fángjiān** (*fahng jyan*; rooms) does your new place have?

- ✓ **yùshì** (*yew shir*; bathroom)
- ✓ **wòshì** (*waw shir*; bedroom)
- ✓ **fàntǐng** (*fahn teeng*; dining room)
- ✓ **xiūxìshì** (*shyo she shir*; den)
- ✓ **chúfáng** (*choo fahng*; kitchen)
- ✓ **kètǐng** (*kuh teeng*; living room)
- ✓ **shūfáng** (*shoo fahng*; study)
- ✓ **kòngfáng** (*koong fahng*; spare room)

Does your new place have a **yuānzi** (*ywan dzuh*; backyard) with a pretty **huāyuán** (*hwah ywan*; garden), perhaps? How about a **yángtái** (*yahng tye*; balcony) or a more romantic little **tōngdào** (*toong daow*; veranda)? You can put some really nice **zhíwù** (*jir woo*; plants) out there, or even some **huā** (*hwah*; flowers), like **júhuā** (*jyew hwah*; chrysanthemums) or **lánhuā** (*lahn hwah*; orchids) or even some **méihuā** (*may hwah*; plum blossoms). Wouldn't that be nice?

Is there a **lóushàng** (*low shahng*; upstairs) as well as a **lóuxià** (*low shyah*; downstairs)? Is there a grand **ménkǒu** (*mun koe*; entrance) or at least a **diàntī** (*dyan tee*; elevator) if you're on the top floor? Are there lots of floor-to-ceiling **chuānghu** (*chwahng hoo*; windows) with great views, or do they look straight into an air shaft, forcing you to cover them with **chuānglián** (*chwahng lyan*; curtains) the first chance you get? No matter. At least you finally have a place you can call your own.

After you finally move in and discover how much empty space there really is, you probably want to go out and buy at least the bare bones basics as far as **jiājù** (*jyah jyew*; furniture) is concerned. How about some of these?

- ✓ **chuáng** (*chwahng*; bed)
- ✓ **chuángdiàn** (*chwahng dyan*; mattress)
- ✓ **zhuōzi** (*jwaw dzuh*; table)
- ✓ **yǐzi** (*ee dzuh*; chair)
- ✓ **chájī** (*chah jee*; coffee table)
- ✓ **shūzhuō** (*shoo jwaw*; desk)
- ✓ **yīguì** (*ee gway*; chest of drawers)
- ✓ **shāfā** (*shah fah*; sofa)

And once you have your bed, you'll probably want to buy some of the following items to put on it. (The list just never ends. Try to make sure you don't run up too much of a **xìnyòng kǎ** [*sheen yoong kah*; credit card] bill too quickly or you may regret having made that move from Poughkeepsie to Pudong in the first place.)

- ✓ **chuángzhào** (*chwahng jaow*; bedspread)
- ✓ **tǎnzi** (*tahn dzuh*; blanket)
- ✓ **chuángdān** (*chwahng dahn*; sheets)
- ✓ **zhěntóu** (*juhn toe*; pillow)
- ✓ **bèizi** (*bay dzuh*; quilt)

The good news, of course, is that after you've purchased all the above items, you can actually sleep on your own new bed in China. The bad news, though, is that now you have no excuse not to **pūchuáng** (*poo chwahng*; make the bed) every morning.

Okay, there's one last thing I almost forgot to remind you to get before you settle in for the night. Trust me, it will make all the difference in the world when it comes to your ability to relax and enjoy your new digs. It's something that you don't want to realize you've forgotten to stock up on before turning in for the night. Here's a hint: It belongs in the **yùshì** (*yew shir*; bathroom). Give up? It's **weishēngzhǐ** (*way shung jir*; toilet paper), silly. (Don't say I didn't warn you.)



Fun & Games

For the following household items, match the English word to the Chinese word. Check Appendix C for the answers.

Chinese Phrases

yùshì

wòshì

fànǐng

tǎnzi

yángtái

zhěntóu

bèizi

shūzhuō

shāfā

English Phrases

dining room

balcony

sofa

desk

quilt

bedroom

bathroom

blanket

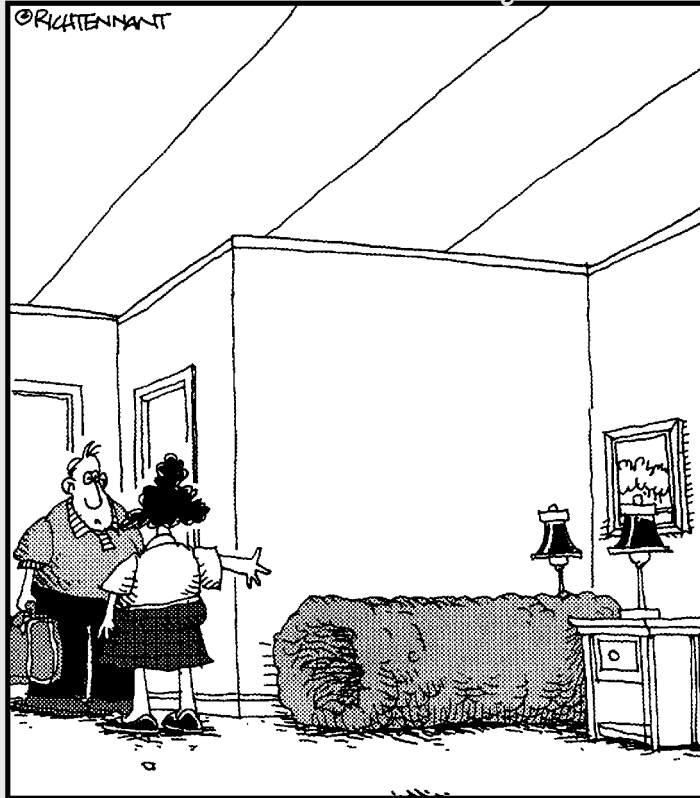
pillow

Part III

Chinese on the Go

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



"This is why you shouldn't use the Chinese you picked up in oriental restaurants when making a reservation. We've got a room with a view and a queen size eggroll."

In this part . . .

Ah, to travel the world! These chapters help you with every aspect of your travel, from getting a visa and making hotel reservations to deciphering foreign currency, asking for directions, and getting to your destination. I even include a chapter on handling emergencies, although I hope you never have to use it. **Yí lù píng'ān!** (*ee loo peeng ahn*; Bon Voyage!)

Chapter 11

Money, Money, Money

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding Chinese currencies
 - ▶ Knowing how (and where) to change money
 - ▶ Cashing checks and charging to plastic
 - ▶ Exchanging money at banks and ATMs
 - ▶ Leaving proper tips
-

Qián (*chyan*; money) makes the world go around. Of course, family and friends are priceless, but you can't very well support yourself or help those you love, much less donate to a charity of your choice, unless you have something to give. And that's what life is really all about. (Unless, of course, your main goal in life is to buy a Ferrari, acquire rare works of art, and live in the south of France . . . in which case you need a LOT of **qián**. All the more reason to read this chapter.)

In this chapter, I share with you important words and phrases for acquiring and spending money — things you can easily do nowadays all over the world. I give you some banking terms to help you deal with everything from live tellers to inanimate objects like ATM machines. I even give you tips on tipping.

Staying Current with Chinese Currency

Depending on where in Asia (or any place where Chinese is spoken) you live, work, or visit, you have to get used to dealing with different types of **huòbì** (*hwaw bee*; currency), each with its own **duìhuànlǚ** (*dway hwahn lyew*; rate of exchange). See Table 11-1 for the Chinese versions of international currency and the following sections for the main forms of Chinese **huòbì**.

Table 11-1 International Currencies		
<i>Chinese Words</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Words</i>
Měiyuán	may ywan	U.S. dollar
Rénmínbì	run meen bee	Mainland Chinese dollar
Xīn tái bì	shin tye bee	Taiwan dollar
Gǎng bì	gahng bee	Hong Kong dollar
Xīng bì	sheeng bee	Singapore dollar
Rì yuán	ir ywan	Japanese dollar
Ōu yuán	oh ywan	Euro

Rénmínbì (RMB) in the PRC

In the People's Republic of China, the equivalent of the **Měiyuán** (*may ywan*; U.S. dollar) is the **yuán** (*ywan*). The **yuán** is also known as **rénmínbì** (*run meen bee*; literally: the people's money). As of early 2005, 1 U.S. dollar is equivalent to about 8.25 (mainland) Chinese dollars. Here's how you say that in Chinese:

Yī měiyuán huàn bā diǎn èr wǔ yuán rénmínbì. (*ee may ywan hwan bah dyan are woo ywan run meen bee*; One U.S. dollar is 8.25 (mainland) Chinese dollars.)

The Chinese **yuán**, which is a paper bill, comes in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100. You also see coins worth 1, 2, or 5 **yuán**. In addition to saying you have **yì yuán**, you can say you have **yí kuài qián** (*ee kwee chyan*), which means the exact same thing — one Chinese dollar. Over a billion people around the globe currently use this currency.

Want to know how much money I have right now in my pocket, Nosy? Why not just ask me?

✔ **Nǐ yǒu jǐ kuài qián?** (*nee yo jee kwee chyan*; How much money do you have?)

Use this phrase if you assume the amount is less than \$10.00.

✔ **Nǐ yǒu duōshǎo qián?** (*nee yo dwaw shaow chyan*; How much money do you have?)

Use this phrase if you assume the amount is greater than \$10.00.

One **yuán** is the equivalent of 10 **máo** (*maow*), which may also be referred to as **jiǎo** (*jyaow*) — the equivalent of 10 cents. Each **máo** or **jiǎo** is the equivalent of 100 **fēn** (*fun*), which compare to American pennies. Paper bills, in addition to the **yuán**, also come in denominations of 2 and 5 **jiǎo**. Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, and 5 **fēn**; 1, 2, and 5 **jiǎo**; and 1, 2, and 5 **yuán**.



The difference between **yuán** and **kuài**, and between **jiǎo** and **máo**, is that **yuán** and **jiǎo** are formal, written ways of saying those denominations and **kuài** and **máo** are the more colloquial forms.

Xīn Táibì in the ROC

In Taiwan, also known as the Republic of China, or ROC, 1 U.S. dollar equals about 31.80 **xīn táibì** (*shin tye bee*; New Taiwan dollars).

Here's how you say that in Chinese:

Yì měiyuán huàn sānshíyī diǎn bā yuán xīn táibì. (*ee may ywan hwahn sahn shir ee dyan bah ywan shin tye bee*; One U.S. dollar is 31.80 New Taiwan dollars.)

You see bills in denominations of 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 and coins in denominations of 1, 5, 10, and 50 cents. Coins, or **língqián** (*leeng chyan*; small change), in Taiwan are particularly beautiful — they have all sorts of flowers etched into them — so you may want to save a few to bring back to the States or to show friends. Just make sure you keep enough on hand for all the great items you can buy cheaply at the wonderful night markets.

Here's how you ask for change:

Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu yí kuài qián de língqián? (*nee yo mayo ee kwey chyan duh leeng chyan*; Do you have change for a dollar?)

Hong Kong dollars

Xiāng gǎng (*shyahng gahng*; Hong Kong; *literally*: fragrant harbour), the long-time financial dynamo of Asia, uses the Hong Kong dollar, or the **gǎngbì** (*gahng bee*). Currently, 1 U.S. dollar is equivalent to 7.65 Hong Kong dollars. Here's how you say that in Chinese:

Yì měiyuán huàn qī diǎn liù wǔ yuán gǎngbì. (*ee may ywan hwahn chee dyan lyo woo ywan gahng bee*; One U.S. dollar is 7.65 Hong Kong dollars.)

Singapore dollars

Singapore is a Mandarin-speaking country in Asia. Its dollars are called **xīng bì** (*sheeng bee*) and come in denominations of 2, 5, 10, 50, and 100. You can find coins in denominations of 1 cent, 5 cents, 10 cents, 20 cents, 50 cents, and 1 dollar.



In Singapore, if you want to say \$1.25, you don't use the number **wǔ** (*woo*; five) to refer to the final 5 cents in the amount. You use the term **bàn** (*bahn*), which means half: **yí kuài liǎng máo bàn** (*ee kwee lyahng maow bahn*) rather than **yí kuài liǎng máo wǔ** (*ee kwee lyahng maow woo*). You can definitely use the number **wǔ** in Taiwan, Hong Kong, or mainland China, however.

Making and Exchanging Money

People make their money in all sorts of ways. Most ways are legitimate. (If you've attained yours through nefarious means, I'm not sure I want to know, so don't tell me!) You may be one of those lucky people who win the **cǎi juàn** (*tsye jywahn*; lottery) or receive a large **yí chǎn** (*yee chahn*; inheritance) you use to traipse to the other side of the world. Or perhaps you have a modest amount saved up from working hard and paying your bills on time, and you hope to make it go a long way. However you get your money, you find out how to change it (and then spend it) with the help of this chapter.

You can always **huàn qián** (*hwahn chyan*; exchange money) the minute you arrive at the **fēijī chǎng** (*fay jee chahng*; airport) at the many **duìhuànchù** (*dway hwahn choo*; exchange bureaus), or you can wait until you get to a major **yínháng** (*een hahng*; bank) or check in at your **lǚguǎn** (*lyew gwahn*; hotel). Of course, you can't make it to a bank or hotel if you don't have enough money to hail a **chūzū chē** (*choo dzoo chuh*; taxi) to reach the **yínháng** or **lǚguǎn**, and you don't want to find yourself in **jiānyù** (*jyan yew*; jail) — where you won't be able to make **bǎoshìjīn** (*baow shir jeen*; bail) — because you still don't have any local **huòbì** (*hwaw bee*; currency).

The following phrases come in handy when you're ready to **huàn qián**:

- ✔ **Qǐng wèn, zài nǎr kěyǐ huàn qián?** (*cheeng one, dzye nar kuh yee hwahn chyan*; Excuse me, where can I change money?)
- ✔ **Qǐng wèn, yínháng zài nǎr?** (*cheeng one, eeng hahng dzye nar*; Excuse me, where is the bank?)
- ✔ **Jīntiān de duìhuàn lǚ shì shénme?** (*jīn tyan duh dway hwahn lyew shir shumuh*; What's today's exchange rate?)

- ✔ **Qǐng nǐ gěi wǒ sì zhāng wǔshí yuán de.** (*cheeng nee gay waw suh jahng woo shir ywan duh*; Please give me four 50-yuan bills.)
- ✔ **Wǒ yào huàn yì bǎi měiyuán.** (*waw yaow hwahn ee bye may ywan*; I'd like to change \$100.)
- ✔ **Nǐmen shǒu duōshǎo qián shǒuxùfèi?** (*nee men show dwaw shaow chyán show shyew fay*; How much commission do you charge?)



No matter where you get money or how much money you plan to convert into local currency, you may have to show your **hùzhào** (*hoo jaow*; passport), so always have that ready to whip out.

Talkin' the Talk



Jane arrives at the airport in Beijing and needs to change some money. She asks a **xínglǐyuán** (*sheeng lee ywan*; porter) where she can find a place to exchange money.

Jane: **Qǐng wèn, zài nǎr kěyǐ huàn qián?**
Cheeng one, dzye nar kuh yee hwahn chyán?
Excuse me, where can I change money?

Xínglǐyuán: **Duihuànchù jiù zài nàr.**
Dway hwahn choo jyoe dzye nar.
The exchange bureau is just over there.

Jane: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you.

Jane goes to the money exchange counter to change some U.S. dollars into Chinese **yuán** with the help of the **chūnàyuán** (*choo nah ywan*; cashier).

Jane: **Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ yào huàn yì bǎi měiyuán de rénminbì.**
Nee how. Waw yaow hwahn ee bye may ywan duh run meen bee.
Hello. I'd like to change USD \$100 into RMB.

Chūnàyuán: **Méiyǒu wèntí.**
Mayo one tee.
No problem.

Jane: **Jīntiān de duihuàn lǜ shì duōshǎo?**
Jin tyan duh dway hwahn lyew shir dwaw shaow?
What's today's exchange rate?

Chūnàyuán: **Yī měiyuán huàn bā diǎn èr wǔ yuán rénminbì.**
Ee may ywan hwahn bah dyan are woo ywan run meen bee.
 One U.S. dollar is 8.25 (mainland) Chinese dollars.

Jane: **Hǎo. Qǐng gěi wǒ liǎng zhāng wǔshí yuán de.**
How. Cheeng gay waw lyahng jahng woo shir ywan duh.
 Great. Please give me two 50 yuán bills.

Chūnàyuán: **Méiyǒu wèntí. Qǐng gěi wǒ kànkàn nǐde hùzhào.**
Mayo one tee. Cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hoo jaow.
 No problem. Please show me your passport.

Words to Know

měiyuán	may ywan	U.S. dollars
yī měiyuán	ee may ywan	one U.S. dollar
rénmínbì	run meen bee	Chinese dollar (mainland)
xīn táibì	shin tye bee	New Taiwan dollars
huàn	hwahn	to exchange
duìhuàn lǜ	dway hwahn lyew	exchange rate
duìhuànchù	dway hwahn choo	exchange counter
chūnàyuán	choo nah ywan	cashier
huàn qián	hwahn chyan	to exchange money
wàibì	why bee	foreign currency
shǒuxùfèi	show shyew fay	commission
Qǐng gěi wǒ kànkàn nǐde hùzhào.	cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hoo jaow	Please show me your passport.

Spending Money

I don't think I'll have trouble selling you on (no pun intended) the thought of spending money. Whenever you see something you want, whether in a **shāngdiàn** (*shahng dyan*; store), on the **jiēshàng** (*jyeh shahng*; street), or at a **yè shì** (*yeh shir*; night market), you may as well give in to temptation and buy it, as long as you have enough **qián**. It's as easy as that. Have money, will travel. Or, rather, have money, will spend.

When you're ready to buy something, you can do it with **xiànjīn** (*shyan jeen*; cash), **zhǐpiào** (*jir pyaow*; check), or **xìnyòng kǎ** (*sheen yoong kah*; credit card). And when traveling overseas, you often use **lǚxíng zhǐpiào** (*lyew sheeng jir pyaow*; traveler's checks).

If you end up buying so many items that you can barely hold them all with both hands, here's one adverb you should remember. It comes in handy when you start adding up the cost of everything before you fork over all your money: I'm speaking of **yígòng** (*ee goong*), which means "altogether," as in "How much are these 20 toys and 80 sweaters altogether?"

You may overhear the following conversation in a store:

Zhèige hé nèige yígòng duōshǎo qián? (*jay guh huh nay guh ee goong dwaw shaow chyán*; How much are this and that altogether?)

Zhèige sān kuài liǎng máo wǔ, nèige yí kuài liǎng máo, suǒyǐ yígòng sì kuài sì máo wǔ. (*jay guh sahn kwyeh lyahng maow woo, nay guh ee kwyeh lyahng maow, swaw yee ee goong suh kwyeh suh maow woo*; This is \$3.25, and that is \$1.20, so altogether that will be \$4.45.)

Before you decide to **mǎi dōngxi** (*my doong she*; buy things), be sure you have enough money **yígòng** to buy everything you want so you don't feel disappointed after spending many hours in your favorite store.



The term **dōngxi** (*doong she*; things) is literally a combination of "east" (**dōng**) and "west" (**xī**). The Chinese language often combines two such opposite words to come up with various concepts. **Dōngxi** always refers to physical objects.

Cashing checks and checking your cash

I don't care what anybody tries to tell you, **xiànjīn** (*shyan jin*; cash) in local currency is always useful, no matter where you are and what time of day it is. Sometimes you can buy things and go places with **xiànjīn** that you can't

swing with a **xìnyòngkǎ** (*sheen yoong kah*; credit card). For example, if your kid hears the ice cream truck coming down the street, you can't just whip out your **xìnyòngkǎ** to buy him an ice cream cone when the truck stops in front of your house. You can't even try to convince the guy to take a **zhǐpiào** (*jir pyaow*; check). For times like these, my friend, you need cold, hard **xiànjīn**. You can use it to buy everything from **bǐngqīlín** (*beeng chee leen*; ice cream) on the street to a **diànyǐng piào** (*dyan yeeng pyaow*; movie ticket) at the theater. Just make sure you put your **qián** (*chyan*; money) in a sturdy **qiánbāo** (*chyan baow*; wallet or purse) and keep it in your front **kǒudài** (*ko dye*; pocket) so a **zéi** (*dzay*; thief) can't easily steal it.

When you talk about how much something costs, you put the numerical value before the word for bill or coin. For example, you can call a dollar **yí kuài** (*ee kwee*; one dollar) or **sān kuài** (*sahn kwee*; three dollars). You translate 10 cents, literally, as one 10-cent coin — **yì máo** (*ee maow*) — or 30 cents as, literally, three 10-cent coins — **sān máo** (*sahn maow*).

Here's how you speak of increasing amounts of money. You mention the larger units before the smaller units, just like in English:

- ✓ **sān kuài** (*sahn kwee*; \$3.00)
- ✓ **sān kuài yì máo** (*sahn kwee ee maow*; \$3.10)
- ✓ **sān kuài yì máo wǔ** (*sahn kwee ee maow woo*; \$3.15)

As useful and convenient as **xiànjīn** is, you really have to pay with **zhǐpiào** for some things. Take your **zūjīn** (*dzoo jeen*; rent) and electricity bills, for example. Can't use cash for these expenses, that's for sure. And when you travel overseas, everyone knows the safest way to carry money is in the form of **lǚxíng zhǐpiào** (*lyew sheeng jir pyaow*; traveler's checks) so you can replace them if they get lost or stolen.



The basic elements of all Chinese currency are the **yuán** (colloquially referred to as a **kuài**), which you can think of as a dollar, the **jiǎo** (colloquially referred to as the **máo**), which is the equivalent of a dime, and the **fēn** (*fun*), which is equivalent to the penny.

Talkin' the Talk

Jacqueline goes shopping in Taipei and finds something she likes. She asks the clerk how much it is.

Jacqueline: **Qǐng wèn, zhè jiàn yīfu duōshǎo qián?**
Cheeng one, jay jyan ee foo dwaw shaow chyan?
 Excuse me, how much is this piece of clothing?

- Clerk: Èrshíwǔ kuài.
Are shir woo kwee.
It's \$25.00.
- Jacqueline: Nǐmen shōu bù shōu zhīpiào?
Nee men show boo show jir pyaow?
Do you take checks?
- Clerk: Lǚxíng zhīpiào kěyǐ. Xìnyòng kǎ yě kěyǐ.
Lyew sheeng jir pyaow kuh yee. Sheen yoong kah
yeah kuh yee.
Traveler's checks are okay. Credit cards are also okay.

Words to Know

qiánbāo	chyan baow	wallet; purse
kǒudài	ko dye	pocket
zhīpiào	jir pyaow	checks
zhīpiào bù	jir pyaow boo	checkbook
lǚxíng zhīpiào	lyew sheeng jir pyaow	traveler's checks
fù zhàng	foo jahng	to pay a bill
língqián	leeng chyan	small change
dà piàozi	dah pyaow dzuh	large bills
huàn kāi	hwahn kye	to break (a large bill)

Paying with plastic

The **xìnyòng kǎ** (*sheen yoong kah*; credit card) may be the greatest invention of the 20th century — for credit card **gōngsī** (*goong suh*; companies), that is. The rest of us are often stuck paying all kinds of potentially exorbitant **lǐlǜ** (*lee lyew*; interest rates) if we're not careful. Still, credit cards do make paying for things much more convenient, don't you agree?

To find out if a store accepts credit cards, all you have to say is:

Nimen shōu bù shōu xìnyòng kǎ? (*nee men show boo show sheen yoong kah*; Do you accept credit cards?)

Overseas, many places accept **Měiguó yùntòng kǎ** (*may gwaw yewn toong kah*; American Express). Closer to America, businesses may only **shōu** (*show*; accept) MasterCard or Visa. In some out-of-the-way parts of China, you can't use plastic at all, so have plenty of **xiànjīn** (*shyan jeen*; cash) or **lǚxíng zhǐpiào** (*lyew sheeng jir pyaow*; traveler's checks) on hand, just in case.

Whether the **jiàgé** (*jyah guh*; price) of the items you want to buy is **guì** (*gway*; expensive) or **piányi** (*pyan yee*; cheap), the **xìnyòng kǎ** comes in handy.

Read on for a list of credit-card-related terms:

- ✔ **xìnyòng** (*sheen yoong*; credit)
- ✔ **xìnyòng kǎ** (*sheen yoong kah*; credit card)
- ✔ **xìnyòng xiàn'é** (*sheen yoong shyan uh*; credit limit)
- ✔ **shēzhàng de zuì gāo é** (*shuh jahng duh dzway gaow uh*; credit line)

Doing Your Banking

If you plan on staying in Asia for an extended time or you want to continue doing business with a Chinese company, you may want to open a **huóqǐ zhànghù** (*hwaw chee jahng hoo*; checking account) where you can both **cún qián** (*tsun chyan*; deposit money) and **qǔ qián** (*chyew chyan*; withdraw money). If you stay long enough, you should open a **dìngqǐ cúnkuǎn hùtóu** (*deeng chee tsun kwan hoo toe*; savings account) so you can start earning some **lìxí** (*lee she*; interest). Sure beats stuffing **dà piàozi** (*dah pyaow dzuh*; large bills) under your **chuáng diàn** (*chwahng dyan*; mattress) for years.

How about trying to make your money work for you by investing in one of the following:

- ✔ **gǔpiào** (*goo pyaow*; stock)
- ✔ **zhàiquàn** (*jye chwan*; bond)
- ✔ **tàotóu jījīn** (*taow toe jee jeen*; hedge fund)
- ✔ **hùzhù jījīn** (*hoo joo jee jeen*; mutual fund)
- ✔ **chǔxù cúnkuǎn** (*choo shyew tsun kwan*; Certificate of Deposit; CD)
- ✔ **guókù quàn** (*gwaw koo chwan*; treasury bond)

Talkin' the Talk



Dan decides to open a savings account in Hong Kong. He enters a bank and approaches the teller.

Dan: **Nín hǎo. Wǒ xiǎng kāi yíge dìngqī cúnkuǎn hùtóu.**
Neen how. Waw shyahng kye ee guh deeng chee tswun kwan hoo toe.
 Hello. I'd like to open a savings account.

Teller: **Méiyǒu wèntí. Nín yào xiān cún duōshǎo qián?**
Mayo one tee. Neen yaow shyan tswun dwaw shaow chyan?
 No problem. How much would you like to deposit initially?

Dan: **Wǒ yào cún yìbǎi kuài qián.**
Waw yaow tswun ee bye kwye chyan.
 I'd like to deposit \$100.

Teller: **Hǎo. Qǐng tián zhèige biǎo. Wǒ yě xūyào kànkàn nín de hùzhào.**
How. Cheeng tyan jay guh byaow. Waw yeah shyew yaow kahn kahn neen duh hoo jaow.
 Fine. Please fill out this form. I will also need to see your passport.

Words to Know

yínháng	een hahng	bank
xiànjīn	shyan jeen	cash
chūnà chuāngkǒu	choo nah chwahng ko	cashier's window
cúnkuǎn	tswun kwan	savings
chūnàyuán	choo nah ywan	bank teller
kāi yíge cúnkuǎn hùtóu	kye ee guh tswun kwan hoo toe	to open a savings account
cún qián	tswun chyan	to deposit money
qǔ qián	chyew chyan	to withdraw money



Banks in the PRC are generally open at 8:30 a.m. from Monday through Saturday. They close for two hours from 12-2 p.m. and then reopen from 2-5:30 p.m. Many branches of the Bank of China are open on Sunday mornings, but some close on Wednesday afternoons. In Taiwan, banks close at 3:30 p.m., and in Hong Kong they're usually open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the week and from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturdays.

Making withdrawals and deposits

Whether you need to **cún qián** (*tsun chyan*; deposit money) or **qǔ qián** (*chyew chyan*; withdraw money), you need to make sure you have enough **qián** in the first place to do so. One way to ensure you don't overextend is to make sure you know what your **jiéyú** (*jyeh yew*; account balance) is at any given moment. Sometimes you can check your available balance if you **shàngwǎng** (*shahng wahng*; go online) to see which **zhǐpiào** (*jir pyaow*; checks) may have already cleared. If someone gives you an **yínháng běnpiào** (*een hahng bun pyaow*; cashier's check), however, it cashes immediately. Lucky you!

If you plan to cash some checks along with your deposits, here are a couple of useful phrases to know:

- ✓ **Wǒ yào duìxiàn zhèi zhāng zhǐpiào.** (*waw yaow dway shyan jay jahng jir pyow*; I'd like to cash this check.)
- ✓ **Bèimiàn qiān zì xiě zài nǎr?** (*bay myan chyan dzuh shyeh dzye nar*; Where shall I endorse it?)

One of the most convenient ways to access some quick cash is to go to the nearest **zìdòng tíkuǎnjī** (*dzuh doong tee kwan jee*; ATM machine).

Accessing an ATM machine

Zìdòng tíkuǎnjī (*dzuh doong tee kwan jee*; ATM machines) are truly ubiquitous these days. Wherever you turn, there they are, on every other street corner. Sometimes I wonder how we ever survived without them. (Same goes for the personal computer . . . but I digress.)

In order to use a **zìdòng tíkuǎnjī**, you need a **zìdòng tíkuǎn kǎ** (*dzuh doong tee kwan kah*; ATM card) to find out your **jiéyú** (*jyeh yew*; account balance) or to **cún qián** (*tsun chyan*; deposit money) or **qǔ qián** (*chyew chyan*; withdraw money). And you definitely need to know your **mìmǎ** (*mee mah*; PIN number); otherwise, the **zìdòng tíkuǎnjī** is useless.

And one more thing: Make sure you don't let anyone else know your **mìmǎ**. It's a **mìmi** (*mee mee*; secret).

Tips on Tipping

Píngcháng (*peeng chahng*; usually) in the United States, a 15 percent tip is customary at restaurants, and you often give a 10 percent tip to taxi drivers. Giving **xiǎo f èi** (*shyaow fay*; tips) is expected everywhere from here to Timbuktu. In some instances, you should even give **xiǎo f èi** to people setting up towels in the public **xǐshǒu jiān** (*she show jyan*; bathroom). Better to know in advance of your trip how much (or how little) is expected of you so you don't embarrass yourself (and by extension, your countrymen).

In Taiwan, **xiǎo f èi** are generally included in restaurant bills. If not, 10 percent is standard. You can **gěi** (*gay*; give) bellboys and porters a dollar (USD) per bag.

In Hong Kong, most restaurants automatically include a 10 percent tip, but feel free to give an additional 5 percent if the **f úwù** (*foo woo*; service) is good. Small tips are also okay for taxi drivers, bellboys, and washroom attendants.

Tipping in mainland China used to be rare, but the idea is finally catching on, especially now that service with a scowl rather than a smile is fast becoming a thing of the past. (For the longest time, workers simply had no incentive to work harder or with a more pleasant demeanor after the Cultural Revolution. Can you blame workers for having no reason to perform their duties with the idea of customer service in mind?) A 3 percent tip is standard in restaurants (still low compared to Taiwan and Hong Kong). Bellboys and room service attendants typically expect a dollar or two (USD). Tipping in **Měijīn** (*may jeen*; U.S. currency) is still very much appreciated, because it's worth about eight times as much as the Chinese dollar.

If you get a bill and can't make heads or tails of it, you can always ask the following question to find out if the tip is included:

Zhàngdān bāokuò f úwù f èi ma? (*jahng dahn baow kwaw foo woo fay mah*;
Does the bill include a service charge/tip?)



In English, when you say “15 percent,” you mean 15 percent out of a total of 100. The way to express **bǎi f ēnbǐ** (*bye fun bee*; percentages) in Chinese is to start with the larger denomination of **bǎi** (*bye*; 100) first and then work your way backwards with the percentage of that amount. Here are some examples:

- ✓ **bǎi f ēn zhī bǎi** (*bye fun jir bye*; 100 percent; *literally*: 100 out of 100 parts)
- ✓ **bǎi f ēn zhī bāshíwǔ** (*bye fun jir bah shir woo*; 85 percent; *literally*: 85 out of 100 parts)
- ✓ **bǎi f ēn zhī shíwǔ** (*bye fun jir shir woo*; 15 percent; *literally*: 15 out of 100 parts)

- ✔ **bǎi fēn zhī sān** (*bye fun jir sahn*; 3 percent; *literally*: 3 out of 100 parts)
- ✔ **bǎi fēn zhī líng diǎn sān** (*bye fun jir leeng dyan sahn*; 0.3 percent; *literally*: 0.3 out of 100 parts)

For more information on numbers, see Chapter 2.

Talkin' the Talk

Rebecca and Rachel are in a restaurant. They get their bill and discuss how much of a tip to leave.

Rebecca: **Wǒmen de zhàngdān yígòng sānshí kuài qián. Xiǎo fèi yīnggāi duōshǎo?**

Waw men duh jahng dahn ee goong sahn shir kwye chyan. Shyaow fay eeng guy dwaw shaow?

Our bill comes to \$30.00 altogether. How much should the tip be?

Rachel: **Yīnwèi fúwù hěn hǎo, suǒyǐ xiǎo fèi kěyǐ bǎi fēn zhī èr shí. Nǐ tóngyì ma?**

Een way foo woo hun how, swaw yee shyaow fay kuh yee bai fun jir are shir. Nee toong ee mah?

Because the service was really good, I think we can leave a 20 percent tip. Do you agree?

Rebecca: **Tóngyì.**

Toong ee.

I agree.

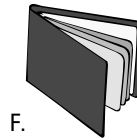
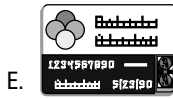
Words to Know

zhàngdān	jahng dahn	the bill
yígòng	ee goong	altogether
yīnggāi	eeng guy	should
yīnwèi . . . suǒyǐ	een way . . . swaw yee	because . . . therefore
tóngyì	toong ee	to agree



Fun & Games

Identify what the following illustrations depict in Chinese. See Appendix C for the correct answers.



- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____



Chapter 12

Taking the Road Less Traveled: Asking for (and Giving) Directions

In This Chapter

- ▶ Asking and entertaining “where” questions
 - ▶ Directing other people
 - ▶ Covering time and distances
 - ▶ Pointing the way with directional coverbs
-

Everyone (yes, even you) has to ask for **fāngxiàng** (*fahng shyahng*; directions) at some time or another. Even if you just need to find the **cèsuǒ** (*tseh swaw*; bathroom) — when you’ve got to go, you’d better know.

You may find yourself baffled by the boulevards in Beihai or dumbfounded by directions in Dalian. This chapter helps you figure out exactly how to ask for directions before you ever **mílù** (*mee loo*; get lost). Whether you lose your bearings in Beijing or wander off the path in Luoyang, this chapter gives you helpful tips that make it easier to find your way back home. Or at least back to your hotel.

You definitely need to know how to ask where certain places are in mainland China, where most people don’t speak English. You have a greater likelihood of hailing an English-speaking cabbie in Taipei or Kowloon to take you where you need to go but not in one of the cities or towns in mainland China.

Avoiding 20 Questions: Just Ask “Where”

Okay, so you’re searching for the closest **yóujú** (*yo jyew*; post office) to mail a package home before your mother’s birthday next week. A passerby tells you to go right down the **jiēdào** (*jyeh daow*; street), but for the life of you, all you see are a couple of **shūdiàn** (*shoo dyan*; bookstores) and an occasional **ditiě zhàn** (*dee tyeh jahn*; subway station). Time to ask for directions. But how?



The easiest way to ask where something is in Chinese is to use the question word **nǎr** (*nar*). It means “where.” But you can’t just say **nǎr**, or folks still won’t know what you’re talking about. You have to use the coverb **zài** (*dzye*) in front of **nǎr** (**zài nǎr**), which can be translated as “in” or “at.” Just put the name of whatever you’re looking for before the word **zài** to create a complete question:

- ✓ **Yóujú zài nǎr?** (*yo jyew dzye nar*; Where’s the post office?)
- ✓ **Shūdiàn zài nǎr?** (*shoo dyan dzye nar*; Where’s the bookstore?)
- ✓ **Nǐ zài nǎr?** (*nee dzye nar*; Where are you?)

Here are some more places you may be looking for when you lose your way:

- ✓ **cèsuǒ** (*tsuh swaw*; bathroom)
- ✓ **Měiguó dàshǐguǎn** (*may gwaw dah shir gwahn*; American Embassy)
- ✓ **xuéxiào** (*shweh shyaw*; school)
- ✓ **yínháng** (*een hahng*; bank)
- ✓ **fànguǎn** (*fahn gwahn*; restaurant)
- ✓ **gōnggòngqìchēzhàn** (*goong goong chee chuh jahn*; bus stop)
- ✓ **huǒchēzhàn** (*hwaw chuh jahn*; train station)
- ✓ **ditiězhàn** (*dee tyeh jahn*; subway station)
- ✓ **chūzū qìchēzhàn** (*choo dzoo chee chuh jahn*; taxi stand)
- ✓ **jízhěnsì** (*jee juh shir*; emergency room)
- ✓ **piàofáng** (*pyaw fahng*; ticket office)

When you travel in unknown areas, you may need to determine whether you can walk or if you need to take a **gōnggòng qìchē** (*goong goong chee chuh*; bus) or **chūzū qìchē** (*choo dzoo chee chuh*; taxi) to reach your destination:

- ✓ Hěn jìn ma? (*hun jeen mah*; Is it near?)
- ✓ Hěn yuǎn ma? (*hun ywan mah*; Is it far?)

Different strokes for different folks: nǎr versus nǎlǐ



Chinese people immediately know where you're from, where you've studied, or at least where your Chinese language teacher is from by the way you say the word "where." If you say **nǎr** (*nahr*) with an "r" sound at the end of the word, you represent a northern Chinese accent commonly found in Beijing. If you say it with a "lee" sound at the end rather than an "r" sound, as in **nǎlǐ** (*nah lee*), it indicates you've probably lived or studied in Taiwan.



When someone gives you a compliment, proper Chinese etiquette dictates that your response should be a swift and decisive "**nǎlǐ, nǎlǐ**," which literally means "Where? Where?" but translates more loosely into "No, no, you're too kind." When a Chinese person says something nice about you, your clothes, your car, or your kids, never accept a compliment the way you do in English, which is with a gracious and accepting "Why, thank you." Instead, you should insist that the compliment is undeserved and vociferously disagree with a quick **nǎlǐ, nǎlǐ**. In mainland China, the equivalent expression is "**nǎr de huà**." (*nar duh hwah*; literally: where are such words coming from?) Humility about your attributes, even if you have to feign it, is always well respected in Chinese culture.

The word **nǎr** spoken with a third (low falling and then rising) tone means "where," but the same word said with a fourth (falling) tone, **nàr**, means "there," so be particularly careful which tone you use when you ask for directions. The person you ask may think you're making a statement, not asking a question.

Talkin' the Talk



Helayne is about to leave her hotel in Beijing to head for the American Embassy to renew her passport. She's not sure where to find it, so she asks a hotel attendant how to get there.

Helayne: **Qǐng wèn, Měiguó dàshǐguǎn zài nǎr?**
Cheeng one, may gwaw dah shir gwahn dzye nar?
 Excuse me, where's the American Embassy?

Attendant: **Měiguó dàshǐguǎn zài Xiù Shuǐ Běi Jiē.**
May gwaw dah shir gwahn dzye shyow shway bay jyeh.
 The American Embassy is on Xiu Shui Bei Street.

Helayne: **Hěn yuǎn ma?**
Hun ywan mah?
 Is it far?

Attendant: **Hěn yuǎn. Nǐ zuì hǎo zuò chūzū qìchē qù.**
Hun ywan. Nee dzway how zwaw choo dzoo chee chuh chyew.
 Yes, it's quite far. You'd best take a taxi.

Helayne: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
 Thanks.

As Helayne starts to leave, the attendant comments on the skirt she's wearing.

Attendant: **Xiǎojiě, nǐde qúnzi hěn piàoliàng.**
Shyaow jyeh, nee duh chwun dzuh hun pyaow lyahng.
 Miss, your skirt is very pretty.

Helayne: **Nǎr de huà!**
Nar duh hwah!
 No, it's not really!

Words to Know

fāngxiàng	fahng shyahng	directions
dìtú	dee too	map
shíjiānbiǎo	shir jyan byaow	timetable
dìzhǐ	dee jir	address
zuò chūzū qìchē	dzwaw choo dzoo chee chuh	to take a taxi
zuò gōnggòng qìchē	dzwaw goong goong chee chuh	to take the bus
zuò fēijī	dzwaw fay jee	to take an airplane

Getting direction about directions

Knowing how to ask where you can find a particular place is the first step, but you also need to know how to get there. (Otherwise, why would you ask where it is in the first place, right?) Here's the simplest way to find out:

Qù _____ zěnmē zǒu? (*chyew _____ dzummuh dzoe; How do I get to _____?*)

Here are some examples of how to use this question pattern:

- ✓ **Qù fēijīchǎng zěnmē zǒu?** (*chyew fay jee chahng dzummuh dzoe; How do I get to the airport?*)
- ✓ **Qù túshūguǎn zěnmē zǒu?** (*chyew too shoo gwahn dzummuh dzoe; How do I get to the library?*)
- ✓ **Qù xuéxiào zěnmē zǒu?** (*chyew shweh shyaw dzummuh dzoe; How do I get to the school?*)

Answering “where” questions

Short of using international sign language with a pantomime act, you may want to get a handle on some basic terms that indicate direction and location. Read on for a quick list:

- ✓ **yòu** (*yo; right*)
- ✓ **zuǒ** (*dzwaw; left*)
- ✓ **qián** (*chyan; front*)
- ✓ **hòu** (*ho; back*)
- ✓ **lǐ** (*lee; inside*)
- ✓ **wài** (*why; outside*)
- ✓ **shàng** (*shahng; above*)
- ✓ **xià** (*shyah; below*)
- ✓ **duìmiàn** (*dway myan; opposite*)
- ✓ **kào jìn** (*kaow jeen; next to*)



If you plan to indicate that something is inside, outside, above, below, in front of, or behind something else, you can use three different, completely interchangeable word endings with any of the location words:

- ✓ **biān** (*byan*)
- ✓ **miān** (*myan*)
- ✓ **tóu** (*toe*)

So, for example, if you want to say that the dog is outside, you can say it in any of the following ways:

- ✓ **Gǒu zài wàimiàn.** (*go dzye why myan*; The dog is outside.)
- ✓ **Gǒu zài wàibiān.** (*go dzye why byan*; The dog is outside.)
- ✓ **Gǒu zài wàitóu.** (*go dzye why toe*; The dog is outside.)

Sometimes you may have the need to use a more complex location expression, such as when you don't want to simply note where something is. Perhaps you want to tell someone where a certain action should take place. For example, if you want to say "Wait in front of the school," here's what you say:

Qǐng nǐ zài xuéxiào qiánmiàn děng. (*cheeng nee dzye shweh shyaow chyan myan dung*; Please wait in front of the school.)

In such cases, the verb **děng** (*dung*; to wait) comes after the specified location (**xuéxiào qiánmiàn**). Here are some other examples:

- ✓ **Zài xuéxiào hòumiàn děng.** (*dzye shweh shyaow ho myan dung*; Wait in back of the school.)
- ✓ **Zài wūzi lǐ chīfàn.** (*dzye woo dzuh lee chir fahn*; Eat in the room.)
- ✓ **Zài túshūguǎn kànshū.** (*dzye too shoo gwahn kahn shoo*; Read in the library.)

Talkin' the Talk



Corey asks Casey for directions in Tainan. He wants to get to the post office.

Corey: **Qǐng wèn, Casey, yóujú zài nǎr?**
Cheeng one, Casey, yo jyew dzye nar?
 Excuse me, Casey, where's the post office?

- Casey: **Yóujú jiù zài yínháng duimiàn. Guò liǎng tiáo lù jiù shì.**
Yo jyew jyo dzye een hahng dway myan. Gwaw lyahng tyaow loo jyo shir.
 The post office is right opposite the bank. If you go two more blocks it's right there.
- Corey: **Xièxiè. Qù yóujú zěnmē zǒu?**
Shyeh shyeh. Chyew yo jyew dzummuh dzoe?
 Thank you. How should I walk to the post office?
- Casey: **Wàng nán zǒu. Yìzhí zǒu jiù dào le.**
Wahng nahn dzoe. Ee jir dzoe jyoe daow luh.
 Walk south. Go straight and you'll see it.

Words to Know

wàng	wahng	toward
duì miàn	dway myan	opposite
zài yínháng duimiàn	dzye een hahng dway myan	opposite the bank
zǒu (zǒu lù)	dzoe (dzoe loo)	to walk
kāi chē	kye chuh	to drive
zuò huǒchē	zwaw hwaw chuh	to take the train
shàng	shahng	to get on
xià	shyah	to get off

Giving Directions

Are you the kind of know-it-all who thinks you're pretty familiar with a foreign city by virtue of having pored over a couple of **dītú** (*dee too*; maps) before arrival? If so, you may want to be the one giving directions on occasion

rather than just asking for them. Knowing your stuff comes in handy when you think the taxi driver is about to take you for a ride (figuratively, that is) because he figures you don't know your way around town.

If you want to **jiào** (*jyaow*; hail) a cab, say this to your hotel door attendant:

Wǒ yào jiào jìchéngchē. (*waw yaow jyaow jee chung chuh*; I would like a taxi.)

You can also say:

Wǒ yào jiào chūzūchē. (*waw yaow jyaow choo dzoo chuh*; I would like a taxi.)

The two methods are interchangeable, just like saying “taxi” or “cab.”

If you really do know your way around the city, you can instruct the taxi driver as to which **gāosùgōnglù** (*gaow soo goong loo*; freeway), **gōnglù** (*goong loo*; highway), **qiáo** (*chyaow*; bridge), or **lù** (*loo*; road) to take; where to turn the **guǎijiǎo** (*gwey jyaow*; corner); or which **xiàngzi** (*shyahng dzuh*; alley or lane) to travel down. Or perhaps you want to avoid going over a particular **tiānqiáo** (*tyan chyaow*; overpass) or under a particular **dixiàdào** (*dee shyah daow*; underpass).

Wherever you want to go, you need to know a few key verbs to instruct the cab driver:

- ✓ **guò** (*gwaw*; to pass)
- ✓ **shàng** (*shahng*; to go up)
- ✓ **xià** (*shyah*; to go down)
- ✓ **yòu zhuǎn** (*yo jwan*; turn right)
- ✓ **zuǒ zhuǎn** (*dzwaw jwan*; turn left)
- ✓ **zhí zǒu** (*jir dzoe*; go straight ahead)
- ✓ **zhuǎn wān** (*jwan wahn*; turn around)

If you don't know an exact location, you can also convey less specific details:

- ✓ **fùjìn** (*foo jeen*; near)
- ✓ **sìzhōu** (*suh joe*; around)

Talkin' the Talk

Jon and Minnie discuss where they want to meet later today in Taiwan.

Minnie: **Wōmen jīntiān xiàwǔ liǎng diǎn zhōng jiàn, hǎo bù hǎo?**
Waw men jin tyan shyah woo lyahng dyan joong jyan, how boo how?
 Let's meet this afternoon at 2:00, okay?

Jon: **Hǎo. Nǐ yào zài nǎr jiàn?**
How. Nee yaow dzye nar jyan?
 Okay. Where would you like to meet?

Minnie: **Wōmen zài gùgōng bówùguǎn qiánmiàn jiàn.**
Waw men dzye goo goong baw woo gwahn chyah myan jyan.
 Let's meet each other in front of the National Palace Museum.

Jon: **Hǎo, yīhuǐr jiàn.**
How, ee hwar jyan.
 Okay, see you later.

At around 1:30, Minnie leaves her hotel in downtown Taipei and asks for help hailing a cab.

Minnie: **Máfan nǐ bāng wǒ jiào jìchéngchē?**
Mah fahn nee bahng waw jyaow jee chung chuh?
 May I trouble you to help me hail a cab?

After she enters the cab, Minnie asks the taxi driver what route he plans to take to get to the National Palace Museum.

Minnie: **Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ yào dào gùgōng bówùguǎn qù. Cóng zhèr dào nàr zěnmē zǒu?**
Nee how. Waw yaow daow goo goong baw woo gwahn chyew. Tsoong jar daow nar dzummuh dzoe?
 Hello. I'd like to go to the National Palace Museum. How do you get there from here?

Taxi Driver: **Cóng zhèr wōmen guò mǎlù, wàng yòu guǎi, zhí zǒu jiù dào le.**
Tsoong jar waw men gwaw mah loo, wahng yo gwye, jir dzoe jyo daow luh.
 From here we cross the avenue, make a right, and then go straight and we're there.

Words to Know

cóng . . . dào	tsoong . . . daow	from . . . to
guò mǎlù	gwah mah loo	cross the avenue
máfan nǐ	mah fahn nee	excuse me
yīhuǐ jiàn	ee hwahr jyan	see you later

Expressing Distances (Time and Space) with Lí

Even though you can use the **cóng . . . dào** pattern to literally say “from here to there” (**cóng zhèr dào nàr**; *tsoong jar daow nar*) when you want to indicate the distance from one place to another, you need to use the “distance from” coverb “**lí**” (*lee*). The general sentence pattern looks something like this:

Place word + **lí** + place word + description of the distance

For example:

- ✓ **Gōngyuán lí túshūguǎn hěn jìn.** (*goong ywan lee too shoo gwan hun jeen*; The park is very close to the library.)
- ✓ **Wǒ jiā lí nǐ jiā tǐng yuǎn.** (*waw jyah lee nee jyah teeng ywan*; My home is really far from your home.)

If you want to specify exactly how far one place is from another, you use the number of **lí** (*lee*; the Chinese equivalent of a kilometer) followed by the word **lǐ** and then the word **lù** (*loo*; *literally*: road). Whether you say **sì lí lù** (*suh lee loo*; 4 kilometers), **bā lí lù** (*bah lee loo*; 8 kilometers), or **èrshísān lí lù** (*are shir sahn lee loo*; 23 kilometers), people know the exact distance when you use this pattern. You also have to use the word **yǒu** (*yo*; to have) before the number of kilometers. If the answer includes an adjectival verb such as **yuǎn** (*ywan*; far) or **jìn** (*jin*; close) rather than a numerical distance, however, you don’t need to specify the number of kilometers or use the word **yǒu**.

Check out the following sample questions and answers that use these new patterns:

- ✓ **Gōngyuán lí túshūguǎn duōme yuǎn?** (*goong ywan lee too shoo gwahn dwaw muh ywan*; How far is the park from the library?)
- ✓ **Gōngyuán lí túshūguǎn yǒu bā lǐ lù.** (*goong ywan lee too shoo gwahn yo bah lee loo*; The park is 8 kilometers from the library.)
- ✓ **Yínháng lí nǐ jiā duōme jìn?** (*eeng hahng lee nee jyah dwaw muh jin*; How close is the bank from your home?)
- ✓ **Hěn jìn. Zhǐ yī lǐ lù.** (*hun jin. jir ee lee loo*; Very close. Just 1 kilometer.)

You may have some other questions when you inquire about locations and distances:

- ✓ **Yào duō cháng shíjiān?** (*yaow dwaw chahng shir jyan*; How long will it take?)
- ✓ **Zǒu de dào ma?** (*dzoe duh daow mah*; Can I walk there?)
- ✓ **Zǒu de dào, zǒu bú dào?** (*dzoe duh daow, dzoe boo daow*; Can one walk there?)



To indicate whether something is likely to happen or unlikely to be attained, the pattern you use includes *potential complements*. You do this by putting the words **de** (*duh*) and **bù** (*boo*) between the verb and the complement to indicate whether a positive or negative potential is involved.

If you say “**Nǐ kànjàn,**” you mean “you see.” If instead you say “**Nǐ kàn de jiàn ma?**” you mean “Can you see?” And if you use the negative “**bù**” rather than the positive implication that goes with **de** to ask “**Nǐ kàn bú jiàn ma?**” you mean “You can’t see?” Finally, if you use both positive and negative potential forms in the same breath by asking “**Nǐ kàn de jiàn, kàn bú jiàn?**” you mean “Can you see (or not)?”

Here are some other examples of this pattern:

- ✓ **zuò wán** (*dzwaw wahn*; to finish [doing something])
- ✓ **zuò de wán** (*dzwaw duh wahn*; can finish)
- ✓ **zuò bù wán** (*dzwaw boo wahn*; can’t finish)
- ✓ **zuò de wán; zuò bù wán?** (*dzwaw duh wahn; dzwaw boo wahn*; can you finish it; can it be finished?)
- ✓ **xǐ gānjìng** (*she gahn jeeng*; to wash [and make clean])

- ✓ **xǐ de gānjìng** (*she duh gahn jeeng*; can be washed)
- ✓ **xǐ bù gānjìng** (*she boo gahn jeeng*; can't be washed)
- ✓ **xǐ de gānjìng; xǐ bù gānjìng?** (*she duh gahn jeeng; she boo gahn jeeng*; can you wash it; can it be washed?)

When you ask for directions, the following questions may come in handy:

- ✓ **Wǒmen zǒu de dào, zǒu bú dào?** (*waw mun dzoe duh daow, dzoe boo daow*; Can we walk [to get there]?)
- ✓ **Wǒmen lái de jí, lái bù jí?** (*waw mun lye duh jee, lye boo jee*; Will we make it on time?)

Discovering Ordinal Numbers

Ever tell someone to make a right at the second **jiāotōng dēng** (*jyaow toong dung*; traffic light) or that your house is the third one on the left?

You can't simply use the numeral plus a classifier in Chinese, such as when you say **sān ge** (*sahn guh*; three) of something. If you say **sān ge jiāotōng dēng** (*sahn guh jyaow toong dung*), the person hears “three traffic lights.” If you want to say “the third traffic light,” you have to add the word “**dì**” (*dee*) before the numeral to create **dì sān ge jiāotōng dēng**, which indicates the third traffic light.



If you use an ordinal number followed by a noun, you must always have a classifier between them. You can't combine **dì sān** (*dee sahn*; the third) with **qìchē** (*chee chuh*; car). You have to put the classifier “**ge**” in between the number and the noun to say **dì sān ge qìchē** (*dee sahn guh chee chuh*), meaning “the third car.”

Creating ordinal numbers (numbers that indicate the order of things) in Chinese is quite easy. Just put **dì** in front of the numeral:

- ✓ **dì yī** (*dee ee*; first)
- ✓ **dì èr** (*dee are*; second)
- ✓ **dì sān** (*dee sahn*; third)
- ✓ **dì sì** (*dee suh*; fourth)
- ✓ **dì wǔ** (*dee woo*; fifth)
- ✓ **dì liù** (*dee lyoe*; sixth)

- ✓ **dì qī** (*dee chee*; seventh)
- ✓ **dì bā** (*dee bah*; eighth)
- ✓ **dì jiǔ** (*dee jyoe*; ninth)
- ✓ **dì shí** (*dee shir*; tenth)

You may need to use these examples to give directions:

- ✓ **dì yī tiáo lù** (*dee ee tyaow loo*; the first street)
- ✓ **dì èr ge fángzi** (*dee are guh fahng dzuh*; the second house)
- ✓ **zuǒ biān dì bā ge fángzi** (*dzaww byan dee bah guh fahng dzuh*; the eighth house on the left)

Specifying Cardinal Points with Directional Coverbs

You can tell someone to go **yòu** (*yo*; right) or **zuǒ** (*dzaww*; left) until you're blue in the face, but sometimes the best way to give people directions is to point them the right way with the cardinal points: north, south, east, or west.

In Chinese, however, you say them in this order:

- ✓ **dōng** (*doong*; east)
- ✓ **nán** (*nahn*; south)
- ✓ **xī** (*she*; west)
- ✓ **běi** (*bay*; north)

To give more precise directions, you may have to use the following:

- ✓ **dōng běi** (*doong bay*; northeast)
- ✓ **xī běi** (*she bay*; northwest)
- ✓ **dōng nán** (*doong nahn*; southeast)
- ✓ **xī nán** (*she nahn*; southwest)



When it comes to indicating north, south, east, west, left, or right, you can use either **-biān** (*byan*) or **-miàn** (*myan*) as a word ending, but not **-tóu** (*to*), which you can use with other position words such as front, back, inside, and outside.



Giving directions often entails multiple instructions. You can't always say "make a right and you're there" or "go straight and you'll see it right in front of you." Sometimes you have to use a common Chinese pattern for giving multiple directions. That pattern is:

xīān + Verb #1, **zài** + Verb #2

This translates into "first you do X, and then you do Y." Here are some examples:

- ✓ **Xiān wàng dōng zǒu, zài wàng yòu zhuǎn.** (*shyan wahng doong dzoe, dzye wahng yo jwan*; First walk east, and then turn right.)
- ✓ **Xiān zhí zǒu, zài wàng xī zǒu.** (*shyan jir dzoe, dzye wahng she dzoe*; First go straight, and then turn west.)

Talkin' the Talk

George is walking around Shanghai looking for the Shanghai Museum. He begins to wonder if he's going in the right direction, so he decides to ask a stranger how to get there.

George: **Qǐng wèn, Shànghǎi bówùguǎn lí zhèr hěn yuǎn ma?**
Cheeng one, shahng hi baw woo gwahn lee jar hun ywan mah?

Excuse me, is the Shanghai Museum very far from here?

Stranger: **Bù yuǎn. Shànghǎi bówùguǎn jù zài rénmin dà dào.**
Boo ywan. Shahng hi baw woo gwahn jyo dzye run meen dah daow.

It's not far at all. The Shanghai Museum is on the Avenue of the People.

George: **Rénmín dà dào lí zhèr duōme yuǎn?**
Run meen dah daow lee jar dwaw muh ywan?
How far is the Avenue of the People from here?

Stranger: **Rénmín dà dào lí zhèr zhǐ yǒu yì lǐ lù zuǒyòu.**
Run meen dah daow lee jar jir yo ee lee loo dzwaw yo.
The Avenue of the People is only about 1 kilometer from here.

George: **Cóng zhèr zǒu de dào, zǒu bú dào?**
Tsoong jar dzoe duh daow, dzoe boo daow?
Can I walk there from here?

- Stranger: **Kěndìng zǒu de dào. Nǐ xiān wàng nán zǒu, zài dì èr tiáo lù wàng xī zhuǎn. Dì yī ge lóu jiù shì.**
Kun deeng dzoe duh daow. Nee shyan wahng nahn dzoe, dzye dee are tyaow loo wahng she jwan. Dee ee guh low jyoe shir.
 It's certainly walkable. Walk north first, and then turn west at the second street. It'll be the first building you see.
- George: **Fēicháng gǎnxiè nǐ.**
Fay chahng gahn shyeh nee.
 I'm extremely grateful (for your help).
- Stranger: **Méi shì.**
May shir.
 It's nothing.

Words to Know

xiān . . . zài . . .	shyan . . . dzye . . .	first . . . then . . .
fēicháng gǎnxiè	fay chahng gahn shyeh	many thanks
méi shì	may shir	it's nothing
kěndìng	kun deeng	definitely
zuǒyòu	dzwaw yo	approximately
bówùguǎn	baw woo gwahn	museum

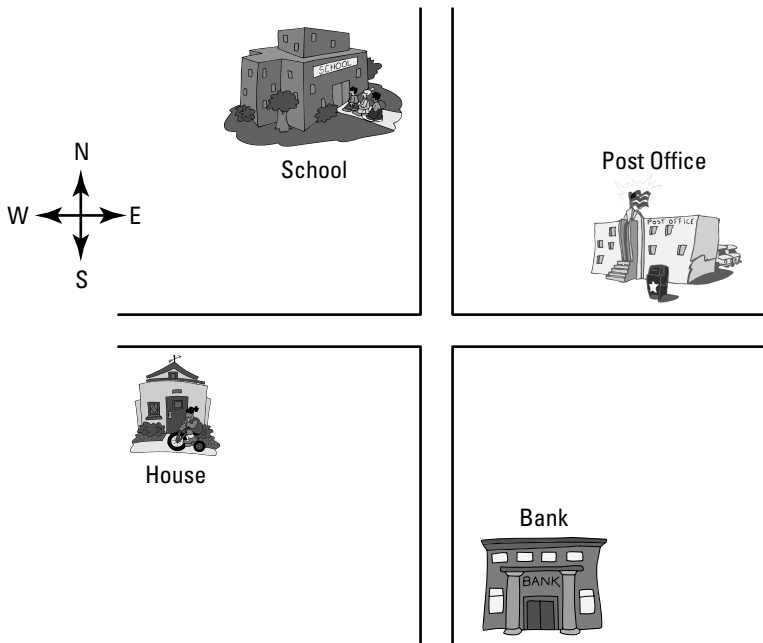


If you get lost in any city in mainland China, you can often get back on track by asking where “**Zhōngshān Lù**” (*joong shahn loo*) or “**Jiěfàng Lù**” (*jyeh fahng loo*) is. “**Zhōngshān**,” literally meaning the middle mountain, refers to the birthplace of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, founder of the modern Chinese Republic in 1911. “**Jiěfàng**,” on the other hand, means “liberation,” referring to the “liberation” of the mainland by the Communists in 1949. “**Lù**” just means “road.” Generally, these streets are located in the middle of town. They serve as the Chinese equivalent of “Main Street” in “Anytown, U.S.A.” Always a safe bet.



Fun & Games

According to the illustration below, say in Chinese which cardinal direction these buildings are located in. (See Appendix C for the answers.)



A. School: _____

B. Post Office: _____

C. Bank: _____

D. House: _____

Chapter 13

Staying at a Hotel

In This Chapter

- ▶ Booking your room reservation
- ▶ Checking in upon arrival
- ▶ Requesting hotel service
- ▶ Packing your bags and paying your bill

The right **lǚguǎn** (*lyew gwahn*; hotel) can make or break a vacation. Whether you stay in a capital city or a little backwater town with only one **lǚguǎn** to its name, you still need to know how to check in, check out, and ask for anything you need in between (including the check). This chapter runs you through the gamut of booking your hotel, checking in at the front desk, checking out at the designated time, and dealing with all sorts of issues that may come up in between.

First, however, I have an astounding fact for you: You have not one, not two, but as many as five ways to say the word “hotel” in Chinese:

- ✓ **lǚguǎn** (*lyew gwahn*; hotel)
- ✓ **fàndiàn** (*fahn dyan*; literally: a place for meals)
- ✓ **jǔdiàn** (*jyo dyan*; literally: a place for wine)
- ✓ **zhāodàisuǒ** (*jaow dye swaw*; literally: a place to receive people)
- ✓ **bīnuǎn** (*been gwahn*; literally: a place for guests)

Making a Room Reservation

Thinking of **yùdìng** (*yew deeng*; reserving) a hotel **fángjiān** (*fahng jyan*; room)? What kind do you want? A **dānrén fángjiān** (*dahn run fahng jyan*; single room) all for yourself? A **shuāngrén fángjiān** (*shwahng run fahng jyan*; double room) for you and your special someone? Or perhaps a penthouse **tàojiān** (*taow jyan*; suite) for a special occasion like your 50th wedding **zhōunián** (*joe nyan*; anniversary)?

Whatever the occasion and whatever kind of room you want, you need to know how to make a reservation. Just make sure you know your **yùsuàn** (*yew swan*; budget) in advance (and stick to it). You're sure to find a decent hotel no matter the price range if you spend some time checking out the competition. Oh, and when you do finally pick up your phone to reserve a room, make sure you have your **xìnyòng kǎ** (*sheen yoong kah*; credit card) in front of you (see Chapter 11 for more money talk).

Here are some questions you may want to ask over the phone as you begin the search for your **lìxiǎng** (*lee shyahng*; ideal) hotel:

- ✔ **Nimen hái yǒu fángjiān ma?** (*nee mun hi yo fahng jyan mah*; Do you have any rooms available?)
- ✔ **Nimen fángjiān de jiàgé shì duōshǎo?** (*nee mun fahng jyan duh jyah guh shir dwaw shaow*; How much are your rooms?)
- ✔ **Wǒ yào yíge fángjiān zhù liǎng ge wǎnshàng.** (*waw yaow ee guh fahng jyan joo lyahng guh wahn shahng*; I'd like a room for two nights.)
- ✔ **Nimen shōu bù shōu xìnyòng kǎ?** (*nee men show boo show sheen yoong kah*; Do you accept credit cards?)
- ✔ **Yǒu méiyǒu shāngwù zhōngxīn?** (*yo mayo shahng woo joong sheen*; Is there a business center?)
- ✔ **Nimen de fángjiān yǒu méiyǒu wǎngluò liánjié?** (*nee men duh fahng jyan yo mayo wahng lwaw lyan jyeh*; Do your rooms have Internet access?)

You have many kinds of rooms to choose from, depending on your budget and your unique needs:

- ✔ **yíge ānjìng de fángjiān** (*ee guh ahn jeeng duh fahng jyan*; a quiet room)
- ✔ **yíge guāngxìan hǎo de fángjiān** (*ee guh gwahng shyan how duh fahng jyan*; a bright room)
- ✔ **yíge cháo hǎi de fángjiān** (*ee guh chaow hi duh fahng jyan*; a room with an ocean view)
- ✔ **yíge cháo yuànzi de fángjiān** (*ee guh chaow ywan dzuh duh fahng jyan*; a room facing the courtyard)
- ✔ **yíge yǒu kōngtiáo de fángjiān** (*ee guh yo koong tyaow duh fahng jyan*; a room with air conditioning)
- ✔ **yíge dài yángtái de fángjiān** (*ee guh dye yahng tye duh fahng jyan*; a room with a balcony)
- ✔ **yíge bù xīyān de fángjiān** (*ee guh boo she yan duh fahng jyan*; a non-smoking room)
- ✔ **yíge fāngbiàn cánjí rén de fángjiān** (*ee guh fahng byan tsahn jee run duh fahng jyan*; a room equipped for handicapped people)

Talkin' the Talk



Elly calls a well-known hotel chain in Hong Kong to make a three-day reservation for his whole family. The hotel clerk quickly answers his call.

- Elly: **Qǐng wèn, nǐmen fángjiān de jiàgé shì duōshǎo?**
Cheeng one, nee men fahng jyan duh jyah guh shir dwaw shaow?
 May I ask, how much are your rooms?
- Hotel Clerk: **Wǒmen de fángjiān yì tiān wǎnshàng yì bǎi wǔ shí kuài měi yuán.**
Waw men duh fahng jyan ee tyan wahn shahng ee bye woo shir kwye may ywan.
 Our rooms are \$150 U.S. dollars a night.
- Elly: **Nà shì dānrén fángjiān hái shì shuāngrén fángjiān de jiàgé?**
Nah shir dahn run fahng jyan hi shir shwahng run fahng jyan duh jyah guh?
 Is that the price of a single room or a double?
- Hotel Clerk: **Dānrén fángjiān hé shuāngrén fángjiān de jiàgé dōu yíyàng.**
Dahn run fahng jyan huh shwahng run fahng jyan duh jyah guh doe ee yahng.
 The price of our single and double rooms is the same.
- Elly: **Hǎo jǐle. Wǒ yào liǎngge dānrén fángjiān yíge shuāngrén fángjiān.**
How jee luh. Waw yaow lyahng guh dahn run fahng jyan ee guh shwahng run fahng jyan.
 Great. I'd like two single rooms and one double.
- Hotel Clerk: **Méiyǒu wèntí. Nǐmen yào dāi jǐ ge wǎnshàng?**
Mayo one tee. Nee men yaow dye jee guh wahn shahng?
 No problem. How many nights will you be staying?
- Elly: **Yí gòng sān ge wǎnshàng.**
Ee goong sahn guh wahn shahng.
 Altogether three nights.
- Hotel Clerk: **Hǎo. Nà yí gòng jiǔ bǎi kuài.**
How. Nah ee goong jyo bye kwye.
 Very well. That will be \$900 altogether.

Words to Know

dānrén fángjiān	dahn run fahng jyan	single room
shuāngrén fángjiān	shwahng run fahng jyan	double room
tàojiān	taow jyan	suite
yígòng	ee goong	altogether
yíyàng	ee yahng	the same
jiàgé	jyah guh	price
hé	huh	and
dōu	doe	both; all
dōu yíyàng	doe ee yahng	they're both the same
dāi	dye	to stay

The coverb **hé** (*huh*; and), along with the noun that always follows it, precedes the main verb or adjective of a sentence. Some synonyms of **hé** are **gēn** (*gun*), **yǔ** (*yew*), and **tóng** (*toong*), although **tóng** translates more closely as “with.”



Hotel or apartment?

China's booming economy has become a magnet for foreign businesses, and scores of foreign business people have begun taking up residence there. Because living in mainland China can be quite expensive and nice apartments that don't come with long waiting lists are hard to come by, many foreigners opt to stay in a permanent hotel room or a serviced apartment

connected to a foreign-run hotel. A friend of mine in Shanghai rents out his nice-sized apartment for \$2,000 U.S. dollars a month, comparable to the rent of major U.S. cities like New York or Chicago. And you can expect the hotels to run \$150 per night, just like in metropolitan U.S. cities.

Checking In Before You Hit the Pool

Aaahhh, **Yàzhōu** (*yah joe*; Asia)! Its allure often begins as soon as you pull up to the front entrance and walk through the hotel door. You may even find yourself mysteriously lingering a bit in the **dàtíng** (*dah teeng*; lobby), visually casing the joint long enough to take in all sorts of amenities. The luxuries at your disposal may include the following:

- ✔ **yóuyǒngchí** (*yo yoong chir*; swimming pool)
- ✔ **diànshì** (*dyan shir*; television)
- ✔ **gānxǐ fúwù** (*gahn she foo woo*; dry cleaning service)
- ✔ **huíyā ànmōchí** (*hway yah ahn maw chir*; jacuzzi)
- ✔ **tīyùguǎn** (*tee yew gwahn*; gym)
- ✔ **shāngwù zhōngxīn** (*shahng woo joong sheen*; business center)
- ✔ **lǚguǎn fàndiàn** (*lyew gwahn fahn dyan*; hotel restaurant)

Before you can take advantage of these conveniences, however, you have to officially **bànlǐ rùzhù shǒuxù** (*bahn lee roo joo show shyew*; check in). You don't want to be caught red handed running in the **tīyùguǎn** or relaxing in the **huíyā ànmōchí** unless you're a bona fide guest, right? (Don't answer that.)

When you walk up to the **fàndiàn qiántái** (*fahn dyan chyan tye*; reception desk), you'll invariably find yourself needing to say one of the following sentences:

- ✔ **Wǒ yǐjīng yùdìng le fángjiān.** (*waw ee jeeng yew deeng luh fahng jyan*; I already made a reservation.)
- ✔ **Wǒ méiyǒu yùdìng fángjiān.** (*waw mayo yew deeng fahng jyan*; I don't have a reservation.)
- ✔ **Nǐmen hái yǒu fángjiān ma?** (*nee men hi yo fahng jyan mah*; Do you have any rooms available?)

If you're in luck, the hotel will have at least one **kōng** (*koong*; empty, vacant) **fángjiān** (*fahng jyan*; room). If the hotel has no available space, you'll hear "**Duìbùqǐ, wǒmen kèmǎn le.**" (*dway boo chee, waw men kuh mahn luh*; Sorry, there are no vacancies/we're full.)

The **qiántái fúwùyuán** (*chyan tye foo woo ywan*; front desk clerk) will ask you to **tián** (*tyan*; fill out) a couple of **biāo** (*byaow*; forms) to book your room, so have a **gāngbǐ** (*gahng bee*; pen) and some form of **zhèngjiàn** (*juhng jyan*; ID) ready — especially your **hùzhào** (*hoo jaow*; passport). Voilà! You're officially a hotel **kèrén** (*kuh run*; guest).

After you successfully manage to check in, a **xíngliyuán** (*sheeng lee ywan*; porter/bell boy) immediately appears to help take your **xíngli** (*sheeng lee*; luggage) to your **fángjiān**. After he lets you in, he'll give you the **yàoshi** (*yaow shir*; key) if you didn't get it from the **qiántái fúwùyuán** downstairs.

Now you can finally **xiūxi** (*shyo she*; take a rest) and maybe even fall asleep. Before you do, however, you may want to put in for a wake-up call. All you have to say is

Qǐng nǐ jiào wǒ qǐchuáng. (*cheeng nee jyaow waw chee chwahng*; literally: Please call me to get out of bed.)

Talkin' the Talk



Beverly arrives in Taiwan and wants to check into a hotel in downtown Taipei, but the clerk informs her that the hotel has no vacancy.

Beverly: **Nǐ hǎo. Qǐng wèn, nǐmen hái yǒu fángjiān ma?**
Nee how. Cheeng one, nee men hi yo fahng jyan mah?
Hello. May I ask, do you have any rooms available?

Clerk: **Duìbùqǐ, wǒmen jīntiān kèmǎn le. Méiyǒu kōng fángjiān le.**
Dway boo chee, waw men jin tyan kuh mahn luh. Mayo koong fahng jyan luh.
I'm sorry, but we're full today. There aren't any vacant rooms.

Beverly: **Zāogāo! Nǐ néng bù néng tuījiàn biéde lǚguǎn?**
Dzaow gaow! Nee nung boo nung tway jyan byeh duh lyew gwahn?
Rats! Could you perhaps recommend another hotel then?

Clerk: **Kéyǐ. Gébì de lǚguǎn yǒu kōng fángjiān. Nǐ zuì hǎo zǒu guò qù shì shì kàn.**
Kuh yee. Guh bee duh lyew gwahn yo koong fahng jyan. Nee dzway how dzoe gwaw chyew shir shir kahn.
Yes. The hotel next door has vacancies. You may as well walk over there and have a look.

Beverly: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you.

Words to Know

duìbùqǐ	dway boo chee	I'm sorry
zāogāo	dzaow gaow	rats!/what a shame
tuījiàn	tway jyan	recommend
biéde	byeh duh	other
lǚguǎn	lyew gwahn	hotel
gébì	guh bee	next door

Taking Advantage of Hotel Service

Uh oh . . . you're finally ensconced in your big, beautiful hotel room when you discover that the **mén suǒ bú shàng** (*mun swaw boo shahng*; door doesn't lock) and the **kōngtiáo huài le** (*koong tyaw hwey luh*; air conditioning doesn't work). To make matters worse, your **chuānghu dǎ bù kāi** (*chwahng hoo dah boo kye*; window won't open). Heat wave! It may be hard to believe, but in addition to all that, your **mǎtǒng dǔzhùle** (*mah toong doo joo luh*; toilet is clogged). Time to call the nearest **kèfáng fúwùyuán** (*kuh fahng foo woo ywan*; hotel housekeeper) and yell for help.

You may want the **kèfáng fúwùyuán** to **sòng** (*soong*; send) the following items right over:

- ✔ **chuīfēngjī** (*chway fung jee*; hair dryer)
- ✔ **máotǎn** (*maow tahn*; blanket)
- ✔ **zhěntóu** (*jun toe*; pillow)
- ✔ **máojīn** (*maow jeen*; towel)
- ✔ **wèishēngzhǐ** (*way shung jir*; toilet paper)

Call quick if the following pieces of equipment are **huàile** (*hwey luh*; broken) and need immediate fixing:

- ✔ **nuǎnqì** (*nwan chee*; heater)
- ✔ **kōngtiáo** (*koong tyaw*; air conditioner)

- ✓ **mǎtǒng** (*mah toong*; toilet)
- ✓ **kāiguān** (*kya gwahn*; light switch)
- ✓ **chāzuò** (*chah dzaw*; electric outlet)
- ✓ **yáokòng qì** (*yaow koong chee*; remote control)

Maybe you just need someone to **dāsǎo fángjiān** (*dah saow fahng jyan*; clean the room). Oh well. Even the best hotels need some tweaking every now and then.

You interact with many different employees on any given hotel stay:

- ✓ **fúwùtái jīnglǐ** (*foo woo tye jeeng lee*; concierge)
- ✓ **zōngjīnglǐ** (*dzoong jeeng lee*; general manager)
- ✓ **zhùlǐ jīnglǐ** (*joo lee jeeng lee*; assistant manager)
- ✓ **fúwùyuán língbān** (*foo woo ywan leeng bahn*; bell captain)
- ✓ **fúwùyuán** (*foo woo ywan*; attendant)

Hey! I almost forgot one of the best kinds of service you can take advantage of on occasion . . . room service! Before you decide to order room service for food, however, just remember that it's often **guì liǎng bèi** (*gway lyahng bay*; twice as expensive) as dining in the **lǔguǎn fàndiàn** (*lyew gwahn fahn dyan*; hotel restaurant), because the service is more **fāngbiàn** (*fahng byan*; convenient).



To make a comparison by saying that something is a number of times more expensive than something else, you first use the word **guì** (*gway*; expensive), followed by the number of times you think it's more expensive and the word **bèi** (*bay*; roughly translated as "times"). You can compare the relative cost of two products or services by using the word **bǐ** (*bee*; compared to) in the following pattern:

X **bǐ** Y **guì** # **bèi**

Here are some examples:

- ✓ **Zuò chūzūchē bǐ zuò gōnggòng qìchē guì wǔ bèi.** (*zwaw choo dzoo chuh bee dzwaw goong goong chee chuh gway woo bay*; Taking a cab is five times more expensive than taking the bus.)
- ✓ **Zhèitiáo qúnzi bǐ nèige guì shí bèi.** (*jay tyaow chwun dzuh bee nay guh gway shir bay*; This skirt is 10 times more expensive than that one.)



Every hotel room in China has a large flask of boiling water that you can use to make tea or for drinking water. Never drink directly from the tap. You can brush your teeth with tap water, because you just spit it out. Local Chinese don't dare drink the tap water either, so you're in good company.

Talkin' the Talk

David enters his hotel room after he checks in, only to discover the bathroom faucet is broken. He calls for housekeeping and a few minutes later hears a knock on his door.

Housekeeper: **Kèfáng fúwùyuán!**
Kuh fahng foo woo ywan!
Housekeeping!

David: **Qǐng jìn!**
Cheeng jin!
Come on in!

Housekeeper: **Yǒu shénme wèntí?**
Yo shumuh one tee?
What seems to be the trouble?

David: **Zhèige shuǐlóngtóu huàile. Yě méiyǒu rèshuǐ.**
Jay guh shway loong toe hwye luh. Yeah mayo ruh shway.
This faucet is broken. There's also no hot water.

Housekeeper: **Hěn duìbùqǐ. Mǎshàng sòng shuǐnuǎngōng guòlái kànkàn.**
Hun dway boo chee. Mah shahng soong shway nwan goong gwaw lye kahn kahn.
I'm so sorry. We'll send a plumber right away to have a look.

David: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
Thank you.

As the housekeeper starts to leave, David suddenly remembers some other things that the housekeeper may be able to take care of as long as she's there.

David: **Xiǎojiě, nǐmen yǒu méiyǒu xǐyī fúwù?**
Shyaow jyeh, nee men yo mayo she ee foo woo?
Miss, do you have any laundry service?

Housekeeper: **Yǒu.**
Yo.
Yes we do.

- David: **Hǎo jīle. Jīntiān kěyǐ bǎ zhè xiē yīfú xǐ hǎo ma?**
How jee luh. Jin tyan kuh yee bah jay shyeh ee foo she how mah?
 Great. Can I have these clothes cleaned today?
- Housekeeper: **Kěyǐ.**
Kuh yee.
 Yes.
- David: **Yóuqíshì zhèige wūdiǎn. Néng bùnéng qùdiào?**
Yo chee shir jay guh woo dyan. Nung boo nung chyew dyaow?
 Especially this stain. Can it be removed?
- Housekeeper: **Méiyǒu wèntí.**
Mayo one tee.
 No problem.
- David: **Hǎo. Xièxiè.**
How. Shyeh shyeh.
 Great. Thanks.

Words to Know

qǐng jìn	cheeng jin	come in, please
xǐ	she	to wash
yóuqíshì	yo chee shir	especially
wūdiǎn	woo dyan	stain
qùdiào	chyew dyaow	erase; remove
méiyǒu wèntí	mayo one tee	no problem
xǐyī fúwù	she ee foo woo	laundry service
mǎshàng	mah shahng	immediately
shuǐnuǎngōng	shway nwan goong	plumber



As you can see in the previous Talkin' the Talk section, the coverb **bǎ** often appears right after the subject of the sentence, separating it from the direct object, which is always something concrete rather than an abstract idea. It separates the indirect and direct objects.

Instead of having the following sentence pattern:

Subject + Verb + Complement (+ Indirect Object) + Object

You have:

Subject + **bǎ** + Object + Verb + Complement (+ Indirect Object)

Here are some examples:

- ✓ **Wǒ bǎ shū jiè gěi nǐ.** (*waw bah shoo jyeh gay nee*; I'll loan you the book.)
- ✓ **Qǐng nǐ bǎ běnzi ná gěi lǎoshī.** (*cheeng nee bah bun dzuh nah gay laow shir*; Please give the notebook to the teacher.)

Checking Out Before Heading Out

That oh-so-depressing time has come again. Time to say **zàijiàn** (*dzye jyan*; goodbye). Time to **téngchū** (*tuhng choo*; vacate) your hotel **fángjiān** (*fahng jyan*; room) and **tuīfáng** (*tway fahng*; check out).

You may need to say some of the following as you begin the end of your stay:

- ✓ **Wǒ yào fù zhàng.** (*waw yaow foo jahng*; I'd like to pay the bill.)
- ✓ **Nǐmen jiēshòu shénme xìnyòng kǎ?** (*nee men jyeh show shummu sheen yoong kah*; Which credit cards do you accept?)
- ✓ **Zhè búshì wǒde zhāngdàn.** (*jay boo shir waw duh jahng dahn*; This isn't my bill.)
- ✓ **Wǒ bù yīnggāi fù zhè xiàng.** (*waw boo eeng gye foo jay shyahng*; I shouldn't be charged for this.)
- ✓ **Jiézhang yǐhòu wǒ néng bùnéng bǎ bāoguǒ liú zài qiántái?** (*jyeh jahng ee ho waw nung boo nung bah baow gwaw lyo dzye chyan tye*; After checking out, may I leave my bags at the front desk?)
- ✓ **Yǒu méiyǒu qù fēijīchǎng de bānchē?** (*yo mayo chyew fay jee chahng duh ban chuh*; Is there a shuttle to the airport?)

Talkin' the Talk

Sandy is ready to check out after his three-day stay at a five-star hotel in Shanghai. He approaches the reception clerk to check out.

Sandy: **Nǐ hǎo. Wǒ jīntiān yào tuìfáng, suǒyǐ yào fù zhàng.**
Nee how. Waw jin tyan yaow tway fahng, swaw yee yaow foo jahng.
 Hello. I'd like to check out today, so I'd like to pay the bill.

Clerk: **Qǐng wèn, nín de fángjiān hàomǎ shì duōshǎo?**
Cheeng one, neen duh fahng jyan how mah shir dwaw shaow?
 May I ask, what's your room number?

Sandy: **Wǔlíngliù hào fángjiān.**
Woo leeng lyo how fahng jyan.
 Room # 506.

Clerk: **Hǎo. Zhè shì nín de zhàngdān. Yígòng yiqiān wǔbǎi kuài.**
How. Jay shir neen duh jahng dahn. Ee goong ee chyan woo bye kwye.
 Okay. This is your bill. It's altogether \$1,500.

Sandy pays the bill with his credit card.

Sandy: **Zhè shì wǒmen fángjiān de yàoshi.**
Jay shir waw mun fahng jyan duh yaow shir.
 This is my room key.

Clerk: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
 Thank you.

Sandy: **Jiézhàng yǐhòu wǒ néng bùnéng bǎ bāoguǒ liú zài qiántái?**
Jyeh jahng ee ho waw nung boo nung bah baow gwaw lyo dzye chyan tye?
 After checking out, may I leave my bags at the front desk?

Clerk: **Kěyǐ. Méiyǒu wèntí.**
Kuh yee. Mayo one tee.
 Yes. No problem.

Words to Know

<i>tuìfáng</i>	<i>tway fahng</i>	<i>check out</i>
<i>zhàngdān</i>	<i>jahng dahn</i>	<i>bill</i>
<i>jié zhàng</i>	<i>jyeh jahng</i>	<i>figure out the bill</i>
<i>fángjià</i>	<i>fahng jya</i>	<i>room charge</i>
<i>suǒyǐ</i>	<i>swaw yee</i>	<i>so; therefore</i>
<i>yàoshi</i>	<i>yaow shir</i>	<i>key</i>



Fun & Games

Fill in the blanks, using the following words: **tuifáng**, **zhàngdān**, **fángjiān**, **kèmnǎn**, **qǐchuáng**. See the answer key in Appendix C.

1. **Nǐmen de _____ yǒu méiyǒu wǎngluò liánjié?**

Do your rooms have Internet access?

2. **Duìbùqǐ, wǒmen _____ le.**

I'm sorry, we have no vacancies.

3. **Qǐng nǐ jiào wǒ _____.**

Please give me a wake up call.

4. **Zhè búshì wǒde _____.**

This isn't my bill.

5. **Wǒ jīntiān yào _____.**

I'd like to check out today.

Chapter 14

Transportation

In This Chapter

- ▶ Traveling by plane
 - ▶ Surviving customs
 - ▶ Getting around town
-

Traveling halfway around the world to **Zhōngguó** (*joong gwaw*; China) can be a long haul. Knowing the magic traveling words and phrases in Chinese can make your journey as efficient and **shūfu** (*shoo foo*; comfortable) as possible. This chapter helps you make your way around the **fēijīchǎng** (*fay jee chahng*; airport) and the **fēijī** (*fay jee*; airplane), survive the **hǎiguān** (*hi gwahn*; customs) experience, and board different types of **jiāotōng** (*jyaow toong*; transportation) after you reach your destination.

Flying Around the Airport

Consider yourself a veteran traveler just because you've been all through **Ōuzhōu** (*oh joe*; Europe) and the Americas? Well, my friend, you're in for a rude awakening. When it comes to finding your way around China, English, or any other Western language, does you little good. You spend a lot of unproductive time trying to interpret the signs to get some sense of which line to stand in and where to go next at the airport. You need to at least know the **Pīnyīn** (*pin yin*; literally: spelled the way it sounds) romanization system, if not Chinese characters themselves. If you don't, you'll be up a creek without a paddle. You may end up following the guy next to you, even if it takes you to the bathroom rather than baggage claims. (See Chapter 1 for more about the pīnyīn system of spelling Chinese words.)

Good move to get a head start by reading *Chinese For Dummies* in advance of your trip. You can bone up on some essential words and phrases before the whole airport experience makes you want to get right back on the next plane bound for home.

Making it past the check-in counter

Ready to **bànlǐ dēngjī shǒuxù** (*bahn lee duhng jee show shyew*; check in)? After lugging your bags up to this point, you finally get to **tuōyùn** (*twaw yewn*; check) your **xíngli** (*sheeng lee*; luggage). You receive a **dēngjīpái** (*duhng jee pye*; boarding pass) at the check-in counter, at which point you're ready to make your way to the appropriate **chūkǒu** (*choo ko*; gate), taking only your **shǒutí xíngli** (*show tee sheeng lee*; carry-on luggage).

All sorts of questions may be running through your mind about now. Here are some basic phrases that may come in handy during check in:

- ✔ **Wǒ xiǎng yào kào guòdào de wèizi.** (*waw shyahng yaow cow gwaw daow duh way dzuh*; I'd like an aisle seat.)
- ✔ **Wǒ xiǎng yào kào chuāng de wèizi.** (*waw shyahng yaow cow chwahng duh way dzuh*; I'd like a window seat.)
- ✔ **Wǒ xiǎng tuōyùn xíngli.** (*waw shyahng twaw yewn sheeng lee*; I'd like to check my luggage.)
- ✔ **Fēijī jǐ diǎn qǐfēi?** (*fay jee jee dyan chee fay*; What time does it depart?)
- ✔ **Wǒde hángbān hàomǎ shì duōshǎo?** (*waw duh hahng bahn how mah shir dwaw shaow*; What's my flight number?)
- ✔ **Zài jǐ hào mén hòujǐ?** (*dzye jee how mun ho jee*; Which gate do we leave from?)

After you check in, you may encounter all sorts of unpleasant surprises. Perhaps the plane can't **zhèngdiǎn qǐfēi** (*juhng dyan chee fay*; depart on time) after all and the airline must **tuīchí** (*tway chir*; postpone) your departure or **qǔxiāo** (*chyew shyaw*; cancel) it altogether. Maybe the **tiānqì** (*tyan chee*; weather) is causing the problems. Better that than a **kǒngbù fènzǐ** (*koong boo fun dzuh*; terrorist) scare in this day and age, right?

Talkin' the Talk



Gordon is checking in at the airport in New York for a business trip to Beijing. He shows his ticket and passport to the **zhíyuán** (*jir ywan*; agent) and checks his luggage.

Zhíyuán: **Nín hǎo. Qǐng chūshì nín de jīpiào.**
Neen how. Cheeng choo shir neen duh jee pyaow.
 Hello. Your ticket, please.

Gordon: **Jiù zài zhèr.**
Jyo dzye jar.
 Here it is.

Zhíyuán: **Nín shì bú shì qù Běijīng? Néng kànkàn nín de hùzhào ma?**
Neen shir boo shir chyew bay jeeng? Nuhng kahn kahn neen duh hoo jaow mah?
 Are you going to Beijing? May I see your passport?

Gordon: **Kěyǐ.**
Kuh yee.
 Here you are.

Zhíyuán: **Yǒu jǐ jiàn xíngli?**
Yo jee jyan sheeng lee?
 How many suitcases do you have?

Gordon: **Wǒ yǒu sān ge xiāngzi.**
Waw yo sahn guh shyahng dzuh.
 I have three suitcases.

Zhíyuán: **Yǒu méiyǒu shǒutí xíngli?**
Yo mayo show tee sheeng lee?
 Do you have any carry-on luggage?

Gordon: **Wǒ zhǐ yǒu yí ge gōngwénbāo.**
Waw jir yo ee guh goong one baow.
 I have only one briefcase.

Zhíyuán: **Hǎo. Nín yào kào guòdào de wèizi háishi yào kào chuāng de wèizi?**
How. Neen yow cow gwaw daow duh way dzuh hi shir yaow cow chwahng duh way dzuh?
 Alright. Would you like an aisle or a window seat?

Gordon: **Wǒ xiǎng yào kào guòdào de wèizi.**
Waw shyahng yaow cow gwaw daow duh way dzuh.
 I'd like an aisle seat.

Zhíyuán: **Hǎo. Zhèi shì nín de dēngjīpái. Qù Běijīng de 108 cì bānjī, 19 pái, B zuò.**
How. Jay shir neen duh duhng jee pye. Chyew bay jeeng duh ee bye leeng bah tsuh bahn jee, shir jyo pye, B dzwaw.
 Fine. Here's your boarding pass. Flight #108 to Beijing, Row 19, Seat B.

Gordon: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
 Thanks.

Zhíyuán: **Zhè shì nín de xíngli língqǔdān. Dào le Běijīng yǐhòu kěyǐ língqǔ nín de xíngli.**
Jay shir neen duh sheeng lee leeng chyew dahn. Dow luh bay jeeng ee ho kuh yee leeng chyew neen duh sheeng lee.
 Here are your luggage claim tags. After you arrive in Beijing, you can claim your luggage.

Gordon: **Xièxiè.**
Shyeh shyeh.
 Thanks.

Zhíyuán: **Zhù nín yí lù píng ān.**
Joo neen ee loo peeng ahn.
 Have a nice trip.

Words to Know

guónèi	gwaw nay	domestic
guójì	gwaw jee	international
piào	pyaow	ticket
hùzhào	hoo jaow	passport
qiānzhèng	chyan juhng	visa
dàodá	dow dah	arrivals
qǐfēi	chee fay	departures
mén or chūkǒu	mun or choo ko	gate
shǒutí xíngli	show tee sheeng lee	carry-on luggage
gōngwénbāo	goong one baow	briefcase
lǐngqǔdān	leeng chyew dahn	luggage claim tag
fàngjìn zuòwèi dǐxià	fahng jeen dzwaw way dee shyah	fit under the seat
tóudǐng shàngfāng de xínglicāng	toe deeng shahng fahng duh sheeng lee tsahng	overhead compartment
yí lù píng ān	ee loo peeng ahn	have a good trip

Boarding your flight

Okay! You're all set to board the plane. Are you lucky enough to sit in the **tóuděngcāng** (*toe duhng tsahng*; first class) section, or do you have to sit in **jīngjìcāng** (*jeeng jee tsahng*; economy class) the whole time? Either way, international flights no longer have a **chōuyān qū** (*cho yan chyew*; smoking area), so if you indulge in that sort of thing, you'll have to white-knuckle it for the next 10 hours or so.

In the meantime, here are some people you see get on the plane before you (at least I hope you do):

- ✔ **jiàshīyuán** (*jyah shih ywan*; pilot)
- ✔ **jīzǔ** (*jee dzoo*; crew)
- ✔ **chéngwùyuan** (*chung woo ywan*; flight attendants)

And if you're like me, you get worried about some things as the plane begins to taxi down the runway:

- ✔ **qǐfēi** (*chee fay*; take off)
- ✔ **qīliú** (*chee lyo*; turbulence)
- ✔ **zhuólù** (*jaw loo*; landing)

Aaah! I get nervous just thinking about them. It's okay, though. The **chéngwùyuan** are on to people like you and me. That's why they make sure to tell you before takeoff where the **jiùshēngyī** (*jyo shung ee*; life vests) and **jīnjí chūkǒu** (*jin jee choo ko*; emergency exits) are located. You may also hear them bark out the following instructions, if you haven't already managed to tune everything out:

- ✔ **Jījīn nǐde ānquándài.** (*jee jin nee duh ahn chwan dye*; Fasten your seat belt.)
- ✔ **Bù zhǔn chōuyān.** (*boo jwun cho yan*; No smoking permitted.)
- ✔ **Bǎ zuòyǐ kàobèi fàngzhí.** (*bah dzwaw ee cow bay fahng jir*; Put your seat back to the upright position.)
- ✔ **Bǎ tuōpán cānzhuō shōu qǐlái.** (*bah twaw pahn tsahn jaw show chee lye*; Put your tray table back.)
- ✔ **Rúguǒ kōngqì yǎli yǒu biànhuà, yǎngqìzhào huì zìdòng luòxià.** (*roo gwaw koong chee yah lee yo byan hwah, yahng chee jaow hway dzuh doong lwaw shyah*; If there's any change in air pressure, the oxygen mask will automatically drop down.)

If you're not a nervous flyer, you'll probably spend all your time listening to **yīnyuè** (*een yweh*; music) through the **ěrjī** (*are jee*; headset), flipping **píndào** (*peen daow*; dials) on the radio or **diànshì tái** (*dyan shir tye*; channels) on the television, or trying to **shuǐjiào** (*shway jyaow*; sleep). Hopefully the flight is showing a good **diànyǐng** (*dyan yeeng*; movie) on such a long trip. But if the show is boring, at least it may help you **shuǐjiào**.



You use the coverb **bǎ** (*bah*) when you want to put the object right up front before you state the verb that tells what you did or will do with the object. (See Chapter 13 for more on this unique coverb.)

Talkin' the Talk

Carl asks an agent in the boarding area if his flight will be on time.

Carl: **Qǐng wèn, wǒmen de fēijī huì búhuì zhèngdiǎn qǐfēi?**
Cheeng one, waw mun duh fay jee hway boo hway juhng dyan chee fay?
 Excuse me, but will our plane be departing on time?

Agent: **Hěn duìbùqǐ. Fēijī yào tuīchí chàbùduō bànge xiǎoshí.**
Hun dway boo chee. Fay jee yaow tway chir chah boo dwaw bahn guh shyaw shir.
 I'm very sorry. Takeoff has been postponed for about a half an hour.

Carl: **Zāogāo!**
Dzaw gaow!
 That's awful!

Words to Know

zhèngdiǎn	juhng dyan	on time
chàbùduō	chah boo dwaw	about; almost (approximately)
zuǒyòu	dzaw yo	approximately
zāogāo	dzow gow	that's awful!

Going through customs

If you survive all the **tuānliú** (*twan lyo*; turbulence) and the boring **diànyǐng** (*dyan yeeng*; movie) on your long flight without having a breakdown, good for you! The next test you have to survive is the **hǎiguān** (*hi gwahn*; customs) experience. After you get to customs, you see many **hǎiguān guānyuán** (*hi gwahn gwahn ywan*; customs officers), none of whom may **dōng Yīngyǔ** (*doong eeng yew*; understand English). Table 14-1 lists the items you need to have ready at customs. The following phrases should come in handy, too:

- ✔ **Nǐ dōng Yīngyǔ ma?** (*nee doong eeng yew mah*; Do you understand English?)
- ✔ **Wǒ shì Měiguó rén.** (*waw shir may gwaw run*; I'm American.)
- ✔ **Wǒ shì Yīngguó rén.** (*waw shir eeng gwaw run*; I'm British.)
- ✔ **Wǒ shì Jiānádà rén.** (*waw shir jyah nah dah run*; I'm Canadian.)
- ✔ **Xīshǒujiān zài nǎr?** (*she show jyan dzye nar*; Where are the restrooms?)

Table 14-1 Items to Have Ready at Customs

<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
rùjìng dēngjì kǎ	roo jeeng duhng jee kah	arrival card
chūjìng dēngjì kǎ	choo jeeng duhng jee kah	departure card
jiànkāng zhèng	jyan kahng jung	health certificate
shēnbào de wùpǐn	shun baow duh woo peen	articles to declare
xiāngyān	shyahng yan	cigarettes
jiǔ	jyo	alcohol
bāo	baow	bag
xiāngzi	shyahng dzuh	suitcase
xíngli	sheeng lee	luggage

The **hǎiguān guānyuán** may ask you a couple of these important questions:

- ✔ **Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu yào shēnbào de wùpǐn?** (*nee yo mayo yaow shun baow duh woo peen*; Do you have anything you want to declare?)
- ✔ **Qǐng gēi wǒ kànkàn nǐde hùzhào.** (*cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hoo jaow*; Please show me your passport.)

- ✔ **Qǐng gěi wǒ kànkàn nǐde hǎiguān shēnbàodān.** (*cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hi gwan shun baow dahn*; Please show me your customs declaration form.)
- ✔ **Nǐ dǎsuàn zài zhèr dāi duōjiǔ?** (*nee dah swan dzye jar dye dwaw jyó*; How long do you plan on staying?)
- ✔ **Nǐ lái zhèr shì bàn gōngwù háishì lǚyóu?** (*nee lye jar shir bahn goong woo hi shir lyew yo*; Are you here on business or as a tourist?)

Customs agents aren't the only people with questions to ask. You may have some questions you want to try out yourself:

- ✔ **Xíngli yào dǎkāi ma?** (*sheeng lee yaow dah kye mah*; Should I open my luggage?)
- ✔ **Xíngli keyǐ shōu qílái ma?** (*sheeng lee kuh yee show chee lye mah*; May I close my suitcases now?)
- ✔ **X guāng huì sǔnhuài wǒde jiāojiǎn ma?** (*X gwahng hway swuhn hwey waw duh jyaow wan mah*; Will the X-ray damage my film?)
- ✔ **Wǒ yào fù shuì ma?** (*waw yaow foo shway mah*; Must I pay duty?)

Talkin' the Talk



Cynthia gets off her plane in Shanghai and begins the customs process by approaching an agent.

Agent: **Qǐng gěi wǒ kànkàn nǐde hùzhào.**
Cheeng gay waw kahn kahn nee duh hoo jaow.
Please show me your passport.

Cynthia shows him her passport, and the agent asks her some important questions.

Agent: **Měiguórén. Nǐ yǒu méiyǒu yào shēnbào de wùpǐn?**
May gwaw run. Nee yo mayo yaow shun baow duh woo peen?
American. Do you have anything you'd like to declare?

Cynthia: **Méiyǒu. Wǒ zhǐ yǒu yìtiáo xiāngyān.**
Mayo. Waw jir yo ee tyaow shyahng yan.
No. I have only a carton of cigarettes.

Agent: **Nǐ lái zhèr shì bàn gōngwù háishì lǚyóu?**
Nee lye jar shirbahn goong woo hi shir lyew yo?
Are you here on business or as a tourist?

Cynthia:	Wǒ lái zuò shēngyì. <i>Waw lye dzwaw shung ee.</i> I've come on business.
Agent:	Nǐ kěyǐ zǒu le. <i>Nee kuh yee dzoe luh.</i> You may go.

Words to Know

qǔ xínglǐ chù	chyew sheeng lee choo	baggage-claim area
gōngwù	goong woo	to be on business
lǚyóu	lyew yo	tour
lùguò	loo gwaw	passing through
jiāo shuì	jyaow shway	pay duty
yìtiáo xiāngyān	ee tyaw shyahng yan	a carton of cigarettes

Navigating Around Town



It's virtually impossible to rent a car in China. Cars just aren't available. And even if you can find a rental, you may not want to, given the bureaucracy and driving conditions. Signs aren't printed in English, which is probably the main reason you shouldn't even attempt it. Just think of the upside. You don't have to suddenly learn how to use a **shǒupáidǎng** (*show pye dahng*; stick shift) or purchase any extra car **bǎoxiǎn** (*baow shyan*; insurance). Take a taxi and relax. Let the driver worry about how to get you from point A to point B.

No matter what form of transportation you end up taking from the airport, and later on around town, here are a few crucial words and phrases to know:

- ✓ **fāngxiàng** (*fahng shyahng*; directions)
- ✓ **dìtú** (*dee too*; map)
- ✓ **Wǒ mīlù le.** (*waw mee loo luh*; I'm lost.)

Hailing a cab

It's Friday night, and you just had a pretty successful day doing business with your Chinese counterparts. You've finally mustered the courage to venture out of your hotel room for a night on the town. You decide to check out a popular **wǔtǐng** (*woo teeng*; dance hall), and you begin to determine what mode of transport can best get you there.

Although **zìxíngchē** (*dzuh sheeng chuh*; bicycles), **mótuōchē** (*maw twaw chuh*; motorcycles), **mǎchē** (*mah chuh*; horse-drawn carts), and even **niú** (*nyo*; cows) are still the main forms of transportation for the average individual in some parts of mainland China, most foreigners take taxis wherever they go. You can easily find taxis around hotels, and cabs are certainly more **shūfu** (*shoo foo*; comfortable) and **fāngbiàn** (*fahng byan*; convenient) than having to deal with nonexistent rules of the road, breathing in **kōngqì wūrǎn** (*koong chee woo rahn*; air pollution) while bicycling, finding your way through a maze of old alleyways, or, depending on the time of year, leaving yourself to the mercy of the natural elements.

Here's what you say to the hotel door attendant if you want help hailing a cab:

Wǒ yào jiào jìchéngchē. (*waw yaow jyaow jee chung chuh*; I would like a taxi.)

After you're safely ensconced in the cab, you need to know how to say the following phrases:

- ✓ **Qǐng dài wǒ dào zhèige dìzhǐ.** (*cheeng dye waw daow jay guh dee jir*; Please take me to this address.)
- ✓ **Qǐng dǎ biǎo.** (*cheeng dah byaow*; Please turn on the meter.)
- ✓ **Qǐng kāi màn yìdiǎr.** (*cheeng kye mahn ee dyar*; Please drive a little slower.)
- ✓ **Qǐng kāi kuài yìdiǎr.** (*cheeng kye kwee ee dyar*; Please drive a little faster.)
- ✓ **Wǒ dēi gǎn shíjiān.** (*waw day gahn shir jyan*; I'm in a hurry.)
- ✓ **Qǐng zōu fēngjǐng hǎo de lù.** (*cheeng dzoe fung jeeng how duh loo*; Please take a scenic route.)
- ✓ **Zài zhèr guǎi wǎr.** (*dzye jar gwee wahr*; Turn here.)
- ✓ **Nǐ kényǐ děng jǐ fēn zhōng ma?** (*nee kuh yee duhng jee fun joong mah*; Can you wait a few minutes?)

Oh, and one more thing. As you **chūfā** (*choo fah*; set off) with your taxi **sījī** (*suh jee*; driver), make sure you put on your **ānquándài** (*ahn chwan dye*; seat belt).

Finally, before you get out of the cab, these phrases may come in handy for price negotiations:

- ✔ **Wǒ gāi gěi nǐ duōshǎo qián?** (*waw gay gay nee dwaw shaow chyan*; How much do I owe you?)
- ✔ **Wǒ huì àn biǎo fù kuǎn.** (*waw hway ahn byaow foo kwahn*; I'll pay what the meter says.)
- ✔ **Bié qīpiàn wǒ.** (*byeh chee pyan waw*; Don't cheat me.)
- ✔ **Kāi wán xiào! Wǒ jùjué fù zhèmmē duō qián.** (*kye wahn shyaow! waw jyew jweh foo juhmmuh dwaw chyan*; You've got to be kidding! I refuse to pay so much.)
- ✔ **Bú yòng zhǎo le.** (*boo yoong jaow luh*; Keep the change.)
- ✔ **Qǐng gěi wǒ shōujù.** (*cheeng gay waw show jyew*; Please give me a receipt.)



Because most people in China don't speak English, always remember to take a hotel card when you leave your hotel. Your card has the name and address in English and Chinese. You can always show the card to a taxi driver when you want to get back. If you're walking around town, you may want to take a **dìtú** (*dee too*; map) that shows local landmarks such as pagodas or train stations near your hotel.

Talkin' the Talk

Herby ventures out for a night on the town and needs a cab. He enlists the help of his hotel doorman.

Herby: **Wǒ yào jiào jìchéngchē.**
Waw yaow jyaow jee chung chuh.
I would like a taxi.

Doorman: **Hǎo.**
How.
Certainly.

The doorman hails a cab and then opens the cab door. Herby gives him a ridiculously large tip of USD\$5.

Herby: **Bú yòng zhǎo le.**
Boo yoong jaow luh.
Keep the change.

Doorman: **Xièxiè!**
Shyeh shyeh!
Thank you!

Herby enters the cab and shows the driver a card with the name and address of a local nightclub.

Herby: **Qǐng dài wǒ dào zhèige yèzǒnghuì.**
Cheeng dye waw daow jay guh yeh dzoong hway.
Please take me to this nightclub.

Driver: **Méiyǒu wèntí.**
Mayo one tee.
No problem.

Herby: **Wǒ bùjí. Qǐng kāi màn yidiǎr.**
Waw boo jee. Cheeng kye mahn ee dyar.
I'm not in a hurry. Please drive a little slower.

Herby finally reaches the nightclub after his scenic cab drive.

Herby: **Wǒ gāi gěi nǐ duōshǎo qián?**
Waw guy gay nee dwaw shaow chyan?
How much do I owe you?

Driver: **Shí kuài liǎng máo wǔ.**
Shir kwee lyahng maow woo.
That will be \$10.25.

Herby hands the driver USD \$15.

Herby: **Qǐng gěi wǒ shōujù. Bú yòng zhǎo le.**
Cheeng gay waw show jyew. Boo yoong jaow luh.
Please give me a receipt. Keep the change.

Driver: **Hǎo. Xièxiè.**
How. Shyeh shyeh.
Okay. Thanks.

Words to Know

chē	chuh	car
chūzūchē	choo dzoo chuh	taxi
sījī	suh jee	driver
kāi chē	kye chuh	to drive a car
jìchéngbiǎo	jee chuhng byaow	meter
xiǎofèi	shyaow fay	tip
chéngkè	chuhng kuh	passenger
wènù	one loo	to ask for directions
gāofēngqī	gaow fung chee	rush hour
dǔchē	doo chuh	traffic jam

Hopping on the bus

Gōnggòng qìchē (*goong goong chee chuh*; buses) are almost as common as bicycles in China. They also cost much less than **chūzūchē** (*choo dzoo chuh*; taxis). But here's the catch: Bus drivers usually don't speak a word of English, signs are only in Chinese, and the buses are always super crowded. Still, if you're game for a unique travel experience, and you don't mind killing time waiting for the bus, put these phrases in your carry-on bag:

- ✓ **Yīngāi zuò jǐ lù chē?** (*eeng guy dzaw jee loo chuh*; Which (number) bus should I take?)
- ✓ **Chē piào duōshǎo qián?** (*chuh pyaow dwaw shaow chyan*; How much is the fare?)
- ✓ **Gōnggòng qìchē zhàn zài nǎr?** (*goong goong chee chuh jahn dzye nar*; Where's the bus station?)
- ✓ **Duōjiǔ lái yí tòng?** (*dwaw jyo lye ee tahng*; How often does it come?)
- ✓ **Qǐng gào sù wǒ zài nǎr xià chē.** (*cheeng gaow soo waw dzye nar shyah chuh*; Please let me know where to get off.)

Talkin' the Talk

Alina is walking along the street, trying to find a bus that can take her to the famous Shilin night market in Taiwan. She sees her old friend Gretchen, and after saying hello, she asks her for help.

- Alina: **Qù Shílín yīngāi zuò jǐ lù gōnggòng qìchē?**
Chyew shir leen eeng guy dzwaw jee loo goong goong chee chuh?
 Which bus should I take to go to Shilin?
- Gretchen: **Yīngāi zuò sān lù chē. Nèige gōnggòng qìchē zhàn jiù zài zhèr.**
Eeng guy dzwaw sahn loo chuh. Nay guh goong goong chee chuh jahn jyo dzye jar.
 You should take the number 3 bus. That bus stop is right here.
- Alina: **Tài hǎo le. Duōjiǔ lái yí tòng?**
Tye how luh. Dzwaw jyo lye ee tahng?
 That's great. How often does it come?
- Gretchen: **Měi sānshí fēn zhōng. Hái hǎo.**
May sahn shir fun joong. Hi how.
 Every 30 minutes. That's not too bad.
- Alina: **Xièxiè nǐ.**
Shyeh shyeh nee.
 Thank you.

Words to Know

<i>gōnggòng qìchē</i>	<i>goong goong chee chuh</i>	bus
<i>gōnggòng qìchē zhàn</i>	<i>goong goong chee chuh jahn</i>	bus station
<i>Jǐ lù?</i>	<i>jee loo</i>	Which route?
<i>Jǐ lù chē?</i>	<i>jee loo chuh</i>	Which number bus?
<i>yuè piào</i>	<i>yweh pyaow</i>	monthly pass
<i>hái hǎo</i>	<i>hi how</i>	it's okay; not too bad

Riding the rails

If you want to get where you need to go really quickly, especially in Hong Kong or New York, the fastest way to get there may take you below the ground — to the **dìtiě** (*dee tyeh*; subway). Most **dìtiě zhàn** (*dee tyeh jahn*; subway stations) are pretty easy to navigate.

Unlike in Hong Kong, the subway system in mainland China is relatively new, and you find stations in less than a handful of cities. Above-ground **huǒchē** (*hwaw chuh*; train) travel, however, is tried and true — especially because China is such a huge place and distances between cities are so great. Unlike the number of subway stations, you can find plenty of **huǒchēzhàn** (*hwaw chuh jahn*; train stations) in China. They even come equipped with **hòuchēshì** (*ho chuh shir*; waiting rooms).



February is a particularly risky month to attempt long-distance train travel, because the shortest month features the Chinese New Year, and you're bound to meet what seems like the entire country traveling from one part of China to another. Make sure you consult a **shíkèbiǎo** (*shir kuh byaow*; time schedule) in advance and note the correct **dàodá shíjiān** (*daow dah shir jyan*; arrival time) and **kāichē shíjiān** (*key chuh shir jyan*; departure time) of your train.

If you plan to travel a long distance, be sure to book a **ruǎnwò** (*rwan waw*; soft sleeper) for such occasions — or at least ask for a **ruǎnzuo** (*rwan dzwaw*; soft seat) — because they're the more comfortable accommodations and not as jam-packed as other parts of the train. Trust me. Soft sleepers are worth the extra cost. For more on the types of seats in trains, see Table 14-2.

Table 14-2 Seating Accommodations on Trains

<i>Chinese Word</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Words</i>
yìngzuò	eeng dzwaw	hard seat
ruǎnzuo	rwan dzwaw	soft seat
yìngwò	eeng waw	hard sleeper
ruǎnwò	rwahn waw	soft sleeper
xiàpù	shyah poo	lower berth
shàngpù	shahng poo	upper berth



Taking the subway around China

Hong Kong constantly upgrades and extends its subway system, making it quite reliable. Taipei also has an excellent and efficient subway system. In Shanghai, China's major commercial center of Pudong is expected to soon have a

subway that connects the east and west sides of the Huangpu River. And with the 2008 Olympics coming up, Beijing's Metro system is undergoing expansion in preparation for the hordes that will descend in a few short years.

Before you **shàngchē** (*shahnng chuh*; board the train) to enjoy your comfy, soft seat, you need to go to the **shòupiàochù** (*show pyaow choo*; ticket office) to buy your **piào** (*pyaow*; ticket). You use the following words and phrases to get the job done:

- ✔ **piào** (*pyaow*; ticket)
- ✔ **piàojià** (*pyaow jyah*; fare)
- ✔ **dānchéngpiào** (*dahn chuhng pyaow*; one-way ticket)
- ✔ **láihuípào** (*lye hway pyaow*; round-trip ticket)
- ✔ **shòupiàochù** (*show pyaow choo*; ticket office)
- ✔ **tèkuài** (*tuh kwey*; express train)
- ✔ **mànchē** (*mahn chuh*; local train)

The following may come in handy at the train station:

- ✔ **Piàofáng zài nǎr?** (*pyaow fahng dzye nar*; Where's the ticket office?)
Notice the different way of saying ticket office in this question. Options abound in the Chinese language.
- ✔ **Wǒ yào yìzhāng yìngwò piào.** (*waw yow ee jahng eeng waw pyaow*; I'd like a hard-sleeper ticket.)
- ✔ **Huǒchē cóng něige zhàntái kāi?** (*hwaw chuh tsoong nay guh jahn tye kye*; Which gate does the train leave from?)

And when you finally hear the **lièchēyuán** (*lyeh chuh ywan*; conductor) say "**Shàng chē le!**" (*shahnng chuh leh*; All aboard!), you can board and ask the following questions:

- ✔ **Zhèige zuòwèi yǒu rén ma?** (*jay guh dzwaw way yo run mah*; Is this seat taken?)
- ✔ **Cānchē zài nǎr?** (*tsahn chuh dzye nar*; Where's the dining car?)

Talkin' the Talk

Lorna is at the Beijing train station to buy a round-trip ticket to Shanghai for tomorrow. She approaches a ticket agent to purchase her ticket.

Lorna: **Qǐng wèn, yǒu méiyǒu míngtiān qù Shànghǎi de huǒchē piào?**
Cheeng one, yo mayo meeng tyan chyew shahng hi duh hwaw chuh pyaow?
 Excuse me, do you have any train tickets to Shanghai for tomorrow?

Ticket Agent: **Yǒu. Yào jǐ zhāng?**
Yo. Yaow jee jahng?
 Yes. How many would you like?

Lorna: **Zhǐ yì zhāng lái huí piào. Xiàge líbàiyī yào huí lái.**
Jir ee jahng lye hway pyaow. Shyah guh lee bye ee yaow hway lye.
 Just one round-trip ticket. I'd like to return next Monday.

Ticket Agent: **Hǎo. Yào yìngwò, ruǎnwò, háishì ruǎnzuo?**
How. Yaow eeng waw, rwahn waw, hi shir rwahn dzwaw?
 Okay. Would you like a hard sleeper, a soft sleeper, or a soft seat?

Lorna: **Wǒ yào yì zhāng ruǎn wò. Xièxiè.**
Waw yaow ee jahng rwahn waw. Shyeh shyeh.
 I'd like a soft sleeper. Thanks.

Words to Know

lái huí piào	lye hway pyaow	round-trip ticket
huí lái	hway lye	to return
huànchē	hwahn chuh	change trains
chápiào	chah pyaow	check the ticket
cānchē	tsahn chuh	dining car
zhàntái	jahn tye	platform



Fun & Games

How do you say these types of transportation in Chinese? (See Appendix C for the answers.)



A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

Chapter 15

Traveling Abroad

In This Chapter

- ▶ Checking your calendar for open dates
- ▶ Choosing a travel destination
- ▶ Filling your luggage
- ▶ Dealing with travel agents

Careful planning is the key to a successful vacation or business trip. You have to keep in mind not only where you want to go, but also the best time to travel. This chapter tells you how to prepare for a trip abroad and how to choose the exact day, date, and year you want to travel. When it comes to making sure your **hùzhào** (*hoo jaow*; passport) is still valid and your **qiānzhèng** (*chyan juhng*; visa) is in order, however, you're on your own. **Yí lù píng ān!** (*ee loo peeng ahn*; Have a good trip!)

When Do You Want to Travel?

The time of year you choose to travel can make all the difference in the world for a great (or lousy) vacation. Should you plan it for **dōngtiān** (*doong tyan*; winter), **chūntiān** (*chwun tyan*; spring), **xiàtiān** (*shyah tyan*; summer), or **qiūtiān** (*chyo tyan*; fall)? A trip to Beijing during **sān yuè** (*sahn yweh*; March), just when the dust storms are blowing in from the Gobi Desert, for example, is quite different than a trip during **wū yuè** (*woo yweh*; May) or **shí yuè** (*shir yweh*; October), when pollution is at a minimum and sunny skies are at a maximum. Of course, **wū yuè** and **shí yuè** are peak seasons to travel to China for exactly these reasons, which means hotel prices are also at their peak. Paris in the **chūntiān** is just as great (and just as expensive) for the same reason. Can't do much to help you there. For more on dates, weeks, months, and years, head to Chapter 7.

Want to find out when friends plan to leave on their vacation? Just ask them one of these basic questions:

- ✔ **Nǐ jǐ yuè jǐ hào zǒu?** (*nee jee yweh jee how dzoe*; When are you leaving; *literally*: What month and day are you leaving?)
- ✔ **Nǐ jǐ yuè jǐ hào qù Zhōngguó?** (*nee jee yweh jee how chyew joong gwaw*; When will you be going to China; *literally*: What month and day will you be going to China?)

If you have to answer the preceding questions, just fill in the month and the number of the day you plan on leaving and put those words in place of **yuè** and **hào**. Here are some examples:

- ✔ **Nǐ jǐ yuè jǐ hào zǒu?** (*nee jee yweh jee how dzoe*; When are you leaving?)
- ✔ **Wǒ wǔ yuè sānshí hào zǒu.** (*waw woo yweh sahn shir how dzoe*; I'm leaving on May 30th.)
- ✔ **Nǐ jǐ yuè jǐ hào qù Měiguó?** (*nee jee yweh jee how chyew may gwaw*; When will you be going to America?)
- ✔ **Wǒ sān yuè yī hào qù Měiguó.** (*waw sahn yweh ee how chyew may gwaw*; I'm going to America on March 1st.)

Bet you can't wait to start making those travel plans now. Which brings me to my next point . . .

Celebrating the Chinese Holidays

You may want to time your trip to mainland China, Taiwan, or Hong Kong to coincide with certain holidays — or, just as important, to avoid certain days and weeks.

First you celebrate **xīnnián** (*shin nyan*; New Year's Day; also known as **yuándàn**; *wan dahn*) on **yī yuè yī hào** (*ee yweh ee how*; January 1st), in addition to a three-day celebration coinciding with the lunar New Year known as **chūn jié** (*chwun jyeh*; Spring Festival, or Chinese New Year). Every year the dates for **chūn jié** change because — you guessed it — it follows the **yīnlì** (*yeen lee*; lunar calendar) rather than the **yánglì** (*yahng lee*; solar calendar). **Chūn jié** always occurs sometime in January or February.

If you travel to China **jīn nián** (*jin nyan*; this year) during 2005, you arrive during **jǐ nián** (*jee nyan*; the Year of the Rooster). Want to travel in the coming years instead?

- ✔ 2006: **gǒu nián** (*go nyan*), Year of the Dog
- ✔ 2007: **zhū nián** (*joo nyan*), Year of the Pig
- ✔ 2008: **shǔ nián** (*shoo nyan*), Year of the Rat

The Year of the Rat is actually the beginning of a whole new 12-year cycle of animals. Table 15-1 shows all the animals of the Chinese zodiac. Just as in Western astrology, each of the Chinese animals represents a different personality type.

<i>Chinese Word</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word</i>
shǔ	shoo	Rat
niú	nyo	Ox
hǔ	hoo	Tiger
tù	too	Rabbit
lóng	loong	Dragon
shé	shuh	Snake
mǎ	mah	Horse
yáng	yahng	Goat
hóu	ho	Monkey
jī	jee	Rooster
gǒu	go	Dog
zhū	joo	Pig

In mainland China, **Láodòng jié** (*laow doong jyeh*; Labor Day) is celebrated on **wǔ yuè yī hào** (*woo yweh ee how*; May 1st), and **Guó qìng jié** (*gwaw cheeng jyeh*; National Day) is celebrated on **shí yuè yī hào** (*shir yweh ee how*; October 1st) in commemoration of the day Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party declared the founding of **Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghé guó** (*joong hwah run meen goong huh gwaw*; the People's Republic of China) in 1949. In Taiwan, **Guó qìng jié** is celebrated on **shí yuè shí hào** (*shir yweh shir how*; October 10th) to commemorate the day in 1911 when China's long dynastic history ended and a new era of **Zhōnghuá mín guó** (*joong hwah meen gwaw*; the Republic of China) began, under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen.



National Day in Taiwan is often referred to as **shuāng shí jié** (*shwahng shir jyeh*; literally: double 10 day), because it occurs on the 10th day of the 10th month.



In Taiwan, you often see years written out that seem to be 11 years short of what you think is correct. That's because the founding of the Republic of China in 1911 is considered the base line for all future years. So 1921 is listed as **mín guó shí nián** (*meen gwaw shir nyan*; “meen gwaw” is the abbreviation for **Zhōnghuá mín guó** [*joong hwah meen gwaw*], or the Republic of China, and “shir nyan,” meaning 10 years, refers to 10 years following the founding of the Republic of China). The year 2005 is noted as **mín guó jiūshí sì nián** (*meen gwaw jyo shir suh nyan*; 94 years after the establishment of the Republic of China).

In addition to the major public holidays worthy of closing down businesses, you may want to experience some of the other fun and interesting Chinese holidays first-hand:

- ✔ **Yuánxiāo jié** (*ywan shyaw jyeh*; The Lantern Festival) is celebrated on the 15th day of the lunar New Year. It marks the end of **chūn jié** (*chwun jyeh*; Spring Festival). Folks display colorful and creative lanterns on the street and eat boiled dumplings with glutinous rice and red bean paste.
- ✔ **Qīngmíng jié** (*cheeng meeng jyeh*; The Clear and Bright Festival) takes place in April to honor one's ancestors by sweeping their graves and burning incense and paper money for their use in the next world. This holiday is primarily celebrated in Taiwan, where you can still see entire families having veritable picnics on the graves of their ancestors, which are often located along the sides of hills and mountains.
- ✔ **Duānwū jié** (*dwan woo jyeh*; The Dragon Boat Festival) occurs on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month and always features a real dragon boat race (well, as real as a dragon can be on a boat, that is). It commemorates the life and, more specifically, the death of China's first great poet, Qu Yuan, who lived during the Warring States (475–221 BCE) period. He drowned himself in the Milo River in Hunan Province while exiled after failing to persuade the king to adequately defend the country. On **Duānwū jié**, people eat sticky rice wrapped in grape leaves known as **zòngzi** (*dzoong dzuh*).
- ✔ **Zhōngqiū jié** (*joong chyo jyeh*; The Mid-autumn Festival) is celebrated on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month as a kind of harvest festival, when families get together and everyone eats **yuèbǐng** (*yweh beeng*; moon cakes) — round pastries with lotus seeds. Everyone takes a moment to really look at the moon on this evening — the subject of much Chinese classical poetry.



All sorts of folk festivals take place in villages throughout mainland China and Taiwan when you least expect them, so if you suddenly find yourself surrounded by a throng of jovial, clapping, and singing people, just follow the crowd and see where the action takes you. You won't be disappointed. Even funeral processions can be the most fascinating and musical of events, with mourners dressed in white sackcloth playing all manner of wind and percussion instruments.

Where Do You Want to Travel?

So, now that you know the time you plan to **lǚyóu** (*lyew yo; travel*), I can't wait to finally ask you: **Nǐ xiǎng dào nǎr qù?** (*nee shyahng daow nar chyew; Where do you want to go?*) Planning a trip to **Yàzhōu** (*yah joe; Asia*), **Fēizhōu** (*fay joe; Africa*), **Ōuzhōu** (*oh joe; Europe*), or **Měizhōu** (*may joe; the Americas*)? Will your voyage be **zài guó nèi** (*dzye gwaw nay; within the country; domestic*) or **zài guó wài** (*dzye gwaw why; outside the country*)? Table 15-2 shows some countries you may **xuǎnzé** (*shwan dzuh; choose*) to visit.

<i>Chinese Word</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word</i>
Jiānádà	jyah nah dah	Canada
Zhōngguó dàlù	joong gwaw dah loo	Mainland China
Fǎguó	fah gwaw	France
Déguó	duh gwaw	Germany
Xiānggǎng	shyahng gahng	Hong Kong
Xiōngyáli	shyoong yah lee	Hungary
Àièrlán	eye are lahn	Ireland
Yísèliè	ee suh lyeh	Israel
Rìběn	ir bun	Japan
Mòxīgē	maw she guh	Mexico
Éguó	uh gwaw	Russia
Nánfēi	nahn fay	South Africa
Ruìshì	rway shir	Switzerland
Ruìdiǎn	rway dyan	Sweden
Táiwān	tye wahn	Taiwan
Tǎnsāngníyà	tahn sahng nee yah	Tanzania
Yuènnán	yweh nahn	Vietnam
Zāiyīěr	zah ee are	Zaire

Depending on the type of activities you enjoy doing while on vacation, you may want to consider traveling to a place that has plenty of the following features (or at least one special one to make it well worth the trip):

- ✔ **hǎitān** (*hi tahn*; beach)
- ✔ **shān** (*shahn*; mountain)
- ✔ **shāmò** (*shah maw*; desert)
- ✔ **zhíwùyuan** (*jir woo ywan*; botanical gardens)
- ✔ **xióngmāo** (*shyoong maow*; pandas)
- ✔ **yóuliè** (*yo lyeh*; safari)
- ✔ **tǎ** (*tah*; pagoda)
- ✔ **fó miào** (*faw myaow*; Buddhist temple)
- ✔ **mótiāndàlóu** (*maw tyan dah lo*; skyscraper)
- ✔ **gǔdǒngdiàn** (*goo doong dyan*; antique shop)
- ✔ **měishùguǎn** (*may shoo gwahn*; art gallery)
- ✔ **xìyuàn** (*she ywan*; theatre)

Unless you're the type who thrives on danger and excitement (or works for a relief agency), try to avoid places where the following natural phenomena occur:

- ✔ **táifēng** (*tye fung*; typhoon)
- ✔ **hànzāi** (*hahn dzye*; drought)
- ✔ **dìzhèn** (*dee juhn*; earthquake)
- ✔ **huǒzāi** (*hwaw dzye*; fire)
- ✔ **shuǐzāi** (*shway dzye*; flood)
- ✔ **yǔjì** (*yew jee*; rainy season)

Planning to travel **cóng** (*tsoong*; from) **Xiōngyáli** (*shyoong yah lee*; Hungary) **dào** (*daow*; to) **Xiānggāng** (*shyahng gahng*; Hong Kong) anytime soon? How about **cóng Riběn** (*tsoong ir bun*; from Japan) **dào Mòxīgē** (*daow maw she guh*; to Mexico) instead? Wherever you travel, you always go **cóng** one place **dào** another. Here are some good phrases to know when you tell people about your upcoming travel plans, using the **cóng . . . dào** pattern:

- ✔ **Wǒ cóng Niūyuē dào Jiāzhōu qù.** (*waw tsoong nyo yweh daow jyah joe chyew*; I'm going from New York to California.)
- ✔ **Tā míngtiān cóng Yísèliè dào Ruìdiǎn qù.** (*tah meeng tyan tsoong ee suh lyeh daow rway dyan chyew*; She's going from Israel to Sweden tomorrow.)

- ✔ **Nimen shénme shíhòu cóng Zhōngguó dào zhèr lái?** (*nee mun shum-muh shir ho tsoong joong gwaw daow jar lye*; When are you all coming here from China?)
- ✔ **Cóng Nánfēi dào Zāiyě duō cháng shíjiān?** (*tsoong nahn fay daow zah ee are dwaw chahng shir jyan*; How long does it take to get from South Africa to Zaire?)

Talkin' the Talk



Páng Lǎoshī (*pahng laow shir*; Professor Pang) asks his American student, Kristina, where she plans to go during the upcoming winter vacation, because she has already been in Tianjin studying Chinese for four months.

Páng Lǎoshī: **Kristina, nǐ hán jià de shíhòu xiǎng qù nǎr?**

Kristina, nee hahn jyah duh shir ho shyahng chyew nar?

Kristina, where do you plan on going during the winter vacation?

Kristina: **Yīnwèi wǒ yǐjīng zài Tiānjīn sì ge yuè le, suǒyǐ wǒ xiǎng zui zhōng qù Fēizhōu kànkàn.**

Een way waw ee jeeng dzye tyan jeen suh guh yweh luh, swaw yee waw shyahng dzway joong chyew fay joe kahn kahn.

Because I've already been in Tianjin for four months, I'd finally like to go to Africa to have a look.

Páng Lǎoshī: **Fēizhōu! Nèmmē yuán. Wèishénme yào qù nàr?**

Fay joe! Nummuh ywan. Way shummuw yaow chyew nar?

Africa! So far away. Why do you want to go there?

Kristina: **Yīnwèi dōngtiān de shíhòu Tiānjīn tài lěng. Ērqiè zài Fēizhōu kěyǐ cānjiā yóuliè!**

Een way doong tyan duh shir ho tyan jeen tye lung. Are chyeh dzye fay joe kuh yee tsahn jyah yo lyeh!

Because winters in Beijing are too cold. What's more, in Africa I can take part in a safari!

Páng Lǎoshī: **Cóng Yàzhōu dào Fēizhōu zuò fēijī jǐge xiǎoshí?**

Tsoong yah joe daow fay joe dzwaw fay jee jee guh shyaow shir?

How many hours is it from Asia to Africa by plane?

Kristina: **Cóng Tiānjīn dào Tǎnsāngniyà yào chābùduō shísān ge xiǎoshí.**

Tsoong tyan jeen daow tahn sahng nee yah yaow chah boo dwaw shir sahn guh shyaw shir.

From Tianjin to Tanzania it takes about 13 hours.

Páng Lǎoshī: **Qǐng dài huí lái hěn duō xiàngpiàn gěi wǒ kànkàn.**

Cheeng dye hway lye hun dwaw shyahng pyan gay waw kahn kahn.

Please bring back lots of pictures to show me.

Kristina: **Yíding huì.**

Ee deeng hway.

I certainly will.

Words to Know

hán jià	hahn jyah	winter vacation
shǔ jià	shoo jyah	summer vacation
fàng jià	fahng jyah	to take a vacation
yóulǎn	yo lahn	to sightsee
zhōngyú	joong yew	finally
ěrqǐě	are chyeĥ	moreover

Passports and visas: Don't leave home without 'em

Surprise! Actually, it should come as no surprise that you need a valid **hùzhào** (*hoo jaow*; passport) and a **qiānzhèng** (*chyan juhng*; visa) if you want to enter mainland China or Taiwan. (For more on passports, visas, and navigating your way around airports, see Chapter 14.) And if you plan on visiting a couple of different countries in the region for any length of time, you

may need a couple of different **qiānzhèng** to go with each destination. Check to see what regulations apply before you board your **fēijī** (*fay jee*; airplane), or you may have the shortest vacation experience of your life.

Check out Chapter 13 for hotel tips after you get where you're going.

Packing for Your Trip

Are you the type who likes to **zhuāngrù** (*jwahng roo*; pack) everything under the **tàiyáng** (*tye yahng*; sun) in three different pieces of oversized **xíngli** (*sheeng lee*; luggage) before a trip? Or are you more the **bēibāo** (*bay baow*; backpack) type, content to take only the bare essentials? Either way, you have to prepare your bags in advance if you want to qualify them as **shǒutí xíngli** (*show tee sheeng lee*; carry-on luggage) or **tuōyùn xíngli** (*twaw yewn sheeng lee*; checked luggage).

What should you pack for a trip to the **hǎitān** (*hi tahn*; beach)? Maybe some of the following items:

- ✔ **yóuyǒngyī** (*yo yoong ee*; bathing suit)
- ✔ **tàiyáng yǎnjìng** (*tye yahng yan jeeng*; sunglasses)
- ✔ **duǎn kù** (*dwahn koo*; shorts)
- ✔ **liángxié** (*lyahng shyeh*; sandals)

No matter where you plan to go, you should pack some of these items:

- ✔ **yáshuā** (*yah shwah*; toothbrush)
- ✔ **yágāo** (*yah gaow*; toothpaste)
- ✔ **huàzhuāng pǐn** (*hwah jawhng peen*; makeup)
- ✔ **chúchòu jì** (*choo cho jee*; deodorant)
- ✔ **shuāzi** (*shwah dzuh*; brush)
- ✔ **shùkǒu shuǐ** (*shoo ko shway*; mouthwash)
- ✔ **nào zhōng** (*naow joong*; alarm clock)
- ✔ **guāhú dāo** (*gwah hoo daow*; razor)
- ✔ **wèi shēng jīn** (*way shung geen*; sanitary napkins)
- ✔ **yuèjǐng yòng miánsāi** (*yweh jeeng yoong myan sye*; tampons)
- ✔ **féizào** (*fay dzaow*; soap)
- ✔ **zhàoxiàng jī** (*jaow shyahng jee*; camera)
- ✔ **zhuǎnjiē qì** (*jwahn jyeh chee*; adaptor)
- ✔ **yùndǒu** (*yewn doe*; iron)
- ✔ **yǔsǎn** (*yew sahn*; umbrella)

Talkin' the Talk

Chén Xiānshēng (*chun shyan shung*; Mr. Chen) and **Chén Tàitài** (*chun tye tye*; Mrs. Chen) are deciding what to pack for a trip to Hong Kong in October.

Chén Xiānshēng: **Wōmen yīng bùyinggāi bǎ yǔsǎn zhuāngrù xǐngli?**
Waw men eeng boo eeng guy bah yew sahn jwahng roo sheeng lee?
 Should we pack an umbrella (in the suitcase)?

Chén Tàitài: **Búyòng le. Xiānggǎng de tiānqì shíyuè fèn hěn hǎo.**
Boo yoong luh. Shyahng gahng duh tyan chee shir yweh fun hun how.
 There's no need to. The weather in Hong Kong in October is real nice.

Chén Xiānshēng: **Duǎn kù ne?**
Dwahn koo nuh?
 How about shorts then?

Chén Tàitài: **Duǎn kù dàgài yě búyào. Shíyuè fèn de tiānqì yǒu yīdiǎn lěng.**
Dwahn koo dah gye yeah boo yaow. Shir yweh fun duh tyan chee yo ee dyan luhng.
 You probably don't need to pack shorts. The weather in October is a little cool.

Chén Xiānshēng: **Nà, wōmen dàodǐ yào zhuāng shénme dōngxi?**
Nah, waw men daow dee yaow jwahng shum-muh doong she?
 Well, then, what in the world should we pack?

Chén Tàitài: **Wōmen jiù bǎ yáshuā hé zhàoxiàng jī zhuāngrù xǐnglǐ jiù wǎn le.**
Waw men jyo bah yah shwah huh jaow shyahng jee jwahng roo sheeng lee jyo wahn luh.
 Just a toothbrush and a camera, that's it.

Chén Xiānshēng: **Nǐ yíding kāi wán xiào ba!**
Nee ee deeng kye wahn shyaow bah!
 You've got to be kidding!

Words to Know

kāi wán xiào	kye wahn shyaw	just kidding
jiù wán le	jyo wahn luh	that's all
dàoǎi	daow dee	in the end; after all
dàgài	dah gye	probably
búyòng le	boo yoong luh	it's not necessary



The sentence structure for the verb **zhuāng** (*jawhng*; to pack) is: **bǎ A zhuāngrù B**, which translates into “pack A into B,” even though the word for “pack” comes in between what you’re packing (A) and what you pack it into (B).

Enlisting the Help of a Travel Agency

Think you can handle traipsing around the world without an advance plan or hotel reservations? Think again. China, for example, is one country you should travel to as part of a **guāngguāng tuán** (*gwahn gwahng twahn*; tour group). If you don’t like the idea of group travel, you should at least make advance reservations for hotels and domestic travel and even for your own private **dǎoyóu** (*daow yo*; tour guide) through a **lǚxíngshè** (*lyew sheeng shuh*; travel agency). Remember, you generally hear no **Yīngyǔ** (*eeng yew*; English) spoken anywhere in China.

Talkin’ the Talk



Daisy and Michael discuss their travel plans with a local travel agent, Miss Lǐ, in Hong Kong.

Miss Lǐ: **Nǐmen hǎo. Wǒ néng bāng shénme máng?**
Nee men how. Waw nung bahng shummu mahng?
 Hello. How may I be of help?

Daisy: **Wǒmen hěn xiǎng qù Zhōngguó dàlù. Néng bùnéng yùdìng yíge lǚguǎn?**
Waw men hun shyahng chyew joong gwaw dah loo.
Nung boo nung yew deeng ee guh lyew gwahn?

We're very interested in traveling to mainland China. Would you be able to reserve hotels for us in advance?

Miss Lǐ: **Méiyǒu wèntí. Nǐmen shénme shíhòu yào zǒu?**
Mayo one tee. Nee mun shummu shir ho yaow dzoe?
 No problem. When would you like to go?

Michael: **Tīngshuō wǔ yuè fèn de tiānqì zuì hǎo.**
Teeng shwaw woo yweh fun duh tyan chee dzway how.
 I've heard the weather in May is the best.

Miss Lǐ: **Duì le. Wǒ yě jiànyì nǐmen gēn yíge guāngguāng tuán yíkuài qù.**
Dway luh. Waw yeah jyan ee nee mun gun ee guh gwahn gwahng twan ee kwar chyew.
 That's correct. I also suggest you go with a tour group.

Daisy: **Wèishénme?**
Way shummu?
 Why?

Miss Lǐ: **Guāngguāng tuán yǒu shuō Yīngyǔ de dǎoyóu hé yóulǎnchē. Nà zuì fāngbiàn.**
Gwahn gwahng twahn yo shwaw eeng yew duh daow yo huh yo lahn chuh. Nah dzway fahng byan.
 Tour groups have an English-speaking tour guide and a sightseeing bus. That's the most convenient way to go.

Michael: **Hǎo. Juéding le.**
How. Jweh deeng luh.
 Okay. It's decided.

Words to Know

<i>guānguāng tuán</i>	<i>gwahn gwahng twahn</i>	tour group
<i>dǎoyóu</i>	<i>daow yo</i>	tour guide
<i>lǚxíng</i>	<i>lyew sheeng</i>	travel
<i>lǚxíng dài lǚ rén</i>	<i>lyew sheeng dye lee run</i>	travel agent
<i>lǚxíngshè</i>	<i>lyew sheeng shuh</i>	travel agency
<i>yùdìng</i>	<i>yew deeng</i>	to make a reservation
<i>yóulǎnchē</i>	<i>yo lahn chuh</i>	sightseeing bus
<i>qǔxiāo fèi</i>	<i>chyew shyaow fay</i>	cancellation fee
<i>juédìng le</i>	<i>jweh deeng luh</i>	it's decided
<i>fāngbiàn</i>	<i>fahng byan</i>	convenient
<i>jiànyì</i>	<i>jyan ee</i>	to suggest



Fun & Games

Fill in the missing words with one of the three possible answers under each sentence. See Appendix C for the answers.

1. **Wǒmen jīnnián qù** _____. (This year we're going to Ireland.)
 - a. Àièrlán
 - b. Éguó
 - c. Nánfēi
2. **Tāmen** _____ **zǒu**. (They're leaving on June 8th.)
 - a. sì yuè wǔ hào
 - b. wǔ yuè jiǔ hào
 - c. liù yuè bā hào
3. **Wǒmen yíding yào kàn** _____. (We definitely want to see Buddhist Temples.)
 - a. xióngmāo
 - b. fó miào
 - c. yóuliè
4. **Bié wàngle zhuāngrù** _____. (Don't forget to pack a toothbrush.)
 - a. yáshuā
 - b. yágāo
 - c. huàzhuāng pǐn
5. **Méiyǒu wèntǐ**. _____. (No problem. Just kidding.)
 - a. Juéding le
 - b. Kāi wǎn xiào
 - c. Jiù wǎn le

Chapter 16

Handling Emergencies

In This Chapter

- ▶ Yelling for help
- ▶ Visiting your doctor
- ▶ Going to the authorities
- ▶ Looking for legal advice

You can easily plan the fun and exciting things you want to experience while you travel or go out with friends, but you can't predict needing to call the police to report a theft or rushing to an emergency room with appendicitis on your trip to the Great Wall. Such things can and do happen, and this chapter gives you the language tools you need to communicate your problems during your times of need.

Calling for Help in Times of Need

When you're faced with an emergency, the last way you want to spend your time is searching for an oversized Chinese-English dictionary to figure out how to quickly call for help. Try memorizing these phrases before a situation arises:

- ✓ **Jiù mìng!** (*jyo meeng*; Help; Save me!)
- ✓ **Zhuā zéi!** (*jwah dzay*; Stop, thief!)
- ✓ **Zhāohuǒ lā!** (*jaow hwaw lah*; Fire!)
- ✓ **Jiào jiùhùchē!** (*jyaow jyo hoo chuh*; Call an ambulance!)
- ✓ **Jiào jīngchá!** (*jyaow jeeng chah*; Call the police!)



Be careful when you say the words **jiào** (*jyow*; to call) and **jiù** (*jyo*; to save) in the phrases above. You don't want to mistakenly ask someone to save the police when you want him to call the police.

Sometimes you have to ask for someone who speaks English. Here are some phrases you can quickly blurt out during emergencies:

- ✔ **Nǐ shuō Yīngwén ma?** (*nee shwaw eeng one mah*; Do you speak English?)
- ✔ **Wǒ xūyào yíge jiǎng Yīngwén de lǜshī.** (*waw shyew yaow ee guh jyahng eeng one duh lyew shir*; I need a lawyer who speaks English.)
- ✔ **Yǒu méiyǒu jiǎng Yīngwén de dài fū?** (*yo mayo jyahng eeng one duh dye foo*; Are there any English-speaking doctors?)

When you finally get someone on the line who can help you, you need to know what to say to get immediate help:

- ✔ **Wǒ bèi rén qiǎng le.** (*waw bay run chyahng luh*; I've been robbed.)
- ✔ **Yǒu rén shòu shāng le.** (*yo run show shahng luh*; People are injured.)
- ✔ **Wǒ yào huì bào yíge chē huò.** (*waw yaow hway baow yee guh chuh hwaw*; I'd like to report a car accident.)



Word to the wise: Chinese people don't have O-negative blood, so Chinese hospitals don't store it. If you have a medical emergency in China that requires O-negative blood, you should check directly with your country's nearest Embassy or Consulate for help. You may need to be airlifted out to get the appropriate care. You may also want to take your own hypodermic needles in case you need an injection, because you can't guarantee that the needles you may come across are sterilized. Better safe than sorry away from home.

Receiving Medical Care

It's everyone's greatest nightmare — getting sick and not knowing why or how to make it better. If you suddenly find yourself in the **yīyuàn** (*ee ywan*; hospital) or otherwise visiting an **yīshēng** (*ee shung*; doctor), you need to explain what ails you — often in a hurry. This may be easier said than done, especially if you have to explain yourself in Chinese (or help a Chinese-speaking victim who's having trouble communicating). You may not have the energy to remember both the pronunciation *and* the proper tone for the word you mean to use. You may want to say you're feeling kind of **tóuyūn** (*toe yewn*; dizzy), but if it comes out sounding like **tuōyùn** (*twaw yewn*) instead, you alert your caregiver that you're sending your luggage on ahead of you. You don't want your doctor to move on to the next patient. Use Table 16-1 to figure out how to say the basic body parts.

Table 16-1 Basic Body Parts		
<i>Chinese Word</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word</i>
shēntǐ	shun tee	Body
gēbo	guh baw	Arm
jiānbǎng	jyan bahng	Shoulder
shǒu	show	Hand
shǒuzhǐ	show jir	Finger
tuǐ	tway	Leg
jiǎo	jyaow	Foot
tóu	toe	Head
bózi	baw dzuh	Neck
xiōng	shyoong	Chest
bèi	bay	Back
liǎn	lyan	Face
yǎnjīng	yan jeeng	Eye
ěrdūo	are dwaw	Ear
bízi	bee dzuh	Nose
hóulóng	ho loong	Throat
gǔtóu	goo toe	Bone
jīròu	jee row	Muscles
shénjīng	shun jeeng	Nerves
fèi	fay	Lungs
gān	gahn	Liver
shèn	shun	Kidney
xīn	shin	Heart
dùzi	doo dzuh	Stomach



When you travel, don't forget to bring your prescription medicines. Carry them in a separate carry-on bag or in your purse. You don't want to pack them in a piece of check-in luggage, never to be seen again if the luggage gets lost.



Unless you're in a big city like Beijing or Shanghai, if you get seriously ill while staying in mainland China, your best bet is to fly to Hong Kong or back home for medical care. Don't forget to check into evacuation insurance before you go.

Finding a doctor

If your **yùnrì** (*yewn chee*; luck) is good, you'll never need to use any of the phrases I present in this chapter. If you end up running **dǎoméi** (*daow may*; out of luck), however, keep reading. Even if you've never **chōuyān** (*cho yan*; smoked) a day in your life, you can still develop **késòu** (*kuh so*; a cough) or even **qìguǎnyán** (*chee gwahn yan*; bronchitis). Time to see a **yīshēng** (*ee shung*; doctor).

Talkin' the Talk

Dàlín and his wife, Miǎn, are on their first trip back to China in 20 years. Miǎn becomes concerned about a sudden onset of dizziness. The two discuss her symptoms.

- Dàlín: **Nǐ zěnmē bùshūfu?**
Nee dzummuh boo shoo foo?
What's wrong?
- Miǎn: **Wǒ gǎnjué bùshūfu kěshì bù zhīdào wǒ déle shénme bìng.**
Waw gahn jweh boo shoo foo kuh shir boo jir daow waw duh luh shummu beeng.
I don't feel well, but I don't know what I have.
- Dàlín: **Nǐ fā shāo ma?**
Nee fah shaow mah?
Are you running a fever?
- Miǎn: **Méiyǒu, dànshì wǒ tóuyūn. Yěxǔ wǒ xūyào kàn nèikē yīshēng.**
Mayo, dahn shir waw toe yewn. Yeh shyew waw shyew yaow kahn nay kuh ee shung.
No, but I feel dizzy. Perhaps I need to see an internist.

Dàlín calls the nearest medical clinic to make an appointment and then returns to Miǎn.

Dàlín: Wǒ jīntiān xiàwǔ sān diǎn zhōng yuē le yíge shíjiān.
 Nǐ zuì hǎo zànrshí zuò xiàlái.
Waw jin tyan shyah woo sahn dyan joong yweh luh ee guh shir jyan. Nee dzway how dzahn shir dzwaw shyah lye.
 I've made an appointment for 3 p.m. this afternoon.
 In the meantime, you'd better sit down for a while.

Words to Know

kànbìng	kahn beeng	to see a doctor
yīshēng	ee shung	doctor
yáyī	yah ee	dentist
hùshì	hoo shir	nurse
bìngrén	beeng run	patient



Although verbs don't express tense in Chinese, you often connect them to things called *aspect markers*, which come directly after the verb and indicate the degree of completion of an action. The aspect markers “**xiàlái**” (*shyah lye*) and “**xiàqù**” (*shyah chyew*) are two such examples. **Xiàlái** refers to an action that slowly turns into a non-action or a calmer state, such as “**zuò** (*dzwaw*) **xiàlái**” (meaning to sit down and rest) in the previous Talkin' the Talk section. **Xiàqù** refers to continuing action.

Describing what ails you

Did your doctor say those magic words: **Méi shénme** (*may shummu*; It's nothing)? Yeah, neither did mine. Too bad. Maybe you're just now checking your old **wēndùjì** (*one doo jee*; thermometer) and finding out, “**Wǒ fā shāo le!**” (*waw fah shaow luh*; I have a fever!) **Āiya!** (*eye yah*; Oh my goodness!) Time to figure out what the problem is. Whether you make a sudden trip to the **jízhěnsì** (*jee jun shir*; emergency room) or take a normal visit to a private doctor's office, you'll probably field the same basic questions about insurance and your symptoms. Table 16-2 lists some symptoms you may have.

Table 16-2 Common Medical Symptoms		
<i>Chinese Phrase</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Phrase</i>
pàngle	pahng luh	Put on weight
shòule	show luh	Lose weight
fāshāo	fah shaow	To have a fever
lādùzi	lah doo dzuh	Diarrhea
biànmì	byan mee	Constipation
ěxīn	uh sheen	Nauseous
hóulóng téng	ho loong tung	Sore throat
tóuténg	toe tung	Headache
wèi tòng	way toong	Stomachache
bèi tòng	bay toong	Backache
ěr tòng	are toong	Earache
yá tòng	yah toong	Toothache
xiàntǐ zhǒngle	shyan tee joong luh	Swollen glands

Your doctor has a laundry list of inspections she must perform when you hit the check-up table:

- ✔ **Qǐng juǎnqǐ nǐde xiùzi.** (*cheeng jwan chee nee duh shyo dzuh*; Please roll up your sleeve.)
- ✔ **Wǒ yòng tǐngzhěnnqì tǐng yíxià nǐde xīnzàng.** (*waw yoong teeng jun chee teeng ee shyah nee duh shin dzahng*; I'm going to use a stethoscope to listen to your heart.)
- ✔ **Shēn hūxī.** (*shun hoo she*; Take a deep breath.)
- ✔ **Bǎ zuǐ zhāngkāi.** (*bah dzway jahng kye*; Open your mouth.)
- ✔ **Bǎ shétóu shēn chūlái.** (*bah shuh toe shun choo lye*; Stick out your tongue.)
- ✔ **Wǒmen huà yàn yíxià xiǎobiàn.** (*waw men huah yan ee shyah shyaoow byan*; Let's have your urine tested.)



Fighting off air pollution in China

Air pollution is a serious problem in mainland China, so if you have respiratory conditions such as asthma and chronic bronchitis, you should wear a facemask in big cities and dusty back roads. Although immunizations aren't

required for travel to China, make sure your tetanus shots are up to date, and check with your doctor about a Hepatitis B vaccine if you plan an extended stay.

Talkin' the Talk



Kristina shows up for her appointment to see Huò Dàifu (Dr. Huo). Because this is her first visit to Dr. Huo, the **jiēdàiyuán** (*jyeh dye ywan*; receptionist) needs her to fill out some forms before she sees the doctor to discuss her symptoms.

Jiēdàiyuán: **Nǐ shì lái kàn bing de ma?**
Nee shir lye kahn beeng duh mah?
Have you come to see a doctor?

Kristina: **Shì de.**
Shir duh.
Yes.

Jiēdàiyuán: **Yǒu méiyǒu yīliáo bǎoxiǎn?**
Yo mayo ee lyaow baow shyan?
Do you have any medical insurance?

Kristina: **Yǒu.**
Yo.
Yes, I do.

Jiēdàiyuán: **Hǎo. Qǐng tián yíxià zhèi zhāng biǎo.**
How. Cheeng tyan ee shyah jay jahng byaow.
Alright. Please fill out this form.

A short while later, the receptionist introduces Kristina to a **hùshì** (*hoo shir*; nurse) who plans to take her blood pressure.

Jiēdàiyuán: **Hùshì huì xiān liáng yíxià xuèyā.**
Hoo shir hway shyan lyahng ee shyah shweh yah.
 The nurse will first take your blood pressure.

Hùshì: **Qǐng juǎnqǐ nǐde xiùzi.**
Cheeng jwan chee nee duh shyo dzuh.
 Please roll up your sleeve.

Hùshì: **Hǎo. Huò Dàifu xiànzài gěi nǐ kànbìng.**
How. Hwaw dye foo shyan dzye gay nee kahn beeng.
 Alright. Dr. Huo will see you now.

Kristina enters Dr. Huo's office, and after a few basic introductory questions, Dr. Huo asks her what brings her to his office.

Huò Dàifu: **Yǒu shénme zhèngzhuàng?**
Yo shumuh juhng jwahng?
 What sorts of symptoms do you have?

Kristina: **Wǒde hóulóng cóng zuótiān jiù tòngle.**
Waw duh ho loong tsoong dzwaw tyan jyo toong luh.
 I've had this pain in my throat since yesterday.

Huò Dàifu: **Hǎo. Wǒ xiān yòng tīngzhēnqì tīng yíxià nǐde xīnzàng.**
How. Waw shyan yoong teeng jun chee teeng ee shyah nee duh shin dzahng.
 Alright. I'm first going to use a stethoscope to listen to your heart.

Dr. Huo puts the stethoscope to Kristina's chest.

Huò Dàifu: **Shēn hūxī.**
Shun hoo she.
 Take a deep breath.

Dr. Huo finishes listening with the stethoscope and takes out a tongue depressor.

Huò Dàifu: **Qǐng bǎ zuǐ zhāngkāi, bǎ shétóu shēn chūlái . . . duì le. Nǐde hóulóng hǎoxiàng yǒu yìdiǎn fāyán.**
Cheeng bah dzway jahng kye, bah shuh to shun choo lye . . . dway luh. Nee duh ho loong how shyahng yo ee dyan fah yan.
 Please open your mouth and stick out your tongue . . . yes. Your throat seems to be inflamed.

Words to Know

jiǎnchá	jyan chah	to examine
wǒ bùshūfu	waw boo shoo foo	I don't feel well
bìngle	beeng luh	to be sick
bìngrén	beeng run	patient
zháoliáng	jaow lyahng	to catch a cold
gǎnmào	gahn maow	to have a cold
shòushāng	show shahng	be injured
liúgǎn	lyo gahn	the flu
fāyán le	fah yan luh	it's inflamed
gāo xuěyā	gaow shweh yah	high blood pressure
bìng lì	beeng lee	medical history

Discussing your medical history

When you see a doctor for the first time, he or she will want to find out about your **bìng lì** (*beeng lee*; medical history). You'll hear the following query:

Nǐ jiā yǒu méiyǒu ___ de bìnglì? (*nee jyah yo mayo ___ duh beeng lee*;
Does your family have any history of ___?)

Table 16-3 lists some of the more serious illnesses that hopefully neither you nor your family members have ever had.

Table 16-3 Serious Illnesses		
<i>Chinese Word(s)</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>English Word(s)</i>
áizhèng	eye juhng	Cancer
fèi'ái	fay eye	Lung cancer

(continued)

Chinese Word(s)	Pronunciation	English Word(s)
qìchuǎnbìng	chee chwan beeng	Asthma
xīnzàng yǒu máobìng	shin dzahng yo maow beeng	Heart trouble
tángniàobìng	tahng nyaow beeng	Diabetes
àizībìng	eye dzuh beeng	AIDS
lǐjì	lee jee	Dysentery
shuǐdòu	shway doe	Chicken pox
huòluàn	hwaw lwan	Cholera
jiǎxíng gānyán	jya sheeng gahn yan	Hepatitis A
yǐxíng gānyán	ee sheeng gahn yan	Hepatitis B
bǐngxíng gānyán	beeng sheeng gahn yan	Hepatitis C
fèi jiéhé	fay jyeh huh	Tuberculosis

Making a diagnosis

I bet you've heard stories about how doctors who use traditional medical techniques from ancient cultures can just take one look at a person and immediately know what ails them. The truth is, aside from simple colds and the flu, most doctors still need to take all kinds of tests to give a proper diagnosis. They may even need to perform the following tasks:

- ✓ **huà yàn** (*hwah yan*; lab tests)
- ✓ **xīndiàntú** (*shin dyan too*; electrocardiogram)
- ✓ **huàyàn yíxià xiǎobiàn** (*hwah yan ee shyah shyaw byan*; have your urine tested)

Talkin' the Talk



Marland takes his daughter, Katherine, to the **yīshēng** (*ee shung*; doctor) after he notices her bad cough. The doctor takes her temperature and discusses what she may have with the family.

Yīshēng: **Katherine, hǎo xiāoxi! Nǐde tǐwēn zhèngcháng.**
Katherine, how shyaow she! Nee duh tee one juhng chahng.

Katherine, good news! Your temperature is normal.

Katherine: **Hǎo jí le.**
How jee luh.
Great.

Yīshēng: **Kěnéng zhǐ shì gǎnmào.**
Kuh nung jir shir gahn maow.
Perhaps it's just a little cold.

Marland: **Huì chuánrǎn ma?**
Hway chwahn rahn mah?
Is it contagious?

Yīshēng: **Bú huì.**
Boo hway.
No.

Katherine: **Yánzhòng ma?**
Yan joong mah?
Is it serious?

Yīshēng: **Bù yánzhòng. Nǐ zui hǎo xiūxi jǐ tiān hē hěn duō shuǐ, jiù hǎo le.**
Boo yan joong. Nee dzway how shyow she jee tyan huh hun dwaw shway, jyo how luh.
No. You should rest for a few days and drink lots of liquids, and it should get better.

Marland: **Tā dèi zài chuángshàng tǎng duōjiǔ?**
Tah day dzye chwahng shahng tahng dwaw jyo?
How long must she rest in bed?

Yīshēng: **Zui hǎo liǎng sān tiān.**
Dzway how lyahng sahn tyan.
Ideally for two or three days.



In Chinese, you generally put a negative prefix, such as **bù** (*boo*), in front of the verb you're negating. It sounds redundant in English to literally translate a response as “not serious” when someone asks about the seriousness of a situation. It's more colloquial and appropriate to translate it as “no,” as you see in the previous Talkin' the Talk section when Katherine asks the doctor if her ailment is serious.



When you give approximate numbers or amounts, you don't need to use the word “or” (**huò zhe**), as in “three or four days.” Just say the numbers right after each other to automatically imply the “or.” For example, **wū liù ge rén** (*woo lyo guh run*) means “five or six people,” and **sì wū tiān** (*suh woo tyan*) means “four or five days.”

Words to Know

xiě/xuè	shyeh/shweh	blood
chōu xiě	cho shyeh	to draw blood
xuèyā	shweh yah	blood pressure
xiǎobiàn	shyaow byan	to urinate
dàbiàn	dah byan	to have a bowel movement
wēndù jì	one doo jee	thermometer
liáng tǐwēn	lyahng tee one	take one's temperature
màibó	my baw	pulse

Treating yourself to better health

Not everything can be cured with a bowl of **jī tāng** (*jee tahng*; chicken soup), despite what my grandmother told me. If your grandmother cooks as well as mine did, however, the soup couldn't hurt . . .

Your doctor may prescribe some **yào** (*yaow*; medicine) to make you feel better. After you **lǐn** (*leen*; fill) your **yào fāng** (*yaow fahng*; prescription), you may find the following instructions on the bottle:

- ✔ **Měi sìgè xiǎoshí chī yíci.** (*may suh guh shyaow shir chir ee tsuh*; Take one tablet every four hours.)
- ✔ **Měi tiān chī liǎng cì, měi cì sān piàn.** (*may tyan chir lyahng tsuh, may tsuh sahn pyan*; Take three tablets, twice a day.)
- ✔ **Fàn hòu chī.** (*fahn ho chir*; Take after eating.)

Talkin' the Talk

Maxine talks to the yàojìshī (*yaow jee shir*; pharmacist) about her prescription and about curing a lingering cough of hers.

Maxine: **Nín néng bùnéng gěi wǒ pèi hǎo zhèige yào?**
Neen nung boo nung gay waw pay how jay guh yaow?
 Can you fill this prescription for me?

Yàojìshī: **Kěyǐ.**
Kuh yee.
 Yes, I can.

Maxine: **Wǒ hái yào zhì késòu de yào.**
Waw hye yaow jir kuh so duh yaow.
 I'd also like something for a cough.

Yàojìshī: **Nǐ zuì hǎo chī késòu tángjiāng. Késòu yào yě kěyǐ.**
Nee dzway how chir kuh so tahng jyahng. Kuh so yaow yeah kuh yee.
 Your best bet is to have some cough syrup. You can also have some cough drops.

Maxine looks at another medicine on the shelf and asks the pharmacist about it.

Maxine: **Zhèige zěnme yàng?**
Jay guh dzummuh yahng?
 How about this?

Yàojìshī: (Laughing) **Bùxíng! Nà shì xièyào. Chúfēi nǐ yǒu biànmì, nà méiyòng!**
Boo sheeng! Nah shir shyeh yaow. Choo fay nee you byan mee, nah may yoong!
 Definitely not! That's a laxative. Unless you're constipated, that won't be of any use!

Maxine: **Bùhǎoyisi!**
Boo how ee suh!
 How embarrassing!

Words to Know

nà méiyòng	nah may yoong	that's useless
bùhǎoyìsi	boo how ee suh	how embarrassing
jiùhùchē	jyo hoo chuh	ambulance
zhēnjiǔ	juhn jyo	acupuncture
yào	yaow	medicine
Zhōng yào	joong yaow	Chinese medicine
Xī yào	she yaow	Western medicine
chī yào	chir yaow	to take medicine
yàofáng	yaow fahng	pharmacy
yàowán	yaow wahn	pill
kàngshēngsù	kahng shung soo	antibiotics
dǎ zhēn	dah juhn	injection
wàikē	why kuh	surgery
dòng shǒushù	doong show shoo	to undergo an operation
sǐ	suh	to die
zhěnliaosuǒ	juhn lyaow swaw	clinic
yīyuàn	ee ywan	hospital
dānjià	dahn jya	stretcher
jiùhùchē	jyo hoo chuh	ambulance
jízhěnrǎnshì	jee juhn shir	emergency room
kàngsuānyào	kahng swan yaow	antacid
āsīpīlín	ah suh pee leen	aspirin
wéitāmìng	way tah meeng	vitamin
Wǒ duì qīngméisù guòmǐn	waw dway cheeng may soo gwaw meen	I'm allergic to penicillin



Sticking to acupuncture and herbal remedies

Chinese acupuncture and herbal medicine are gaining currency in places outside of China. Little wonder, because these remedies have proven their efficacy in China for over a thousand years. Herbal medicine remedies from the jungles and rain forests of rural China have helped every ailment from rheumatism to

cancer, and healers often use them in conjunction with Western medicine these days. As for acupuncture, proper placement of needles in certain key points of the body has proven so useful in alleviating pain and in numbing patients that you can undergo major surgery without Western anesthesia.

Calling the Police

Ever have your pocketbook **tōu le** (*toe luh*; stolen)? Being a victim is an awful feeling, as I can tell you from experience. You feel **shēngqì** (*shung chee*; angry) at such a **kēpà** (*kuh pah*; scary) experience, especially if it happens in another country and the **zéi** (*dzay*; thief) **táopǎo** (*taow paow*; escapes) quickly.

I hope you're never the victim of a crime like theft (or something worse). Still, you should always be prepared with some key words you can use when the **jǐngchá** (*jeeng chah*; police) finally pull up in the **jǐngchē** (*jeeng chuh*; police car) and take you back to the **jǐngchájú** (*jeeng chah jyew*; police station) to identify a potential **zéi**. Hopefully the culprit will be **zhuā le** (*jwah luh*; arrested).

You may also find yourself in an emergency that doesn't involve you. If you ever witness an accident, here are some phrases you can relay to the police, emergency workers, or victims:

- ✔ **Tā bèi qìchē yàzháo le.** (*tah bay chee chuh yah jaw luh*; He was run over by a car.)
- ✔ **Tā zài liúxiě.** (*tah dzye lyo shyeh*; He's bleeding.)
- ✔ **Bié kū. Jǐngchá hé jiùhùchē lái le.** (*byeh koo. jeeng chah huh jyo hoo chuh lye luh*; Don't cry. The police and the ambulance have arrived.)



Don't sweat the Chinese justice

Justice is meted out quickly in the People's Republic of China, often without recourse to appeals. Many times the crime ends in a death sentence carried out quickly, for everything from murder and rape to white collar type crimes and corruption. The flip side of the coin

is that as far as tourism is concerned, foreigners rarely experience crime. China is considered an extremely safe place for tourists and business people alike. Policemen are always willing to help a lost foreigner in any city.

Acquiring Legal Help



Nine out of ten foreigners never need to look for a lawyer during a stay in China, which isn't as litigious a society as the United States, to be sure. If you do need a **lǚshī** (*lyew shir*; lawyer), however, your best bet is to check with your country's **dàshǐguǎn** (*dah shir gwahn*; Embassy) or **língshǐguǎn** (*leeng shir gwahn*; Consulate) for advice.

It can be very **máf an** (*mah fun*; annoying) and stressful to have to deal with **lǚshī**, no matter what country you're in, but you have to admit — they do know the **fǎlǜ** (*fah lyew*; law). And if you have to go to **fǎyuàn** (*fah ywan*; court) for any serious **shìjiàn** (*shir jyan*; incident), you want the judge to **pànjué** (*pahn jweh*; make a decision) in your favor. Moral of the story: Good **lǚshī** are worth their weight in **jīn** (*gin*; gold), even if you still consider them **shāyú** (*shah yew*; sharks) in the end.



Fun & Games

Identify the following body parts in Chinese. Check Appendix C for the answers.

1. Arm: _____
2. Shoulder: _____
3. Finger: _____
4. Leg: _____
5. Neck: _____
6. Chest: _____
7. Eye: _____
8. Ear: _____
9. Nose: _____

Part IV

The Part of Tens

The 5th Wave By Rich Tennant



"Here's a recipe for Chinese Thousand Year Old Eggs. Thank goodness for microwave ovens."

In this part . . .

This part is short and sweet. It's also essential if you don't want to make all sorts of cultural faux pas when you start using your Chinese. I give you practical tips to keep in mind and Chinese expressions and phrases that make you sound like a native. Equally important, I give you 10 things to avoid doing when you're in China or with Chinese acquaintances. Dive right in. These chapters are fun!

Chapter 17

Ten Ways to Pick Up Chinese Quickly

In This Chapter

- ▶ Practicing by listening
 - ▶ Speaking while you cook
 - ▶ Finding practice tools online and on television
 - ▶ Meeting Chinese friends
 - ▶ Translating your name with calligraphy
-

This chapter contains ten good activities that can help speed up your Chinese learning curve. Having useful, easy-to-access, and easy-to-follow learning tools makes a big difference in your progress. And besides, you can have fun with them, too.

Listen to Chinese-Language Tapes, CDs, and CD-ROMs

Just imagine trying to figure out what Chinese tones sound like without actually hearing them spoken out loud. Kind of like imagining what Beethoven's Fifth sounds like based on a written description. Even if you read this book cover to cover, you'll be hard pressed to figure out just what the first, second, third, and fourth tones actually sound like unless you listen to the accompanying CD. Be creative with your discovery of the language (and your language listening) by picking up all the language tapes, CDs, and CD-ROMs you can find out there. Keep mimicking what you hear over and over again so that your pronunciation and intonation become better with each go-round. Pretty soon you'll be able to tell a native Mandarin speaker from a native Cantonese speaker.

Attend a Peking Opera Performance

Okay, I admit that the first time I attended a performance of Peking Opera, I wished I had brought a pair of ear plugs. The opera is an acquired taste to be sure. Kind of like caviar. But I recommend spending time cultivating an appreciation for it. Peking Opera originated in the late 1700s, when opera troupes originally staged performances for the royal family. Only later did it become such a public art, and now it's all the rage for any person who claims to appreciate Chinese culture. The makeup, costumes, cacophonous music, and stylized movements are predictable and much treasured by the Chinese people. Listening to Peking Opera not only helps you develop an appreciation for a great Chinese art form, but also fine-tunes your recognition of the pronunciation of standard Mandarin. You can even learn a few tunes at the same time. A win-win situation all around.

Cook with a Wok

You may be surprised what cooking with a wok can do for your Chinese. Not only do you start eating healthier, but because you're forced to visit some Asian food markets to gather the ingredients you need to cook with, you also soak in Chinese words by osmosis. Ever hear of **dòufu** (*doe foo*)? That means soy bean curd in Mandarin. How about bok choy? Okay, so that's Cantonese, but the Mandarin is **bái cài** (*bye tsye*; Chinese cabbage). The best traditional Chinese cooking, all done with a wok, puts you in the proper frame of mind to want to soak up some more Chinese language. Try following some recipes from a Chinese cookbook and repeat the names of the ingredients over and over, a sure fire way to speak more Chinese. And if you're not a great cook, get into the habit of eating at Chinese restaurants and mastering the names of at least ten dishes before the end of the meal.

Shop for Food in Chinatown

Mingle with the Mandarin-speaking masses while you attune your ear to the sounds and tones of Chinese. This is only one of the fun things to do in Chinatown, of course, but one worth doing often. Not only do you cultivate a good ear for Chinese, but you also become privy to the gestures that often go along with the sounds. (And you thought the Italians had cornered the market on hand gestures.)

Surf the Net

Tons of information on Chinese language and culture is only a mouse click away. Now that you're in the information age, take advantage of it. Everything from how to write Chinese characters to discovering Peking Opera is out there. Whatever motivated you to start speaking Chinese in the first place, the World Wide Web keeps you involved. Just do a quick search for places like Shanghai, Beijing, or Taipei or cultural keywords like wok or pagoda. You'll be amazed at what you can come up with.

Watch Kung-Fu Flicks

Bruce Lee is only the tip of the iceberg. Go to your local public library and ask to see the list of kung-fu movies. Everything from Hong Kong action films to mainland martial arts flicks — you should find them all there. Pick whatever interests you. Directors like Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige have become famous around the world. (Okay, so they didn't direct kung-fu movies . . . but they're still worth checking out.)

The best way to grasp Chinese is to watch them over and over to see how many words and phrases you can pick up in one sitting. You soon become adept at anticipating which gestures go with which words, and you develop a great ear for all those tones.

Exchange Language Lessons

Finding a language partner has to be one of the best ways to pick up Chinese. Not only do you get to learn the language, but you also develop a friendship along the way. Tons of students come to the States every year from China. Whether you're in school at the moment or just live near one, you should have no problem putting up a sign offering a language exchange. And don't forget to ask your language partner to compare notes about Chinese and American culture. That's when the real fun begins.

Make Chinese Friends

Possibilities for meeting Chinese-speaking people are endless. Check out the cubicle next to you at your office or the desk ahead of you in class. Or how about the mother of the kid who's in your son's karate class? Wherever you go, you have a chance to make a new friend who not only knows Chinese, but who also can teach you a little about the culture. You may even find a new friend to see that kung-fu movie with or to help you navigate grocery shopping in Chinatown (not to mention how to use a wok after you buy all your food).

Study Chinese Calligraphy

Chinese calligraphy is one of the most beautiful art forms in the world. Why not pick up a brush and create those beautiful strokes yourself on rice paper? The whole ritual of preparing the ink and paper is an exercise in patience and meditation, and you get to appreciate the difficulty Chinese school children have in learning to write Chinese. You can discover how to write your name in Chinese (have your English name transliterated, because there's no alphabet in Chinese) and then practice writing those characters over and over until you can sign your name to a Chinese New Year's card and mail it to a friend.

Be Curious and Creative

If you look for opportunities to practice Chinese, I guarantee you can find them. Be imaginative. And stop worrying about failing. In fact, make as many mistakes as it takes so that you can make a mental note of what you should do or say differently the next time around. Give yourself a pat on the back every time you discover something new in Chinese or figure out a novel way to discover more about the Chinese language and people. Keep yakking away with the new words and phrases you find in *Chinese For Dummies* and enjoy watching the reactions on people's faces when you open your mouth.

Chapter 18

Ten Things Never to Do in China

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding Chinese etiquette
 - ▶ Being gracious and humble in social situations
-

This chapter may save you from certain embarrassment and possibly even outright humiliation one day. It gives you ten important tips on what not to do if you really want to win friends and make a good impression with your Chinese acquaintances. Take my tips to heart.

Never Accept a Compliment Graciously

You may find yourself at a loss for words when you compliment a Chinese host on a wonderful meal, and you get in response, “No, no, the food was really horrible.” You hear the same thing when you tell a Chinese parent how smart or handsome his son is — he meets the compliment with a rebuff of “No, he’s really stupid” or “He’s not good looking at all.” These people aren’t being nasty . . . just humble and polite. Moral of the story here: Feign humility, even if it kills you! A little less boasting and fewer self-congratulatory remarks go a long way towards scoring cultural sensitivity points with the Chinese.

Never Make Someone Lose Face

The worst thing you can possibly do to Chinese acquaintances is publicly humiliate or otherwise embarrass them. Doing so makes them lose face. Don’t point out a mistake in front of others or yell at someone.

The good news is that you can actually help someone gain face by complimenting them and giving credit where credit is due. Do this whenever the opportunity arises. Your graciousness is much appreciated.

Never Get Angry in Public

Public displays of anger are frowned upon by the Chinese and are most uncomfortable for them to deal with — especially if the people getting angry are foreign tourists, for example. This goes right along with making someone (usually the Chinese host) lose face, which you should avoid at all costs. The Chinese place a premium on group harmony, so foreigners should try to swallow hard, be polite, and cope privately.

Never Address People by Their First Names First

Chinese people have first and last names like everyone else. However, in China, the last name always comes first. The family (and the collective in general) always takes precedence over the individual. Joe Smith in Minnesota is known as Smith Joe (or the equivalent) in Shanghai. If a man is introduced to you as Lǐ Míng, you can safely refer to him as Mr. Lǐ (not Mr. Míng).

Unlike people in the West, the Chinese don't feel very comfortable calling each other by their first names. Only family members and a few close friends ever refer to the man above, for example, as simply "Míng." They may, however, add the prefix **lǎo** (*laow*; old) or **xiǎo** (*shyaow*; young) before the family name to show familiarity and closeness. **Lǎo Lǐ** (Old Lǐ) may refer to his younger friend as **Xiǎo Chén** (Young Chén).

Never Take Food with the Wrong End of Your Chopsticks

The next time you gather around a dinner table with a Chinese host, you may discover that serving spoons for the many communal dishes are nonexistent. This is because everyone serves themselves (or others) by turning their chopsticks upside down to take food from the main dishes before putting the food on the individual plates.

Never Drink Alcohol Without First Offering a Toast

Chinese banquets include eight to ten courses of food and plenty of alcohol. Sometimes you drink rice wine, and sometimes you drink industrial strength Máo Tái, known to put a foreigner or two under the table in no time. One way to slow the drinking is to observe Chinese etiquette by always offering a toast to the host or someone else at the table before taking a sip yourself. This not only prevents you from drinking too much too quickly, but also shows your gratitude toward the host and your regard for the other guests. If someone toasts you with a “**gān bēi**,” (*gahn bay*) however, watch out.

Gān bēi means “bottoms up,” and you may be expected to drink the whole drink rather quickly. Don’t worry. You can always say “**shuí yì**” (*shway ee*; as you wish) in return and take just a little sip instead.

Never Let Someone Else Pay the Bill Without Fighting for It

Most Westerners are stunned the first time they witness the many fairly chaotic, noisy scenes at the end of a Chinese restaurant meal. The time to pay the bill has come and everyone is simply doing what they’re expected to do — fight to be the one to pay it. The Chinese consider it good manners to vociferously and strenuously attempt to wrest the bill out of the very hands of whoever happens to have it. This may go on, back and forth, for a good few minutes, until someone “wins” and pays the bill. The gesture of being eager and willing to pay is always appreciated.

Never Show Up Empty Handed

Gifts are exchanged frequently between the Chinese, and not just on special occasions. If you have dinner in someone’s house to meet a prospective business partner or for any other pre-arranged meeting, both parties commonly exchange gifts as small tokens of friendship and good will. Westerners are often surprised at the number of gifts the Chinese hosts give. The general rule of thumb is to bring many little (gender non-specific) gifts when you travel to China. You never know when you’ll meet someone who wants to present you with a special memento, so you should arrive with your own as well.

Never Accept Food, Drinks, or Gifts Without First Refusing a Few Times

No self-respecting guests immediately accept whatever may be offered to them in someone's home. No matter how much they may be eager to accept the food, drink, or gift, proper Chinese etiquette prevents them from doing anything that makes them appear greedy or eager to receive it, so be sure to politely refuse a couple of times.

Never Take the First "No, Thank You" Literally

Chinese people automatically refuse food or drinks several times — even if they really feel hungry or thirsty. Never take the first "No, thank you" literally. Even if they say it once or twice, offer it again. A good guest is supposed to refuse at least once, but a good host is also supposed to make the offer at least twice.

Chapter 19

Ten Favorite Chinese Expressions

In This Chapter

- ▶ Sounding like a native
- ▶ Getting to know the lingo of daily life

Some English words and phrases are common expressions you hear repeatedly during the course of a day. The Chinese language is no different. It accommodates this tendency with tons of colorful expressions. Some expressions are known as **chéngyǔ** (*chung yew*) — four-character sayings — which help describe any given situation or put sentiments into words in a nutshell. Mastering these popular Chinese expressions and knowing when to use them helps you put a welcoming smile on the face of the native speaker when appropriate situations arise.

This chapter offers some idiomatic expressions that make you sound like a native. You hear these expressions all the time in typical daily situations.

Gōngxǐ Gōngxǐ

goong-she goong-she; Congratulations!

You say **gōngxǐ gōngxǐ** for happy occasions when congratulations are in order.

“My wife just had a baby!” your friend says. “Wow! I didn’t even know she was pregnant,” you say. “**Gōngxǐ gōngxǐ!**”

Your brother finally passes the Bar Exam (on the third try). **Gōngxǐ gōngxǐ!**

Hey! You just turned 21. Now you can finally go to a bar. **Gōngxǐ gōngxǐ!**
Let’s go!



On the Chinese New Year, you hear not only “**gōngxǐ gōngxǐ**,” but also “**gōngxǐ fācái**” (*goong she fah-tsye*), which means “Congratulations and may you prosper.”

Yì Lù Píng'ān

ee loo peeng ahn; Bon Voyage! Have a good trip.

This is a great phrase to use when a friend or acquaintance is about to embark on a long journey. When you see someone off at the airport, you hear many people say this. You may want to teach your family and friends **yì lù píng'ān** before you board the plane!

Yì Yán Nán Jìn

ee yan nahn jeen; It's a long story.

Maybe someone wants to know how you got that black eye. Maybe you don't really want to go into the details. Just say **yì yán nán jìn** to save the blow-by-blow description for when you're ready.

Mǎmǎ Hūhū

mah mah hoo hoo; So-so.

The phrase **mǎmǎ hūhū** literally means “horse horse tiger tiger.” You use this expression when you want to indicate a situation is just okay or mediocre.

Just barely pass that test? You did **mǎmǎ hūhū**. Slightly under the weather today? You're feeling **mǎmǎ hūhū**. Food at that new restaurant not so great? It's just **mǎmǎ hūhū**.

Kāi Wán Xiào

kya (rhymes with pie) *wahn shyaw*; Just kidding, or You've got to be kidding!

You say **kāi wán xiào** when you can't believe your ears. Suppose your co-worker just told you she's been fired, even though she was promoted only a month ago. That definitely calls for a **kāi wán xiào** in response. When she finally tells you it's not true, she adds **kāi wán xiào** at the end. She was just kidding. (Now you're really angry.)

Máfan Nǐ

mah fahn nee; Sorry to trouble you.

You say **máfan nǐ** when, although you don't want to put anyone out, you politely accept an extended offer to do something for you. If you can't reach the salt at the other end of the dinner table and someone offers to pass it to you, you say **máfan nǐ**. It means, "So sorry to trouble you, but would you mind?"

You can also say something (or someone) is a real pain in the neck by proclaiming, "**Tā hěn máfan.**" (He's really a pain, or it's really an inconvenient annoyance.)

Zěnmē Yàng?

dzummuh yahng; How's it going, or what's up?

A great catch-all expression when you run into old friends and want to find out how they've been or what they're up to these days. You just say: Hey! **Zěnmē yàng?**

You don't say it to a stranger or someone you've just met in a more formal situation, but it's a great expression to use between friends.



Another way you can use **zěnmē** is by adding "**le**" in place of "**yàng**" at the end. (**Nǐ zěnmē le?**) If you do, you say, "Hey, what's wrong with you?" Kind of like, "What could you possibly have been thinking when you did such a stupid thing?"

Qǐng Wèn

cheeng one; Please, may I ask; excuse me, but . . .

Before you ask a question, be polite and preface it with **qǐng wèn**. You're asking if you can even ask about something. You can use it when you go shopping and need to address a store clerk:

Qǐng wèn (Please, may I ask), how much is that thousand-year-old egg?

You can also use it when you need directions and have to approach a total stranger:

Qǐng wèn (Excuse me), which bus can take me to the Temple of Heaven?

Zìjǐ Lái

dzuh jee lye; I'll help myself, thanks.

The rules of Chinese eating etiquette dictate that you should never start to fill up your plate before at least attempting to serve someone else first. **Zìjǐ lái** is a polite expression you use to indicate that you can help yourself as soon as someone starts to serve you. A host always starts to serve the guests sitting closest, but the guests should always say **zìjǐ lái** (and then relent and let the person serve them anyway) for each and every course. After the host has started a dish, however, you may indeed begin to serve yourself.

And just as you should never serve yourself first, you should also never take even a sip of alcohol without at least toasting someone else first (see Chapter 18 for more things you should never do). For that, you can say **gānbēi!** (*gahn bay*; bottoms up!)

Āiyà!

eye yah; Oh my!

Āiyàs can be heard all over China whenever people feel frustrated, shocked, or even just plain old annoyed. You hear it when you show up to your parents' home for dinner with a friend who looks like he's in a punk rock band. You may even say it yourself when you realize you left your briefcase in the taxi, which is now halfway across town. And you definitely have an **āiyá** moment when you wonder how to look anything up in a Chinese dictionary after finding out that there's no alphabet.

Chapter 20

Ten Phrases That Make You Sound Chinese

In This Chapter

- ▶ Saying the right things in social situations
 - ▶ Maintaining your humility and graciousness
-

This chapter gives you phrases that help your conversation for many social occasions. Knowing these phrases provides you with an authentic flavor of Chinese culture and hospitality. Use them liberally to fit right in with any crowd.

As you read this chapter, you may notice that the Chinese often repeat phrases. Repeating words happens often in spoken Chinese.

Huānyíng Huānyíng!

hwan yeeng hwan yeeng; Welcome!

You use this phrase when guests arrive at your home or in your country to make them feel right at home. And if you say **huānyíng zài lái** (*hwan yeeng dzye lye*) before they leave, it means you welcome them to come again. A bit of Chinese hospitality in action.

Bǐcǐ Bǐcǐ

bee tsuh bee tsuh; Same to you; You too.

This little phrase comes in handy when someone wishes you well or gives you a compliment that merits return so you don't appear vain. What's that you say? Great looking dress I have on? **Bǐcǐ bǐcǐ**. (Yours looks great, too.) May you have a long and happy retirement. **Bǐcǐ bǐcǐ**. (Same to you.)

Jiǔyǎng Jiǔyǎng

jiyoe yahng jiyoe yahng; Pleased to meet you; *literally*: I have admired you for a long time.

Saying **Jiǔyǎng jiǔyǎng** when you first meet someone you've heard something about is a polite gesture.

Màn Màn Chī!

mahn mahn chir; Bon Appetit!

Be sure to say **màn màn chī** to the others at your table before you take your first bite. You'll win hearts all around. It actually means "eat real slowly"; saying the phrase lets everyone know you hope they take their time and enjoy the meal.

Wǒ Qǐng Kè

waw cheeng kuh; It's on me; My treat.

You hear this phrase day in and day out all over China. Everyone wants to be the one to pay the bill (see Chapter 18), so folks make a big deal out of being the first person to go to the hip when the check comes. Even if you don't mean it, ask for the bill at least once or twice while others protest. Whoever keeps insisting gets to pay the bill.

Friends often make a joke by adding "**nǐ fù qián**" (*nee foo chyan*) at the end of this phrase. If you hear someone say "**wǒ qǐng kè, nǐ fù qián**," it means "I'll take the bill, but you'll be the one to pay it." Only say this when you dine with a good friend who can take a joke, however, or you'll be sunk just when you were starting to impress people with your newly acquired Chinese.

Yǒu Kōng Lái Wán

yo koong lye wahn; Please come again.

Just before guests leave your home, you should always say "**Yǒu kōng lái wán**." (*Literally*: When you have time, come back and play.) Sometimes you also hear people say "**màn zǒu**," (*mahn dzoe*) which literally means "walk

slowly” and is loosely translated as “careful going home.” A good host doesn’t forget to wish his or her guests well as they depart. The saying implies they’ll be back again anyway. Chinese hospitality at its best.



When you’re in mainland China, you may hear the last word pronounced as “*wahr*” rather than “*wahn*,” which is the way the Taiwanese pronounce it. In fact, any time you hear a word end in “r,” it indicates the person is speaking a northern dialect, like Mandarin spoken in Beijing. People in Taiwan speak in one of the southern dialects, so they invariably pronounce certain words with an “n” sound at the end rather than an “r” sound.

Láojià Láojià

laow jyah laow jyah; Excuse me; Pardon me.

Ever wonder what to say when you need to pass a person who’s standing in your way? Especially if you find yourself in busy Shanghai where it often feels like you’re in a sea of humanity, **láojià láojià** is exactly the phrase you want to remember for crowded moments. It offers you a nice way of getting someone’s attention without being rude.

Zhù Nǐ Zǎo Rì Kāng Fú

joo nee dzaow ir kahng foo; Get well soon.

Hopefully you won’t have to use this expression too often, but if you do, at least the folks hearing it will know your colloquial Chinese is good. You’ll fit right in with the rest of the well-wishers, and your Chinese friends are sure to appreciate your good wishes.

Búkèqi

boo kuh chee; You’re welcome; No problem; Don’t mention it.

You say **búkèqi** as the bookend to **xièxiè** (*shyeh shyeh*; thanks). You can’t say one without expecting to hear the other. **Búkèqi** represents more than just a response to “thank you,” however. It’s part and parcel of a larger group of words that express a humble spirit, which the Chinese always treasure in friends and acquaintances. If someone thanks you profusely for something you do, whether big or small, never accept the thanks as something you agree you deserve. Giving yourself a pat on the back is the opposite of what

you want to convey. Always make it sound like your deed is no big deal, something you prefer to downplay. Doing so puts you in the correct frame of mind for the kind of public humility prized by the Chinese. (See Chapter 18 for more tips on Chinese faux pas.)

Hǎo Jiǔ Méi Jiàn

how jyoe may jyan; Long time no see.

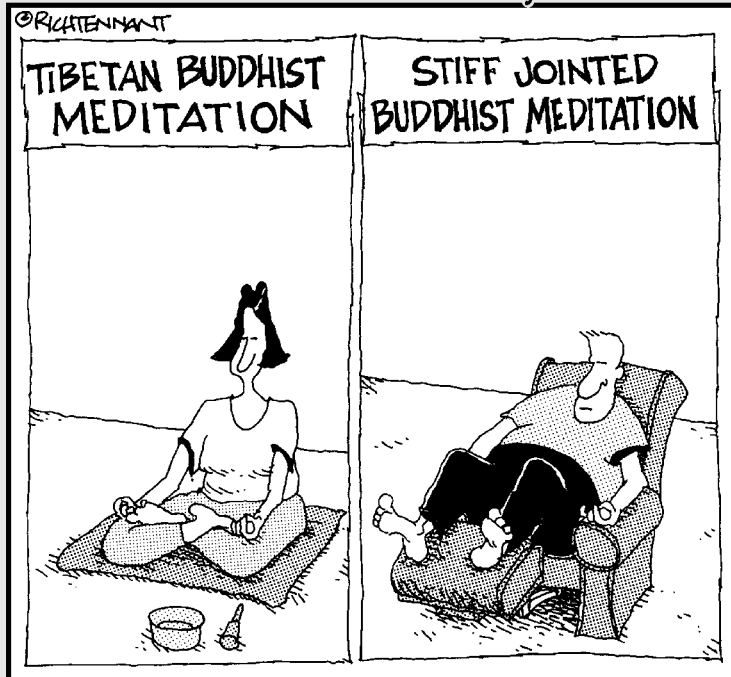
You can use this phrase in all seriousness or in jest if you've just seen someone an hour before. Either way, it puts people in a good mood to know that you care about being in their presence again. You can even say it to your *Chinese For Dummies* book if it stays on your bookshelf for too long.

Part V

Appendixes

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



In this part . . .

The appendixes in this part give you easy-to-access Chinese reference sources. I include a simple list of verbs in Chinese, because Chinese has no equivalent of English verb conjugation. I provide a mini-dictionary with some of the words you use most often. Next, you get the answers to the Fun & Games exercises that appear at the ends of the chapters. Finally, I list the tracks of the audio CD included with this book so you can read along as you listen and then practice speaking Chinese with the correct tones.

Appendix A

Chinese Verbs

Here's a handy list of useful Chinese verbs. For a general description of how verbs work in Chinese, see Chapter 2.

àn/*ahn*/to press

ānpái/*ahn pye*/to arrange;
to schedule

ānzhuāng/*ahn jwahng*/to install

bāngmáng/*bahng mahng*/to help

bō/*baw*/to dial

cānjiā/*tsahn jyah*/to participate

chàng/*chahng*/to sing

chī/*chir*/to eat

chídào/*chir daow*/to be late

chóngxīn kāijī/*choong sheen kye
jee*/to reboot

chuān/*chwan*/to wear

chuī/*chway*/to blow

cún qián/*tsun chyan*/to deposit
money

dǎ/*dah*/to hit; to strike; to play

dài/*dye*/to bring; to carry; to wear
(accessories)

děng/*duhng*/to wait

diǎn/*dyan*/to order (food)

dǒng/*doong*/to understand

è/*uh*/to be hungry

fēi/*fay*/to fly

fù zhàng/*foo jahng*/to pay a bill

gǎibiàn/*gye byan*/to change

gǎnjué/*gahn jweh*/to feel

gǎnxiè/*gahn shyeh*/to thank

gàosù/*gaow soo*/to tell

gāoxìng/*gaow sheeng*/to be happy

gěi/*gay*/to give

gōngzuò/*goong dzwaw*/to work

guà/*gwah*/to hang up

guān / <i>guan</i> /to close	jiù / <i>jyoe</i> /to save (a life)
gūjì / <i>goo jee</i> /to estimate	juédìng / <i>jyweh deeng</i> /to decide
guò / <i>gwaw</i> /to pass	kāi / <i>kye</i> /to open
hē / <i>huh</i> /to drink	kāi chē / <i>kye chuh</i> /to drive
hézuò / <i>huh dzwaw</i> /to cooperate	kāihuì / <i>kye hway</i> /to have or be in a meeting
huà / <i>hwah</i> /to paint	kàn / <i>kahn</i> /to read; to look; to see
huàn / <i>hwahn</i> /to exchange	kě / <i>kuh</i> /to be thirsty
huānyíng / <i>hwahn eeng</i> /to welcome	lái / <i>lye</i> /to come
huí / <i>hway</i> /to return	liànxí / <i>lyan she</i> /to practice
huì / <i>hway</i> /to know how to do something	líkai / <i>lee kye</i> /to leave
hūxī / <i>hoo she</i> /to breathe	liú / <i>lyoe</i> /to leave (an object; a message)
jiàn / <i>jyan</i> /to see	mà / <i>mah</i> /to scold
jiǎng / <i>jyahng</i> /to speak	mǎi / <i>my</i> /to buy
jiànli / <i>jyan lee</i> /to set up	mài / <i>my</i> /to sell
jiànyì / <i>jyan ee</i> /to suggest	máng / <i>mahng</i> /to be busy
jiào / <i>jyaow</i> /to call	mílù / <i>mee loo</i> /to get lost
jiē / <i>jyeh</i> /to answer (a phone call)	ná / <i>nah</i> /to pick up; to take
jiè / <i>jyeh</i> /to loan; to borrow	néng / <i>nuhng</i> /to be able to
jiěfàng / <i>jyeh fahng</i> /to liberate	pànjué / <i>pahn jweh</i> /to make a legal decision
jiéhūn / <i>jyeh hwun</i> /to marry	qiān rù / <i>chyan roo</i> /to log on
jiějué / <i>jyeh jweh</i> /to solve	qiān chū / <i>chyan choo</i> /to log off
jièshào / <i>jyeh shaow</i> /to introduce	
jiézhàng / <i>jyeh jahng</i> /to pay the bill	

qǐng / <i>cheeng</i> /to invite	tuōyùn / <i>twaw yewn</i> /to check in luggage
qù / <i>chyew</i> /to go	wán / <i>wahn</i> /to play
qǔ qián / <i>chyew chyan</i> /to withdraw money	wàng / <i>wahng</i> /to forget
qǔxiāo / <i>chyew shyaow</i> /to cancel	wèn / <i>one</i> /to ask
ràng / <i>rahng</i> /to permit	xǐ / <i>she</i> /to wash
rènshi / <i>run shir</i> /to know (a person); to recognize	xià / <i>shyah</i> /to get off
shàng / <i>shahng</i> /to get on	xiǎng / <i>shyahng</i> /to think; to miss
shàngwǎng / <i>shahng wahng</i> /to go online	xiàzài / <i>shyah dzye</i> /to download
shì / <i>shir</i> /to be	xǐhuān / <i>she hwan</i> /to like; to enjoy
shōu / <i>show</i> /to receive	xìn / <i>sheen</i> /to believe
shòu / <i>show</i> /to accept (money, tickets, etc.)	xuǎnzé / <i>shwan dzuh</i> /to choose
shū / <i>shoo</i> /to lose	xuéxí / <i>shweh she</i> /to study
shuō / <i>shwaw</i> /to speak	yǎnshì / <i>yan shir</i> /to give a presentation
sòng / <i>soong</i> /to send	yào / <i>yaow</i> /to want
tánpàn / <i>tahn pahn</i> /to negotiate	yíng / <i>eeng</i> /to win
tǎolùn / <i>taow lwun</i> /to discuss	yòng / <i>yoong</i> /to use
tián / <i>tyan</i> /to fill out (a form)	yǒu / <i>yo</i> /to have; there are
tīng / <i>teeng</i> /to hear; to listen to	yóulǎn / <i>yo lahn</i> /to sightsee
tóngyì / <i>toong ee</i> /to agree	yóuyǒng / <i>yo yoong</i> /to swim
tuìfáng / <i>tway fahng</i> /to check out (of hotel room)	yuànyì / <i>ywan yee</i> /to be willing to
tuìhuí / <i>tway hway</i> /to return (merchandise)	yùsuàn / <i>yew swan</i> /to budget
	zhǎo / <i>jaow</i> /to look for

zhàoxiàng/*jaow shyahng*/to take pictures

zhīdào/*jir daow*/to know (a fact)

zhù/*joo*/to reside; to extend wishes

zhuā/*jwah*/to catch

zhuǎn/*jwan*/to transfer; to turn

zhuāngrù/*jwahng roo*/to pack

zhuǎnzū/*jwan dzoo*/to sublet

zhǔchí/*joo chir*/to lead

zǒu (lù)/*dzoe (loo)*/to walk

zū/*dzoo*/to rent

zuò/*dzwaw*/to do; to make; to sit

zuò fàn/*dzwaw fahn*/to cook

Chinese-English Mini-Dictionary

A

ǎi/*eye*/short
àirén/*eye run*/spouse (used only in the PRC)
āiyà/*eye yah*/oh my goodness!
ānjìng/*ahn jeeng*/quiet
ānpái/*ahn pye*/to arrange
ānquándài/*ahn chwan dye*/seat belt

B

bàba/*bah bah*/father
bǎifēnbǐ/*bye fun bee*/percentage
bàn/*bahn*/half
bāngmáng/*bahng mahng*/to help
bàngōngshǐ/*bahn goong shir*/office
bàngōngzhuō/*bahn goong jwaw*/desk
bànyè/*bahn yeh*/midnight
bàoqiàn/*baow chyan*/I'm sorry
bào zhǐ/*baow jir*/newspaper
biéde/*byeh duh*/other
bìng/*beeng*/to be sick
bīnguǎn/*been gwahn*/hotel
bō/*baw*/to dial
bówùguǎn/*baw woo gwahn*/museum
bù/*boo*/not; no
bú kèqì/*boo kuh chee*/you're welcome
būchōng/*boo choong*/to add
búcuò/*boo tswaw*/not bad; really good
bùzhǎng/*boo jahng*/department head; minister

C

cā/*tsah*/to sweep
cài/*tsye*/food
càidān/*tsye dahn*/menu
cānguǎn/*tsahn gwahn*/restaurant
cānjīnzhǐ/*tsahn jeen jir*/napkin
cèsuǒ/*tsuh swaw*/toilet
chá/*chah*/tea; to look something up
chángcháng/*chahng chahng*/often
chángtú diànhuà/*chahng too dyan hwah*/long-distance phone call
chāojí shìchǎng/*chaow jee shir chahng*/supermarket
chātóu/*chah toe*/adaptor
chāzi/*chah dzuh*/fork
chéngshì/*chung shir*/city
chī yào/*chir yaow*/to take medicine
chīfàn/*chir fahn*/to eat
chuān/*chwahn*/to wear
chuáng/*chwahng*/bed
chuánzhēn jī/*chwan juhn jee*/fax machine
chūfā/*choo fah*/to leave the house; to set off
chūzū/*choo dzoo*/to rent
chūzū chē/*choo dzoo chuh*/taxi
cóng/*tsoong*/from
cōngmíng/*tsoong meeng*/intelligent
cuò/*tsaw*/incorrect; mistake

D

dà/dah/big
 dǎ/dah/to do, play, or hit
 dàlù/dah loo/mainland (China)
 dānchéngpiào/dahn chuhng pyaow/one-way ticket
 dāngrán/dahng rahn/of course
 dànshì/dahn shir/but; however
 dàshīguǎn/dah shir gwahn/embassy
 dàtīng/dah teeng/lobby
 děng/duhng/to wait
 dēngjǐpái/duhng jee pye/boarding pass
 diǎn/dyan/to order (food)
 diànhuà/dyan hwah/telephone
 diànhuà hàomǎ/dyan hwah how mah/telephone number
 diànhuà hàomǎbù/dyan hwah how mah boo/telephone book
 diànnǎo/dyan now/computer
 diànshì/dyan shir/television
 diàntī/dyan tee/elevator
 diànyǐng/dyan yeeng/movie
 diànzǐ yóujiàn/dyan dzuh yo jyan/e-mail
 diànzǐ yóuxiāng dìzhǐ/dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir/e-mail address
 dìfāng/dee fahng/place
 dìng wèi/deeng way/to make a reservation
 dìqū/dee chyw/area; location
 dìtiě/dee tyeh/subway
 dìtú/dee too/map
 dìzhǐ/dee jir/address
 dōngxi/doong she/thing
 dōu/doe/both; all
 duìbùqǐ/dway boo chee/excuse me; I'm sorry
 duìfāng fùfèi diànhuà/dway fahng foo fay dyan hwah/collect call
 duìhuàn lǜ/dway hwahn lyew/exchange rate
 duìhuànchù/dway hwahn choo/exchange bureaus

duìmiàn/dway myan/opposite
 dùjià/doo jyah/on vacation
 duō/dwaw/many
 duō jiǔ?/dwaw jyoe/how long?
 duōshǎo?/dwaw shaow/how much?

E

è/uh/hungry
 érzi/are dzuh/son

F

fǎlù/fah lyew/law
 fàn/fahn/food
 fàndiàn/fahn dyan/restaurant
 fàndiàn qiántái/fahn dyan chyan tye/reception desk
 fáng jià/fahng jyah/to take a vacation
 fángjiān/fahng jyan/room
 fānguǎn/fahn gwahn/hotel
 fángzi/fahng dzuh/house
 fàntīng/fahn teeng/dining room
 fēijī/fay jee/airplane
 fēijīchǎng/fay jee chahng/airport
 féizào/fay dzaow/soap
 fēn/fun/minute; one cent
 fùjìn/foo jeen/area; vicinity
 fùmǔ/foo moo/parents
 fùqián/foo chyan/to pay
 fùqīn/foo cheen/father
 fúwùqì/foo woo chee/server
 fúwùtái jīnglǐ/foo woo tye jeeng lee/concierge
 fúwùyuán/foo woo ywan/attendant

G

gǎibiàn/guy byan/to change (attitude; behavior)
 Gǎng bì/gahng bee/Hong Kong dollar
 gāngbǐ/gahng bee/pen

gānjìng/*gahn jeeng*/clean
gǎnxiè/*gahn shyeh*/many thanks
gāofēngqǐ/*gaow fung chee*/rush hour
gàosù/*gaow soo*/to tell
gāosùgōnglù/*gaow soo goong loo*/freeway
gāoxìng/*gaow sheeng*/happy
gěi/*gay*/to give
gèng/*guhng*/more
gèrén diànnǎo/*guh run dyan now*/PC
 (personal computer)
gōnggòng qìchē/*goong goong chee*
chuh/public bus
gōnggòng qìchē zhàn/*goong goong chee*
chuh jahn/bus stop
gōnglù/*goong loo*/highway
gōngsī/*goong suh*/company
gōngwénbāo/*goong one baow*/briefcase
gōngxǐ/*goong she*/congratulations
gōngyòng diànhuà/*goong yoong dyan*
hwah/public telephone
gōngzuò/*goong dzwaw*/to work; job
guà/*gwah*/to hang up
guān/*guan*/to care about
guānguāng tuán/*gwahn gwahng*
twahn/tour group
guāngpán/*gwahng pahn*/CD (music)
gǔdài/*goo dye*/ancient; antique
guì/*gway*/expensive
guójiè diànhuà/*gwaw jee dyan hwah*/inter-
 national phone call
guójiè wǎngluò/*gwaw jee wahng lwaw*/the
 Internet
guójiā/*gwaw jyah*/country
guóyǔ/*gwaw yew*/Mandarin (term used in
 Taiwan)

H

hǎiguān/*hi gwahn*/customs
háizi/*hi dzuh*/child
Hànyǔ/*hahn yew*/Chinese (language)
hǎo/*how*/good

hǎokàn/*how kahn*/pretty
hàomǎ/*how mah*/number
hē/*huh*/to drink
hétóng/*huh toong*/contract
huài/*hwye*/broken; bad
huàn/*hwahn*/to change (trains, money,
 and so on)
huándēngjǐ/*hwahn duhng jee*/slide
 projector
huándēngpiàn/*hwahn duhng pyan*/
 slides
huānyíng/*hwahn yeeng*/welcome
huí/*hway*/to answer; return
huì/*hway*/to know (how to do something)
huí lái/*hway lye*/to return (come back)
huìyì/*hway ee*/meeting
huò zhe/*hwaw juh*/or
huòbì/*hwaw bee*/currency
huǒchē zhàn/*hwaw chuh jahn*/train
 station
hùshì/*hoo shir*/nurse
hùtóu/*hoo toe*/bank account
hùzhào/*hoo jaow*/passport

J

jǐ/*jee*/several; how many
jiā/*jyah*/family; home
jiàgé/*jyah guh*/price
jiàn/*jyan*/to see; a classifier
jiǎnchá/*jyan chah*/to examine
jiǎng/*jyahng*/to talk
jiànshēn yùndòng/*jyan shun yewn*
doong/to work out
jiǎnsuǒ/*jyan swaw*/to search
jiànyì/*jyan ee*/to suggest; suggestion
jiào/*jyaow*/to be called
jiāo/*jyaow*/to teach
jiàoshòu/*jyaow show*/professor
jiāotōng/*jyaow toong*/transportation
jiàri/*jyah ir*/vacation day
jí/*jee*/hurry

jiè/*jyeh*/to borrow; also to loan
jiē/*jyeh*/to answer the phone; street
jiéhūn/*jyeh hwun*/to marry
jiějué/*jyeh jweh*/to resolve; to solve
jiérì/*jyeh ir*/holiday
jièshào/*jyeh shaow*/to introduce
jiéyú/*jyeh yew*/account balance
jìn/*jin*/close
jīngchá/*jeeng chah*/police
jīngchájú/*jeeng chah jyew*/police station
jīngjīcāng/*jeeng jee tsahng*/economy class
jīngjīrén/*jeeng jee run*/broker
jīnglǐ/*jeeng lee*/manager
jīnjí chūkǒu/*jin jee choo koe*/emergency exits
jīntiān/*jin tyan*/today
jiǔ/*jyoe*/wine; alcohol
jiùhùchē/*jyoe hoo chuh*/ambulance
jiùshēngyǐ/*jyoe shung ee*/life vests
jízhěnsì/*jee juhn shir*/emergency room

K

kāfēi/*kah fay*/coffee
kāfēitīng/*kah fay teeng*/café
kāi/*kye*/to open
kāi chē/*kye chuh*/to drive
kāihuì/*kye hway*/to have a meeting
kāimén/*kye mun*/to open the door
kāishǐ/*kye shir*/to start
kàn/*kahn*/to read; to see
kànbìng/*kahn beeng*/to see a doctor
kàojìn/*cow jeen*/next to
kè/*kuh*/class (academic)
kě/*kuh*/thirsty
kè hu/*kuh hoo*/client
kěndìng/*kuhn deeng*/definitely
kěnéng/*kuh nung*/perhaps
kěpà/*kuh pah*/scary
kèrén/*kuh run*/guest
kěxi/*kuh she*/too bad; unfortunately

kěyǐ/*kuh yee*/can; to be able to
kōngtiáo/*koong tyaw*/air conditioning
kòngwèi/*koong way*/vacant
kuài/*kwye*/fast; dollar
kuàiji/*kwye jee*/accounting
kuàizi/*kwye dzuh*/chopsticks

L

lái/*lye*/to come
lái huí piào/*lye hway pyaw*/round-trip ticket
lǎo/*laow*/old; overdone
lǎobǎn/*laow bahn*/a boss
lǎoshī/*laow shir*/teacher
lèi/*lay*/tired
léishè guāngdié/*lay shuh gwahng dyeh*/CD-ROM
lěng/*luhng*/cold
lǐ/*lee*/inside; Chinese equivalent of a kilometer
liáotiān/*lyaow tyan*/to chat
lǐbài/*lee bye*/to pray; week
lǐkāi/*lee kye*/to leave
lǐngqǔdān/*leeng chyew dahn*/luggage claim tag
lǐngshiguǎn/*leeng shir gwahn*/consulate
lǐtáng/*lee tahng*/auditorium
liúhuà/*lyoe hwah*/to leave a message
liúlǎn/*lyoe lahn*/to browse
liúxíng/*lyoe sheeng*/popular
lǐwù/*lee woo*/gifts
lóushàng/*low shahng*/upstairs
lóuxià/*low shyah*/downstairs
lù/*loo*/road
lǔguǎn/*lyew gwahn*/hotel
lǔshī/*lyew shir*/lawyer
lùxiàngjī/*loo shyahng jee*/video recorder
lǔxíng/*lyew sheeng*/to travel
lǔxíng dàilǐrén/*lyew sheeng dye lee run*/travel agent

lǚxíng zhīpiào/*lyew sheeng jir*
pyaow/traveler's checks
lǚxíngshè/*lyew sheeng shuh*/travel agency
lùyǐn diànhuà/*loo een dyan*
hwah/answering machine
lǚyóu/*lyew yoe*/tour
lǚyóu shǒucè/*lyew yoe show tsuh*/
 guidebook

M

máfán/*mah fahn*/annoying
mài/*my*/to sell
mǎi/*my*/to buy
māma/*mah mah*/mother
mǎn/*mahn*/slow
mànchē/*mahn chuh*/local train
máng/*mahng*/busy
máojīn/*maow jeen*/towel
máotǎn/*maow tahn*/blanket
màoyì zhānxiāohuì/*maow ee jahn*
shyaow hway/trade show
měige/*may guh*/each
Měiguó/*may gwaw*/America
Měiguóren/*may gwaw run*/American
méiyǒu/*mayo*/don't have
Měiyuán/*may ywan*/U.S. dollar
mén/*mun*/door
ménkǒu/*mun ko*/entrance
miàn/*myan*/face
miǎnfèi/*myan fay*/free
miàntiáo/*myan tyaow*/noodles
mǐfàn/*mee fahn*/rice
mílù/*mee loo*/to get lost
mìmǎ/*mee mah*/personal identification
 number; password
míngnián/*meeng nyan*/next year
míngpiàn/*meeng pyan*/business card
míngtiān/*meeng tyan*/tomorrow
mìshū/*mee shoo*/secretary
mǔqīn/*moo cheen*/mother

N

ná/*nah*/to pick up
nà/*nah*/that
nǎ/*nah*/which
nán péngyǒu/*nahn pung yo*/boyfriend
nào zhōng/*now joong*/alarm clock
nǎr/*nar*/where
nǐ/*nee*/you
niánjì/*nyan jee*/age
niánqīng/*nyan cheeng*/young
nǐmen/*nee mun*/you (plural)
nín/*neen*/you (polite)
nuǎnhuó/*nwan hwaw*/warm
nǚpéngyǒu/*nyew puhng yo*/girlfriend

O

Ōu yuán/*oh ywan*/Euro
Ōuzhōu/*oh joe*/Europe

P

pànjué/*pahn jweh*/to make a legal decision
pēngtiáo yìshù/*puhng tyaow ee*
shoo/cooking
péngyǒu/*puhng yo*/friend
piányì/*pyan yee*/cheap
piānzi/*pyan dzuh*/movie
piào/*pyaow*/ticket
piàoliàng/*pyaow lyahng*/pretty
píngcháng/*peeng chahng*/usually; often
pīntuō/*peen twaw*/pint
pīnyǐn/*peen yeen*/Chinese romanization
 system
Pǔtōnghuà/*poo toong hwah*/Mandarin
 (term used in mainland China)

Q

qián/*chyan*/front; money
qiān chū/*chyan choo*/to log off

qiánbāo/*chyan baow*/wallet
qiānbǐ/*chyan bee*/pencil
qiántái fúwùyuán/*chyan tye foo woo ywan*/receptionist
qiānzhèng/*chyan juhng*/visa
qiáo/*chyaow*/bridge
qìchē/*chee chuh*/car
qǐfēi/*chee fay*/to take off (airplane)
qíguài/*chee gwey*/strange
qiān rù/*chyan roo*/to log on
qíng/*cheeng*/affection
qìng/*cheeng*/to celebrate
qǐng/*cheeng*/please
qīng/*cheeng*/clear
qīngzǎo/*cheeng dzaow*/time (midnight to dawn)
qítā/*chee tah*/other; anything else
qīzi/*chee dzuh*/wife
qù/*chyew*/to go
qū qián/*chyew chyan*/to withdraw money
quánbù/*chwan boo*/entire; the whole thing
qùdiào/*chyew dyaow*/erase; remove
qùnián/*chyew nyan*/last year
qúnzi/*chwun dzuh*/skirt
qǔxiāo/*chyew shyaw*/to cancel

R

ràng/*rahng*/to let; to allow
rè/*ruh*/hot
rén/*run*/person
rénmínbì/*run meen bee*/PRC dollar
rènshi/*run shir*/to know (someone)
Rì yuán/*ir ywan*/Japanese dollar
Rìběn/*ir bun*/Japan
rìlì/*ir lee*/calendar
rìqī/*ir chee*/date
róngxìng/*roong sheeng*/to be honored
róngyì/*roong ee*/easy
ròu/*row*/meat
ruǎnjiàn/*rwahn jyan*/software

S

shàng/*shahng*/above; on top
shàng/*shahng*/to go up; get on; above
shāngdiàn/*shahng dyan*/store
shàngge xīngqī/*shahng guh sheeng chee*/last week
shàngge yuè/*shahng guh yweh*/last month
shàngwǎng/*shahng wahng*/to go online
shāngwù zhōngxīn/*shahng woo joong sheen*/business center
shāngyè/*shahng yeh*/business
shéi/*shay*/who; whom
shēn/*shun*/dark; deep
shēngqì/*shung chee*/angry
shēngrì/*shung ir*/birthday
shēng yì huǒ bàn/*shuhng yee hwaw bahn*/business partner
shēngyīn/*shung een*/voice
shénme/*shummuh*/what
shēntǐ/*shun tee*/body
shì/*shir*/yes; is
shīfu/*shir foo*/master; cook
shíhòu/*shir ho*/time
shíjiānbǎo/*shir jyan byaw*/schedule
shìpǐn záhuò/*shir peen dzah hwaw*/groceries
shuǐzāi/*shway dzye*/flood
shōudào/*show daow*/to receive
shǒujī/*show jee*/cell phone
shǒujī hàomǎ/*show jee how mah*/cell-phone number
shōujù/*show jyew*/receipt
shòushāng/*show shahng*/to be injured
shǒutí xíngli/*show tee sheeng lee*/carry on luggage
shǒutíshì/*show tee shir*/laptop
shū/*shoo*/to lose; book
shuāng/*shwahng*/a pair

shuāngrén fángjiān/*shwahng run fahng*
jyan/double room
shūfu/*shoo foo*/comfortable
shuǐguǒ/*shway gwaw*/fruit
shuǐjiào/*shway jyaow*/sleep
shuō/*shwaw*/to speak
sījī/*suh jee*/driver
sìzhōu/*suh joe*/around
sòng/*soong*/to send
sōng/*soong*/loose
sùcài/*soo tsey*/vegetarian dishes
sui/*sway*/age
suǒ/*swaw*/to lock
sùshè/*soo shuh*/dormitory

T

tā/*tah*/he; him
tāde/*tah duh*/his
tài/*tye*/too much
táishì/*tye shir*/desktop
tàitài/*tye tye*/wife (used mostly in Taiwan)
Táiwān/*tye wahn*/Taiwan
tàiyáng yǎnjìng/*tye yahng yan jeeng*/
sunglasses
tāmen/*tah mun*/they; them
tāng/*tahng*/soup
tánpàn/*tahn pahn*/negotiate
tǎnzi/*tahn dzuh*/blanket
tàojiān/*taow jyan*/suite
tǎolùn/*taow loon*/to discuss
tèsè/*tuh suh*/special
tián/*tyan*/fill out (a form)
tiānqì/*tyan chee*/weather
tiàowǔ/*tiaow woo*/to dance
tīng/*teeng*/to listen to
tóngshì/*toong shir*/colleague
tóngwū/*toong woo*/roommate
tóngyì/*toong ee*/to agree
tóuděngcāng/*toe dung tsahng*/first class
tóuténg/*toe tung*/headache

tuǐchí/*tway chir*/postponed
tuìfáng/*tway fahng*/to check out of a room
tuìhuí/*tway hway*/to return
(merchandise)
tuìkuǎn/*tway kwahn*/refund
tuōyùn/*twaw yewn*/to check in luggage

W

wài/*wye*/outside
wàibì/*wye bee*/foreign currency
wàijiāoguān/*wye jyaow gwahn*/diplomat
wǎnfàn/*wahn fahn*/dinner
wǎngluò liánjié/*wahng lwaw lyan*
jyeh/Internet access
wǎngshàng fúwù tígōng shāng/*wahng*
shahng foo woo tee goong shahng/
Internet service provider
wǎngzhàn/*wahng jahn*/Web site
wǎnhuì/*wahn hway*/party
wǎnshàng/*wahn shahng*/evening (6 p.m.
to midnight)
wéi/*way*/hello (on phone only)
wèishēngzhǐ/*way shung jir*/toilet paper
wèishénme/*way shummu*/why
wénjiàn/*one jyan*/a file
wènlu/*one loo*/to ask for directions
wèntí/*one tee*/problem
wǒ/*waw*/I; me
wōde/*waw duh*/mine
wōmen/*waw mun*/we; us
wòshì/*waw shir*/bedroom
wǔfàn/*woo fahn*/lunch
wǔyuè/*woo yweh*/May

X

xǐ/*she*/to wash
xià/*shyah*/below; get down; get off; next
xiàge/*shyah guh*/next
xiàge xīngqī/*shyah guh sheeng chee*/
next week

xiàgè yuè/*shyah guh yweh*/next month
 xiǎng/*shyahng*/to think
 Xiānggǎng/*shyahng gahng*/Hong Kong
 xiàngmù/*shyahng moo*/item
 xiāngzi/*shyahng dzuh*/suitcase
 xiànjīn/*shyan jeen*/cash
 xiánliáo/*shyan lyaow*/small talk
 xiántán/*shyan tahn*/to chat
 xiànzài/*shyan dzye*/now
 xiǎo/*shyaow*/small
 xiǎofèi/*shyaow fay*/tip
 xiǎogéjiān/*shyaow guh jyan*/cubicle
 xiǎoxīn/*shyaow sheen*/be careful
 xiàwǔ/*shyah woo*/afternoon (12 – 6 p.m.)
 xiàzài/*shyah dzye*/to download
 xīcān/*she tsahn*/Western food
 xièxiè/*shyeh shyeh*/thanks
 xiézi/*shyeh dzuh*/shoes
 xǐhuān/*she hwahn*/to like
 xīn/*shin*/new
 Xīng bì/*sheeng bee*/Singapore dollar
 xíngli/*sheeng lee*/luggage
 xīngqī'èr/*sheeng chee are*/Tuesday
 xīngqīliù/*sheeng chee lyo*/Saturday
 xīngqīsān/*sheeng chee sahn*/Wednesday
 xīngqīsì/*sheeng chee suh*/Thursday
 xīngqītīān/*sheeng chee tyan*/Sunday
 xīngqīwǔ/*sheeng chee woo*/Friday
 xīngqīyī/*sheeng chee ee*/Monday
 xìnxi/*sheen she*/a message
 xìnyòng kǎ/*sheen yoong kah*/credit card
 xīshǒu jiǎn/*she show jyan*/bathroom
 xiūxi/*shyo she*/to rest
 xǐyī fúwù/*she ee foo woo*/laundry service
 xuǎnzé/*shwan dzuh*/to choose
 xuéshēng/*shweh shung*/student
 xuéxí/*shweh she*/to study
 xuéxiào/*shweh shyaow*/school
 xūyào/*shyew yaow*/to need

Y

yǎnjìng/*yan jeeng*/glasses
 yǎnjīng/*yan jeeng*/eye
 yǎnshì/*yan shir*/a presentation
 yào/*yaow*/to want; medicine
 yàofáng/*yaow fahng*/pharmacy
 yáokòng qì/*yaow koong chee*/
 remote control
 yàoshi/*yaow shir*/key
 yàowán/*yaow wahn*/pill
 yáshuā/*yah shwah*/toothbrush
 yáyī/*yah ee*/dentist
 Yàzhōu/*yah joe*/Asia
 yě/*yeah*/also
 yī/*ee*/one
 yìchéng/*ee chung*/agenda
 yīfu/*ee foo*/clothing
 yīhòu/*ee ho*/after
 yīhuǎr jiàn/*ee hwar jyan*/see you later
 yīhuǎr/*ee hwar*/in a little while
 yìjiàn/*ee jyan*/opinion
 yíng/*eeng*/to win
 yìngbì/*eeng bee*/coins
 yīnggāi/*eeng guy*/should
 yínháng/*een hahng*/bank
 Yīngwén; Yīngyǔ/*eeng one; eeng*
yew/English (language)
 yīnliào/*een lyaow*/drinks
 yīnwèi/*een way*/because
 yīnyuè/*een yweh*/music
 yìqǐ/*ee chee*/together
 yīshēng/*ee shung*/doctor
 yīwéi/*ee way*/to consider
 yìxie/*ee shyeh*/a few
 yíyàng/*ee yahng*/the same
 yīyuàn/*ee ywan*/hospital
 yǐzi/*ee dzuh*/chair
 yòng/*yoong*/to use
 yònghù xìngmíng/*yoong hoo sheeng*
meeng/user name

yòu/yo/right
yǒu/yo/to have
yǒu shēng yóujiàn/yo shung yo
 jyan/voicemail
yóujú/yo jyew/post office
yóulǎn/yo lahn/to sightsee
yǔ/yew/rain
yuán/ywan/Chinese dollar
yuǎn/ywan/far
yùdìng/yew deeng/to make a reservation
Yuènnán/yweh nahn/Vietnam
yùndòng/yewn doong/exercise
yùnrì/yewn chee/luck
yǔsǎn/yew sahn/umbrella
yùsuàn/yew swan/budget
yǔyī/yew ee/raincoat

Z

zàijiàn/dzye jyan/goodbye
zánmen/dzahn mun/we; us (informal)
zǎofàn/dzaow fahn/breakfast
zāogāo/dzaow gaow/rats!; what a shame
zǎoshàng/dzaow shahng/morning (6 a.m.
 to noon)
zázhì/dzah jir/magazine
zéi/dzay/thief
zěnmé/dzummah/how
zhàngdān/jahng dahn/bill
zhàngfu/jahng foo/husband
zhàntái/jahn tye/platform
zhǎo/jaow/to look for
zhāohu/jaow hoo/greeting
zhàopiàn/jaow pyan/photo
zhàoxiàng/jaow shyahng/to take pictures
zhàoxiàng jī/jaow shyahng jee/camera
zhēn/juhn/really; truly
zhèngdiǎn/juhng dyan/on time
zhèngjiàn/juhng jyan/ID

zhí/jir/straight
zhǐ/jir/only
zhīdào/jir daow/to know (information)
zhìliàng/jir lyahng/quality
zhǐpiào/jir pyaow/check (money)
zhǐpiào bù/jir pyaow boo/checkbook
zhōng/joong/time; size medium
Zhōngguó/joong gwaw/China
Zhōngguó rén/joong gwaw run/Chinese
 person
Zhōngwén/joong one/Chinese language
zhōngwǔ/joong woo/afternoon
zhōngyú/joong yew/finally
zhōumò/joe maw/weekend
zhù/joo/to reside
zhuǎn/jwan/to transfer; to turn
zhūbǎo/joo baow/jewelry
zhǔguǎn/joo gwan/CEO
zhuólù/jwaw loo/landing
zhuōzi/jwaw dzuh/table
zìdòng lóutī/dzuh doong low tee/
 escalator
zìdòng tíkuǎn kǎ/dzuh doong tee kwan
 kah/ATM card
zìdòng tíkuǎnjī/dzuh doong tee kwan
 jee/ATM
zìjǐ/dzuh jee/self
zǒngcái/dzoong tsye/president
 (of company)
zǒngshì/dzoong shir/always
zǒngsuàn/dzoong swahn/finally
zǒu/dzoe/to walk
zūfèi/dzoo fay/rent
zūfù/dzoo foo/grandfather
zuì/dzway/the most
zuǒ/dzwaw/left
zuótiān/dzwaw tyan/yesterday

English-Chinese Mini-Dictionary

A

above; on top/**shàng**/*shahng*
account balance/**jiéyú**/*jyeh yew*
accounting/**kuàiji**/*kwyè jee*
adaptor/**chātóu**/*chah toe*
add/**bǔchōng**/*boo choong*
address/**dìzhǐ**/*dee jir*
affection/**qíng**/*cheeng*
after/**yǐhòu**/*ee ho*
afternoon/**zhōngwǔ**/*joong woo*
afternoon (12 – 6 p.m.)/**xiàwǔ**/*shyah woo*
age/**niánjì**; **sù**/*nyan jee*; *sway*
agenda/**yìchéng**/*ee chung*
agree/**tóngyì**/*toong ee*
air conditioning/**kōngtiáo**/*koong tyaow*
airplane/**fēijī**/*fay jee*
airport/**fēijīchǎng**/*fay jee chahng*
alarm clock/**nào zhōng**/*naow joong*
also/**yě**/*yeh*
always/**zǒngshì**/*dzoong shir*
ambulance/**jiùhùchē**/*jyoe hoo chuh*
America/**Měiguó**/*may gwaw*
American/**Měiguóren**/*may gwaw run*
ancient; antique/**gǔdài**/*goo dye*
angry/**shēngqì**/*shung chee*
annoying/**máfan**/*mah fahn*
answer the phone/**jiē**/*jyeh*
answer; return/**huí**/*hway*
answering machine/**lùyīn diànhuà**/*loo
een dyan hwah*
area; location/**dìqū**/*dee chyew*

area; vicinity; neighborhood/**fùjìn**/*foo
jeen*
around/**sìzhōu**/*suh joe*
arrange/**ānpái**/*ahn pye*
Asia/**Yàzhōu**/*yah joe*
ask for directions/**wènù**/*one loo*
ATM card/**zìdòng tíkuǎn kǎ**/*dzuh doong
tee kwan kah*
ATM/**zìdòng tíkuǎnjī**/*dzuh doong tee
kwan jee*
attendant/**fúwùyuán**/*foo woo ywan*
auditorium/**lǐtáng**/*lee tahng*

B

bank/**yínháng**/*een hahng*
bank account/**hùtóu**/*hoo toe*
bathroom/**xǐshǒu jiān**/*she show jyan*
be called/**jiào**/*jyaow*
be careful/**xiǎoxīn**/*shyaow sheen*
be honored/**róngxìng**/*roong sheeng*
be injured/**shòushāng**/*show shahng*
be sick/**bìng**/*beeng*
because/**yīnwèi**/*een way*
bed/**chuáng**/*chwahng*
bedroom/**wòshì**/*waw shir*
below/**xià**/*shyah*
big/**dà**/*dah*
bill/**zhàngdān**/*jahng dahn*
birthday/**shēngrì**/*shung ir*
blanket/**máotǎn**; **tǎnzi**/*maow tahn*; *tahn
dzuh*
boarding pass/**dēngjīpái**/*dung jee pye*

body/**shēntǐ**/shun tee
 book/**shū**/shoo
 borrow; loan/**jiè**/jyeh
 boss/**lǎobǎn**/laow bahn
 both; all/**dōu**/doe
 boyfriend/**nán péngyǒu**/nahn pung yo
 breakfast/**zǎofàn**/dzaow fahn
 bridge/**qiáo**/chyaow
 briefcase/**gōngwénbāo**/goong one baow
 broken; bad/**huài**/hwyeh
 broker/**jīngjìrén**/jeeng jee run
 browse/**liúlǎn**/lyo lahn
 budget/**yùsuàn**/yew swan
 bus stop/**gōnggòng qìchē zhàn**/goong
 goong chee chuh jahn
 business/**shēngyì**/shung yee
 business card/**míngpiàn**/meeng pyan
 business center/**shāngwù**
zhōngxīn/shahng woo joong sheen
 business partner/**shēng yì huǒ bàn**/
 shung yee hwaw bahn
 busy/**máng**/mahng
 but; however/**dànshì**/dahn shir
 buy/**mǎi**/my

C

café/**kāfēitīng**/kah fay teeng
 calendar/**rìlì**/ir lee
 camera/**zhàoxiàng jī**/jaow shyahng jee
 can; to be able to/**kěyǐ**/kuh yee
 cancel/**qǔxiāo**/chyew shyaw
 car/**qìchē**/chee chuh
 care about/**guān**/gwan
 carry-on luggage/**shǒutú xíngli**/show tee
 sheeng lee
 cash/**xiànjīn**/shyan jeen
 CD (music)/**guāngpán**/gwahng pahn
 CD-ROM/**léishè guāngdié**/lay shuh
 gwahng dyeh
 celebrate/**qìng**/cheeng
 cell phone/**shǒujī**/show jee

cell-phone number/**shǒujī hàomǎ**/show
 jee how mah
 CEO/**zhǔguǎn**/joo gwan
 chair/**yǐzi**/ee dzuh
 change (attitude; behavior)/**gǎibiàn**/guy
 byan
 change (trains, money, and so on)/
huàn/hwahn chuh
 chat/**liáotiān; xiántán**/lyaow tyan; shyan
 tahn
 cheap/**piányì**/pyan yee
 check (money)/**zhǐpiào**/jir pyaow
 check in luggage/**tuōyùn**/twaw yewn
 check out of a room/**tuifáng**/tway fahng
 checkbook/**zhǐpiào bù**/jir pyaow boo
 child/**háizi**/hi dzuh
 China/**Zhōngguó**/joong gwaw
 Chinese (language)/**Hànyǔ**/hahn yew;
Zhōngwén/joong one
 Chinese dollar/**yuán**/yuan
 Chinese person/**Zhōngguó rén**/joong
 gwaw run
 Chinese romanization
 system/**pīnyīn**/peen yeen
 choose/**xuǎnzé**/shwan dzuh
 chopsticks/**kuàizi**/kwyeh dzuh
 city/**chéngshì**/chung shir
 class (academic)/**kè**/kuh
 clean/**gānjìng**/gahn jeeng
 clear/**qīng**/cheeng
 client/**kè hù**/kuh hoo
 close/**jìn**/jeen
 clothing/**yīfu**/ee foo
 coffee/**kāfēi**/kah fay
 coins/**yìngbì**/eeng bee
 cold/**lěng**/luhng
 colleague/**tóngshì**/toong shir
 collect call/**duìfāng fùfèi diànhuà**/dway
 fahng foo fay dyan hwah
 come/**lái**/lye
 comfortable/**shūfu**/shoo foo
 company/**gōngsī**/goong suh

computer/**diànnǎo**/*dyan now*
 concierge/**fúwùtái jīnglǐ**/*foo woo tye jeeng lee*

congratulations/**gōngxǐ**/*goong she*
 consider/**yīwéi**/*ee way*
 consulate/**línshiguǎn**/*leeng shir gwahn*
 contract/**hétóng**/*huh toong*
 cooking/**pēngtiáo yìshù**/*puhng tyaww ee shoo*
 country/**guójiā**/*gwaw jyah*
 credit card/**xìnyòng kǎ**/*sheen yoong kah*
 cubicle/**xiǎogéjiān**/*shyaow guh jyan*
 currency/**huòbì**/*hwaw bee*
 customs/**hǎiguān**/*hi gwahn*

D

dance/**tiàowǔ**/*tiaww woo*
 dark; deep/**shēn**/*shun*
 date/**rìqī**/*ir chee*
 definitely/**kěndìng**/*kuhn deeng*
 dentist/**yáyī**/*yah ee*
 department head; minister/**bùzhǎng**/*boo jahng*
 desk/**bàngōngzhuō**/*bahn goong jwaw*
 desktop/**táishì**/*tye shìr*
 dial/**bō**/*baw*
 dining room/**fàntīng**/*fahn teeng*
 dinner/**wǎnfàn**/*wahn fahn*
 diplomat/**wàijiāoguān**/*wye jyaow gwahn*
 discuss/**tǎolùn**/*taow loon*
 do, play, or hit/**dǎ**/*dah*
 doctor/**yīshēng**/*ee shung*
 don't have/**méiyǒu**/*mayo*
 door/**mén**/*mun*
 dormitory/**sùshè**/*soo shuh*
 double room/**shuāngrén fángjiān**/*shwahng run fahng jyan*
 download/**xiàzài**/*shyah dzye*
 downstairs/**lóuxià**/*low shyah*
 drink/**hē**/*huh*
 drinks/**yǐnliào**/*een lyaow*

drive/**kāi chē**/*kye chuh*
 driver/**sījī**/*suh jee*

E

each/**měige**/*may guh*
 easy/**róngyì**/*roong ee*
 eat/**chīfàn**/*chir fahn*
 economy class/**jīngjīcāng**/*jeeng jee tsahng*
 elevator/**diàntī**/*dyan tee*
 e-mail/**diànzǐ yóujiàn**/*dyan dzuh yo jyan*
 e-mail address/**diànzǐ yóuxiāng dìzhǐ**/*dyan dzuh yo shyahng dee jir*
 embassy/**dàshìguǎn**/*dah shir gwahn*
 emergency exits/**jīnjí chūkǒu**/*jeen jee choo ko*
 emergency room/**jízhěnsì**/*jee jun shir*
 English (language)/**Yīngwén; Yīngyǔ**/*eeng one; eeng yew*
 entire; the whole thing/**quánbù**/*chwan boo*
 entrance/**ménkǒu**/*mun ko*
 erase; remove/**qùdiào**/*chyew dyaow*
 escalator/**zìdòng lóutī**/*dzuh doong low tee*
 Euro/**Ōu yuán**/*oh ywan*
 Europe/**Ōuzhōu**/*oh joe*
 evening (6 p.m. to midnight)/**wǎnshàng**/*wahn shahng*
 examine/**jiǎnchá**/*jyan chah*
 exchange bureaus/**duihuànchù**/*dway hwahn choo*
 exchange rate/**duihuàn lǜ**/*dway hwahn lyew*
 excuse me; I'm sorry/**duibùqǐ**/*dway boo chee*
 exercise/**yùndòng**/*yewn doong*
 expensive/**guì**/*gway*
 eye/**yǎnjīng**/*yan jeeng*

F

face/**miàn**/*myan*
 family; home/**jiā**/*jyah*

far/**yuǎn**/*ywan*
 fast; dollar/**kuài**/*kwye*
 father/**bàba**; **fùqīn**/*bah bah; foo cheen*
 fax machine/**chuánzhēn jī**/*chwahn juhn jee*
 few/**yīxiē**/*ee shyeh*
 file/**wénjiàn**/*one jyan*
 fill out (a form)/**tián**/*tyan*
 finally/**zhōngyú**/*joong yew*
 first class/**tóuděngcāng**/*toe dung tsahng*
 flood/**shuǐzāi**/*shway dzye*
 food/**cài**; **fàn**/*tsye; fahn*
 foreign currency/**wàibì**/*wye bee*
 fork/**chāzi**/*chah dzuh*
 free/**miǎnfèi**/*myan fay*
 freeway/**gāosùgōnglù**/*gaow soo goong loo*
 Friday/**xīngqīwǔ**/*sheeng chee woo*
 friend/**péngyǒu**/*puhng yo*
 from/**cóng**/*tsoong*
 front; money/**qián**/*chyan*
 fruit/**shuǐguǒ**/*shway gwaw*

G

get lost/**mílù**/*mee loo*
 gifts/**lǐwù**/*lee woo*
 girlfriend/**nǚpéngyǒu**/*nyew puhng yoe*
 give/**gěi**/*gay*
 glasses/**yǎnjìng**/*yan jeeng*
 go/**qù**/*chyew*
 go down; get off; next/**xià**/*shyah*
 go online/**shàngwǎng**/*shahng wahng*
 go up; get on/**shàng**/*shahng*
 good/**hǎo**/*how*
 goodbye/**zàijiàn**/*dzye jyan*
 grandfather/**zǔfù**/*dzoo foo*
 greeting/**zhāohu**/*jaow hoo*
 groceries/**shípǐn záhuò**/*shir peen dzah hwaw*
 guest/**kèrén**/*kuh run*
 guidebook/**lǚyóu shǒucè**/*lyew yo show tsuh*

H

half/**bàn**/*bahn*
 hang up/**guà**/*guah*
 happy/**gāoxìng**/*gaow sheeng*
 have/**yǒu**/*yo*
 have a meeting/**kāihuì**/*kye hway*
 he; him/**tā**/*tah*
 headache/**tóuténg**/*toe tuhng*
 hello (on phone only)/**wéi**/*way*
 help/**bāngmáng**/*bahng mahng*
 highway/**gōnglù**/*goong loo*
 his/**tāde**/*tah duh*
 holiday/**jiérì**/*jyeh ir*
 Hong Kong/**Xiānggǎng**/*shyahng gahng*
 Hong Kong dollar/**Gǎng bì**/*gahng bee*
 hospital/**yīyuàn**/*ee ywan*
 hot/**rè**/*ruh*
 hotel/**bīnuǎn**/*been gwahn*
 hotel/**fànguǎn**/*fahn gwahn*
 hotel/**lǚguǎn**/*lyew gwahn*
 house/**fángzi**/*fahng dzuh*
 how/**zěnmē**/*dzummuh*
 how long?/**duō jiǔ?**/*dwaw jyoe*
 how much?/**duōshǎo?**/*dwaw shaow*
 hungry/**è**/*uh*
 hurry/**jǐ**/*jee*
 husband/**zhàngfu**/*jahng foo*

I

I; me/**wǒ**/*waw*
 I'm sorry/**bàoqiàn**/*baow chyan*
 ID/**zhèngjiàn**/*juhng jyan*
 in a little while/**yīhuǐr**/*ee hwar*
 incorrect; mistake/**cuò**/*tsaw*
 inside; Chinese equivalent of a kilometer/**lǐ**/*lee*
 intelligent/**cōngmíng**/*tsoong meeng*

international phone call/**guójì diànhuà**/*gwaw jee dyan hwah*
 Internet/**guójì wǎngluò**/*gwaw jee wahng lwaw*
 Internet access/**wǎngluò liánjié**/*wahng lwaw lyan jyeh*
 Internet service provider/**wǎngshàng fúwù tíngōng shāng**/*wahng shahng foo woo tee goong shahng*
 introduce/**jièshào**/*jyeh shaow*
 item/**xiàngmù**/*shyahng moo*

J

Japan/**Rìběn**/*ir bun*
 Japanese dollar/**Rì yuán**/*ir ywan*
 jewelry/**zhūbǎo**/*joo baow*

K

key/**yàoshi**/*yaow shir*
 know (how to do something)/**huì**/*hway*
 know (information)/**zhīdào**/*jir daow*
 know (someone)/**rènshi**/*run shir*
 kilometer (Chinese equivalent)/**lǐ**/*lee*

L

landing/**zhuólù**/*jaw loo*
 laptop/**shǒutíshì**/*show tee shir*
 last month/**shàngge yuè**/*shahng guh yweh*
 last week/**shàngge xīngqī**/*shahng guh sheeng chee*
 last year/**qùnián**/*chyew nyan*
 laundry service/**xǐyī fúwù**/*she ee foo woo*
 law/**fǎlù**/*fah lyew*
 lawyer/**lǚshī**/*lyew shir*
 leave/**líkǎi**/*lee kye*
 leave a message/**liúhuà**/*lyoe hwah*
 leave the house; to set off/**chūfā**/*choo fah*
 left/**zuǒ**/*dzwaw*
 let; to allow/**ràng**/*rahng*
 life vests/**jiùshēngyī**/*jyoe shung ee*
 like/**xǐhuān**/*she hwahn*

listen to/**tīng**/*teeng*
 lobby/**dàitīng**/*dah teeng*
 local train/**mànchē**/*mahn chuh*
 lock/**suǒ**/*swaw*
 log off/**qiān chū**/*chyan choo*
 log on/**qiān rù**/*chyan roo*
 long-distance phone call/**chángtú diànhuà**/*chahng too dyan hwah*
 look for/**zhǎo**/*jaow*
 look something up/**chá**/*chah*
 loose/**sōng**/*soong*
 lose; book/**shū**/*shoo*
 luck/**yùnrì**/*yewn chee*
 luggage/**xíngli**/*sheeng lee*
 luggage claim tag/**lǐngqǔdān**/*leeng chyew dahn*
 lunch/**wǔfàn**/*woo fahn*

M

magazine/**zázhì**/*dzah jir*
 mainland (China)/**dàlù**/*dah loo*
 make a legal decision/**pànjué**/*pahn jweh*
 make a reservation (seats)/**dìng wèi**/*deeng way*
 make a reservation (room, tickets, and so on)/**yùdìng**/*yew deeng*
 manager/**jīnglǐ**/*jeeng lee*
 Mandarin/**guóyǔ**; **pǔtōnghuà**/*gwaw yew (term used in Taiwan); poo toong hwah (term used in mainland China)*
 many/**duō**/*dwaw*
 many thanks/**gǎnxiè**/*gahn shyeh*
 map/**dìtú**/*dee too*
 marry/**jiéhūn**/*jyeh hwun*
 master; cook/**shǐfu**/*shir foo*
 May/**wǔyuè**/*woo yweh*
 meat/**ròu**/*row*
 meeting/**huìyì**/*hway ee*
 menu/**càidān**/*tsye dahn*
 message/**xìnxì**/*sheen she*
 midnight/**bànyè**/*bahn yeh*
 mine; my/**wǒde**/*waw duh*

minute; one cent/**fēn**/*fun*
 Monday/**xīngqīyī**/*sheeng chee ee*
 more/**gèng**/*guhng*
 morning (6 a.m. to noon)/**zǎoshàng**/*dzaow shahng*
 most/**zuì**/*dzway*
 mother/**māma**; **mǔqīn**/*mah mah; moo cheen*
 movie/**diànyǐng**; **piānzi**/*dyan yeeng; pyan dzuh*
 museum/**bówùguǎn**/*baw woo gwahn*
 music/**yīnyuè**/*een yweh*

N

napkin/**cānjīnzhǐ**/*tsahn jeen jir*
 need/**xūyào**/*shyew yaow*
 negotiate/**tánpàn**/*tahn pahn*
 new/**xīn**/*shin*
 newspaper/**bàozi**/*baow jir*
 next/**xiàge**/*shyah guh*
 next month/**xiàge yuè**/*shyah guh yweh*
 next to/**kàojìn**/*cow jeen*
 next week/**xiàge xīngqī**/*shyah guh sheeng chee*
 next year/**míngnián**/*meeng nyan*
 noodles/**miàntiáo**/*myan tyaoow*
 not bad; really good/**búcuò**/*boo tswaw*
 not; no/**bù**/*boo*
 now/**xiànzài**/*shyan dzye*
 number/**hàomǎ**/*how mah*
 nurse/**hùshi**/*hoo shir*

O

of course/**dāngrán**/*dahng rahn*
 office/**bàngōngshì**/*bahn goong shir*
 often/**chángcháng**/*chahng chahng*
 oh my goodness!/**āiyà**/*eye yah*
 old; overdone/**lǎo**/*laow*
 on time/**zhèngdiǎn**/*juhng dyan*
 on vacation/**dùjià**/*doo jyah*
 one/**yī**/*ee*

one-way ticket/**dānchéngpiào**/*dahn chuhng pyaow*
 only/**zhǐ**/*jir*
 open/**kāi**/*kye*
 open the door/**kāimén**/*kye mun*
 opinion/**yìjiàn**/*ee jyan*
 opposite/**duìmiàn**/*dway myan*
 or/**huò zhe**/*hwaw juh*
 order (food)/**diǎn**/*dyan*
 other/**biéde**/*byeh duh*
 other; anything else/**qítā**/*chee tah*
 outside/**wài**/*wye*

P

pair/**shuāng**/*shwahng*
 parents/**fùmǔ**/*foo moo*
 party/**wǎnhuì**/*wahn hway*
 passport/**hùzhào**/*hoo jaow*
 password/**mimǎ**/*mee mah*
 pay/**fùqián**/*foo chyan*
 PC (personal computer)/**gèrén diànnǎo**/*guh run dyan now*
 pen/**gāngbǐ**/*gahng bee*
 pencil/**qiānbǐ**/*chyan bee*
 percentage/**bǎifēnbǐ**/*bye fun bee*
 perhaps/**kěnéng**/*kuh nuhng*
 person/**rén**/*run*
 pharmacy/**yàofáng**/*yaow fahng*
 photo/**zhàopiàn**/*jaow pyan*
 pick up/**ná**/*nah*
 pill/**yàowán**/*yaow wahn*
 PIN/**mimǎ**/*mee mah*
 pint/**pīntuō**/*peen twaw*
 place/**difāng**/*dee fahng*
 platform/**zhàntái**/*jahn tye*
 please/**qǐng**/*cheeng*
 police/**jǐngchá**/*jeeng chah*
 police station/**jǐngchájú**/*jeeng chah jyew*
 popular/**liúxíng**/*lyo sheeng*
 post office/**yóujú**/*yo jyew*
 postponed/**tuǐchí**/*tway chir*

pray; week/**lǐbài**/*lee bye*
 PRC dollar/**rénmínbì**/*run meen bee*
 presentation/**yǎnshì**/*yan shir*
 president (of company)/**zǒngcái**/*dzoong tsye*
 pretty/**hǎokàn**/*how kahn*
 pretty/**piàoliàng**/*pyaow lyahng*
 price/**jiàgé**/*jyah guh*
 problem/**wèntí**/*one tee*
 professor/**jiàoshòu**/*jyaow show*
 public bus/**gōnggòng qìchē**/*goong goong chee chuh*
 public telephone/**gōngyòng diànhuà**/*goong yoong dyan huah*

Q

quality/**zhìliàng**/*jir lyahng*
 quiet/**ānjìng**/*ahn jeeng*

R

rain/**yǔ**/*yew*
 raincoat/**yǔyī**/*yew ee*
 rats!; what a shame/**zāogāo**/*dzaow gaow*
 read; to see/**kàn**/*kahn*
 really; truly/**zhēn**/*juhn*
 receipt/**shōujù**/*show jyew*
 receive/**shōudào**/*show daow*
 reception desk/**fàndiàn qiántái**/*fahn dyan chyan tye*
 receptionist/**qiántái fúwùyuán**/*chyan tye foo woo ywan*
 refund/**tuìkuǎn**/*tway kwahn*
 remote control/**yáokòng qì**/*yaow koong chee*
 rent/**zūfèi**/*dzoo fay*
 rent/**chūzū**/*choo dzoo*
 reside/**zhù**/*joo*
 resolve; solve/**jiějué**/*jyeh jweh*
 rest/**xiūxi**/*shyo she*
 restaurant/**cānguǎn**/*tsahn gwahn*
 restaurant/**fàndiàn**/*fahn dyan*

return (come back)/**huílái**/*hway lye*
 return (merchandise)/**tuihuí**/*tway hway*
 rice/**mífàn**/*mee fahn*
 right/**yòu**/*yo*
 road/**lù**/*loo*
 room/**fángjiān**/*fahng jyan*
 roommate/**tóngwū**/*toong woo*
 round-trip ticket/**lái huí piào**/*lye hway pyaow*
 rush hour/**gāofēngqī**/*gaow fuhng chee*

S

same/**yíyàng**/*ee yahng*
 Saturday/**xīngqīliù**/*sheeng chee lyo*
 scary/**kēpà**/*kuh pah*
 schedule/**shíjiānbǐào**/*shir jyan byaow*
 school/**xuéxiào**/*shweh shyaow*
 search/**jiǎnsuǒ**/*jyan swaw*
 seat belt/**ānquándài**/*ahn chwan dye*
 secretary/**mishū**/*mee shoo*
 see a doctor/**kànbing**/*kahn beeng*
 see you later/**yǐhuǐ jiàn**/*ee hwar jyan*
 see; a classifier/**jiàn**/*jyan*
 self/**zìjǐ**/*dzuh jee*
 sell/**mài**/*my*
 send/**sòng**/*soong*
 server/**fúwùqì**/*foo woo chee*
 several; how many/**jǐ**/*jee*
 shoes/**xiézi**/*shyeh dzuh*
 short/**ǎi**/*eye*
 should/**yīnggāi**/*eeng guy*
 sightsee/**yóulǎn**/*yo lahn*
 Singapore dollar/**Xīng bì**/*sheeng bee*
 skirt/**qúnzi**/*chwun dzuh*
 sleep/**shuìjiào**/*shway jyaow*
 slide projector/**huàndēngjī**/*hwahn duhng jee*
 slow/**màn**/*mahn*
 small/**xiǎo**/*shyaow*
 small talk/**xiánliáo**/*shyan lyaow*
 soap/**féizào**/*fay dzaow*

software/**ruǎnjiàn**/*rwahn jyan*
 son/**érzi**/*are dzuh*
 soup/**tāng**/*tahng*
 speak/**shuō**/*shwaw*
 special/**tèsè**/*tuh suh*
 spouse (used only in the PRC)/**àirén**/*eye run*
 start/**kāishǐ**/*kye shir*
 store/**shāngdiàn**/*shahng dyan*
 straight/**zhí**/*jir*
 strange/**qíguài**/*chee gwye*
 street/**jiē**/*jyeh*
 student/**xuéshēng**/*shweh shung*
 study/**xuéxí**/*shweh she*
 subway/**ditiě**/*dee tyeh*
 suggest; suggestion/**jiànyì**/*jyan ee*
 suitcase/**xiāngzi**/*shyahng dzuh*
 suite/**tàojiān**/*taow jyan*
 Sunday/**xīngqītiān**/*sheeng chee tyan*
 sunglasses/**tàiyáng yǎnjìng**/*tye yahng yan jeeng*
 supermarket/**chāojí shìchǎng**/*chaow jee shir chahng*
 sweep/**cá**/*tsah*

T

table/**zhuōzi**/*jaw dzuh*
 Taiwan/**Táiwān**/*tye wahn*
 take a vacation/**fàng jià**/*fahng jyah*
 take medicine/**chī yào**/*chir yaow*
 take off (airplane)/**qífēi**/*chee fay*
 take pictures/**zhàoxiàng**/*jaow shyahng*
 talk/**jiǎng**/*jyahng*
 taxi/**chūzū chē**/*choo dzoo chuh*
 tea/**chá**/*chah*
 teach/**jiāo**/*jyaow*
 teacher/**lǎoshī**/*laow shir*
 telephone/**diànhuà**/*dyan hwah*
 telephone book/**diànhuà hàomǎbù**/*dyan hwah how mah boo*

telephone number/**diànhuà hàomǎ**/*dyan hwah how mah*
 tell/**gàosù**/*gaow soo*
 thanks/**xièxiè**/*shyeh shyeh*
 that/**nà**/*nah*
 that's awful/**zāogāo**/*dzaow gaow*
 they; them/**tāmen**/*tah mun*
 thief/**zéi**/*dzay*
 thing/**dōngxi**/*doong she*
 think/**xiǎng**/*shyahng*
 thirsty/**kě**/*kuh*
 Thursday/**xīngqī**/*sheeng chee suh*
 ticket/**piào**/*pyaow*
 time/**shíhòu**/*shir ho*
 time (midnight to dawn)/**qīngzǎo**/*cheeng dzaow*
 time; size medium/**zhōng**/*joong*
 tip/**xiǎofèi**/*shyaow fay*
 tired/**lèi**/*lay*
 today/**jīntiān**/*jin tyan*
 together/**yìqǐ**/*ee chee*
 toilet/**cèsuǒ**/*tsuh swaw*
 toilet paper/**wèishēngzhǐ**/*way shung jir*
 tomorrow/**míngtiān**/*meeng tyan*
 too bad; unfortunately/**kěxǐ**/*kuh she*
 too much/**tài**/*tye*
 toothbrush/**yáshuā**/*yah shwah*
 tour/**lǚyóu**/*lyew yo*
 tour group/**guāngguāng tuán**/*gwahng gwahng twahn*
 towel/**máojīn**/*maow jeen*
 trade show/**màoyì zhǎnxiǎohuì**/*maow ee jahn shyaow hway*
 train station/**huǒchē zhàn**/*hwaw chuh jahn*
 transfer/**zhuǎn**/*jwan*
 transparency/**tóuyǐngpiàn**/*toe eeng pyan*
 transportation/**jiāotōng**/*jyaow toong*

travel/**lǔxíng**/lyew sheeng
 travel agency/**lǔxíngshè**/lyew sheeng
 shuh
 travel agent/**lǔxíng dàilǐrén**/lyew sheeng
 dye lee run
 traveler's checks/**lǔxíng zhipiào**/lyew
 sheeng jir pyaow
 Tuesday/**xīngqī'èr**/sheeng chee are
 turn/**zhuǎn**/jwan
 TV/**diànshì**/dyan shir

U

U.S. dollar/**Měiyuán**/may ywan
 umbrella/**yǔsǎn**/yew sahn
 upstairs/**lóushàng**/low shahng
 use/**yòng**/yoong
 user name/**yònghù xìngmíng**/yoong hoo
 sheeng meeng
 usually; often/**píngcháng**/peeng chahng

V

vacant/**kòngwèi**/koong way
 vacation day/**jiàri**/jyah ir
 vegetarian dishes/**sùcài**/soo tsyé
 video recorder/**lùxiàngjī**/loo shyahng jee
 Vietnam/**Yuènnán**/yweh nahn
 visa/**qiānzhèng**/chyan juhng
 voice/**shēngyīn**/shung een
 voicemail/**yǒu shēng yóujiàn**/yo shung yo
 jyan

W

wait/**děng**/duhng
 walk/**zǒu**/dzoe
 wallet/**qiánbāo**/chyan baow
 want; medicine/**yào**/yaow
 warm/**nuǎnhuó**/nuan hwaw

wash/**xǐ**/she
 we; us (informal)/**zánmen**/dzahn mun
 we; us/**wōmen**/waw mun
 wear/**chuān**/chwahn
 weather/**tiānqì**/tyan chee
 Web site/**wǎngzhàn**/wahng jahn
 Wednesday/**xīngqīsān**/sheeng chee sahn
 weekend/**zhōumò**/joe maw
 welcome/**huānyíng**/hwahn yeeng
 Western food/**xīcān**/she tsahn
 what/**shénme**/shummuh
 where/**nǎr**/nar
 which/**nǎ**/nah
 who; whom/**shéi**/shay
 why/**wèishénme**/way shummuh
 wife/**qīzi**/chee dzuh
 wife (used mostly in Taiwan)/**tàitai**/tye tye
 win/**yíng**/eeng
 wine; alcohol/**jiǔ**/jyoe
 withdraw money/**qǔ qián**/chyew chyan
 work; job/**gōngzuò**/goong dzwaw
 work out/**jiànshēn yùndòng**/jyan shun
 yewn doong

Y

yes; is/**shì**/shir
 yesterday/**zuótiān**/dzwaw tyan
 you/**nǐ**/nee
 you (plural)/**nǐmen**/nee mun
 you (polite)/**nín**/neen
 you're welcome/**bú kèqì**/boo kuh chee
 young/**niánqīng**/nyan cheeng

Appendix C

Answer Key

The following are all of the answers to the Fun & Games quizzes.

Chapter 2

wū, qī, shí, sānshí, liùshí, jiǔshí

Chapter 3

hǎo, míngzi, Déguórén, bàofēngxuē, jiàn

1. Hǎo jiǔ méi jiàn.
2. Wǎn ān.
3. Zǎo.
4. Nǎr de huà.
5. Hěn gāoxìng jiàndào nǐ.
6. Yílù píng'ān.

Chapter 4

yīshēng: doctor

lǎoshī: teacher

fēixíngyuán: pilot

zúqiú duìyuán: soccer player

Chapter 5

- A. píngguō (apple)
- B. júzi (orange)
- C. shēngcài (lettuce)
- D. fānqié (tomato)

- E. hú luóbo (carrot)
- F. yángcōng (onion)
- G. xīlánhuā (broccoli)

Chapter 6

- A. Zhūbǎo diàn: jewelry store
- B. Cài shìchǎng: food market
- B. Huādiàn: flower shop
- D. Yàofáng: drugstore
- E. Wánjù diàn: toy store

Chapter 7

- 9:15 a.m.: zǎoshàng jiǔ diǎn yíkè
- next month: xiàge yuè
- midnight: bàn yè
- two weeks ago: liǎngge xīngqī yǐqián
- 4:30 p.m.: xiàwǔ sì diǎn bàn

Chapter 8

- A. dǎ pīngpōngqiú
- B. tán gāngqín
- C. dǎ tàijíquán
- D. chuī chángdí
- E. pá shān

Chapter 9

- Just a moment.: Shāodēng
- Is she at home?: Tā zài ma?
- Hello.: Wéi?
- Sorry, you dialed the wrong number.: Duìbùqǐ, nǐ bōcuòle hàomǎ.
- Please leave a message.: Qǐng nǐ liú yíge huà.

Chapter 10

1. yùshì: bathroom
2. wòshì: bedroom
3. fàntīng: dining room
4. tānzi: blanket
5. yángtái: balcony
6. zhěntóu: pillow
7. bèizi: quilt
8. shūzhuō: desk
9. shāfā: sofa

Chapter 11

- A. zìdòng tíkuǎnjī (ATM machine)
- B. chūnàyuán (bank teller)
- C. yínháng (bank)
- D. hùzhào (passport)
- E. xìnyòng kǎ (credit card)
- F. qiánbāo (wallet)

Chapter 12

Xuéxiào zài běibiān (or běimiàn). The school is to the north.

Yóujú zài dōngbiān (or dōngmiàn). The post office is to the east.

Yínháng zài nánbiān (or nánmiàn). The bank is to the south.

Fángzi zài xībiān (or xīmiàn). The house is to the west.

Chapter 13

1. fángjiān
2. kèmǎn
3. qǐchuáng
4. zhāngdàn
5. tuífáng

Chapter 14

- A. fēijī
- B. huǒchē
- C. dìtiě
- D. gōnggòng qìchē
- E. chūzū chē

Chapter 15

- 1. shǐěr lán
- 2. liù yuè bā hào
- 3. fó miào
- 4. yáshuā
- 5. kāi wǎn xiào.

Chapter 16

- 1. gēbō: arm
- 2. jiānbǎng: shoulder
- 3. shǒuzhǐ: finger
- 4. tuǐ: leg
- 5. bózi: neck
- 6. xiōngqiāng: chest
- 7. yǎnjīng: eye
- 8. ěrduō: ear
- 9. bízi: nose

Appendix D

About the CD

The following is a list of tracks that appear on the book's audio CD.

Chapter 1

Track 1: Practicing Chinese initials

Track 2: Practicing Chinese tones

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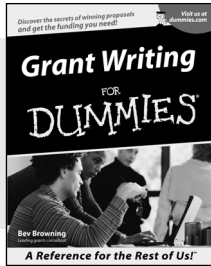
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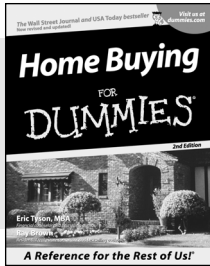
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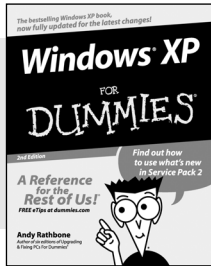
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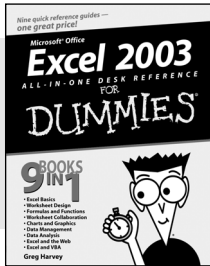
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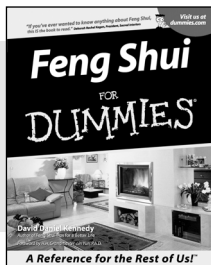
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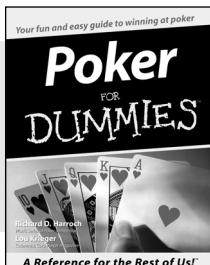
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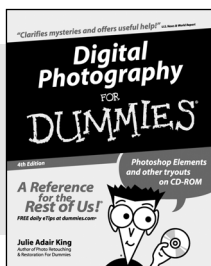
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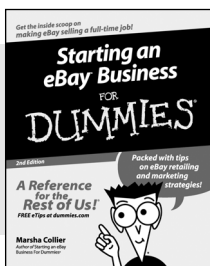
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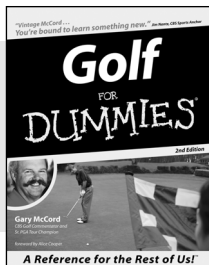
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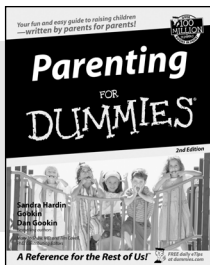
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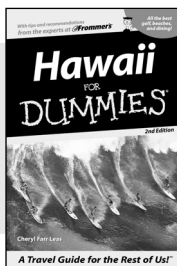
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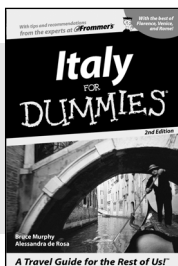
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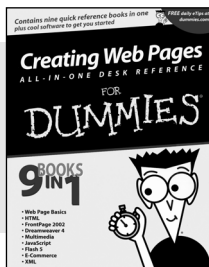
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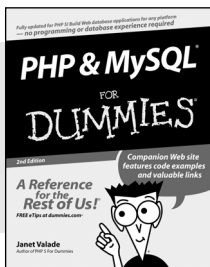
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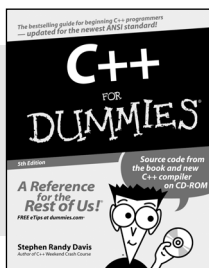
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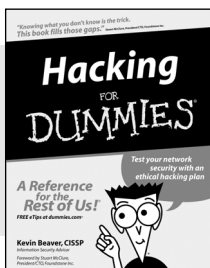
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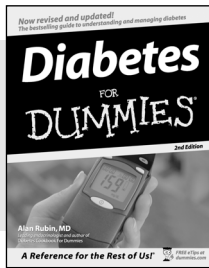


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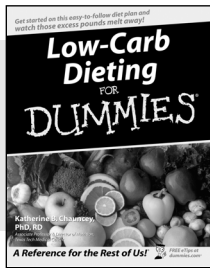
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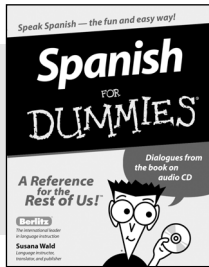
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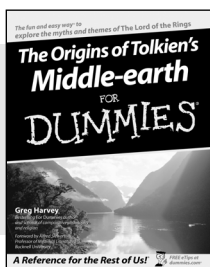
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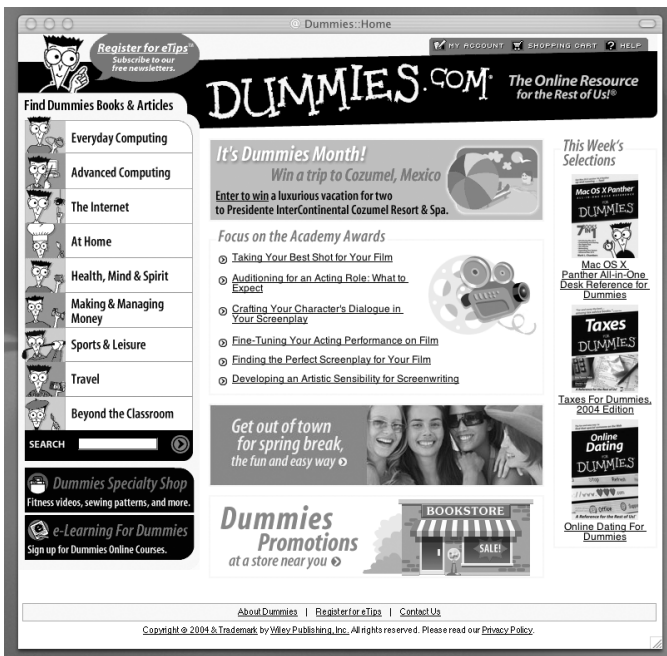


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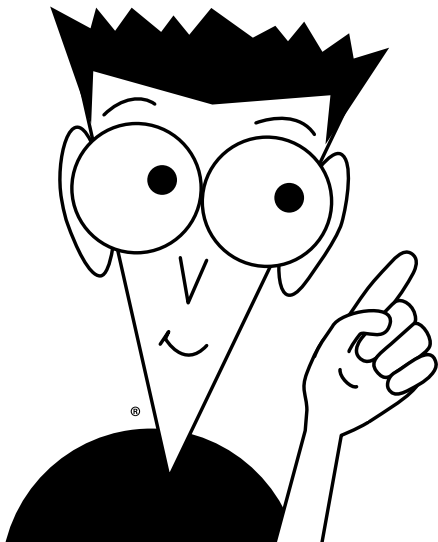
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