

Sounds & Tones:

The hardest thing about writing Chinese is remembering hundreds of characters! The hardest thing about speaking Chinese is debatable between the grammar and the tones. Of course, the CDs or audio cassettes repeat the 1000 sentences contained in this book, and as you listen and follow along in the text, you learn grammar, word order, how to pronounce words and tone them, too.

Mandarin Chinese has 4 specific tones and 1 neutral tone, also called the “Natural Tone,” which equals 5 tones. Since the Natural Tone is rarely used as well as actually having no real tone mark, there are essentially 4 tones. Once you learn the 4 tone marks you should mentally note the tone for each word while listening to the Chinese speaker. As skeptical as some English speakers may be in accepting this, you oftentimes will not be understood by Chinese people unless you correctly tone your words. Sometimes the same spelling results in 4 different words according to how you tone the spelling (the word). The best example of this is the Pinyin word and sound, “mai.” “Mǎi” 3rd Tone means to “buy.” “Mài” 4th Tone means to “sell.” So are you buying or selling? That depends on how you tone it! So the importance of learning this section, Sounds & Tones, cannot be overemphasized! Although you will be inundated with sounds and tones in the hundreds of words and sentences which follow in the textbook and on the talking CDs or audio cassettes --- if you are serious about learning Chinese, you should repeat this section over and over until you really have these sounds and tones down! These are the “syllables” of Chinese. They are the building blocks for every Chinese word you use. By learning these first you expedite your learning process so that you can concentrate more on memorizing vocabulary, and then on using that vocabulary in correct sentence syntax: grammar.

Instructions: To prevent you from getting lost in this section (which would be easy to do because so many of these sounds are similar), the male American speaker spells the beginning syllable at the start of each set. This makes it easy for you to differentiate when a new set starts. Simply listen for the male voice. To discern which set the CD or tape is on, simply find the beginning spelling of any set. “B - e - i” for example makes it easy to locate the “ay” group in the textbook. The Chinese female speaker goes through each set once. The Natural Tone, when represented, is said first. Then 1st Tone through 4th Tone. Any tone not represented of course is not said. Sometimes a sound has only one tone, such as 4th Tone, so pay attention and mentally-note what tones go with what syllables. In Mandarin, each syllable has it’s own spelling and sound - different from other syllables. After the Chinese female speaker pronounces and tones each syllable, you should repeat the pronunciation and the tone as closely as possible to how she pronounced it, to how she toned it.

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
a	a	ā			à
b-a	ba	bā	bá	bǎ	bà
c-a		cā			
d-a		dā	dá	dǎ	dà
f-a	fa	fā	fá	fǎ	fà

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
g-a		gā	gá		
h-a		hā	há	hǎ	
l-a	la	lā	lá	lǎ	là
m-a	ma	mā	má	mǎ	mà
n-a	na		ná	nǎ	nà
p-a		pā	pá		pà
s-a		sā		sǎ	sà
t-a		tā		tǎ	tà
w-a	wa	wā	wá	wǎ	wà
y-a	ya	yā	yá	yǎ	yà
z-a		zā	zá		
c-h-a		chā	chá	chǎ	chà
s-h-a		shā	shá	shǎ	shà
z-h-a		zhā	zhá	zhǎ	zhà

.....

o		ō	ó	ǒ	
b-o	bo	bō	bó	bǒ	bò
f-o			fó		
m-o		mō	mó	mǒ	mò
p-o		pō	pó	pǒ	pò

.....

e		ē	é	ě	è
c-e					cè

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
d-e	de		dé		
g-e		gē	gé	gě	gè
h-e		hē	hé		hè
k-e		kē	ké	kě	kè
l-e	le				
n-e	ne				nè
r-e				rě	rè
s-e					sè
t-e		tē			tè
y-e		yē	yé	yě	yè
z-e			zé		zè
c-h-e		chē		chě	chè
s-h-e		shē		shě	shè
z-h-e		zhē	zhé	zhě	zhè



a-i		āi	ái	ǎi	ài
b-a-i		bāi	bái	bǎi	bài
c-a-i		cāi	cái	cǎi	cài
d-a-i		dāi		dǎi	dài
g-a-i		gāi		gǎi	gài
h-a-i		hāi	hái	hǎi	hài

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
k-a-i		kāi		kǎi	
l-a-i			lái		lài
m-a-i			mái	mǎi	mài
n-a-i				nǎi	nài
p-a-i		pāi	pái		pài
s-a-i		sāi			sài
t-a-i		tāi	tái	tǎi	tài
w-a-i		wāi			wài
z-a-i		zāi		zǎi	zài
c-h-a-i		chāi	chái		
s-h-a-i		shāi		shǎi	shài
z-h-a-i		zhāi	zhái	zhǎi	zhài



b-e-i		bēi		běi	bèi
d-e-i				děi	
f-e-i		fēi	féi	fěi	fèi
g-e-i				gěi	
h-e-i		hēi			
l-e-i		lēi	léi	lěi	lèi
m-e-i			méi	měi	mèi
n-e-i				něi	nèi
p-e-i		pēi	péi		

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
w-e-i		wēi	wéi	wěi	wèi
z-e-i			zéi		
s-h-e-i			shéi		
z-h-e-i					zhèi

a-o		āo	áo	ǎo	ào
b-a-o		bāo	báo	bǎo	bào
c-a-o		cāo	cáo	cǎo	
d-a-o		dāo		dǎo	dào
g-a-o		gāo		gǎo	gào
h-a-o			háo	hǎo	hào
k-a-o				kǎo	kào
l-a-o		lāo	láo	lǎo	lào
m-a-o		māo	máo	mǎo	mào
n-a-o			náo	nǎo	nào
p-a-o		pāo	páo	pǎo	pào
r-a-o			ráo	rǎo	rào
s-a-o		sāo		sǎo	sào
t-a-o		tāo	táo	tǎo	tào
y-a-o		yāo	yáo	yǎo	yào
z-a-o		zāo		zǎo	zào
c-h-a-o		chāo	cháo	chǎo	chào

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
s-h-a-o		shāo	sháo	shǎo	shào
z-h-a-o		zhāo	zháo	zhǎo	zhào
.....					
o-u		ōu		ǒu	òu
c-o-u					còu
d-o-u		dōu		dǒu	dòu
f-o-u			fóu	fǒu	
g-o-u		gōu		gǒu	gòu
h-o-u			hóu	hǒu	hòu
l-o-u	lou	lōu	lóu		lòu
m-o-u			móu	mǒu	mòu
p-o-u		pōu		pǒu	
r-o-u			róu	rǒu	ròu
s-o-u		sōu		sǒu	sòu
t-o-u		tōu	tóu	tǒu	tòu
y-o-u		yōu	yóu	yǒu	yòu
z-o-u	zou	zōu		zǒu	zòu
c-h-o-u		chōu	chóu	chǒu	chòu
s-h-o-u		shōu		shǒu	shòu
z-h-o-u		zhōu	zhóu		
.....					
a-n		ān			àn
b-a-n		bān		bǎn	bàn

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
c-a-n		cān	cán	cǎn	càn
d-a-n		dān	dán	dǎn	dàn
f-a-n		fān	fán	fǎn	fàn
g-a-n		gān	gán	gǎn	gàn
h-a-n		hān	hán	hǎn	hàn
k-a-n		kān	kán	kǎn	kàn
l-a-n			lán	lǎn	làn
m-a-n			mán	mǎn	màn
n-a-n			nán	nǎn	nàn
p-a-n		pān	pán		pàn
r-a-n			rán	rǎn	
s-a-n		sān		sǎn	sàn
t-a-n		tān	tán	tǎn	tàn
w-a-n		wān	wán	wǎn	wàn
y-a-n		yān	yán	yǎn	yàn
z-a-n		zān	zán		zàn
c-h-a-n		chān	chán	chǎn	chàn
s-h-a-n	shan	shān	shán	shǎn	shàn
z-h-a-n	zhan	zhān	zhán	zhǎn	zhàn
.....					
e-n		ēn			
b-e-n	ben	bēn		běn	bèn
c-e-n		cēn	cén		

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
f-e-n		fēn	fén	fěn	fèn
g-e-n		gēn		gěn	gèn
h-e-n			hén	hěn	hèn
k-e-n				kěn	
m-e-n	men	mēn	mén		mèn
n-e-n					nèn
p-e-n		pēn	pén		
r-e-n			rén	rěn	rèn
s-e-n		sēn			
w-e-n		wēn	wén	wěn	wèn
z-e-n		zēn		zěn	
c-h-e-n		chēn	chén		chèn
s-h-e-n		shēn		shěn	shèn
z-h-e-n		zhēn		zhěn	zhèn
.....					
a-n-g		āng	áng		àng
b-a-n-g	bang	bāng		bǎng	bàng
c-a-n-g		cāng	cáng		
d-a-n-g		dāng		dǎng	dàng
f-a-n-g		fāng	fáng	fǎng	fàng
g-a-n-g		gāng		gǎng	gàng
h-a-n-g			háng		hàng
k-a-n-g		kāng	káng	kǎng	kàng

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
l-a-n-g			láng	lǎng	làng
m-a-n-g			máng	mǎng	
n-a-n-g			náng	nǎng	
p-a-n-g		pāng	páng		pàng
r-a-n-g		rāng	ráng	rǎng	ràng
s-a-n-g		sāng		sǎng	sàng
t-a-n-g		tāng	táng	tǎng	tàng
w-a-n-g		wāng	wáng	wǎng	wàng
y-a-n-g		yāng	yáng	yǎng	yàng
z-a-n-g		zāng			zàng
c-h-a-n-g		chāng	cháng	chǎng	chàng
s-h-a-n-g		shāng		shǎng	shàng
z-h-a-n-g		zhāng		zhǎng	zhàng
.....					
b-e-n-g		bēng	béng	běng	bèng
c-e-n-g			céng		
d-e-n-g		dēng		děng	dèng
f-e-n-g		fēng	féng	fěng	fèng
g-e-n-g		gēng		gěng	gèng
h-e-n-g		hēng	héng		hèng
k-e-n-g		kēng		kěng	
l-e-n-g	leng	lēng	léng	lěng	lèng

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
m-e-n-g		mēng	méng	měng	mèng
n-e-n-g			néng		nèng
p-e-n-g		pēng	péng	pěng	pèng
r-e-n-g		rēng	réng		
s-e-n-g		sēng			
t-e-n-g			téng		
w-e-n-g		wēng		wěng	wèng
z-e-n-g		zēng			zèng
c-h-e-n-g		chēng	chéng	chěng	chèng
s-h-e-n-g		shēng	shéng	shěng	shèng
z-h-e-n-g		zhēng		zhěng	zhèng

c-i		cī	cí	cǐ	cì
r-i					rì
s-i		sī		sǐ	sì
z-i		zī		zǐ	zì
c-h-i		chī	chí	chǐ	chì
s-h-i	shi	shī	shí	shǐ	shì
z-h-i		zhī	zhí	zhǐ	zhì

b-i		bī	bí	bǐ	bì
d-i		dī	dí	dǐ	dì

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
j-i		jī	jí	jǐ	jì
l-i	li	lī	lí	lǐ	lì
m-i		mī	mí	mǐ	mì
n-i			ní	nǐ	nì
p-i		pī	pí	pǐ	pì
q-i		qī	qí	qǐ	qì
t-i		tī	tí	tǐ	tì
x-i		xī	xí	xǐ	xì
y-i		yī	yí	yǐ	yì

j-i-a		jiā	jiá	jiǎ	jià
l-i-a				liǎ	
q-i-a		qiā	qiá	qiǎ	qià
x-i-a		xiā	xiá		xià

b-i-e		biē	bié	biě	biè
d-i-e		diē	dié		
j-i-e		jiē	jié	jiě	jiè
l-i-e		liē	lié	liě	liè
m-i-e		miē			miè
n-i-e		niē			niè
p-i-e		piē		piě	

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
q-i-e		qiē	qié	qiě	qiè
t-i-e		tiē		tiě	
x-i-e		xiē	xié	xiě	xiè

b-i-a-o		biāo		biǎo	
d-i-a-o		diāo			diào
j-i-a-o		jiāo	jiáo	jiǎo	jiào
l-i-a-o		liāo	liáo	liǎo	liào
m-i-a-o		miāo	miáo	miǎo	miào
n-i-a-o				niǎo	niào
p-i-a-o		piāo	piáo	piǎo	piào
q-i-a-o		qiāo	qiáo	qiǎo	qiào
t-i-a-o		tiāo	tiáo	tiǎo	tiào
x-i-a-o		xiāo	xiáo	xiǎo	xiào

d-i-u		diū			
j-i-u		jiū		jiǔ	jiù
l-i-u		liū	liú	liǔ	liù
m-i-u					miù
n-i-u		niū	niú	niǔ	niù
q-i-u		qiū	qiú	qiǔ	
x-i-u		xiū		xiǔ	xiù

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
b-i-a-n		biān		biǎn	biàn
d-i-a-n		diān		diǎn	diàn
j-i-a-n		jiān		jiǎn	jiàn
l-i-a-n			lián	liǎn	liàn
m-i-a-n			mián	miǎn	miàn
n-i-a-n		niān	nián	niǎn	niàn
p-i-a-n		piān	pián		piàn
q-i-a-n		qiān	qián	qiǎn	qiàn
t-i-a-n		tiān	tián	tiǎn	
x-i-a-n		xiān	xián	xiǎn	xiàn

b-i-n		bīn			bìn
j-i-n		jīn		jǐn	jìn
l-i-n			lín	lǐn	lìn
m-i-n			mín	mǐn	
n-i-n			nín		
p-i-n		pīn	pín	pǐn	pìn
q-i-n		qīn	qín	qǐn	qìn
x-i-n		xīn			xìn
y-i-n		yīn	yín	yǐn	yìn

j-i-a-n-g		jiāng	jiáng	jiǎng	jiàng
l-i-a-n-g		liáng	liǎng	liàng	

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
n-i-a-n-g			niáng		niàng
q-i-a-n-g		qiāng	qiáng	qiǎng	qiàng
x-i-a-n-g		xiāng	xiáng	xiǎng	xiàng

b-i-n-g		bīng		bǐng	bìng
d-i-n-g		dīng		dǐng	dìng
j-i-n-g		jīng		jǐng	jìng
l-i-n-g		līng	líng	lǐng	lìng
m-i-n-g			míng	mǐng	mìng
n-i-n-g			níng	nǐng	nìng
p-i-n-g		pīng	píng		
q-i-n-g		qīng	qíng	qǐng	qìng
t-i-n-g		tīng	tíng	tǐng	
x-i-n-g		xīng	xíng	xǐng	xìng
y-i-n-g		yīng	yíng	yǐng	yìng

b-u				bǔ	bù
c-u		cū	cú		cù
d-u		dū	dú	dǔ	dù
f-u		fū	fú	fǔ	fù
g-u		gū		gǔ	gù
h-u		hū	hú	hǔ	hù

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
k-u		kū		kǔ	kù
l-u			lú	lǔ	lù
m-u			mú	mǔ	mù
n-u			nú	nǔ	nù
p-u		pū	pú	pǔ	pù
r-u			rú	rǔ	rù
s-u		sū	sú		sù
t-u		tū	tú	tǔ	tù
w-u		wū	wú	wǔ	wù
x-u		xū	xú	xǔ	xù
y-u		yū	yú	yǔ	yù
z-u		zū	zú	zǔ	
c-h-u		chū	chú	chǔ	chù
s-h-u		shū	shú	shǔ	shù
z-h-u		zhū	zhú	zhǔ	zhù
.....					
g-u-a		guā		guǎ	guà
h-u-a		huā	huá		huà
k-u-a		kuā		kuǎ	kuà
w-a	wa	wā	wá	wǎ	wà
s-h-u-a		shuā			shuà
z-h-u-a		zhuā		zhuǎ	zhuà
.....					

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
c-u-o		cuō	cuó		cuò
d-u-o		duō	duó	duǒ	duò
g-u-o		guō	guó	guǒ	guò
h-u-o		huō	huó	huǒ	huò
k-u-o					kuò
l-u-o		luō	luó	luǒ	luò
n-u-o			nuó	nuǒ	nuò
r-u-o					ruò
s-u-o		suō	suó	suǒ	
t-u-o		tuō	tuó	tuǒ	tuò
z-u-o		zuō	zuó	zuǒ	zuò
c-h-u-o		chuō			chuò
s-h-u-o		shuō			shuò
z-h-u-o		zhuō	zhuó	zhuǒ	zhuò

g-u-a-i		guāi	guái	guǎi	guài
h-u-a-i			huái		huài
k-u-a-i				kuǎi	kuài
w-a-i		wāi			wài
c-h-u-a-i				chuǎi	
s-h-u-a-i		shuāi	shuái	shuǎi	shuài

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
c-u-i		cuī		cuǐ	cuì
d-u-i		duī			duì
g-u-i		guī		guǐ	guì
h-u-i		huī	huí	huǐ	huì
k-u-i		kuī	kuí	kuǐ	kuì
r-u-i				ruǐ	ruì
s-u-i		suī	suí	suǐ	suì
t-u-i		tuī	tuí	tuǐ	tuì
z-u-i				zuǐ	zuì
s-h-u-i				shuǐ	shuì
z-h-u-i		zhuī			zhuì

c-u-a-n					cuàn
d-u-a-n		duān		duǎn	duàn
g-u-a-n		guān		guǎn	guàn
h-u-a-n		huān	huán	huǎn	huàn
k-u-a-n		kuān	kuán	kuǎn	
l-u-a-n			luán	luǎn	luàn
n-u-a-n				nuǎn	
r-u-a-n				ruǎn	
s-u-a-n		suān			suàn
t-u-a-n		tuān	tuán		

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
y-u-a-n		yuān	yuán	yuǎn	yuàn
z-u-a-n		zuān		zuǎn	zuàn
c-h-u-a-n		chuān	chuán	chuǎn	chuàn
s-h-u-a-n		shuān			shuàn
z-h-u-a-n		zhuān		zhuǎn	zhuàn

c-u-n		cūn	cún	cǔn	cùn
d-u-n		dūn		dǔn	dùn
g-u-n				gǔn	gùn
h-u-n		hūn	hún		hùn
k-u-n		kūn		kǔn	kùn
l-u-n		lūn	lún		lùn
r-u-n					rùn
s-u-n		sūn		sǔn	
t-u-n		tūn	tún		tùn
z-u-n		zūn			
c-h-u-n		chūn	chún	chǔn	
s-h-u-n				shǔn	shùn
z-h-u-n		zhūn		zhǔn	

g-u-a-n-g		guāng		guǎng	guàng
h-u-a-n-g		huāng	huáng	huǎng	huàng
k-u-a-n-g		kuāng	kuáng		kuàng

<u>English</u>	<u>Natural Tone</u>	<u>1st Tone</u>	<u>2nd Tone</u>	<u>3rd Tone</u>	<u>4th Tone</u>
c-h-u-a-n-g		chuāng	chuáng	chuǎng	chuàng
s-h-u-a-n-g		shuāng		shuǎng	
z-h-u-a-n-g		zhuāng			zhuàng

c-o-n-g		cōng	cóng		
d-o-n-g		dōng		dǒng	dòng
g-o-n-g		gōng		gǒng	gòng
h-o-n-g		hōng	hóng	hǒng	
k-o-n-g		kōng		kǒng	kòng
l-o-n-g			lóng	lǒng	lòng
n-o-n-g			nóng		nòng
r-o-n-g			róng	rǒng	
s-o-n-g	sōng			sǒng	sòng
t-o-n-g	tōng		tóng	tǒng	tòng
z-o-n-g	zōng			zǒng	zòng
c-h-o-n-g	chōng	chóng		chǒng	chòng
z-h-o-n-g	zhōng			zhǒng	zhòng

l-u			lú	lǚ	lù
n-u				nǚ	nù
l-u-e					lùe
n-u-e					nùe