

Getting started with Chinese 2



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About this free course

This free course is an adapted extract from the Open University course developed from extract parts of LXC002 - *Beginners Chinese 2: 开始吧 kāishǐ ba!* - <http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/short-courses/lxc002>.

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You can experience this free course as it was originally designed on OpenLearn, the home of free learning from The Open University –

[Getting started with Chinese 2](#)

There you'll also be able to track your progress via your activity record, which you can use to demonstrate your learning.

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Introduction

Introduction

你们好！*Nǐmen hǎo!*

Welcome to *Getting started with Chinese 2!*

This two-week course will teach you how to ask questions using ‘what’ and ‘where’, use time expressions in the correct order and speak about different activities such as watching TV and learning Chinese. Little by little you will improve your ability to make more sophisticated conversations and to understand more complex language in a variety of different scenarios.

Each week comprises 3–4 hours of interactive activities, explanations, exercises and tips about language learning. It is a good idea to keep notes either on paper or electronically in your preferred digital device so that you can keep track of your progress. At the end of both weeks you will have a quiz with 10 questions to revise what you have been learning and check your progress. Each week also has consolidation and expansion activities, and you will be encouraged to build your own phrase book little by little.

One important thing to do before you start is to take some time to decide how you will allocate your time to your studies. Learning Chinese, like learning any language, is a gradual process; it’s often described as a ‘marathon, not a sprint.’ Little and often is the best approach, so if possible, spread your 3–4 hours over the week, rather than devoting one whole afternoon or evening. This will give you plenty of opportunities to revisit vocabulary and language structures, to revise quickly what you did last time and above all, to practise and consolidate. This is the best way to learn vocabulary and perfect your pronunciation and tones. If you are keen to learn characters, you can make paper flashcards or use some apps such as Quizlet to make digital flashcards.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- refer to different languages and use different terms such as China, Chinese books, Chinese people and Chinese language
- talk about activities, such as watching TV and learning Chinese
- recognise where time expressions should be placed in sentences
- ask questions with *shénme* 什么 (‘what’), *nǎr* 哪儿 (‘where’) and understand the different usages of *dōu* 都 (‘all, both’)
- ask a choice question with *háishì* 还是 (‘or’).

Open Centre for Languages and Cultures

This course has been developed from extract parts of [LXC002 - Beginners Chinese 2: 开始吧 kāishǐ ba!](#). The Open University has launched a dedicated learning centre called [The Open Centre for Languages and Cultures](#). OpenLearn is supporting this project and is providing extracted units of all courses on The Open Centre in our dedicated [Language and Cultures Hub](#).

The Open Centre for Languages and Cultures is the exciting new home for non-accredited language and intercultural communication short courses. You can study a wide range of language and language related subjects with us anywhere in the world, in any time zone, whatever your motivation – leisure, professional development or academic.

It's the one stop shop for engaging with languages, professional communication and intercultural dialogue.

Our short courses allow us to be agile and responsive to the needs of learners who want to be part of a global society. We offer non-accredited short courses in a range of subjects including modern languages and languages for business and the workplace. We are also leading the way in developing short courses for academic research methods and pre-sessional English with IELTS, which will be available for registration in due course.

The Open Centre for Languages and Cultures is an international leader in online language learning and intercultural communications, built on our pioneering pedagogy and research.

What makes the Open Centre different?

- The OU is the leader in online learning and teaching with a heritage of more than 50 years helping students achieve their learning ambitions.
- The short courses are underpinned by academic rigour and designed by native speakers experienced in producing engaging materials for online learning of languages and cultures.
- The graduating nature of the courses means that learners can build up their language and skills over time.
- Learners will also gain a better understanding of the culture(s) associated with the language(s) they study enabling the development of intercultural communication skills.
- Learners can mix and match the short courses and study more than one course at a time.

Once this course is complete you will be directed to OpenLearn's hub for language content where you will be able to build on your newly found language skills.

Now that you're fully prepared, it's time to start on [Week 1](#).

Audio content is not available in this format.

Week 1: I learn Chinese in the evening

Introduction

In this first week, you will learn how to refer to names of languages; how to talk about activities such as watching TV and learning Chinese; how to use different terms such as China, Chinese books, Chinese people and Chinese language; and where time expressions should be placed in sentences.

Wǒmen kāishǐ ba! 我们开始吧! (Let's start).

1 How to refer to different languages

You may already know country names such *Zhōngguó* 中国 (China), *Yīngguó* 英国 (United Kingdom) or *Fǎguó* 法国 (France), now you will learn how to turn the country names into their corresponding language.

Activity 1

Match the following maps with the correct languages.

Match each of the items above to an item below.

yìdàlìwén 意大利文

déwén 德文

fǎwén 法文

yīngwén 英文

Using the answers from the previous question complete the following statements, matching the correct parts of their sentences. How do you form the names of various languages?

replace *guó* 国 (country) with *wén* 文 (language).

add *wén* 文 in order to form the name of the language

Match each of the items above to an item below.

If the relevant country name ends in the character, *guó* 国,

If the relevant country name does not end in the character *guó* 国,

2 Daily activities

Table 1 lists some new vocabulary which you can use to talk about different daily activities. Read and repeat the words aloud and then copy them into your notebook.

Table 1 Vocabulary to speak about daily activities

Chinese	English
xué 学	learn, study
zuò 做	make, do
xiě 写	write
kàn 看	see, watch, look; read
shàng wǎng 上网	surf the internet
zhuānyè 专业	major, subject
yīngwén 英文	English language
zhōngwén 中文	Chinese language
wénxué 文学	literature
diànshì 电视	TV
shū 书	book
hànzì 汉字	Chinese character
wǎnshang 晚上	evening
tiāntiān 天天	every day
fàn 饭	meal

Note that 网 *wǎng* is the shortened word for internet: the equivalent of the English 'net'. The full term in Chinese is *hùlián wǎng* 互联网 (lit. inter-connect net).

Activity 2

Listen to the words given in Table 1 in the audio below. Pause and repeat each word as many times as you want. Then, write down the five words that you found more difficult to remember in the space below.

Audio content is not available in this format.

Provide your answer...

You have just learned some new verbs and nouns. Now, match the following nouns with the appropriate verb.

hànzì 汉字

fàn 饭

wǎng 网

Match each of the items above to an item below.

xiě 写

zuò 做

shàng 上

Look at the pictures and decide if the statement underneath is true or false.



Figure 1

Tāmen xué zhōngwén. 他们学中文。

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Discussion

True. This is a drawing of a class learning Chinese with Chinese words on the board.



Figure 2

Tā kàn diànshì. 她看电视。

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Discussion

True. This is a drawing of a girl watching TV.

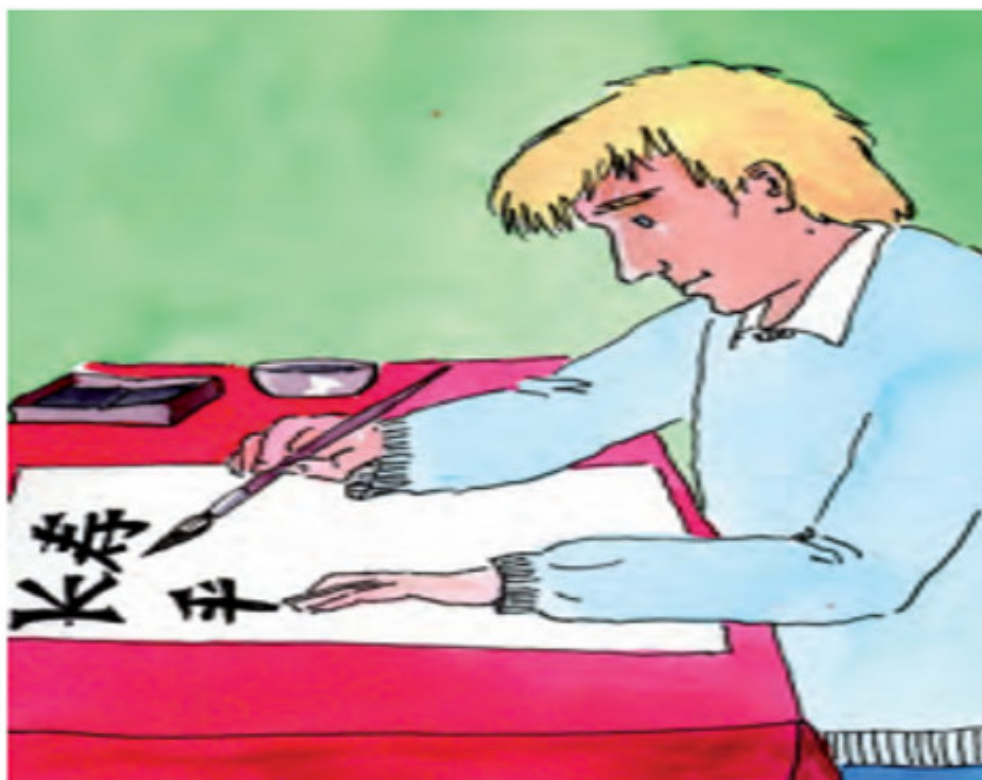


Figure 3

Dàwèi xiě hànzì. 大卫写 汉字。

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Discussion

True. This is a drawing of a western man writing Chinese characters.



Figure 4

Tā kàn yīngwén shū. 他看英文书。

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Discussion

False. This is a drawing of a man reading a Chinese book, not an English book



Figure 5

Wǒ shàng wǎng. 我上网。

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

[Discussion](#)

True. This is a drawing of a person surfing on the internet.

3 Time expressions

Now have a go at Activities 3 and 4.

Activity 3

Listen to the recordings and answer the True/False questions that follow. (Try to answer without revealing the transcript).

Audio content is not available in this format.

They watch TV every evening.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Audio content is not available in this format.

I write Chinese characters in the evening.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Select the correct option to complete this sentence.

From the above listening, we can conclude: in Chinese, time expressions such as 'every morning', 'in the evening' etc. must be placed:

- ☐ before the verbs such as 'watch TV / surf the internet' etc.
- ☐ at the end of a sentence, as in English.

Activity 4

Listen to the audio and select the activities you hear. (Try to answer without revealing the transcript).

Audio content is not available in this format.

- ☐ Learn Chinese.
- ☐ Watch TV.
- ☐ Go online.
- ☐ Read English books.

Listen to the audio and select the activities you hear. (Try to answer without revealing the transcript).

Audio content is not available in this format.

- ☐ Learn Chinese literature.
- ☐ Write Chinese characters.

- ☐ Go online.
- ☐ Watch movies.
- ☐ Cook.

4 Names of countries, people and language

In English, the words 'English', 'French', 'Spanish', etc. are used not only to designate language and a person's nationality but can also function as adjectives in front of nouns (e.g. 'English newspaper', 'French poet', 'Spanish city'). In Chinese, however, a distinction is made. As you have already seen, the character *wén* 文 is added to a country name to designate language and the character *rén* 人 to designate a person. When associating a country with anything else, however, you use just the country name in front of the noun in question, as shown in the table below. In these examples, the country name functions as an adjective.

Table 2 Names of countries, people and language

Country names as adjectives	Languages	People
<i>Zhōngguó wénxué</i> 中国文学 Chinese literature	<i>zhōngwén</i> 中文 Chinese	<i>zhōngguórén</i> 中国人 Chinese person/people
<i>Xībānyá diànyǐng</i> 西班牙电影 Spanish film	<i>xībānyáwén</i> 西班牙文 Spanish	<i>xībānyárén</i> 西班牙人 Spaniard

Note that there can be some ambiguity when saying something like:

Zhōngguó xiǎoshuō 中国小说 a Chinese novel

In this example, it could be that the novel is in the Chinese language, but it could also be that it was originally written by a Chinese writer but has been translated into another language. The ambiguity is removed if the language name rather than the country name is placed before the noun.

zhōngwén xiǎoshuō 中文小说 a novel in Chinese

Activity 5

Choose the English words that correspond to the underlined characters (forms).

Zhōngguó hěn dà 中国很大。

- ☐ Chinese people
- ☐ China

Zhōngguó diànyǐng hǎo kàn. 中国电影好看。

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ China

Lǐ Yīng xué Fǎguó wénxué. 李英学法国文学。

- ☐ French
- ☐ France

5 What would you say?

Now have a go at Activity 6.

Activity 6

Describe the following pictures in Chinese. Then, listen to the model description and record your answer trying to sound like the model. You can play it back or try a new recording as many times as you like by pressing 'Start again' or 'Re-record'.

Interactive content is not available in this format.

Interactive content is not available in this format.

Interactive content is not available in this format.

Interactive content is not available in this format.

6 Build a language notebook

Building a language notebook is a way to note down, each week, new vocabulary and expressions, and also tips about pronunciation, grammar, culture and communication in general that will support you as you start to learn Chinese.

Activity 7

What would you write in each box, if anything? Would you add more boxes?

Table 3 Language notebook

Key vocabulary	<i>Provide your answer...</i>
Key sentences	<i>Provide your answer...</i>
Culture	<i>Provide your answer...</i>
Language	<i>Provide your answer...</i>

Discussion

This is a suggestion as to how you may have filled in the boxes.

Table 4 Example of a completed language notebook for Week 1

Key vocabulary in characters, Pinyin, and English	学 xué	to learn, to study
	做 zuò	to make, to do
	写 xiě	to write
	看 kàn	to see, to watch, to look; to read
	上网 shàng wǎng	to surf the internet
	专业 zhuānyè	major; subject
	英文 yīngwén	English language
	中文 zhōngwén	Chinese language
	文学 wénxué	literature
	电视 diànshì	TV
	书 shū	book
	汉字 hànzi	Chinese character

晚上 *wǎnshang*

evening

天天 *tiāntiān*

everyday

今晚 *jīn wǎn*

this evening;
tonight

Key sentences

I write Chinese characters in the evening.

Wǒ wǎnshang xiě hànzi. 我晚上写汉字。

I read books, watch TV and surf the Internet in the evenings.

Wǒ wǎnshang kàn shū, kàn diànshì, shàng wǎng. 我晚上看书, 看电视, 上网。

What subject do you study?

Nǐ xué shénme zhuānyè? 你学什么专业?

I study Chinese literature.

Wǒ xué Zhōngguó wénxué. 我学中国文学。

Language

- How to change country names (usually ends with *guó* 国) to languages: replace *guó* 国 with *wén* 文 if there is *guó* 国 in the country name, if there is not *guó* 国 in the country name, add *wén* 文;
- How to say people of a country country name + *rén* 人
- How to say some daily activities.
- Time expressions must go before verbs.

You may have filled your table in differently, or you may have a different idea about how to build on what you are learning. Your learning journey is personal, so you need to keep notes in a way that is appropriate to you.

Take some time, now, to establish your own language notebook.

7 Practising and consolidating

In the next activity you will work as an interpreter.

Activity 8

Listen to the sentences given in English and then record yourself saying them in Chinese. Play back your recording and then listen to a model answer given in the feedback section.

Interactive content is not available in this format.

Interactive content is not available in this format.

8 Typing Chinese characters

You will now have a go at typing Chinese characters.

Activity 9

Follow these instructions on [enabling Chinese font and typing characters](#). Once you have enabled the Chinese font, the most common method used in inputting Chinese characters is to type in the Pinyin.

Below are the key characters used this week. Try to type them using the Pinyin input into the box below. Carefully read the characters below so that when you type, you are able to choose the correct ones.

Remember, when using the Pinyin input method, you don't need to worry about tones. All you need to type is the correct Pinyin spelling.

Table 5 Typing Chinese characters

xué 学	to learn, to study	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
zuò 做	to make, to do	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
xiě 写	to write	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
kàn 看	to see, to watch, to look; to read	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
shàng wǎng 上网	to surf the internet	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
zhuānyè 专业	major; subject	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
yīngwén 英文	English language	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
zhōngwén 中文	Chinese language	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
wénxué 文学	literature	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
diànshì 电视	TV	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
shū 书	book	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>
hànzì 汉字	Chinese character	<input type="text" value="Provide your answer..."/>

wǎnshang evening
晚上

Provide your answer...

tiāntiān everyday
天天

Provide your answer...

9 Word formation

Words in Chinese are formed by one or more characters. In this section you will look at combining characters to form new words.

Box 1 Word formation

shàng 上 (to go to) + *wǎng* 网 (net) = *shàngwǎng* 上网 (surf the internet)

xué 学 (to learn, school) + *shēng* 生 (new) = *xuéshēng* 学生 (pupil, student)

wǎn 晚 (late) + *shang* 上 (up, above) = *wǎnshang* 晚上 (evening)

zhuān 专 (specialised) + *yè* 业 (course, industry) = *zhuānyè* 专业 (subject, major, special field)

yīng 英 (hero, Britain) + *wén* 文 (language, culture) = *yīngwén* 英文 (English language)

hàn 汉 (Han Chinese) + *zì* 字 (character) = *hànzì* 汉字 (Chinese character)

电 *diàn* (electricity, electric) + 视 *shì* (viewing, vision, sight) = 电视 *diànshì* (television).

Note that it literally means 'electric viewing'!

Reminder...

字 in 名字 *míngzì* (name) is the same 字 as in 汉字 *hànzì* (Chinese character) except that here it is pronounced with the 4th tone.

Activity 10

Match up the Chinese words with their English equivalents. All the characters have been introduced, but they are in combination with different characters to form new meanings.

Drag each answer (above) into the correct slot (below)

hànzì 汉字

zhōngwén míngzì 中文名字

kàn diànshì 看电视

wǎnshang jiàn 晚上见

dà xuésēng 大学生

shī shēng 师生

hǎokàn 好看

Match each of the items above to an item below.

Chinese character

Chinese name

watch TV

see you in the evening

university student

teacher(s) and student(s)

good-looking

10 This week's quiz

Check what you've learned this week by taking the end-of-week quiz.

[Week 1 quiz](#)

Open the quiz in a new window or tab (by holding ctrl [or cmd on a Mac] when you click the link), then return here when you have done it.

11 Summary of Week 1

Now you have reached the end of Week 1, reflect a little on what you have learnt.

Activity 11

In the box below, note down what you have found easy, useful or fun, and what was more difficult. At the end of the course, you can download your weekly reflection.

Provide your answer...

Now, you might want to share in the space below some of your daily activities in Pinyin or characters. If you want to type Pinyin with tone marks, you can follow the simple instructions from the PDF file, [How to type Pinyin with tone marks on a PC](#). You may start the sentence with *Nǐ hǎo* 你好.

Provide your answer...

Next week you are going to learn how to say what you will do tomorrow, revise how to ask questions with *shénme* 什么 and *nǎ'r* 哪儿, learn different usages of *dōu* 都, how to say what you do at a certain place and how to ask a choice question with *háishì* 还是.

Audio content is not available in this format.

I enjoy learning Chinese!

Week 2: What are you going to do tomorrow evening?

Introduction

This week, you are going to learn how to talk about what you be will doing tomorrow; how to ask questions with *shénme* 什么 ('what') and *nǎr* 哪儿 ('where') and find out the different usages of *dōu* 都 ('all, both'). You will also practise how to say what you do at a certain place and will learn how to ask a choice question with *háishì* 还是 ('or').

我们开始吧! (*Let's start*)

1 I watch TV on Monday morning

You'll start this week with a listening activity.

Activity 1

Listen to the recordings and write down their English translations. The key words to listen for are days of the week. You may remember the formula to form days of the week: xīngqīyī 星期 (week day) + numbers from one to six for Monday to Saturday. For example, 'Friday' in Chinese is xīngqīyīwǔ 星期五. For Sunday, there are two terms: xīngqītiān 星期天 and xīngqīrì 星期日.

Audio content is not available in this format.

Provide your answer...

Answer

I learn Chinese on Monday and Tuesday evenings. I watch TV on Wednesday evenings.

Audio content is not available in this format.

Provide your answer...

Answer

I write Chinese characters on Thursday evenings. I surf the internet on Friday evenings. I watch movies on Sunday evenings.

2 I am going to London tomorrow

In Week 1, you learned that time expressions must be placed before the verb in Chinese. Box 1 looks at how to use this rule when speaking about the future.

Box 1 Expressing the immediate future.

As you may have learned already, Chinese verbs do not change their form, so tense is conveyed instead by the context, usually a time expression. The future tense (especially the immediate future) in Chinese is usually expressed by time expressions such as 'this evening', 'tomorrow', etc.

Wǒ míngtiān xiàwǔ qù Lúndūn. 我明天下午去伦敦。

lit. I tomorrow afternoon go London. (I'm going to go to London tomorrow afternoon.)

Nǐ jīntiān wǎnshang zuò shénme? 你今天晚上做什么？

lit. you this evening do what? (What are you doing this evening?)

The following list includes time expressions which indicate the future, as well other vocabulary which will help you to form sentences about what you are planning to do. You may already recognise some. Write them down in your notebook and practise saying them aloud.

míngtiān 明天 (tomorrow).

míngtiān wǎnshang 明天晚上 (tomorrow evening).

míng wǎn 明晚 (tomorrow evening).

míngtiān shàngwǔ 明天上午 (tomorrow morning).

míngtiān xiàwǔ 明天下午 (tomorrow afternoon).

shénme 什么 (what).

qù 去 (to go).

nǎr 哪儿 (where).

Běijīng 北京 (Beijing).

Lúndūn 伦敦 (London).

Activity 2

Choose the correct Chinese translations for the English sentences. Tick all that apply.

I am going to learn Chinese tomorrow morning.

- ☐ *Míngtiān shàngwǔ wǒ xué zhōngwén.* 明天上午我学中文。
- ☐ *Wǒ míngtiān shàngwǔ xué zhōngwén.* 我明天上午学中文。
- ☐ *Wǒ xué zhōngwén míngtiān shàngwǔ.* 我学中文明天上午。
- ☐ *Míngtiān wǒ shàngwǔ xué zhōngwén.* 明天我上午学中文。

Discussion

You learned in Week 1 that time expressions must be placed before the verb. In the above sentences, you can see that time expressions can be before or after the subject (e.g. 我我).

Time expressions can also be split up as in *Míngtiān wǒ shàngwǔ xué zhōngwén*. 明天我上午学中文. *Míngtiān* 明天 goes before 我 我, *shàngwǔ* 上午 goes after 我 我.

Which of the following sentences are correct to mean “She is going to London tomorrow afternoon”? Select all that apply.

- ☐ *Tā míngtiān xiàwǔ qù Lúndūn*. 她明天下午去伦敦.
- ☐ *Tā míngtiān xiàwǔ qù Lúndūn*. 他明天下午去伦敦.
- ☐ *Tā qù Lúndūn míngtiān xiàwǔ*. 她去伦敦明天下午.
- ☐ *Míngtiān xiàwǔ tā qù Lúndūn*. 明天下午她去伦敦.
- ☐ *Míngtiān tā xiàwǔ qù Lúndūn*. 明天她下午去伦敦.

Discussion

Please note the difference between *tā* 他 –he and *tā* 她 –she.

From the above sentences, we can conclude: time expressions such as, ‘tomorrow evening, ‘tomorrow’ etc. in Chinese can be placed:

- ☐ before the subject, (e.g., ‘she’).
- ☐ after the subject.
- ☐ If the time expression has two parts such ‘tomorrow’ and ‘afternoon’, the time expression can be split up, i.e., ‘tomorrow’ goes before the subject, and ‘afternoon’ goes after the subject.
- ☐ at the end of a sentence as in English.

3 Asking questions with 'what' and 'where'

Now have a go at Activity 3.

Activity 3

Choose the correct Chinese translations for the English sentences below. Tick all that apply.

He is going to watch TV tomorrow evening.

- ☐ *Míngtiān tā wǎnshang kàn diànshì.* 明天他晚上看电视。
- ☐ *Wǎnshang tā míngtiān kàn diànshì.* 晚上他明天看电视。
- ☐ *Tā kàn diànshì míngtiān wǎnshang.* 他看电视明天晚上。
- ☐ *Míngtiān wǎnshang tā kàn diànshì.* 明天晚上他看电视。
- ☐ *Tā míngtiān wǎnshang kàn diànshì.* 他明天晚上看电视。

What is he going to do tomorrow evening?

- ☐ *Tā míngtiān wǎnshang zuò shénme?* 他明天晚上做什么？
- ☐ *Míngtiān wǎnshang tā zuò shénme?* 明天晚上他做什么？
- ☐ *Míngtiān tā wǎnshang zuò shénme?* 明天他晚上做什么？
- ☐ *Shénme tā míngtiān wǎnshang zuò?* 什么他明天晚上做？
- ☐ *Tā míngtiān wǎnshang shénme zuò?* 他明天晚上什么做？
- ☐ *Tā zuò shénme míngtiān wǎnshang ?* 他做什么明天晚上？

Compare the following sentences and then answer the question that follows.

Tā míngtiān wǎnshang zuò shénme? 他明天晚上做什么？

Tā míngtiān wǎnshang kàn diànshì. 他明天晚上看电视。

Where does the question word *shénme* 什么 go in a question sentence?

- ☐ The question word *shénme* 什么 replaces the answer *diànshì* 电视, and it occupies the same place as *diànshì* 电视. In the above question, *shénme* 什么 goes at the end of the question sentence as *diànshì* 电视 goes in the answer sentence. In the question sentence, the verb *zuò* 做 to do is used to replace the verb *kàn* 看 to watch in the answer sentence.
- ☐ *shénme* 什么 like 'what' in English usually goes at the beginning of a question sentence.

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Choose the correct Chinese translations for the English sentences.

I am going to Beijing tomorrow.

- ☐ *Wǒ qù Běijīng míngtiān.* 我去北京明天。
- ☐ *Wǒ míngtiān qù Běijīng.* 我明天去北京。
- ☐ *Míngtiān wǒ qù Běijīng.* 明天我去北京。
- ☐ *Wǒ qù míngtiān Běijīng.* 我去明天北京。

Where are you going tomorrow?

- ☐ *Nǎr nǐ jīntiān míngtiān qù?* 哪儿你今天明天去？

- ☐ *Nǐ míngtiān nǎr qù?* 你明天哪儿去?
- ☐ *Nǐ míngtiān qù nǎr?* 你明天去哪儿?
- ☐ *Nǐ qù nǎr míngtiān?* 你去哪儿明天?
- ☐ *Míngtiān qù nǐ nǎr?* 明天你去哪儿?

Compare the following two sentences and answer the question below.

Nǐ míngtiān qù nǎr? 你明天去哪儿?

Wǒ míngtiān qù Běijīng. 我明天去北京.

Where does the question word *nǎr* 哪儿 ('where') go in a question sentence?

- ☐ *Nǎr* 哪儿 like 'where' in English usually goes at the beginning of a question sentence.
- ☐ The question word *Nǎr* 哪儿 in the question sentence replaces the answer *Běijīng* 北京 in the answer sentence, and it goes at the same place as 北京. So *nǎr* 哪儿 goes at the end of the question sentence as *Běijīng* 北京 in the answer sentence.

4 Use of *dōu* 都 (both/all)

The adverb *dōu* 都 (both/all) is placed before the verb in statements. Depending on the meaning of the sentence, when negated it can be placed before or after the negation word. Learn more about its usage by having a go at Activity 4.

Activity 4

The following Chinese sentence should read 'Are all the teachers British?'. Is this true or false?

Lǎoshīmen dōu shì Yīngguó rén ma? 老师们都是英国人吗？

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Where should *dōu* 都 be placed in a sentence?

- ☐ at the beginning as in the English sentence.
- ☐ before the verb (e.g., '*shì* 是').

The following Chinese sentence should read 'Not all of them are doctors'. Is this true or false?

Tāmen dōu bù shì yīshēng. 他们都不是医生。

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Discussion

The answer is: False. This sentence means 'None of them are doctors'. To convey 'not all of them', *dōu* 都 should be placed between *bù* 不 and *shì* 是: *Tāmen bù dōu shì yīshēng.* 他们不都是医生。

The following Chinese sentence should read 'Not all of us live in London.' Is this true or false?

Wǒmen bù dōu zhù zài Lúndūn. 我们不都住在伦敦。

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

So, we can conclude that *dōu bù* 都不 and *bù dōu* 不都 have different meanings. Which means what?

dōu bù 都不

bù dōu 不都

Match each of the items above to an item below.

total negation/none

partial negation/not all

5 *dōu* 都: asking about habitual actions

The adverb *dōu* 都 can be used to ask about habitual actions:

Nǐ wǎnshang dōu zuò shénme? 你晚上都做什么？

What do you usually do in the evening?

Note that *dōu* 都 cannot be used in the reply:

Kàn shū, xiězì, shàngwǎng ... 看书、写字、上网 ...

reading books, writing characters, going online...

Activity 5

Listen to the following question in Chinese. Record your response, play back your recording and then listen to a model answer given in the feedback.

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6 Emphatic *dōu* 都 in statements

Note that when talking about something that happens frequently, *dōu* 都 (all) normally follows the time expression (e.g. *tiāntiān* 天天 every day) to emphasise its frequency. Again, the whole phrase must be placed before the verb.

Table 1 *dōu* 都 used in statements

<i>Tāmen</i>	<i>tiāntiān</i>	<i>dōu</i>	<i>kàn</i>	<i>diànshì</i>
他们	天天	都	看	电视。

lit. they every day all watch TV (They watch TV every day.)

Activity 6

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Where is *dōu* 都 placed within a sentence? Write down your conclusion in your notebook and then reveal the answer.

Answer

dōu 都 must be placed straight before the verb in a sentence.

7 Location, location, location

You have learned before that, in Chinese, time expressions such as ‘tomorrow evening’, ‘tomorrow’ etc. must be placed before the verb (time + verb), as in:

Wǒ xīngqītiān wǎnshàng kàn diànyǐng. 我星期天晚上看电影。

lit. I Sunday evening watch movies/a movie. (I watch movies/a movie on Sunday evening.)

Similarly, expressions of location should also be placed before the verb. The sentence structure looks like this: *zài* 在 (at/in) + a place + do something.

Wǒ zài Běijīng xué zhōngwén. 我在北京学中文。

lit. I in Beijing learn Chinese. (I learn Chinese in Beijing.)

Activity 7

Choose the correct Chinese translation.

I study Chinese literature in Beijing.

- ☐ *Wǒ xué Zhōngguó wénxué zài Běijīng.* 我学中国文学在北京。
- ☐ *Wǒ zài Běijīng xué Zhōngguó wénxué.* 我在北京学中国文学。
- ☐ *Wǒ xué zài Běijīng Zhōngguó wénxué.* 我学在北京中国文学。

He learns French in France.

- ☐ *Tā xué zài Fàguó fǎwén.* 他学在法国法文。
- ☐ *Tā xué fǎwén zài Fàguó.* 他学法文在法国。
- ☐ *Tā zài Fàguó xué fǎwén.* 他在法国学法文。

From the above, we can conclude: In Chinese the location of expressions such as , ‘in Beijing, ‘in France’ etc. must be placed...

- ☐ before the verb, as in ‘in France I study’.
- ☐ at the end of a sentence, as usually happens in English.

8 Choice questions with *háishi* 还是

To ask a question that offers a choice of answers, you need to use *háishi* 还是, a question word which is equivalent to the construction 'Do.../Does.../Are.../Is.../Would ...or ...?' in English.

Table 2 Example 1 of a choice question using *háishi* 还是

Tā Yīngguórén háishi měiguórén?
shì

她 英国人 还是 美国人?
是

lit. She is British, or American (Is she British or American?)

Table 3 Example 2 of a choice question using *háishi* 还是

Nǐ kàn diànshì, kàn shū, háishi xiě
hànzi?

你 看 电视, 看书, 还是 写 汉字?

lit. You watch TV, read books or write characters? (Do you watch TV, read books or write characters?)

Activity 8

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Do you need the question word 吗 at the end of a choice question?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9 What would you say?

Based on what you have learned so far complete Activity 9.

Activity 9

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Look at the picture and decide which statement is true.



Figure 1

- *Wǒ dìdì tiāntiān dōu xiě hànzì.* 我弟弟天天都写汉字。
- *Wǒ dìdì tiāntiān dōu kàn diànshì.* 我弟弟天天都看电视。

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10 Build a language notebook

Building a language notebook is a way to note down, each week, new vocabulary and expressions, as well as tips about pronunciation, grammar, culture and communication in general that will support you as you start to learn Chinese.

Activity 10

What would you write into each box, if anything? Would you add more boxes?

Table 4 Language notebook

Key phrases in Pinyin	<i>Provide your answer...</i>
Key words	<i>Provide your answer...</i>
Culture	<i>Provide your answer...</i>
Language	<i>Provide your answer...</i>
Word formation	<i>Provide your answer...</i>

Discussion

This is a suggestion as to how you may have filled in the table.

Table 5 Example of a completed language notebook for Week 2

Key phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nǐ míngtiān qù nǎr?</i> 你明天去哪儿? • <i>Wǒ míngtiān qù Běijīng</i> 我明天去北京. • <i>Nǐ míngtiān zuò shénme?</i> 你明天做什么? • <i>Wǒ míngtiān xué fǎwén, kàn diànshì, xiě hànzì.</i> 我明天学法文, 看电视, 写汉字. • <i>Nǐ wǎnshang dōu zuò shénme?</i> 你晚上都做什么? • <i>Nǐ míngtiān shàngwǔ hái shì míngtiān wǎnshang qù Běijīng?</i> 你明天上午还是明天晚上去北京?
Key words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>míngtiān</i> 明天 (tomorrow). • <i>míngtiān wǎnshang</i> 明天晚上 (tomorrow evening). • <i>míng wǎn</i> 明晚 (tomorrow evening). • <i>míngtiān shàngwǔ</i> 明天上午 (tomorrow morning). • <i>míngtiān xiàwǔ</i> 明天下午 (tomorrow afternoon). • <i>shénme</i> 什么 (what). • <i>qù</i> 去 (to go). • <i>nǎr</i> 哪儿 (where). • <i>Běijīng</i> 北京 (Beijing). • <i>Lúndūn</i> 伦敦 (London).
Culture	
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use <i>shénme</i> 什么 to ask a 'what' question • Use <i>nǎr</i> 哪儿 to ask a 'where' question • Different usages of <i>dōu</i> 都 • How to ask a choice question with <i>háishi</i> 还是
Word formation	

You may have filled the table in differently, or you may have a different idea about how to build on what you are learning. Your learning journey is personal, so you need to keep notes in a way that is appropriate to you.

Take some time now to establish your own language notebook.

11 Practising and consolidating

To help consolidate what you have learned in this week, now have a go at Activity 11.

Activity 11

Match the English sentences with their Chinese equivalents.

What do you study as your major?

Miss Wang writes Chinese characters every evening.

I study English literature.

Match each of the items above to an item below.

Nǐ xué shénme zhuānyè? 你学什么专业?

Wáng Xiǎojiě tiāntiān wǎnshang dōu xiě hànzi. 王小姐天天晚上都写汉字。

Wǒ xué Yīngguó wénxué. 我学英国文学。

Match the English word with the corresponding Chinese word.

To learn, to study

- ☐ *zì* 字
- ☐ *sùì* 岁
- ☐ *xué* 学
- ☐ *yīng* 英

Match the English word with the corresponding Chinese word.

Evening

- ☐ *hǎode* 好的
- ☐ *wǎnshang* 晚上
- ☐ *xīqī* 星期
- ☐ *míngtiān* 明天

12 Head components

Head components, also known as ‘radicals’, offer associated meanings to words. Many characters share the same head component.

Table 6 Head components 日 and 氵

Head component	Meaning association	Meaning association	Examples
日	sun, time	<i>rì zì páng</i> 日字旁	<i>míng</i> 明 (<i>rì</i> 日 + <i>yuè</i> 月 = bright)
氵	water	<i>sān diǎn shuǐ</i> 三点水	<i>hàn</i> 汉 (氵 + 又 = Han Chinese)

As the table shows, the characters that contain the ‘sun head component’ (日) normally have meanings associated with the sun, time or light. For example, *zǎo* 早 means ‘morning’ and it has got the ‘sun head component’ on the top part. One can interpret that as the sun has risen. 日 is also an independent character as in *xīngqīrì* 星期日 (Sunday). The characters that contain the ‘water head component’ (氵) usually have something to do with water. The character *hàn* 汉 (now refers to Han Chinese) originally referred to a river. Note that this head component is not an independent character but only a building block in forming characters.

Activity 12

Read through the note on head components 日, then go through the characters you have learned so far or check a dictionary and find three more characters that contain the head component 日 and give their English meaning.

Provide your answer...

Can you find the English meaning of the following two characters that contain 氵? Use a dictionary and write down their Pinyin and their English meanings.

1. 江
2. 海

Provide your answer...

Answer

1. *Jiāng* 江—river
2. *hǎi* 海—sea

13 This week's quiz

Check what you've learned this week by taking the end-of-week quiz.

[Week 2 quiz](#)

Open the quiz in a new window or tab (by holding ctrl [or cmd on a Mac] when you click the link), then return here when you have done it.

14 Summary of Week 2

Now you have reached the end of Week 2, reflect on what you have learnt this week.

Activity 13

In the box below, note down what you have found easy, what was more difficult, and how you plan to improve.

Provide your answer...

Audio content is not available in this format.

lit. good study/learn. This is a common phrase used to encourage learners to work hard!

This OpenLearn course is an adapted extract from the Open University badged course [LXC002 - Beginners Chinese 2: 开始吧 kāishǐ ba!](#). Visit the [OpenLearn's hub for language](#) content where you will be able to build on your newly found language skills.

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Images

Introduction

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Week 1

Section 2, Figure 1 and Activity 6, Image 1: Ana Sánchez

Section 2, Figure 2 and Activity 6, Image 2: Ana Sánchez

Section 2, Figure 3: Ana Sánchez

Section 2, Figure 4 and Activity 6, Image 3: Ana Sánchez

Section 2, Figure 5 and Activity 6, Image 4: Ana Sánchez

Week 2

Section 9, Figure 1: courtesy of Fu Qian

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