



Chinese@OU

free Chinese character learning app

To download:

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- For Android devices, go to Google Play Store, search 'Chinese@OU' and install

Learning to read and write Chinese characters presents three major challenges to both non-native learners as well as Chinese children who first start learning characters: i) the complexity of characters, as an average character consists of about 12 strokes; ii) matching character form with pronunciation, pinyin form and the English meaning; and iii) using characters to form sentences.

This app, an improved version of *Chinese Characters First Steps* app, can assist beginner learners to tackle these three challenges on one screen with interactive activities to help you write, recognize visually and aurally, and memorise the most frequently used characters in a systematic, friendly and fun way. Most importantly it helps you to form phrases and sentences with the limited characters learnt.

This app contains the first 200 plus characters introduced in The Open University's [Beginners' Chinese module 第一步 Di yī bù \(L197\)](#) and they are also taught in the GCSE Chinese syllabus. By combining them, a further 200+ useful words and phrases are introduced (e.g. e.g. 网 net + 球 ball = 网球 tennis, which appears in one of the Word search activities).

There are 16 lessons altogether which chronologically build upon each other. Each lesson has five activities: Writing, Reading, Listening, Rearranging, and Identifying or Word Search. **To get the most out of this app, go to Help page located within each activity to find out different functionalities.**

Writing

Learn how characters are drawn stroke by stroke by watching the animation of each character, hear the pronunciation, match it with pinyin and English, and draw the character with or without the model.



Reading

Test yourself on recognising the characters you have learnt in the Writing section of the current lesson. Match the character with Pinyin or English meaning. You can hear the pronunciation of the character. This will help to reinforce the link between the character, the Pinyin and the English meaning.



Listening

This part of the application presents you with the opportunity to test your understanding of:

- i) some characters you have learnt in the current lesson which are single character word (e.g. 好 – good); and
- ii) words consisting of two or more characters, which are made up of characters you have learnt in the current and previous lessons (e.g. 早上 – morning).



Rearranging

Learning characters in context, i.e. in a word or sentence, helps you to memorise them better than learning them in isolation. In this activity, you will have the opportunity to create a sentence based on the audio you hear, using the characters provided, which you have already learnt. After you have correctly arranged the sentence, you are asked to match it with the English translation.



Identifying

Except for Lesson 1, all odd-numbered lessons (e.g. Lesson 3, Lesson 5, etc.) have an Identifying Activity. In this activity, you will be presented with five groups of characters. Each group consists of four similar looking characters. You will need to choose the character that matches the English meaning. Once the correct character is identified, the feedback provides a word/phrase that contains this character. This activity will help you develop your character recognition skill and vocabulary building.



Word Search

In addition to Lesson 1, all even-numbered lessons (i.e. Lesson 2, Lesson 4, etc) have a Word Search Activity. Here you have the opportunity to search for words/phrases that consist of the characters you have learnt in a particular lesson and from previous lessons (e.g. Word Search in Lesson 3 consist of some characters in Lesson 3 and also characters in Lessons 1 and 2). For example, in Lesson 1 you learn the character 好 (good), and in Lesson 11 you learn the character 吃 (to eat), then in Lesson 11's Word Search, you get to search for the word for 'tasty, delicious' (好吃). This activity not only helps develop your character recognition skills but also helps you to remember characters in context, and it is fun to play!

Answers can be found in the grid in any direction: forward, backward, up, down or diagonal. As each answer is found by striking through each answer that matches the English/Pinyin word in the blue tab, with your finger, it will be highlighted and the audio is automatically played.

Tip: Tap the text in the blue tab at the bottom of the screen to hear the pronunciation. If you still cannot find the word/phrase, tap the eye icon to reveal the answer.

Word Search

Pinyin | English

姓	不	见	三	好	很
八	谢	名	再	不	您
八	十	五	很	好	谢
字	吗	也	吗	字	谢
贵	好	?	你	贵	六
不	伦	好	对	王	么

How are you? (formal) | You're welcome