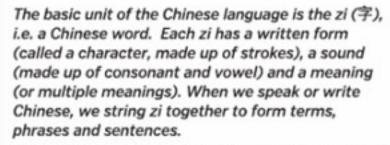
Character Builder 🥸





In Putonghua (the spoken form of Modern Standard Chinese) each zi is pronounced in one of four tones:

1st tone: 1 = diacritical mark — pitch: 5 to 5, highest prolonged

2nd tone: 2 = diacritical mark / pitch: 3 to 5, middle to high

3rd tone: 3 = diacritical mark U pitch: 2 to 1 to 4, low to lowest to high

4th tone: 4 = diacritical mark \ pitch: 5 to 1, highest to lowest)

To pronounce each zi below, follow its pinyin and the given tone number. Light-sound words, which have no definite pitch, carry no diacritical mark and are marked by 0.

This week: Words about raising families



Putonghua pronunciation: dan1, dan4 Cantonese pronunciation: daam3

Meanings: weight, load carried on shoulderpole, burden

Noun 擔 (dan4) = loads (of grains/coal) suspended from two ends of shoulder-pole. 千斤重擔 (qian1 jin1 zhong4 dan4 = thousand-catties-heavy-burden) = extremely heavy burden. Verb 擔 (dan1) = carry burden: 承擔 (cheng2 dan1 = accept- shoulder) responsibility, 擔任 (dan1 ren4 = burden-act-as = serve) post, 擔保 (dan1 bao3 = burden-protect = act as guarantor).

Parents shoulder 生活擔子 (sheng1 huo2 dan4 zi0 = exist-live-burden-diminutive = burden of earning livelihood), 擔驚受怕 (dan1 jing1 shou4 pa4 = shoulder-fright-receive-fear = feel fears/worries) when child is ill, 擔心 (dan1 xin1 = burden-heart = worry/care for) children's future.

Birth control slogan "三個斷擔挑!" (san1 ge4 duan4 dan4 tiao1 = three-kid-units-break-burden-pole) = "Having/raising three kids will make you collapse!"

by Diana Yue