

Character Builder 您好嗎？

The basic unit of the Chinese language is the *zi* (字), i.e. a Chinese word. Each *zi* has a written form (called a character, made up of strokes), a sound (made up of consonant and vowel) and a meaning (or multiple meanings). When we speak or write Chinese, we string *zi* together to form terms, phrases and sentences.

This week: Words about computers

顯

Pronunciation: *xian* (Putonghua, 4th tone), *hin* (Cantonese 6th tone)
Basic meaning: show

顯 = 顯現 (*xian xian*) = appear. 明顯 (*ming xian* = bright/clear~appear) means obvious. 顯像 (*xian xiang* = show~image) means image-display.

Computers use visual display units (顯示器 *xian shi qi* = appear~show~machines = 螢幕 *ying mo* = fire-fly/fluorescence~screen) to show 字 (*zi* = words), 圖 (*tu* = pictures), 影像 (*ying xiang* = shadow-likeness = images). LCD (liquid crystal display) is 液晶顯像 (*yi jing xian xiang* = liquid~crystal~show~image).

Using 滑鼠 (*hua shu* = slip~mouse = mouse) to move 游標 (*you biao* = swim/move~mark = cursor), we click on 圖標 (*tu biao* = picture-mark = icons) to access 軟件 (*ruan jian* = soft~piece = softwares), 檔案 (*dang an* = cabinet~record = files).