SAYMEI · EVERYDAY CHINESE · CHEAT SHEET

How to Write a Letter in Chinese: Format and Template

A Chinese letter opens with 亲爱的 (qīn'ài de), dear, and the name, flush left. Each paragraph starts two characters in. You close with a wish such as 祝好 (zhù hǎo), then sign and date on the right. Here's the layout line by line, with openings and closings for friends, teachers and companies.



亲爱的 **qīn'ài de** Dear

Sounds like chin-eye duh. qīn high and level: 1st tone, ài falls: 4th tone, de light: neutral tone. To close the letter: 祝好 (zhù hǎo), All the best.

The format, line by line

GREETING
亲爱的小王：
Qīn'ài de Xiǎo Wáng:

OPENING
好久不见了！你最近好吗？
Hǎojiǔ bú jiàn le! Nǐ zuìjìn hǎo ma?

BODY
我在北京一切都好，工作也很顺利。
Wǒ zài Běijīng yíqiè dōu hǎo, gōngzuò yě hěn shùnlì.

BODY
下个月我要去上海，希望能见到你。
Xià ge yuè wǒ yào qù Shànghǎi, xīwàng néng jiàndào nǐ.

WISH
祝你
Zhù nǐ

WISH
身体健康！
Shēntǐ jiànkāng!

SIGNATURE
你的朋友
Nǐ de péngyou

SIGNATURE
李明
Lǐ Míng

DATE
二〇二六年十一月五日
Èr líng èr liù nián shíyī yuè wǔ rì

YOUR LETTER

GREETING _____

OPENING _____

BODY _____

BODY _____

WISH _____

WISH _____

SIGNATURE _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

The greeting starts flush left and ends with a colon. Every paragraph starts two characters in, the opening line and 祝 (zhù) included. The wish itself, 身体健康 (shēntǐ jiànkāng), starts flush left on the next line. A formal letter splits its closing the same way: 此致 (cǐzhì) indented, then 敬礼 (jìnglǐ), with respect, flush left below it. Your name and the date go on the right.

13 phrases for writing a letter in Chinese

OPENINGS: WHO YOU'RE WRITING TO

亲爱的 qīn'ài de Dear WARM

尊敬的 zūnjìng de Dear (respected) FORMAL

亲爱的爷爷奶奶 qīn'ài de yéye nǎinai Dear Grandpa and Grandma WARM

CLOSING WISHES

祝好 zhù hǎo All the best EVERYDAY

祝你身体健康 zhù nǐ shēntǐ jiànkāng Wishing you good health WARM

祝学习进步 zhù xuéxí jìnbù Wishing you progress in your studies EVERYDAY

此致敬礼 cǐzhì jìnglǐ With respect (Yours sincerely) FORMAL

THE FIRST LINE: HELLO

你好 nǐ hǎo Hello EVERYDAY

您好 nín hǎo Hello (respectful) POLITE

好久不见 hǎojiǔ bú jiàn Long time no see CASUAL

SIGNING OFF

你的朋友 nǐ de péngyou Your friend WARM

您的学生 nín de xuésheng Your student POLITE

敬上 jìngshàng Respectfully yours FORMAL

What to avoid, and why

× Don't end a formal letter with only 祝好 (zhù hǎo). It's friendly and brief, fine for friends and colleagues you know. To a teacher, a company or an official, close with 此致敬礼 (cǐzhì jìnglǐ) or 祝您身体健康 (zhù nín shēntǐ jiànkāng).

× Write 您 (nín), the respectful you, to a teacher, an elder or a client, and keep it from the greeting to the closing. Switching to 你 (nǐ) halfway looks careless.

× Don't write the date in English order. Chinese runs from big to small: the year, 年 (nián), then the month, 月 (yuè), then the day, 日 (rì). An address on an envelope also runs big to small, from the province or city down to the street.

Hear every phrase and take the quiz: **saymei.app/tools/chinese-letter-format**
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