SAYMEI · EVERYDAY CHINESE · CHEAT SHEET

How to Say Shut Up in Chinese

Shut up is 闭嘴 (bì zuǐ), and it's as rude as it is in English. Here's how hard each version lands, the kinder ways to ask for quiet, and what to say when "shut up!" means "no way!"



闭嘴 bì zuǐ Shut up

Sounds like bee dzway. bì falls: 4th tone, zuǐ dips: 3rd tone. If someone says it to you: 好好好 (hǎo hǎo hǎo), Okay, okay.

Which one fits?

Someone's too loud	小声点，好吗？ Xiǎo shēng diǎn, hǎo ma? Could you keep it down?
A noisy room	请大家安静一下。 Qǐng dàjiā ānjìng yíxià. Quiet, please, everyone.
A friend won't stop	好了好了，别说了！ Hǎo le hǎo le, bié shuō le! Okay, okay, enough!
Joking with a close friend	闭嘴啦！ Bì zuǐ la! Oh, shut up!
Kids arguing	别吵了！ Bié chǎo le! Stop arguing!
"Shut up, no way!"	真的假的？ Zhēn de jiǎ de? Shut up, really?

13 ways to say shut up in Chinese, from gentle to harsh

●○○ gentle · ●●○ blunt · ●●● harsh

GENTLE: ASKING FOR QUIET

安静一点 ānjìng yìdiǎn A bit quieter, please ●○○

小声点 xiǎo shēng diǎn Keep it down ●○○

请安静 qǐng ānjìng Quiet, please ●○○

嘘 xū Shh ●○○

BLUNT: STOP TALKING

别说了 bié shuō le Stop, that's enough ●○○

别吵了 bié chǎo le Stop the noise / stop arguing ●●○

闭嘴 bì zuǐ Shut up ●●○

HARSH: SAID IN ANGER

你给我闭嘴 nǐ gěi wǒ bì zuǐ You shut up, right now ●●●

少废话 shǎo fèihuà Cut the crap ●●●

住口 zhùkǒu Silence! ●●●

WHEN "SHUT UP!" MEANS "NO WAY!"

真的假的 zhēn de jiǎ de Shut up, really? CASUAL

不会吧 bú huì ba No way! CASUAL

你开玩笑吧 nǐ kāi wánxiào ba You're kidding, right? EVERYDAY

What to say if someone tells you to shut up

好好好 hǎo hǎo hǎo Okay, okay CASUAL

别这样 bié zhèyàng Don't be like that EVERYDAY

你怎么这么说话 nǐ zěnme zhème shuōhuà How can you talk like that? EVERYDAY

ROOMMATES, LATE AT NIGHT

A: 你能小声点吗？ Nǐ néng xiǎo shēng diǎn ma? Can you keep it down?

B: 不好意思！ Bù hǎoyìsi! Sorry!

BETWEEN CLOSE FRIENDS

A: 你是不是喜欢她？ Nǐ shì bu shì xǐhuan tā? You like her, don't you?

B: 闭嘴啦！ Bì zuǐ la! Oh, shut up!

BIG NEWS

A: 我下个月结婚。 Wǒ xià ge yuè jiéhūn. I'm getting married next month.

B: 真的假的？ Zhēn de jiǎ de? Shut up! Really?

What to avoid, and why

× Don't say 闭嘴 (bì zuǐ) to a teacher, a boss, an older relative or a stranger. It's as rude as shut up in English, and it costs you both face. Ask with 请安静 (qǐng ānjìng) or 小声点 (xiǎo shēng diǎn) instead.

× Don't use 闭嘴 (bì zuǐ) for surprise. In Chinese it only ever means stop talking, so a delighted "shut up!" comes out as an insult. Say 真的假的 (zhēn de jiǎ de) or 不会吧 (bú huì ba).

× 给我 (gěi wǒ) in front of an order, as in 你给我闭嘴 (nǐ gěi wǒ bì zuǐ), makes it a threat. Parents shout it at kids; between adults it starts a fight.

Hear every phrase and take the quiz: **saymei.app/tools/shut-up-in-chinese**
Keep speaking with Mei Lin, SayMei's AI tutor: **saymei.app**

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