



CHARACTERS • EARLY BEGINNER

48 Starter Chinese Character Practice Cards

Print and cut 48 high-utility Simplified Chinese character cards that connect each written form to tone-marked pinyin, a concise meaning, a visible component cue, and a useful word.

nǐ → nǐ hǎo

你 → 你好

you → hello

Front: retrieve nǐ. Back: connect 亻 + 尔 to the useful word 你好.

By the end, you can...

- ✓ Retrieve a character's spoken syllable from its written form before flipping the card
- ✓ Connect a character to a useful word rather than relying on an isolated English label
- ✓ Notice recurring components without treating them as guaranteed definitions or pronunciations



Early beginner

10–15 minutes per review session

24 pages

Answer guide

Self-contained print practice. Audio and web tools are optional.



1

Print, align, cut, and retrieve

After this page, you can Prepare a usable deck without losing front-to-back alignment or turning review into rereading.

✓ **PREPARE**

Before cutting

1

Print at actual size or 100%; disable fit-to-page scaling.

☐

2

Choose duplex printing and flip on the long edge.

☐

3

Test Set 1 only, then hold the sheet to a light to check the borders.

☐

4

The paired back uses the same logical card order; its physical columns are mirrored for long-edge duplex alignment.

☐

5

Cut on the printed guides only after both sides align.

☐



2

Print, align, cut, and retrieve CONTINUED

After this page, you can Prepare a usable deck without losing front-to-back alignment or turning review into rereading.

PREPARE

One honest retrieval turn

Step	Action	Count it correct when...
1 · Look	See only the large Hanzi front	You do not peek at the back
2 · Retrieve	Say the pinyin and one useful word	Tone and word are both accurate
3 · Check	Flip and compare every field	You correct rather than explain away a miss
4 · Sort	Known pile or retry pile	Any sound or word miss goes to retry
5 · Return	Try misses once more, then stop	Misses are scheduled again after a delay



Find, cover, recall

Find one useful row. Cover it and reconstruct the target form before checking.



3

Use a small, spaced retrieval plan

After this page, you can Revisit cards after increasing delays while keeping misses close.

SCHEDULE

Suggested starting schedule

This is a practical starting plan, not a universal optimum. Shorten or lengthen gaps based on your actual recall.

Session	Deck	Retrieval target	After the check
Day 0	One set of 8	Form → pinyin + useful word	Retry misses once; mark them for Day 1
Day 1	Yesterday's 8 + one new set	Cold retrieval before review	Keep misses; set correct cards aside
Day 3	All cards studied so far	Mix sets so position is not a cue	Return only misses the next day
Day 7	All 48, split into two short rounds	Form → sound + word; then reverse 8 cards	Star weak cards
Day 14	All 48 shuffled	One cold cumulative pass	Move stable cards to a longer gap



Find, cover, recall

Find one useful row. Cover it and reconstruct the target form before checking.



4

Use a small, spaced retrieval plan CONTINUED

After this page, you can Revisit cards after increasing delays while keeping misses close.

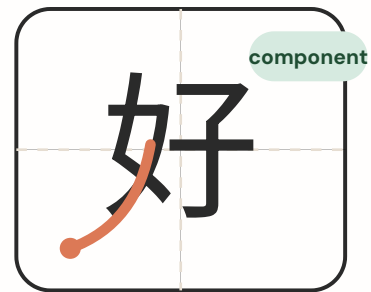
SCHEDULE

Stop while retrieval is still deliberate

A short attempt from memory is the work. Rapidly rereading every back can feel fluent without testing recall. If a session gets sloppy, use fewer cards and preserve the delay rather than drilling the whole deck repeatedly.

Put it in your own words.

Cover this card and explain the idea in one sentence.



A visual anchor for this page's idea



5

Set 1 fronts • People and identity

After this page, you can Retrieve eight high-utility people and identity characters from form alone.

✂ RETRIEVE

Set 1 • fronts

rén 人	nǐ 你
tā 他	men 们
wǒ 我	hǎo 好
tā 她	xìng 姓

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



6

Set 1 backs • People and identity

After this page, you can Check form, sound, component cue, and useful word for Set 1.

✓ CHECK

Set 1 • backs

person

Component: 人

rénmen

人们

people

you

Component: 亻 + 尔

nǐ hǎo

你好

hello

he; him

Component: 亻 + 也

tāmen

他们

they; them

plural suffix for people

Component: 亻 + 阝

wǒmen

我们

we; us

I; me

Component: 我 · independent character

wǒmen

我们

we; us

good

Component: 女 + 子

hěn hǎo

很好

very good

she; her

Component: 女 + 也

tāmen

她们

they; them (female group)

surname; be surnamed

Component: 女 + 生

xìngmíng

姓名

full name

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



7

Set 2 fronts • Conversation

After this page, you can Retrieve eight speech and conversation characters from form alone.

✂ RETRIEVE

Set 2 • fronts

kǒu

口

chī

吃

hē

喝

jiào

叫

ma

吗

ne

呢

tīng

听

shuō

说

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



8

Set 2 backs • Conversation

After this page, you can Check form, sound, component cue, and useful word for Set 2.

✓ CHECK

Set 2 • backs

mouth; opening

Component: 口

ménkǒu

门口

doorway; entrance

eat

Component: 口 + 乞

chīfàn

吃饭

eat a meal

drink

Component: 口 + 曷

hē shuǐ

喝水

drink water

be called; call

Component: 口 + 叫

wǒ jiào...

我叫...

my name is...

yes-no question particle

Component: 口 + 马

hǎo ma

好吗

is that okay?

follow-up particle

Component: 口 + 尼

nǐ ne

你呢

and you?

listen; hear

Component: 口 + 斤

tīngshuō

听说

hear that; be told

speak; say

Component: 讠 + 兑

shuōhuà

说话

speak; talk

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



9

Set 3 fronts • Time and calendar

After this page, you can Retrieve eight time and calendar characters from form alone.

✂ RETRIEVE

Set 3 • fronts

rì 日	míng 明
shí 时	zǎo 早
wǎn 晚	zuó 昨
tiān 天	yuè 月

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



10

Set 3 backs • Time and calendar

After this page, you can Check form, sound, component cue, and useful word for Set 3.

✓ CHECK

Set 3 • backs

day; sun

Component: 日

shēngrì

生日

birthday

bright; next

Component: 日 + 月

míngtiān

明天

tomorrow

time; hour

Component: 日 + 寸

shíjiān

时间

time

early

Component: 日 + 十

zǎoshang

早上

morning

late; evening

Component: 日 + 免

wǎnshang

晚上

evening

yesterday element

Component: 日 + 乍

zuótiān

昨天

yesterday

day; sky

Component: 一 over 大

míngtiān

明天

tomorrow

month; moon

Component: 月

yī yuè

一月

January

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



11

Set 4 fronts • Actions and movement

After this page, you can Retrieve eight action and movement characters from form alone.

✂ RETRIEVE

Set 4 • fronts

shǒu

手

dǎ

打

zhǎo

找

ná

拿

zǒu

走

lù

路

lái

来

qù

去

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



12

Set 4 backs · Actions and movement

After this page, you can Check form, sound, component cue, and useful word for Set 4.

✓ CHECK

Set 4 · backs

hand

Component: 手

shǒujī

手机

mobile phone

hit; do by hand

Component: 扌 + 丁

dǎ diànhuà

打电话

make a phone call

look for

Component: 扌 + 戈

zhǎodào

找到

find

take; hold

Component: 手 at the bottom

ná zǒu

拿走

take away

walk; leave

Component: 走

zǒulù

走路

walk

road; route

Component: 足 + 各

lùkǒu

路口

intersection

come

Component: 来 · independent character

lái

来

come

go

Component: 土 + 厶

qù

去

go

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



13

Set 5 fronts • Sentence builders

After this page, you can Retrieve eight core sentence-building characters from form alone.

✂ RETRIEVE

Set 5 • fronts

bù 不	yǒu 有
zài 在	hěn 很
de 的	zhè 这
nǎ 哪	shì 是

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



14

Set 5 backs · Sentence builders

After this page, you can Check form, sound, component cue, and useful word for Set 5.

✓ CHECK

Set 5 · backs

not

Component: 不 · independent character

bú shì

不是

is not; no

have; there is

Component: 有 · independent character

méiyǒu

没有

not have; there is not

be at; in

Component: 土 in the lower position

xiànzài

现在

now

very; quite

Component: 彳 + 艮

hěn hǎo

很好

very good

possession and description marker

Component: 白 + 勺

wǒ de

我的

my; mine

this

Component: 讠 + 文

zhè ge

这个

this one

which

Component: 口 + 那

nǎlǐ

哪里

where

be; is

Component: 日 at the top

shì

是

be; yes in confirmation

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



15

Set 6 fronts • Daily learning and needs

After this page, you can Retrieve eight daily learning and needs characters from form alone.

✂ RETRIEVE

Set 6 • fronts

shuǐ 水	méi 没
qǐng 请	xiè 谢
jiā 家	zì 字
xué 学	shēng 生

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



16

Set 6 backs • Daily learning and needs

After this page, you can Check form, sound, component cue, and useful word for Set 6.

✓ CHECK

Set 6 • backs

water

Component: 水

hē shuǐ

喝水

drink water

not; have not

Component: 讠 + 没

méiyǒu

没有

not have; there is not

please; invite

Component: 讠 + 青

qǐngwèn

请问

excuse me; may I ask

thank

Component: 讠 + 射

xièxie

谢谢

thank you

home; family

Component: 宀 + 豕

huíjiā

回家

go home; return home

written character; word element

Component: 宀 + 子

míngzì

名字

name

study; learn

Component: 子 in the lower position

xuésheng

学生

student

be born; life; student element

Component: 生 · independent character

shēngrì

生日

birthday

Print at 100%. Cut on the dashed lines. Keep front/back sets in the printed order.



17

Cumulative check • Form and sound

After this page, you can Retrieve character–pinyin mappings across all six sets.

RETRIEVE

Choose without consulting the cards

Choose the exact character or tone-marked pinyin.

1

WORKED EXAMPLE

Which character is nǐ?

- ☒ 你
 ☐ 他
 ☐ 她
 ☐ 人

Why it works: It completes the requested job using the target pattern.

2

Which pinyin belongs to 姓?

- ☐ xīng
 ☐ xìng
 ☐ shēng
 ☐ shì

3

Which character is the neutral-tone yes-no question particle ma?

- ☐ 吗
 ☐ 呢
 ☐ 哪
 ☐ 的

4

Which pinyin belongs to 昨?

- ☐ zǎo
 ☐ zuó
 ☐ zǒu
 ☐ zhǎo

Finish from memory. Choose one completed response, cover the page, and make it again.



18

Cumulative check · Form and sound

 CONTINUED

After this page, you can Retrieve character–pinyin mappings across all six sets.

🔍 RETRIEVE

Choose without consulting the cards

Choose the exact character or tone-marked pinyin.

5

Which character is lù?

☐ 来☐ 去☐ 走☐ 路

6

Which pinyin belongs to 没?

☐ méi☐ men☐ míng☐ ma

7

Which character is qǐng?

☐ 听☐ 说☐ 请☐ 谢

8

Which pinyin belongs to 学?

☐ xué☐ xìng☐ xiè☐ shuō

Finish from memory. Choose one completed response, cover the page, and make it again.



19

Cumulative check • Useful words and components

After this page, you can Retrieve word context and visual component cues across all six sets.

CONNECT

Choose the exact back-of-card connection

Every answer appears on a card back; choose from memory first.

9

WORKED EXAMPLE

Which useful word on the cards means 'full name'?

- ☒ 姓名 ☐ 名字 ☐ 你好 ☐ 学生

Why it works: It completes the requested job using the target pattern.

10

Which useful word is paired with 听?

- ☐ 说话 ☐ 听说 ☐ 请问 ☐ 谢谢

11

Which useful word means 'yesterday'?

- ☐ 早上 ☐ 晚上 ☐ 明天 ☐ 昨天

12

Which useful word means 'intersection'?

- ☐ 门口 ☐ 路口 ☐ 走路 ☐ 回家

Finish from memory. Choose one completed response, cover the page, and make it again.



20

Cumulative check • Useful words and components

CONTINUED

After this page, you can Retrieve word context and visual component cues across all six sets.

CONNECT

Choose the exact back-of-card connection

Every answer appears on a card back; choose from memory first.

13

Which component cue belongs to 找?

☐ 扌 + 戈☐ 足 + 各☐ 讠 + 爻☐ 讠 + 青

14

Which useful word means 'where'?

☐ 这个☐ 哪里☐ 现在☐ 我的

15

Which useful word means 'excuse me; may I ask'?

☐ 谢谢☐ 请问☐ 听说☐ 没有

16

Which useful word means 'student'?

☐ 生日☐ 学生☐ 学校☐ 姓名

Finish from memory. Choose one completed response, cover the page, and make it again.



21

Check your work

After this page, you can compare your response, understand the repair, and choose one item to replay later.

✓ ANSWER GUIDE

Answers with useful feedback

Closed tasks have a direct answer. Open tasks include a model or success criteria; your response does not need to match word for word.

1

Which character is nǐ?

nǐ
你

2

Which pinyin belongs to 姓?

xìng

3

Which character is the neutral-tone yes-no question particle ma?

ma
吗

4

Which pinyin belongs to 昨?

zuó

5

Which character is lù?

lù
路

6

Which pinyin belongs to 没?

méi

Do not stop at checking. Circle one repair and make that response again with the answer covered.



22

Check your work CONTINUED

After this page, you can compare your response, understand the repair, and choose one item to replay later.

✓ ANSWER GUIDE

Answers with useful feedback

Closed tasks have a direct answer. Open tasks include a model or success criteria; your response does not need to match word for word.

7

Which character is qǐng?

qǐng

请

8

Which pinyin belongs to 学?

xué

9

Which useful word on the cards means 'full name'?

xìngmíng

姓名

10

Which useful word is paired with 听?

tīngshuō

听说

11

Which useful word means 'yesterday'?

zuótiān

昨天

12

Which useful word means 'intersection'?

lùkǒu

路口

Do not stop at checking. Circle one repair and make that response again with the answer covered.



23

Check your work CONTINUED

After this page, you can compare your response, understand the repair, and choose one item to replay later.

✓ ANSWER GUIDE

Answers with useful feedback

Closed tasks have a direct answer. Open tasks include a model or success criteria; your response does not need to match word for word.

13

Which component cue belongs to 找?

shǒu · gē

扌 + 戈

14

Which useful word means 'where'?

nǎlǐ

哪里

15

Which useful word means 'excuse me; may I ask'?

qǐngwèn

请问

16

Which useful word means 'student'?

xuésheng

学生

Do not stop at checking. Circle one repair and make that response again with the answer covered.