



WRITING • STARTER

Type Your First Chinese Messages with Pinyin

Set up a Simplified Chinese pinyin keyboard, understand the candidate window, and type useful beginner messages without needing to handwrite every character.

Nǐ hǎo!

你好!

Hello!

Type nihao, then select 你好. Tone marks are not normally entered in the IME code.

By the end, you can...

- ✓ Find and enable a Simplified Chinese pinyin input method
- ✓ Type pinyin without tone marks and choose a candidate by meaning
- ✓ Use v for ü and an apostrophe where a syllable boundary is ambiguous



Starter

45–70 minutes with any phone or computer

18 pages

Answer guide

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



1

What the pinyin keyboard does

After this page, you can Understand the three-step path from sound code to checked Chinese text.

 **FOLLOW**

Code → candidates → meaning check

A pinyin input method editor, or IME, does not translate English. You type the pinyin sound code, usually without tone marks. It offers characters and words that could match that sound. You select the intended candidate, then reread the finished message because a different candidate may sound the same.

Put it in your own words.

Cover this card and explain the idea in one sentence.



A visual anchor for this page's idea



2

What the pinyin keyboard does CONTINUED

After this page, you can Understand the three-step path from sound code to checked Chinese text.

FOLLOW

One code can have many candidates

The English purpose tells you which character to choose.



shì

是

to be; is

Useful in 我是学生。 I am a student.



shí

十

ten

Useful in 十块。 ten kuai.



shí

时

time; hour

Useful in 时间。 time.



shì

市

city; market

Useful in 市中心。 city center.



Cover + retrieve

Choose one line. Hide it, say it once, then uncover and repair one detail.



3

Add and test the input method

After this page, you can Enable pinyin input and confirm that a candidate window appears.

✓ SET UP

Device-neutral setup

Use your system's keyboard, language, or input-source settings.

1

Open keyboard, language, or input-source settings

☐

2

Add Chinese, Simplified

☐

3

Choose Pinyin or Pinyin – Simplified

☐

4

Switch from the English keyboard to the Chinese keyboard

☐

5

Type nihao

☐

6

Select 你好 from the candidate window

☐

7

Switch back to English and confirm you know the shortcut or globe-key location

☐



4

Add and test the input method CONTINUED

After this page, you can Enable pinyin input and confirm that a candidate window appears.

SET UP

If the test does not work



Use the visual cue, then find the matching row.

What you see	What to check
Only Latin letters appear	Confirm that the active input source is Chinese Pinyin, not English
Traditional characters appear	Choose Simplified Chinese Pinyin unless you intentionally want Traditional
No candidate window appears	Type several letters together, such as nihao, and check the active input indicator
The first candidate is wrong	Read more candidates or type a longer phrase for context



Find, cover, recall

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



5

Learn four high-value input habits

After this page, you can Convert tone-marked pinyin into the plain codes common pinyin keyboards expect.

TYPE

What to type

You want	Tone-marked pinyin	Type	Why
你好	nǐ hǎo	nihao	Do not type tone marks into the ordinary IME code
我们	wǒmen	women	Type a whole word so context helps
绿	lǜ	lv	v commonly stands for ü
西安	Xī'an	xi'an	The apostrophe separates xi from an
中国	Zhōngguó	zhongguo	Capital letters are not needed for normal input



Find, cover, recall

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



6

Learn four high-value input habits CONTINUED

After this page, you can Convert tone-marked pinyin into the plain codes common pinyin keyboards expect.

 **TYPE**

Write the input code

Write the plain-letter code you would type.

1

WORKED EXAMPLE

你好 · nǐ hǎo

One answer **nihao**

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

2

绿 · lǜ



One more from you

Make a new response with the same target pattern.

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



7

Learn four high-value input habits CONTINUED

After this page, you can Convert tone-marked pinyin into the plain codes common pinyin keyboards expect.

 **TYPE**

Write the input code

Write the plain-letter code you would type.

3

西安 · Xī'ān

4

中国 · Zhōngguó

**One more from you**

Make a new response with the same target pattern.

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



8

Choose candidates by meaning

After this page, you can Use context to select the intended character rather than accepting the first sound match.

 **CHOOSE**

Circle the intended candidate

Each prompt gives the typed code and intended English message.

5

WORKED EXAMPLE

wo shi xuesheng · 'I am a student.' Choose shì.

☒ 是
 ☐ 十
 ☐ 时
 ☐ 市

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

6

xian zai san dian · 'It is three now.' Choose zài.

☐ 再
 ☐ 在

7

shi kuai · 'ten kuai.' Choose shí.

☐ 是
 ☐ 十
 ☐ 时

8

wo yao he shui · 'I want to drink water.' Choose hē.

☐ 和
 ☐ 喝
 ☐ 河

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



9

Choose candidates by meaning CONTINUED

After this page, you can Use context to select the intended character rather than accepting the first sound match.

CHOOSE

Circle the intended candidate

Each prompt gives the typed code and intended English message.

9

qing wen · 'May I ask...?' Choose wèn.

☐ 文☐ 问☐ 闻

10

ta shi wo mama · 'She is my mother.' Choose tā.

☐ 他☐ 她☐ 它

11

wo men · 'we.' Choose men.

☐ 门☐ 们

12

ni hao ma · 'How are you?' Choose neutral ma.

☐ 妈☐ 马☐ 吗

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



10

Type messages people can use

After this page, you can Move from isolated characters to short messages with enough context for better candidates.

oo REPAIR

Four first messages

1

Nǐ hǎo!

你好!

Hello!

Type nihao

2

Wǒ jiào Ānnà.

我叫安娜。

My name is Anna.

Type wojiao anna, then inspect the name candidates

3

Wǒ sān diǎn dào.

我三点到。

I will arrive at three.

Type wosandiandao

4

Xièxie! Míngtiān jiàn!

谢谢! 明天见!

Thanks! See you tomorrow!

Type xiexie mingtianjian



Cover + retrieve

Choose one line. Hide it, say it once, then uncover and repair one detail.



11

Type messages people can use CONTINUED

After this page, you can Move from isolated characters to short messages with enough context for better candidates.

REPAIR

Repair the wrong candidate

Circle the incorrect character, then write the corrected message.

13

WORKED EXAMPLE

我十学生。 Intended: I am a student.

One answer wǒ shì xué shēng

我是学生。

Why it works: Replace 十 with 是.

14

我们三点到。 Intended: We will arrive at three.



One more from you

Make a new response with the same target pattern.

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



12

Type messages people can use CONTINUED

After this page, you can Move from isolated characters to short messages with enough context for better candidates.

REPAIR

Repair the wrong candidate

Circle the incorrect character, then write the corrected message.

15

你号! Intended: Hello!

16

请文, 洗手间在哪儿? Intended: Excuse me, where is the restroom?



One more from you

Make a new response with the same target pattern.

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



13

Send-ready practice

After this page, you can Plan, type, and meaning-check three personalized messages.

 TYPE

My first three messages

17

Draft and then type: (1) hello plus your name, (2) a simple arrival time, and (3) thanks plus when you will meet again. Record the plain input code and final Chinese for each. Do not send unless you choose to after checking the recipient and meaning.

Success looks like Any three grammatical messages matching the requested purposes, with plausible input codes and checked Simplified Chinese, are acceptable.

Choose your mode Write in Hanzi · write in tone-marked pinyin · say and record it



14

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

你好 · nǐ hǎo

nihao

2

绿 · lǜ

lv

3

西安 · Xī'an

xi'an

4

中国 · Zhōngguó

zhongguo

5

wo shi xuesheng · 'I am a student.' Choose shì.

shì

是

6

xian zai san dian · 'It is three now.' Choose zài.

zài

在

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



15

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

shì kuai · 'ten kuai.' Choose shí.

shí

十

8

wǒ yào he shuǐ · 'I want to drink water.' Choose hē.

hē

喝

9

qǐng wèn · 'May I ask...?' Choose wèn.

wèn

问

10

tā shì wǒ māma · 'She is my mother.' Choose tā.

tā

她

11

wǒ men · 'we.' Choose men.

men

们

12

nǐ hǎo ma · 'How are you?' Choose neutral ma.

ma

吗

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



16

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

我十学生。 Intended: I am a student.

wǒ shì xué shēng

我是学生。

Why: Replace 十 with 是.

14

我们三点到。 Intended: We will arrive at three.

wǒ men sān diǎn dào

我们三点到。

Why: Replace 门 with 们.

15

你号! Intended: Hello!

Nǐ hǎo!

你好!

Why: Replace 号 with 好.

16

请文, 洗手间在哪儿? Intended: Excuse me, where is the restroom?

qǐng wèn · xǐ shǒu jiān zài nǎ ér

请问, 洗手间在哪儿?

Why: Replace 文 with 问.

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



17

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.

17

Draft and then type: (1) hello plus your name, (2) a simple arrival time, and (3) thanks plus when you will meet again. Record the plain input code and final Chinese for each. Do not send unless you choose to after checking the recipient and meaning.

ONE POSSIBLE ANSWER

Nǐ hǎo, wǒ jiào Ānnà. / Wǒ sān diǎn dào. / Xièxie, míngtiān jiàn.

ni hao wo jiao anna → 你好，我叫安娜。 / wo san dian dao → 我三点到。 / xie xie ming tian jian → 谢谢，明天见。

Success criteria: Any three grammatical messages matching the requested purposes, with plausible input codes and checked Simplified Chinese, are acceptable.

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