

PINYIN

Class objectives: I will be able to understand what Pinyin is and why we need it.

Concept A: Introduction to pinyin

- Pinyin is a pronunciation system based on the alphabet.
- Without it, you wouldn't have a way to know how to pronounce Chinese words. Each Pinyin syllable is the combination of initials (consonants), finals (vowels) and tones.
- Pinyin is so important to read and write Chinese.
- It is essential to learn it (and the tones that go with them) before learning Mandarin.

Concept B: Use of pinyin and phonetics

- Chinese Characters, called "Hanzi", are the writing symbols of the Chinese language.
- Pinyin is the Romanization of a phonetic notation for Chinese Characters.
- Each syllable is composed of three parts:

- ❖ Initials
- ❖ Finals
- ❖ Tones

In the Pinyin system there are 23 initials, 24 finals, 4 tones and a neutral tone.

Concept C: Vowels

MANDARIN	SIMILAR ENGLISH SOUND	EXAMPLE (PINYIN & CHARACTER)	NOTE
a	Father	bà 爸	
e	fur	cè 测	
i	see	dì 地	
o	or	pó 婆	
u	flute	bù 不	
ü	German 'für'	Lǜ 绿	Written as 'u' when appearing after 'j q x'
ai	fly	nǎi 奶	
ao	now	hǎo 好	
ei	day	měi 美	

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