

Using Chinese Synonyms

Using Chinese Synonyms is an essential reference book, specifically designed for non-native speakers of Chinese, and for teachers and other language professionals who want a user-friendly guide to the finer nuances of Chinese synonyms. It contains approximately 1700 synonyms in 315 groups. With the particular needs of non-native speakers of Chinese in mind, this invaluable book selects and explains words and phrases in everyday use, allowing students to enhance their knowledge of one of the most important and widely spoken languages in the world. This book assists in the development of fluent, spontaneous and skilful use of Chinese synonyms.

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Contents

Acknowledgements	vi
Abbreviations and notes	vii
<i>Pinyin</i> List	1
<i>Pinyin</i> Grouped List	21
Introduction	37
Chinese synonyms	1
Bibliography	370
English Index	372

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Abbreviations and notes

Abbreviations

n.	noun
v.	verb
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
aux.	auxiliary
num.	number
mw.	measure word
pr.	pronoun
conj.	conjunction
oft.	often
ph.	phrase
sb.	somebody
sth.	something
usu.	usually
[]	[notes] (used in sample sentences to differentiate notes from English translations)
*	see Note beneath a synonym group

Grammar notes

Parts of speech

- noun: book, man, today, economics, Australia, etc.
- verb: to eat, to discuss, to enlarge, to think, to begin, etc.
- adjective: glorious, bad, tall, happy, polite, etc.
- adverb: very, extremely, somewhat, often, probably, etc.
- auxiliary word: can, may, will, have to, should, etc.
- conjunction: and, or, when, while, if, etc.
- pronoun: I, you, she, they, it, etc.

Syntactic terminology

He (subject) quickly (adverbial) finished (predicate) his (attributive) dinner (object).

Layout notes

<i>pinyin</i> frame title , part of speech		English translation
<i>pinyin</i> headword , part of speech *register, **HSK word frequency	English translation and exposition of the headword	sample sentences

*Level of register

3 – formal/ written
2 – neutral
1 – informal/ colloquial
1* – vulgar

**Level of HSK word frequency and language difficulty
(HSK: Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi, the Chinese Proficiency Test, equivalent to TOEFL or IELTS)

A – most commonly used and the least difficult, equivalent of HSK jiǎ (甲 ‘first’)
B – more commonly used, equivalent of HSK yǐ (乙 ‘second’)
C – commonly used, equivalent of HSK bǐng (丙 ‘third’)
D – currently used, equivalent of HSK dīng (丁 ‘fourth’)
N/A – not HSK listed

Within each frame title, items are arranged firstly by the level of register, from 3 to 1*, then alphabetically for headwords within each register level. Within the same level of register, order is determined first by

- alphabetical order of the initials of the first characters of headwords; then by
- *pinyin* ordering of the finals; then by
- the order of tones (from the first to the fourth); then by
- the number of strokes, i.e. characters with fewer strokes precede ones with more strokes; then by
- the order of the beginning stroke: horizontal line (一), then vertical line (丨), then left slash (丿), then dot (丶), then straight stroke with a bending tip (㇀).

If the first characters of headwords are the same in every way, the same principle is applied to the next character, and so on. The above also applies to the arrangement of frame titles, less the level of register.

Pinyin initials:

b p m f, d t n l, g k h, j q x, zh ch sh r, z c s

Pinyin finals:

	i	u	ü
a	ia	ua	
o		uo	
e	ie		üe
ai		uai	
ei		uei	
ao	iao		
ou	iou		
an	ian	uan	üan
en	in	uen	ün
ang	iang	uang	
eng	ing	ueng	
ong	iong		