



Essential Chinese Grammar Words

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Word	Pinyin	Type	Meaning	Example	Example Pinyin	Translation
了	le	aspect particle indicating completed action or change of state	indicates action completion or change	我吃了。	wǒ chī le.	I ate.
吗	ma	question particle for yes/no questions	turns statement into yes/no question	你好吗?	nǐ hǎo ma?	How are you?
呢	ne	particle for follow-up questions or indicating ongoing action	what about...? or ongoing state	我呢?	wǒ ne?	What about me?
吧	ba	particle indicating suggestion or assumption	used for suggestions or softening tone	我们走吧。	wǒmen zǒu ba.	Let's go.
的	de	possessive particle	of; possessive	这是我的书。	zhè shì wǒ de shū.	This is my book.
在	zài	preposition / verb	at; in; on; to be at	我在学校。	wǒ zài xuéxiào.	I am at school.
和	hé	conjunction	and; with	我和你去。	wǒ hé nǐ qù.	You and I are going.
因为	yīnwèi	conjunction	because	因为下雨，我不去。	yīnwèi xià yǔ, wǒ bù qù.	Because it is raining, I am not going.
不	bù	Adverb (negation)	not, no	我不去。	wǒ bù qù.	I am not going.
也	yě	Adverb (also)	also, too	我也去。	wǒ yě qù.	I am going too.
很	hěn	Adverb (very)	very	今天很热。	Jīntiān hěn rè.	Today is very hot.
都	dōu	Adverb (all, both)	all, both	我们都来了。	Wǒmen dōu lái le.	We all came.
得	de	Structural particle	Used after a verb to introduce a complement of degree or result.	他说得很快。	Tā shuō de hěn kuài.	He speaks very fast.
着	zhe	Aspect particle	Indicates a continuous state or ongoing action.	门开着。	Mén kāi zhe.	The door is open.
过	guo	Aspect particle	Indicates past experience of an action.	我去过北京。	Wǒ qù guo Běijīng.	I have been to Beijing.
就	jiù	Adverb	Expresses earliness, immediacy, or emphasis; often 'then' or 'as early as'.	我一到家就睡了。	Wǒ yī dào jiā jiù shuì le.	As soon as I got home, I went to sleep.

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把	bǎ	object marker / preposition	grammatical particle used to shift object before verb	请把门关上。	Qǐng bǎ mén guān shàng.	Please close the door.
被	bèi	passive voice marker	by (used to indicate passive voice)	我的手机被他拿走了。	Wǒ de shǒujī bèi tā ná zǒu le.	My phone was taken away by him.
才	cái	adverb indicating lateness or only then	not until, only then	我八点才起床。	Wǒ bā diǎn cái qǐchuáng.	I didn't get up until eight o'clock.
还	hái	adverb meaning still/also	still, yet, also	我还要一杯水。	Wǒ hái yào yì bēi shuǐ.	I also want a glass of water.
会	huì	Auxiliary verb (modal)	can; will; know how to	我会写汉语。	Wǒ huì xiě Hànyǔ.	I can write Chinese.
从	cóng	Preposition	from (time/place)	他来自中国。	Tā cóng Zhōngguó lái.	He comes from China.
所以	suǒyǐ	Conjunction	therefore; so	今天下雨，所以我没去。	Jīntiān xià yǔ, suǒyǐ wǒ méi qù.	It rained today, so I didn't go.
比	bǐ	Preposition (comparison)	than; compared to	我比他高。	Wǒ bǐ tā gāo.	I am taller than him.
是	shì	verb "to be"	is, am, are	我是学生。	Wǒ shì xuéshēng.	I am a student.
有	yǒu	verb "to have"	have, there is/are	我有一本书。	Wǒ yǒu yì běn shū.	I have a book.
要	yào	auxiliary verb "to want/will"	want, will, going to	我要喝水。	Wǒ yào hē shuǐ.	I want to drink water.
可以	kěyǐ	modal verb "can/may"	can, may	我可以进去吗？	Wǒ kěyǐ jìnqù ma?	May I go in?
但是	dànshì	conjunction	but	我想去，但是我很忙。	Wǒ xiǎng qù, dànshì wǒ hěn máng.	I want to go, but I am very busy.
如果	rúguǒ	conjunction	if	如果你有空，我们一起去。	Rúguǒ nǐ yǒu kòng, wǒmen yìqǐ qù.	If you are free, we can go together.
对	duì	preposition	to, towards	老师对我说。	lǎoshī duì wǒ shuō.	The teacher said to me.
给	gěi	preposition	to, for	我给他一本书。	wǒ gěi tā yì běn shū.	I gave him a book.
几	jǐ	interrogative pronoun	how many; how much	你有几本书？	nǐ yǒu jǐ běn shū?	How many books do you have?
怎么	zěnmē	interrogative adverb	how; what	你怎么来学校？	nǐ zěnmē lái xuéxiào?	How do you come to school?
没	méi	negative adverb	not (have); didn't	我没去。	wǒ méi qù.	I didn't go.

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再	zài	adverb	again; another; more	请再说一遍。	qǐng zài shuō yī biàn.	Please say it again.
虽然	suīrán	conjunction	although	虽然很冷, 但是我想出去。	suīrán hěn lěng, dànshì wǒ xiǎng chūqù.	Although it is very cold, I want to go out.
可是	kěshì	conjunction	but, however	我想去, 可是我很忙。	wǒ xiǎng qù, kěshì wǒ hěn máng.	I want to go, but I am very busy.
跟	gēn	preposition/conjunction	with, and	我跟朋友一起去。	wǒ gēn péngyou yīqǐ qù.	I go with a friend.
或者	huòzhě	conjunction	or	你喝茶或者喝咖啡?	nǐ hē chá huòzhě hē kāfēi?	Do you drink tea or coffee?
已经	yǐjīng	adverb	already	我已经吃过午饭了。	wǒ yǐjīng chī guò wǔfàn le.	I have already eaten lunch.
还是	háishi	conjunction	or (in questions); still	你要茶还是咖啡?	nǐ yào chá háishi kāfēi?	Do you want tea or coffee?
又	yòu	adverb	again (past action)	他又迟到了。	tā yòu chídào le.	He was late again.
可能	kěnéng	auxiliary verb	maybe; possibly	明天可能会下雨。	míngtiān kěnéng huì xià yǔ.	It may rain tomorrow.
第	dì	prefix for ordinal numbers	-th (ordinal marker)	这是我第一次来北京。	zhè shì wǒ dì yī cì lái Běijīng.	This is my first time coming to Beijing.
每	měi	pronoun meaning each, every	each, every	每个人都很忙。	měi gè rén dōu hěn máng.	Everyone is busy.
别	bié	adverb for negative imperative	don't (do something)	别说话。	bié shuō huà.	Don't talk.
到	dào	verb-complement indicating result or arrival	(after verb) to (reach, succeed in)	我找到了钥匙。	wǒ zhǎo dào le yàoshi.	I found the key.
却	què	Adverb	but, yet	他很努力, 却没通过考试。	tā hěn nǔlì, què méi tōngguò kǎoshì.	He worked hard, but he did not pass the exam.
而	ér	Conjunction	and, but	他会说中文而且会说英文。	tā huì shuō Zhōngwén érqiě huì shuō Yīngwén.	He can speak Chinese and also English.
而且	érqiě	Conjunction	moreover, also	他会说中文, 而且会说英文。	tā huì shuō zhōngwén, érqiě huì	He can speak Chinese, and moreover, he

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					shuō yīngwén.	can speak English.
为了	wèile	Preposition/Conjunction	in order to, for	为了学中文, 我每天都练习。	wèile xué zhōngwén, wǒ měitiān dōu liànxí.	In order to learn Chinese, I practice every day.
啊	a	modal particle	used for exclamation or to soften tone	今天真冷啊!	jīntiān zhēn lěng a!	It's really cold today!
地	de	structural particle	adverbial modifier, like -ly	她慢慢地走。	tā màn màn de zǒu.	She walks slowly.
让	ràng	causative verb / passive marker	to let; by (passive)	这件事让我很高兴。	zhè jiàn shì ràng wǒ hěn gāoxìng.	This matter makes me very happy.
不过	búguò	conjunction	but, however	菜很好吃, 不过有点贵。	cài hěn hǎochī, búguò yǒudiǎn guì.	The food is very tasty, but it is a little expensive.
只	zhǐ	Adverb	only	我只喝水。	wǒ zhǐ hē shuǐ.	I only drink water.
更	gèng	Adverb	even more	今天比昨天更冷。	jīntiān bǐ zuótiān gèng lěng.	Today is even colder than yesterday.
最	zuì	Adverb	most	这是我最喜欢的书。	zhè shì wǒ zuì xǐhuan de shū.	This is the book I like the most.
太	tài	Adverb	too / excessively	这件衣服太贵了。	zhè jiàn yīfu tài guì le.	This piece of clothing is too expensive.
突然	tūrán	adverb	suddenly; unexpectedly	他突然哭了。	Tā tūrán kū le.	He suddenly started crying.
终于	zhōngyú	adverb	finally; at last	我们终于到了。	Wǒmen zhōngyú dào le.	We finally arrived.
一直	yīzhí	adverb	always; continuously; all along	我一直在等你。	Wǒ yīzhí zài děng nǐ.	I have been waiting for you all along.
甚至	shènzhì	conjunction/adverb	even; so much so that	他甚至不知道我的名字。	Tā shènzhì bù zhīdào wǒ de míngzi.	He even doesn't know my name.
除了	chúle	Preposition (except, besides)	except for, besides, apart from	除了他, 大家都来了。	Chúle tā, dàjiā dōu lái le.	Everyone came except him.
即使	jíshǐ	Conjunction (even if)	even if; even though	即使下雨, 我也要去。	Jíshǐ xià yǔ, wǒ yě yào qù.	Even if it rains, I will go.
只要	zhǐyào	Conjunction (as long as)	as long as; if only	只要你来, 我就高兴。	Zhǐyào nǐ lái, wǒ jiù gāoxìng.	As long as you come, I will be happy.

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否则	fǒuzé	Conjunction (otherwise)	otherwise; or else	快点, 否则会迟到。	Kuài diǎn, fǒuzé huì chídào.	Hurry up, otherwise you will be late.
因此	yīncǐ	conjunction	therefore, thus	他病了, 因此没来。	Tā bìng le, yīncǐ méi lái.	He was sick, so he didn't come.
由于	yóuyú	preposition / conjunction	due to, owing to	由于天气不好, 我们没去。	Yóuyú tiānqì bù hǎo, wǒmen méi qù.	Due to bad weather, we didn't go.
对于	duìyú	preposition	regarding, concerning	对于这个问题, 我有意见。	duìyú zhè ge wèntí, wǒ yǒu yìjiàn.	Regarding this question, I have an opinion.
以及	yǐjí	conjunction	and, as well as	我喜欢水果以及蔬菜。	wǒ xǐhuān shuǐguǒ yǐjí shūcài.	I like fruit as well as vegetables.
刚	gāng	Adverb (recent past)	just (a moment ago)	他刚到。	tā gāng dào.	He just arrived.
正	zhèng	Adverb (in progress)	just (in the process of), right when	她正在吃饭。	tā zhèngzài chīfàn.	She is eating right now.
先	xiān	Adverb (priority)	first, before (doing something)	你先坐。	nǐ xiān zuò.	You sit first.
然后	ránhòu	Conjunction (sequence)	then, after that	先写字, 然后画画。	xiān xiě zì, ránhòu huà huà.	First write characters, then draw.
将	jiāng	indicates future action; also used for object preposing in formal language	will; about to; (also used to mark the object before the verb)	我将明天去北京。	wǒ jiāng míngtiān qù Běijīng.	I will go to Beijing tomorrow.
以	yǐ	preposition meaning 'using; by means of; in accordance with'	with; by; using; according to	请以中文回答。	qǐng yǐ Zhōngwén huídá.	Please answer in Chinese.
自	zì	preposition meaning 'from; since'	from; since	我自去年开始学中文。	wǒ zì qùnián kāishǐ xué Zhōngwén.	I have been studying Chinese since last year.
与	yǔ	conjunction meaning 'and'; preposition meaning 'with'	and; with	我与朋友一起去。	wǒ yǔ péngyou yìqǐ qù.	My friend and I are going together.
必须	bìxū	Modal verb	must, have to	你必须先做作业。	nǐ bìxū xiān zuò zuòyè.	You must do your homework first.
比较	bǐjiào	Adverb	relatively, quite, rather	这本书比较难。	zhè běn shū bǐjiào nán.	This book is rather difficult.
原来	yuánlái	Adverb	originally; as it turns out	原来你在这里。	yuánlái nǐ zài zhèlǐ.	So you were here.
并且	bìngqiě	Conjunction	and also, moreover	他会说中文, 并且	tā huì shuō zhōngwén, bìngqiě	He can speak Chinese and also write

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				会写汉字。	bìngqiě huì xiě hàn zì.	Chinese characters.
这	zhè	Demonstrative pronoun	this	这是我的书。	zhè shì wǒ de shū.	This is my book.
那	nà	Demonstrative pronoun	that	那是你的包。	nà shì nǐ de bāo.	That is your bag.
什么	shénme	Interrogative pronoun	what	你要什么?	nǐ yào shénme?	What do you want?
谁	shéi	Interrogative pronoun	who	他是谁?	tā shì shéi?	Who is he?
们	men	plural suffix	plural marker for pronouns and people	我们都来了。	wǒmen dōu lái le.	We all came.
个	gè	general measure word	measure word for many common nouns	我有一个苹果。	wǒ yǒu yí gè píngguǒ.	I have one apple.
些	xiē	measure word for indefinite amounts	some, a few	我买了些苹果。	Wǒ mǎi le xiē píngguǒ.	I bought some apples.
哪	nǎ	question word	which	你要哪本书?	Nǐ yào nǎ běn shū?	Which book do you want?
能	néng	modal verb	can, able to	他能来。	Tā néng lái.	He can come.
想	xiǎng	verb / modal verb	to want to, to think	我想吃饭。	Wǒ xiǎng chī fàn.	I want to eat.
应该	yīnggāi	modal verb	should, ought to	你应该休息。	Nǐ yīnggāi xiūxi.	You should rest.
关于	guānyú	preposition	about, regarding	关于这个问题, 我不知道。	Guānyú zhège wèntí, wǒ bù zhīdào.	About this question, I don't know.
嘛	ma	particle	of course; surely (indicates obviousness)	当然嘛!	Dāngrán ma!	Of course!
的话	dehuà	conjunction	if; in the case of	如果下雨的话, 我不去。	Rúguǒ xià yǔ de huà, wǒ bù qù.	If it rains, I won't go.
既然	jìrán	conjunction	since; now that	既然来了, 就坐吧。	Jìrán lái le, jiù zuò ba.	Since you're here, sit down.
无论	wúlùn	conjunction	no matter; regardless	无论多忙, 我都学习。	Wúlùn duō máng, wǒ dōu xuéxí.	No matter how busy I am, I study.