

Introduction

This booklet is simple. It's designed to make your visit to Beijing more fun.

Even if you can't speak a single word of Chinese, this will help you go where you like, do what you want, and solve any little problems you meet along the way.

Chinese is a fascinating language, spoken by more people than any other language in the world. But because it has many dialects, even Chinese people from different regions sometimes misunderstand each other. Don't be discouraged if your attempts at speaking aren't immediately successful. Keep it simple – just point to the relevant phrases in this booklet and you'll get your meaning across.

For first-time visitors to China, we begin with a brief introduction to the country's official language: Mandarin Chinese. This is followed by a pronunciation guide to help get you talking.

The following sections should allow you to deal with most everyday situations. Each contains a list of questions and statements in both English and Chinese, plus useful vocabulary and tips on common cultural misunderstandings.

The final section lists English-language telephone services and websites you can check for further help and in-depth Beijing information.

Just remember: Keep it simple and enjoy Beijing!



Welcome
to Beijing



Chinese Characters Pronunciation

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Chinese Characters

The biggest obstacle to learning Chinese is the written language. While English uses a simple, 26-letter alphabet, written Chinese comprises thousands of different symbols, each of which must be learned individually. Even basic literacy requires knowledge of around two thousand of these symbols, known as characters.

Each character represents a single spoken syllable. One character may represent one single idea or thing, or it may have a whole host of associations, especially when used in combination with other characters.

Take the characters for Beijing as an example:

北京

北=*Běi*="north"







京=*Jīng*="capital"

Because used together they form a single idea – the name of the Chinese capital city – we write these two characters as a single word in English.

In order to help teach schoolchildren (and foreigners) correct pronunciation, the *pinyin* system was developed to transcribe Chinese into Latin script. We'll look at how *pinyin* works in the next section on pronunciation.

The Origin of Chinese Characters

Chinese characters are among the oldest forms of writing in the world. The earliest examples date to the Shang Dynasty more than three thousand years ago. These characters were inscribed in bones and turtle shells to record events and the pronouncements of Shang soothsayers (hence their common English name of “oracle bones”). While many Shang characters are yet to be deciphered, some share striking similarities with modern Chinese writing.

Oracle bone characters	Modern characters	
	門 门	<i>mén</i> , door
	日 日	<i>rì</i> , sun
	月 月	<i>yuè</i> , moon
	上 上	<i>shàng</i> , up
	下 下	<i>xià</i> , down
	好 好	<i>hǎo</i> , good



The characters for “door” and “sun” are obviously pictographic representations. Abstract concepts may also have pictographic roots. The character for “good”, for example, represents a woman and a child. Other characters, however, may have no discernible connection with their meaning. The character 来 [*lái*], for example, originally referred to a kind of wheat; it now means “to come”.

Pronunciation

To read the phrases in this booklet aloud, first you need to know how the *pinyin* system works.

As we've seen, each Chinese character represents a single syllable. The consonant and vowel sounds which form these syllables are written in *pinyin* as follows:

Consonants and semi-consonants

"b"	like the b in <i>bore</i>	"ng"	like the ng in <i>sing</i>
"p"	like the p in <i>poor</i>	"sh"	like the sh in <i>shy</i>
"d"	like the d in <i>door</i>	"r"	like the r in <i>ray</i>
"t"	like the t in <i>tore</i>	"s"	like the s in <i>say</i>
"g"	like the g in <i>guard</i>	"x"	like the sh in <i>sheet</i>
"k"	like the c in <i>card</i>	"f"	like the f in <i>fan</i>
"z"	like the ds in <i>adds</i>	"h"	like the ch in <i>loch</i>
"c"	like the ts in <i>its</i>	"l"	like the l in <i>lie</i>
"zh"	like the j in <i>jelly</i>	"w"	like the w in <i>way</i>
"ch"	like the ch in <i>chilly</i>	"y"	like the y in <i>yell</i>
"j"	like the g in <i>genius</i>		
"q"	like the ch in <i>chew</i>		
"m"	like the m in <i>me</i>		
"n"	like the n in <i>need</i>		

Bear in mind that these examples are only approximate equivalents. Sounds like "q", "x", "zh" and "ch" are quite unlike anything in English – the only way to get them right is to listen to Chinese people and imitate them!

Vowels

"a"	like the a in <i>father</i>	"o"	like the ore in <i>more</i>
"ai"	like the i in <i>bite</i>	"ou"	like the o in <i>go</i>
"ao"	like the ow in <i>now</i>	"ong"	like the ung in <i>Jung</i>
"an"	like the an in <i>man</i>	"u"	like the oo in <i>moo</i>
"ang"	like the ang in <i>tang</i>	"ua"	like the ua in <i>sua</i> ve
"e"	like the ur in <i>fur</i>	"uo"	like the war in <i>war</i>
"ei"	like the ay in <i>day</i>	"uai"	like the wi in <i>wipe</i>
"en"	like the un in <i>under</i>	"ui"	like the way in <i>way</i>
"eng"	like the ung in <i>dung</i>	"uan"	like the wan in <i>wangle</i>
"i"	like the er in <i>wonder</i> (after "z", "c", "s", "zh", "ch", "sh" and "r" only)	"un"	like the won in <i>wondrous</i>
"j"	like the ea in <i>pea</i>	"uang"	like wrong without the "r" (sorry but that's as close as it gets in English)
"ia"	like the ja in the German <i>ja</i> ("Yes")	"ü"	like the French "u" in "tu" [for a closer approxi- mation, purse your lips as if to whistle, then say "ee"]
"iao"	like the eow in the cat's <i>meow</i>	"üe"	like the "ü" as above followed quickly by air
"ie"	like the ye in <i>yet</i>	"üan"	like the "ü" as above followed quickly by the en in end "ün" like the "ü" as above followed quickly by the un in pun
"iu"	like the yo in <i>yo-yo</i>	"er"	like the are in <i>are</i>
"ian"	like the yen in <i>yen</i>		
"in"	like the in in <i>tin</i>		
"iang"	like the yang in <i>yang</i>		
"ing"	like the ing in <i>ring</i>		
"iong"	like the Jung in psycho-analysis ("y" replaces "i" at the beginning of syllables if there is no initial consonant)		

TOP TIP

Pirate-speak

Listening to Beijing people talk, you may notice they seem to say “Arr”, a lot. This is a peculiarity of the Beijing dialect, whereby the final part of a syllable is replaced by a hearty “-arr”. Some visitors compare this sound to the exclamations of pirates and salty sea-dogs in old movies. In *pinyin* it is represented by the simple addition of an “r”. Thus, for example *bian* (“side”) becomes *bianr* in the mouths of many Beijingers.

Tones

Now for the hard part.

The basic sounds of Chinese are easy enough for English speakers to mimic; what isn't so easy is saying them using the correct “tone”. While English speakers use tone for emphasis or emotion, Chinese use different tones to distinguish words that otherwise sound exactly the same.

For example, if you order *tang* in a restaurant you might get soup, but only if you say *tang* with a steady high tone. Otherwise, you might be given sugar, instead, which is also *tang* but said with a rising tone.

There are four tones in Mandarin Chinese: high (1st tone); rising (2nd tone); falling-rising (3rd tone); falling (4th tone). When writing in *pinyin*, these are indicated by one of four diacritics: – high; ˊ rising; ˇ falling-rising; ˋ falling. Thus:

妈	<i>mā</i>	“mother”
麻	<i>má</i>	“numb”
马	<i>mǎ</i>	“horse”
骂	<i>mà</i>	“swear”, “insult”

Again, the only way to get to grips with this aspect of the language is by listening to Chinese people themselves and imitating them.

Getting By...

Basic Basics

Hello!

Nǐ hǎo! 你好!

Do you speak English?

Nǐ huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?
你会说英语吗?

I don't understand.

Wǒ bù míngbai.
我不明白。

Does anyone here
speak English?

Zhè'r yǒu rén huì shuō
yīngyǔ ma?
这儿有人会说英语吗?

Here

Zhè'r 这儿

There

Nà'r 那儿

This one.

Zhèigè. 这个。

That one.

Nèigè. 那个。

It's mine.

Shì wǒ de. 是我的。

Where's the toilet?

Cèsuǒ zài nǎ'r?
厕所在哪儿?

Thank you

Xièxiè 谢谢

Goodbye

Zàijiàn 再见



TOP TIP Yes and No

Puzzlingly, the Chinese language does not contain straightforward terms for “Yes” and “No”. Don’t worry, many Chinese people know these two English words, anyway, and you can emphasize your point by using body language. Nod your head and smile enthusiastically for “Yes”; shake it for “No”. To really underline a refusal, try simultaneously waving your right hand as if vigorously polishing a dirty mirror.

Numbers

Since Chinese people also use Roman numerals, you can avoid all number problems just by carrying a pen and paper. But if you'd like to practice saying your numbers, here are the basics:

1	一	yī	6	六	liù
2	二	èr	7	七	qī
3	三	sān	8	八	bā
4	四	sì	9	九	jiǔ
5	五	wǔ	10	十	shí

Chinese numbers build very simply. For example, “eleven” is a combination of the characters for “ten” and “one”; “twelve” is a combination of “ten” and “two”, and so on...

11	十一	shí yī
12	十二	shí èr
13	十三	shí sān

“Twenty-one” is a combination of the characters for “two”, “ten” and “one”; “thirty-one” is a combination of “three”, “ten” and “one”...

21	二十一	èr shí yī
31	三十一	sān shí yī
41	四十一	sì shí yī
51	五十一	wǔ shí yī
99	九十九	jiǔ shí jiǔ
100	一百	yī bǎi

A lot of misunderstandings arise over numbers. Take the easy way to avoid confusion – write them down!

Ordinal Numbers

To make a number into its ordinal form, e.g. “first”, “thirteenth”, just add “*dì*” [第] in front.

Thus:

The first

Dì yī 第一

The thirteenth

Dì shí sān 第十三

If talking about a number “of” something, e.g. “three of these”, then add “*ge*” [个] after the number.

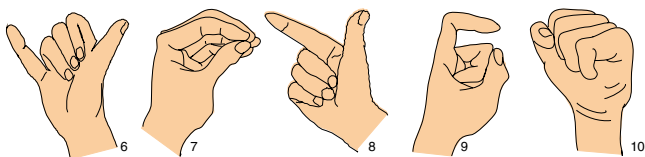
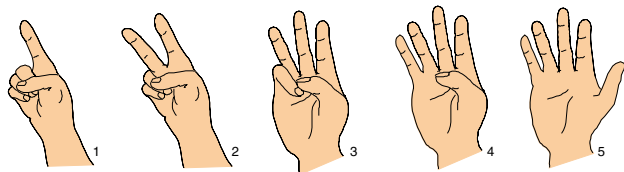
Thus:

Three of these

Sāngè zhèigè 三个这个

Finger Counting

Watch out! Chinese people also count on their fingers, but in a different way to Europeans or Americans. Learn these signs for “one” to “ten” and you can bargain without saying a word.



Getting By...

What Time Is It?

Jǐ diǎn le? 几点了?

For communicating about times of the day, nothing beats a pen and paper. But telling the time in Chinese is also very simple – as long as you've learned your numbers.

After the hour number add the word *diǎn* [点], then the number of minutes it is past the hour followed by the word *fēn* [分].

Also worth knowing is the word for “half”, *bàn* [半], which follows *diǎn* to make the term for “half past...”

3 o'clock

Sān diǎn 三点

or to be more precise,

Sān diǎn zhōng 三点钟

4.20

Sì diǎn èrshí

四点二十

7.30

Qī diǎn bàn 七点半

11.55

Shíyī diǎn wǔ shí wǔ

十一时五十五

In the morning

Zǎoshàng/shàngwǔ

早上/上午

In the afternoon

Xiàwǔ 下午

In the evening

Wǎnshàng 晚上

Two hours

Liǎng gè xiǎoshí 两个小时

Three minutes

Sān fēnzhōng 三分钟

Ten seconds

Shí miǎozhōng 十秒钟

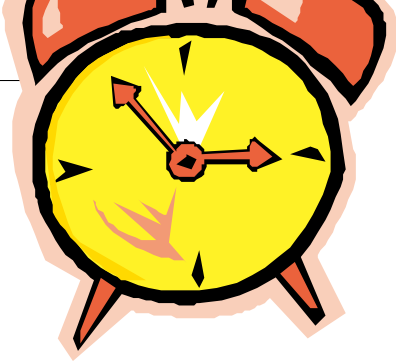
Half an hour

Bàngè xiǎoshí

半个小时

A quarter of an hour

Shí wǔ fēnzhōng 十五分钟



Present

Today **Jīntiān** 今天

This morning

Jīntiān zǎoshàng/shàngwǔ

今天早上/上午

This afternoon

Jīntiān xiàwǔ 今天下午

Tonight/This evening

Jīntiān wǎnshàng 今天晚上

This week **Zhèizhōu** 这周

This month **Zhèigè yuè** 这个月

This year **Jīnnián** 今年

Now **Xiànzài** 现在

Past

Yesterday **Zuótiān** 昨天

The day before yesterday

Qiántiān 前天

Last week **Shàngzhōu** 上周

Last month **Shànggè yuè** 上个月

Last year **Qùnián** 去年

Future

Tomorrow **Míngtiān** 明天

The day after tomorrow

Hòutiān 后天

Next week **Xiàzhōu** 下周

Next month **Xiàgè yuè** 下个月

Next year **Míngnián** 明年

Days

Monday **Zhōu yī** 周一

Tuesday **Zhōu èr** 周二

Wednesday **Zhōu sān** 周三

Thursday **Zhōu sì** 周四

Friday **Zhōu wǔ** 周五

Saturday **Zhōu liù** 周六

Sunday **Zhōu rì** 周日

Months

This is even easier. There are no names as in English, just numbers plus the word for “month”, **yuè** 月. Thus, for example, January is “one month”, **yīyuè** 一月, while July is “seven month”, **qīyuè** 七月.

Seasons

Spring **Chūntiān** 春天

Summer **Xiàtiān** 夏天

Autumn **Qiūtiān** 秋天

Winter **Dōngtiān** 冬天

Getting By...

At the Airport

Zài jīchǎng 在机场

On Arrival

Where's the information desk?

Zìxúntái zài nǎ'r? 咨询台在哪儿?

Where's the hotel information desk?

Jiǔdiàn zìxúntái zài nǎ'r?

酒店咨询台在哪儿?

Where's the lost property desk?

Shīwù zhāolǐng chù zài nǎ'r?

失物招领处在哪儿?

Where's the toilet?

Cèsuǒ zài nǎ'r? 厕所在哪儿?

I've lost my luggage.

Wǒ de xíngli dīu le. 我的行李丢了。

I've lost my passport.

Wǒ de hùzhào diū le.

我的护照丢了。

Where's the taxi rank?

Chūzūchēzhàn zài nǎ'r?

出租车站在哪儿?

Where's the subway/underground/metro station?

[NB: The Beijing Capital Airport rail link is mainly an overground light-rail line]

Dìtiězhàn zài nǎ'r?

地铁站在哪儿?

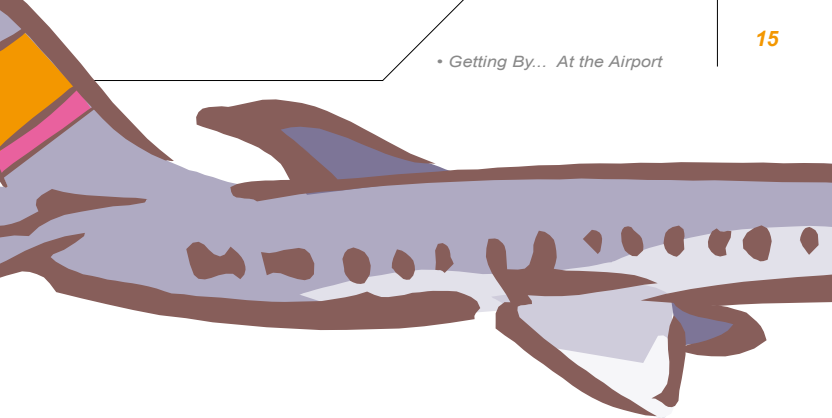
On Departure

Beijing Capital International Airport

Běijīng shǒudū guójì jīchǎng
(shǒudū jīchǎng)

北京首都国际机场 (首都机场)

[NB:] International and domestic flights leave from both terminals 2 and 3. Tell your taxi driver whether you are flying international or domestic and he should let you off close to the right entrance.



Terminal 2

èrhào hángzhàn lóu 2号航站楼

Terminal 3

Sānhào hángzhàn lóu 3号航站楼

[NB: Taxi drivers all know this new terminal as "T 3" ("T sān")]

International flight

Guójì hángbān 国际航班

Domestic flight

Guó nèi hángbān 国内航班

Where are the check-in desks?

Dēngjì chù zài nǎr?

登记处在哪儿?

Where can I book flight tickets?

Zài nǎr kěyǐ dīng dào jīpiào?

在哪儿可以订到机票?

TOP TIP

Asking "Where?"

This couldn't be easier. Just say the name of the place or thing that you want and add, "...zài nǎr?".

Before posing your question, however, it's a good idea to say a couple of things in Chinese first.

Try this:

"Hello! May I ask..."

"Nǐ hǎo! Qǐng wèn..." "你好! 请问....."

Chinese people generally don't expect foreigners to be able to speak Chinese. This makes some nervous. Assuming they won't be able to understand, often they don't start listening properly until your second or third sentence.

Getting By...

In the Taxi

Zài chūzūchē lǐ 在出租车里

As long as you have the name and address of your destination written down, there's no need to say anything at all in a Beijing taxi. Otherwise, a mere handful of words will serve most purposes:

Take me to...

"Qù..." 去.....

"Turn left."

Zuǒ guǎi. 左拐。

Turn right.

Yòu guǎi. 右拐。

Turn left/right at the lights.

Hónglǜdēng zuǒ/yòu guǎi.

红绿灯左/右拐。

Go straight on.

Zhíxíng. 直行。

Stop here.

Tíng zài zhè'r. 停在这儿。

Take me to the nearest subway/
underground/metro station.

Dào zuìjìn de dìtiězhàn.

到最近的地铁站。

Take me to the nearest police
station.

Qù zuìjìn de pàichūsuǒ.

去最近的派出所。

Take me to the nearest
post office.

Qù zuìjìn de yóujú.

去最近的邮局。

Take me to the nearest Bank of China.

Qù zuìjìn de Zhōngguó yínháng.

去最近的中国银行。

Please turn the radio down.

Qǐng tiáoxiǎo shōuyīnjī.

请调小收音机。

[Alternatively, keep it simple by pointing to the radio and just saying, "Turn that off." **Bǎ nèigè guān diào.**

把那个关掉]

Please turn the radio off.

Qǐng guāndiào shōuyīnjī.

请关掉收音机。

TOP TIP

Carry change!

Taxi drivers often run short of change, yet still expect passengers to have the right money. If you have nothing but 100-yuan bills, show one to the driver before you get started and ask:

"Have you got change?"

Yǒu língqián ma? 有零钱吗?

Popular Destinations

Silk Street

Xiùshuǐ jiē 秀水街

The Pearl Market

Zhēnzhū shìchǎng 珍珠市场

China World Trade Center

Guómào 国贸

Tian'anmen Square

Tiān'ānmén 天安门

The Temple of Heaven

Tiāntán 天坛

The Forbidden City

Gùgōng 故宫

Yonghegong (Lama Temple)

Yōnghégōng 雍和宫

The Summer Palace

Yíhéyuán 颐和园

The National Stadium (Bird's Nest)

Guójiā tǐyùchǎng (niǎo cháo)

国家体育场(鸟巢)



The National Aquatic Center
(Water Cube)

Guójiā yóuyǒng zhōngxīn
(shuǐ lì fāng)

国家游泳中心(水立方)

Houhai

Hòuhǎi 后海

Wangfujing

Wángfǔjǐng 王府井

Beijing Railway Station

Běijīngzhàn 北京站

Beijing West Railway Station

Běijīng xīzhàn 北京西站

Beijing Capital International
Airport

Shǒudū jīchǎng 首都机场

TOP TIP

Toll fees

Beijing taxi drivers will usually pay tolls themselves and then add the toll fee to your fare at the end of the journey. First-time visitors please note: There is a toll on the road from Beijing Capital International Airport into the city. It was 10 yuan at the time of writing.

No tipping!

Beijing taxi drivers don't expect to be tipped. Should you insist, however, they're unlikely to object.

Put the meter on!

You'll almost certainly find Beijing's taxi drivers helpful and honest. To avoid misunderstandings, however, always check they put the meter on. If you get into a "taxi" and find there is no meter, get out again immediately.



Getting By...

At the Hotel

Zài jiǔdiàn 在酒店

I have a reservation.

Wǒ yùdìng le. 我预订了。

Do you have any rooms free?

Kōng fángjiān háiyǒu ma?

空房间还有吗?

I'd like a single/double/standard room.

[NB: "Standard" rooms typically feature two single beds]

Wǒ yào dānrén/shuāngrén/
biāozhǔn jiān.

我要单人/双人/标准间。

I'd like a non-smoking room.

Wǒ yào wúyān fángjiān.

我要无烟房间。

Do you accept credit cards?

Néng yòng guójì xìnyòngkǎ
ma? 能用国际信用卡吗?

Where's the lift/elevator?

Diàntī zài nǎ'r? 电梯在哪儿?

What time is breakfast?

[NB: Don't worry about learning how to tell the time in Chinese; just get them to write it down.]

Zǎocān shì jǐdiǎn?

早餐是几点?

Where is breakfast?

Zǎocān zài nǎ'r?

早餐在哪儿?

Could someone help carry
my bag?

Yǒu rén bāng wǒ ná xià xíngli
ma? 有人帮我拿下行李吗?

Where's the business center?

Shāngwù zhōngxīn zài nǎ'r?

商务中心在哪儿?

I'd like to get online.

Wǒ yào shàngwǎng. 我要上网。

My room is too hot/cold.

Wǒ de fángjiān tài rè/lěng.

我的房间太热/冷。

The air-conditioning is broken.

Kōngtiáo huài le. 空调坏了。

The heating is broken.

Nuǎnqì huài le. 暖气坏了。

The telephone is broken.

Diànhuà huài le. 电话坏了。

The toilet is broken.

Cèsuǒ huài le. 厕所坏了。

Please send someone to fix it.

Qǐng zhǎo rén xiūlǐ yīxià.

请找人修理一下。

Could you clean my room,
please?

Dǎsǎo xià fángjiān kěyǐ ma?

打扫下房间可以吗？

I'd like an extra pillow.

Wǒ yào zài jiā yīgè zhěntou.

我要再加一个枕头。

I'd like some more toilet paper.

Wǒ zài yào xiē cèzhǐ.

我再要些厕纸。

I'd like some more soap.

Wǒ zài yào xiē xiāngzào.

我再要些香皂。

I'd like some clean towels.

Wǒ xūyào xiē gānjìng máojīn.

我需要些干净毛巾。

I'd like to see the manager.

Wǒ yào jiàn nǐmen jīnglǐ.

我要见你们经理。

I'd like to check out.

Wǒ yào tuì fáng. 我要退房。

TOP TIP

To tip or not to tip

Unlike most service workers in China, bell boys and porters at up-market hotels do expect to be tipped. Ten yuan is a reasonable standard.

Tips are also expected by tour guides and drivers on organized tours. But Chinese people rarely, if ever, tip in restaurants.

Getting By...

Asking Directions

Wèn lù 问路

Beijing is laid out in a grid, within which locals orient themselves according to the points of the compass. When traveling by subway, for example, the station exits are labeled “East”, “North”, “Southwest”, etc. However, they are only labeled in Chinese, so if you only learn four characters, make them these four:

North	Běi	北
South	Nán	南
East	Dōng	东
West	Xī	西

Ideally, you should always try to have the name and address written down in Chinese. Since you shouldn't expect to understand anything much said by locals, **remember your trusty pen and paper**. Get them to draw a map!

Nevertheless, also remember your taxi instructions:

Straight ahead	On the right
Yī zhí zǒu 一直走	Yòubiān 右边
Turn right	On the left
Yòu guǎi 右拐	Zuǒbiān 左边
Turn left	
Zuǒ guǎi 左拐	

As we saw at the airport, all you need to ask directions is the name of the place you're going, plus "...
zài nǎ'r?" "在哪儿?"

Thus:

Where is the National Stadium [Bird's Nest]?

Guójiā tǐyùchǎng (niǎo cháo)
zài nǎ'r?

国家体育场(鸟巢)在哪儿?

Better than this, however, is to use the phrase for, "How do I get to...?" which you make by saying the name of the place you're going and adding

"...zěnmē zǒu?" "...怎么走?"

Thus:

How do I get to the National Stadium [Bird's Nest]?

"Guójiā tǐyùchǎng (niǎo cháo)
zěnmē zǒu?"

"国家体育场(鸟巢)怎么走?"

How do I get to the nearest subway/metro/underground station

"Zuìjìn de dìtiězhàn zěnmē zǒu?"
"最近的地铁站怎么走?"



TOP TIP**I'm sorry, but...**

In the interests of saving face, Chinese people almost never utter a flat refusal to any suggestion. In tourist areas, you may find yourself the object of persistent hawkers or other people you wish would leave you alone. Just saying no won't get rid of them, so what would a polite Beijinger do?

They'd make up an excuse. Claiming another appointment is acceptable; saying you have a "meeting" is even better. Saying that you feel ill is an almost foolproof method of deflecting unwelcome attention.

Don't feel guilty about this, especially if you are being cajoled by "students" proposing art exhibitions or nearby tea houses – the latter is a particularly notorious scam.

I'm sorry...

Duì bù qǐ...

对不起……

I have a meeting.

Wǒ yào kāihuì qù.

我要开会去。

I have something else I must do.

Wǒ hái yǒu shì.

我还有事。

I feel ill.

Wǒ bù shūfu.

我不舒服。

I'll do it with you another time.

[NB: This is the king of polite refusals, instantly understood to mean, "No, and I don't want to talk about this any more."]

I'm going to see the doctor.

Wǒ yào qù kànbìng.

我要去看病。

Gǎi tiān zài shuō ba.

改天再说吧。

Getting By...

At the Restaurant/Bar

Zài fàndiàn/jiǔbā 在饭店/酒吧

Beijing's better class of restaurant increasingly provides a bilingual menu, or at least a menu with pictures. If neither is forthcoming, you can a) find another restaurant, or b) inspect what others are eating and indicate which dishes you fancy. Just to be totally clear, you can add:

I'd like that.

Wǒ yào nèigè 我要那个

For comprehensive restaurant and bar information, look for one of Beijing's English-language listings magazines: *Beijing This Month*, *That's Beijing*, *City Weekend* or *Time Out Beijing*. See the final section of this handbook for English-language websites with useful listings.

To ask for a table, all you need is your numbers plus one word: "Wèi" (位). Thus:

"Table for two."

"Liǎng wèi." "两位。"

◀ [NB: Although you've learned the word for "two" as "er" (二), when speaking about "two somethings", the word for "two" becomes "liǎng" (两).]

"Table for three."

"Sān wèi." "三位。"

...and so on.





“Can I see the menu?”
Càidān gěi wǒ kànkàn.
菜单给我看看。

Waiter!/Waitress!
Fúwùyuán! 服务员!

Could I have another pair of chopsticks?
Zài gěi wǒ yīshuāng kuàizi.
再给我一双筷子。

Could I have a knife & fork?”
Gěi wǒ yīfù dāo chā.
给我一副刀叉。

Could I have a spoon?
Gěi wǒ yīgè sháozi.
给我一个勺子。

Could I have another bowl?
Zài gěi wǒ yīgè wǎn.
再给我一个碗。

Could I see the drinks list?
Jiǔshuǐdān gěi wǒ kànkàn.
酒水单给我看看。

Could I have some paper napkins?
Gěi wǒ xiē cānjīnzhǐ.
给我些餐巾纸。

[NB: You could just say, “Cānjīnzhǐ.”]

Could I have a glass of water?
Gěi wǒ yībēi shuǐ. 给我一杯水。

Not too spicy.
Bù yào tài là. 不要太辣。

Don't add MSG.
Bùyào fàng wèijīng.
不要放味精。

This isn't what I ordered.
Zhè bùshì wǒ diǎn de.
这不是我点的。

I want to speak to the manager.

Wǒ xiǎng gēn nǐmén jīnglǐ
shuōhuà. 我想跟你们经理说话。

The bill, please.

Mǎidān. 买单。

I don't eat meat. I don't eat
fish, either.

Wǒ bù chī ròu, yě bù chī yú.
我不吃肉，也不吃鱼。

TOP TIP

Veggie trouble

Although staff in Beijing restaurants are getting better at dealing with special dietary requirements, overall there's still a tendency not to take them very seriously. You can't be too clear about what you want. And if your vegetable dish still arrives with extra pork or dried shrimp, don't hesitate to send it back. But stay cool!

Useful words for ordering

Remember, just add, "I'd like..."

"Wǒ yào..." "我要……" in front of any of these:

Toothpick Yáqiān 牙签

Beer Píjiǔ 啤酒

Coffee Kāfēi 咖啡

Coke Kělè 可乐

Cold water Bīngshuǐ 冰水

Fruit juice Guǒzhī 果汁

Special needs

I'm a vegetarian.

Wǒ shì sùshízhě. 我是素食者。

I have a nut allergy. Please tell
the chef he must not use any
nuts or nut oil.

Wǒ duì guǒrén guòmǐn. Qǐng
gàosù chúshī bù yào fàng rèn hé
guǒrén huò guǒyóu.

我对果仁过敏。请告诉厨师不要
放任何果仁或果油。

Milk Niú nǎi 牛奶

Sprite Xuěbì 雪碧

Vinegar Cù 醋

Orange juice Chéngzhī 橙汁

Soy sauce Jiàng yóu 酱油

Tea Chá 茶

Green tea **Lǜchá** 绿茶
 Jasmine tea **Huāchá** 花茶
 Pu'er tea **Pǔ'ěrchá** 普洱茶
 Oolong tea **Wūlóngchá** 乌龙茶
 Apple juice **Píngguǒzhī** 苹果汁
 Mineral water
Kuànguānshuǐ 矿泉水
 Wine (red)
Hóng jiǔ 红酒
 Wine (white)
Bái pútáojiǔ 白葡萄酒



TOP TIP

Rice with your meal?

Note that rice is typically brought after all the other dishes, especially if you are drinking alcohol. If you want rice at the same time, it helps to be specific:

Please bring the rice first

Xiān shàng mǐfàn. 先上米饭。

Less politeness, please

English people in particular tend to hedge requests with a lot of polite phrases. No question feels complete without at least a “Would you mind..?” or a “Could you..?” followed by a “...please?”.

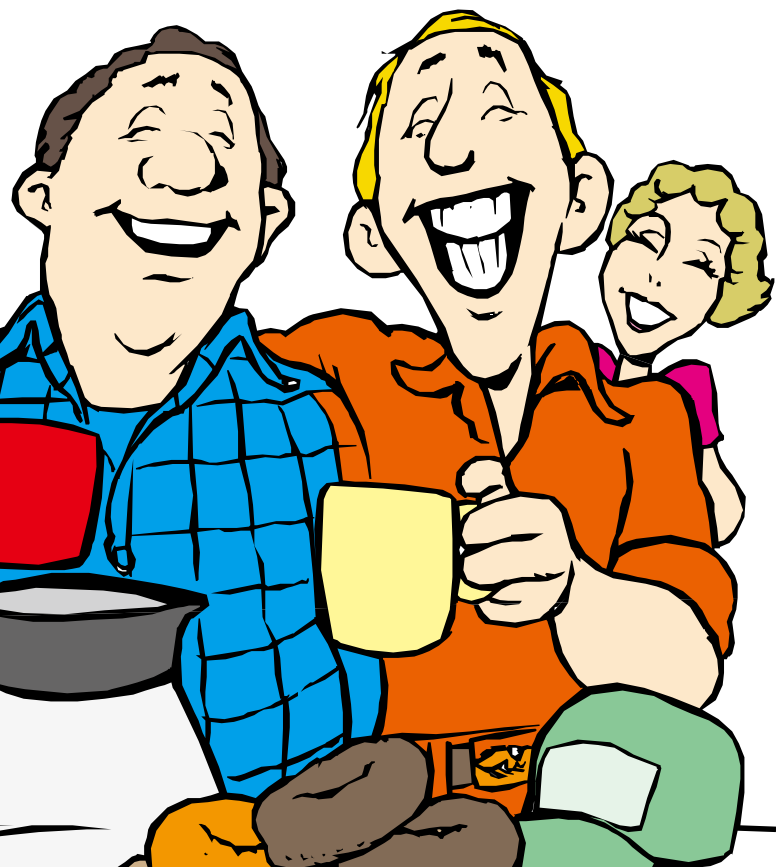
There's no need for this in Beijing. Chinese people are typically more direct – to the point that their language can sound abrupt and even rude to the English ear. Chinese people may even find too many “pleases” and “thank yous” rather bemusing. That's not to say you shouldn't say “Thank you”; just that you should do so sparingly. For example, thanking a waitress every time she brings a new dish to your table will make you seem odd, rather than polite.

Carry cash

Even restaurants which display credit card signs won't necessarily accept yours. Some only accept credit cards issued by Chinese banks, although these may ostensibly be part of the VISA system, for example. Check before you order:

Do you accept international credit cards?

Néng yòng guójì xìnyòngkǎ ma? 能用国际信用卡吗?



Getting By...

At the Railway Station/ On the Train

Zài huǒchēzhàn/huǒchē shàng 在火车站/火车上

For those who like rail travel, China's long-distance trains are (generally) a pleasure. There are four classes of tickets, in ascending order of comfort and cost:

Hard-seat **Yingzuò** 硬座 Soft-seat **Ruǎnzuò** 软座
Hard-sleeper **Yingwò** 硬卧 Soft-sleeper **Ruǎnwò** 软卧

Hard-sleeper carriages have lower, middle and upper berths, while soft-sleepers have just lower and upper berths. Ticket prices vary slightly according to which berth you take – the lower berth is slightly more expensive than the upper ones.

Upper berth **Shàngpù** 上铺
Middle berth **Zhōngpù** 中铺
Bottom berth **Xiàpù** 下铺

Buying Tickets

Where is the ticket office?

Shòupiàotīng zài nǎ'r? 售票厅在哪儿?

At the ticket office, keep it simple.

If you want the next available train, just say:

Hello, I'm going to...

Nǐ hǎo! wǒ yào qù... 你好! 我要去.....

I want the next train.

Yào xià yītàng chē.

要下一趟车。

Then state the class of ticket you want (and which berth, if you are taking a sleeper)

How much?

Duō shǎo qián? 多少钱?

What time is there a train for…?

Dào…de chē jǐdiǎn yǒu?

到……的车几点有?

Is there a later train?

Wǎn yīdiǎn'er de yǒu ma?

晚一点儿的有吗?

Is there an earlier train?

Zǎo yīdiǎn'er de yǒu ma?

早一点儿的有吗?

What time does the train leave?

Huǒchē jǐdiǎn lízhàn?

火车几点离站?

What time does the train arrive?

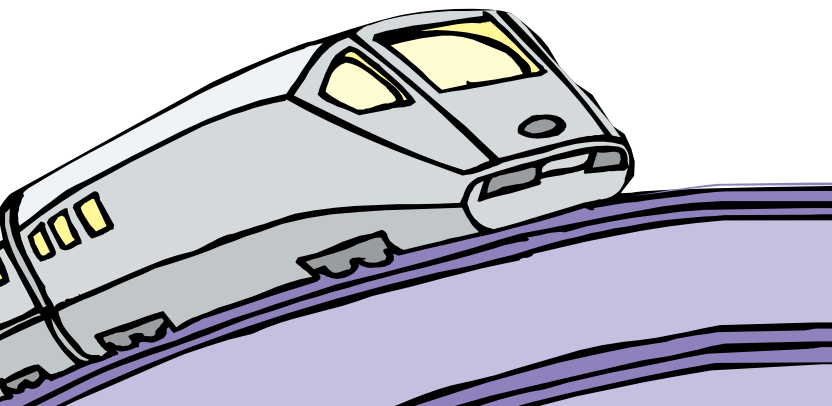
Huǒchē jǐdiǎn dào zhàn?

火车几点到站?

Where do I go for this train?

[Show your ticket!]

Dào nǎ'r zuò chē? 到哪儿坐车?



On the Train

Excuse me, this is my seat.

Duì bù qǐ, zhè shì wǒ de wèizi ba ? 对不起，这是我的位子吧？

[NB: For some reason, people on trains are easily provoked. It's a good idea to use a deferential tone when confronting them. If it becomes necessary to insist, however, just state flatly, "This is my seat!"

"Zhè shì wǒ de wèizi!" 这是我的位子]

Can you tell me when we get to...?

Jǐdiǎn dào...? 几点到.....?

Where do I go to upgrade
my ticket?

Zài nǎ'r bǔ piào ? 在哪儿补票?

I'd like to upgrade my ticket.

Wǒ yào bǔ piào. 我要补票。

I want to change to a
hard-sleeper.

Wǒ yào bǔ yìngwò. 我要补硬卧。

I want to change to a soft-seat.

Wǒ yào bǔ ruǎnzuo.

我要补软座。

I want to change to a
soft-sleeper.

Wǒ yào bǔ ruǎnwò.

我要补软卧。

Where is the restaurant car?

Cānchē zài nǎ'r? 餐车在哪儿?

TOP TIP

Take the upper berth

If you're traveling by sleeper and want an early night, buy a ticket for the upper berth – the bottom one is likely to be occupied for much of the evening by your Chinese co-travelers, who like to while away the time chatting, eating and playing cards.

Getting By...

At the Olympics

Zài àoyùn chǎngsuǒ 在奥运场所

Getting by in Beijing will never be easier than during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and Paralympics. An army of willing volunteers has trained to welcome half a million foreign visitors. Many have studied English specially for this event. They will all be thrilled to hear a few words of Chinese in return.

[Show your ticket]
How do I get here?
Zěnmē zǒu? 怎么走?

This is my seat!
Zhè shì wǒ de wèizi!
这是我的位子!

What time does the event start?
Shénme shíjiān kāishǐ bǐsài?
什么时间开始比赛?

Where can I buy drinks?
Zài nǎ'r mǎi yǐnliào?
在哪儿买饮料?

I can't find my seat.
Wǒ zhǎo bù dào wèizi.
我找不到位子。

Where can I buy food?
Zài nǎ'r mǎi shíwù?
在哪儿买食物?

Excuse me, I think you're sitting
in my seat.
Bù hǎo yìsi, wǒ xiǎng nǐ zuò le
wǒ de wèizi.
不好意思, 我想你坐了我的位子。

I can't see.
Wǒ kàn bù jiàn. 我看不见。

Could you sit down, please?
Qǐng nín zuòxià hǎoma?
请您坐下好吗?

Sit down!

Zuòxià! 坐下!

Would you mind putting that flag down, please?

Qǐngwèn, néng bǎ nà qízi fàngxià ma?

请问，能把那旗子放下吗？

Put that flag down!

Fàngxià qízi! 放下旗子!

Would you mind putting that banner down, please?

Qǐngwèn, néng bǎ nà tiáofú fàngxià ma?

请问，能把那条幅放下吗？

Put that banner down!

Fàngxià tiáofú! 放下条幅!

Where is the disabled access?

Cánzhàng tōngdào zài nǎ'r?
残障通道在哪儿？

Where's the toilet?

Cèsuǒ zài nǎ'r? 厕所在哪儿？

How do I get out [of the stadium]?

Zěnmě chūqù? 怎么出去？

I've lost my ticket.

Wǒ de piào diū le. 我的票丢了。

TOP TIP

Support the locals

Shout encouragement at Chinese athletes by yelling, "Jiā yóu!" [加油!]



Olympic Venues

I'm going to...

Wǒ qù... 我去.....

How do I get to...?

...zěnmē zǒu?...怎么走?

National Stadium

Guójiā tǐyùchǎng

国家体育场 (鸟巢)

National Aquatics Center

Guójiā yóuyǒng zhōngxīn

国家游泳中心 (水立方)

National Indoor Stadium

Guójiā tǐyùguǎn

国家体育馆

Beijing Shooting Range Hall

Běijīng shèjìguǎn

北京射击馆

Beijing Olympic Basketball

Gymnasium

Běijīng àolínpǐkè lánqiúguǎn

北京奥林匹克篮球馆

Laoshan Velodrome

Lǎoshān zìxíngchēguǎn

老山自行车馆

Shunyi Olympic Rowing-Canoeing Park

Shùnyì àolínpǐkè shuǐshàng

gōngyuán

顺义奥林匹克水上公园

China Agricultural University
Gymnasium

Zhōngguó nóngyè dàxué
tǐyùguǎn

中国农业大学体育馆

Peking University Gymnasium

Běijīng dàxué tǐyùguǎn

北京大学体育馆

Beijing Science and Technology
University Gymnasium

Běijīng kējì dàxué tǐyùguǎn

北京科技大学体育馆

Beijing University of Technol-
ogy Gymnasium

Běijīng gōngyèdàxué tǐyùguǎn

北京工业大学体育馆

Beijing Olympic Green Tennis Court

Běijīng àolínpǐkè gōngyuán

wǎngqiúchǎng

北京奥林匹克公园网球场

Olympic Sports Center Stadium

Aotí zhōngxīn tǐyùchǎng

奥体中心体育场

Olympic Sports Center Gymnasium

Aotí zhōngxīn tǐyùguǎn

奥体中心体育馆

Beijing Workers' Stadium

Běijīng gōngrén tǐyùchǎng

北京工人体育场

Beijing Workers' Gymnasium

Běijīng gōng rén tǐ yù guǎn

北京工人体育馆

Capital Indoor Stadium

Shǒu dū tǐ yù guǎn

首都体育馆

Fengtai Sports Center

Softball Field

Fēng tái tǐ yù zhōng xīn

lěi qí uǒ chǎng

丰台体育中心垒球场

Yingdong Natatorium of National Olympic Sports Center

Yīng dōng yóu yǒng guǎn

英东游泳馆

Laoshan Mountain Bike Course

Lǎo shān shān dì zì xíng chē chǎng

老山山地自行车场

Beijing Shooting Range CTF

Běijīng shè jī chǎng fēi dié bǎo chǎng

bǎo chǎng

北京射击场飞碟靶场

Beijing Institute of Technology Gymnasium

Gymnasium

Běijīng lǐ gōng dà xué tǐ yù guǎn

北京理工大学体育馆

Beijing University of Aeronautics & Astronautics Gymnasium

Běijīng háng kōng háng tiān

dà xué tǐ yù guǎn

北京航空航天大学体育馆

北京航空航天大学体育馆

Fencing Hall of National Convention Center

Guójiā huì yì zhōng xīn jī jiàn guǎn

国家会议中心击剑馆

国家会议中心击剑馆

Beijing Olympic Green Hockey Stadium

Stadium

Běijīng ào lín pǐ kè gōng yuán

qū gùn qí uǒ chǎng

北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场

北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场

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北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场

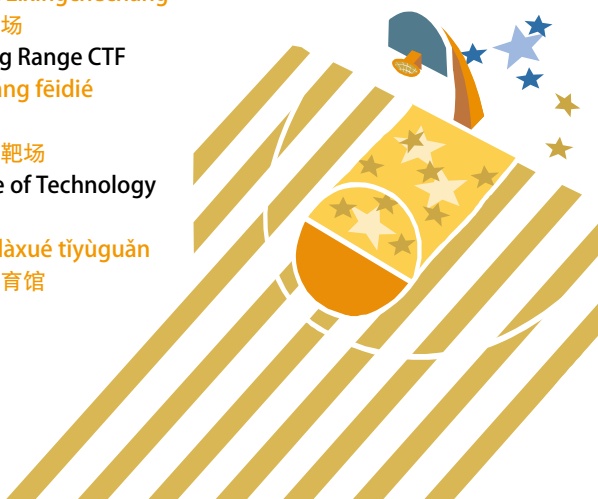
北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场

北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场

北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场

北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场

北京奥林匹克公园曲棍球场



Beijing Olympic Green
Archery Field

Běijīng àolínpǐkè gōngyuán
shèjiànchǎng

北京奥林匹克公园射箭场

Beijing Wukesong Sports
Center Baseball Field

Běijīng wūkēsōng tǐyùzhōngxīn
bàngqiúchǎng

北京五棵松体育中心棒球场

Chaoyang Park Beach Volleyball
Ground

Cháoyáng gōngyuán shātān
páiqiúchǎng

朝阳公园沙滩排球场

Laoshan Bicycle Moto Cross
(BMX) Venue

Lǎoshān xiǎolúnchē sàichǎng

老山小轮车赛场

Triathlon Venue

Tiěrén sānxiàng sàichǎng

铁人三项赛场

Road Cycling Course

Gōnglùzìxíngchē sàichǎng

公路自行车赛场



Getting By...

At the Internet Café

Zài wǎngba 在网吧

Internet access is not a problem in Beijing. However, if you want to upload or download files, the city's internet cafes are no use. All of them disable their computers' USB ports. One option is to use the online services in up-market hotel business centres, but be warned that these can be ridiculously expensive – ten to 20 times the price of internet cafes.

Where is the nearest internet café?

Zuìjìn de wǎngba zài nǎ'r?

最近的网吧在哪儿?

I want to get online?

Wǒ yào shàngwǎng. 我要上网。

How much does it cost per hour?

Yī xiǎoshí duōshǎo qián?

一小时多少钱?

Can I connect a flash disk?

Wǒ néng yòng yōupán ma?

我能用U盘吗?

Do I need a password?

Yǒu mìmǎ ma? 有密码吗?

What's the password?

Mimǎ shì shénme?

密码是什么?

This computer doesn't work.

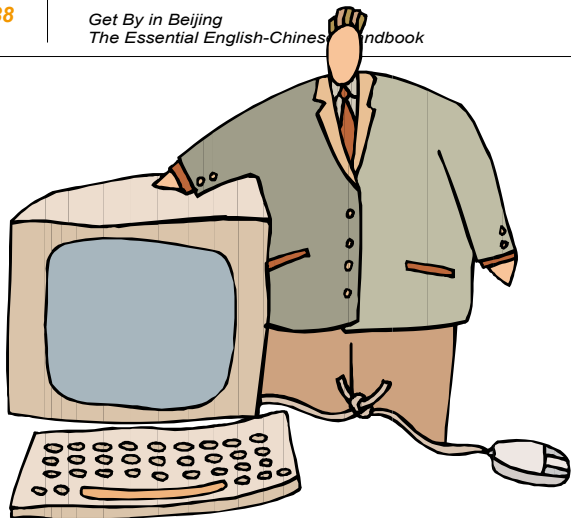
Zhègè diànnǎo huài le.

这个电脑坏了。

This keyboard is broken.

Zhègè jiànpán huài le.

这个键盘坏了。



This mouse is broken.
Zhèigè shǔbiāo huài le.
这个鼠标坏了。

This chair is uncomfortable.
Zhèigè yǐzi bù shūfu.
这个椅子不舒服。

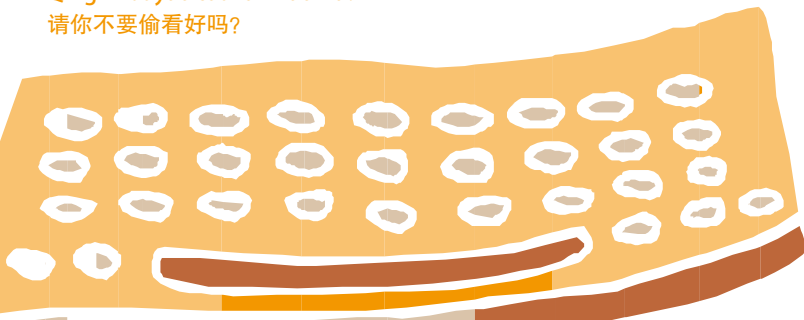
Can I change computers?
Wǒ néng huàn tái diànnǎo ma?
我能换台电脑吗？

Would you mind not looking
over my shoulder?
Qǐng nǐ bùyào tōukàn hǎoma?
请你不要偷看好吗？

I'm sorry, I'm rather busy at
the moment.
Duì bù qǐ, wǒ zhè huì'r hěn máng.
对不起，我这会儿很忙。

I'd like to sit somewhere quieter.
Wǒ xiǎng zhǎo gè ānjìng de
dìfāng zuò.
我想找个安静的地方坐。

I've finished.
Wǒ yòng wán le.
我用完了。



Getting By...

At the Market

Zài shìchǎng 在市场

Few tourists leave Beijing without visiting at least one of the city's many markets. Clothes, souvenirs and antiques can all be had for excellent prices – as long as you're careful! Every price on the markets is negotiable. If a salesperson tells you they don't bargain, move on to another stall and they will probably change their mind.

As you'll be accosted all around the market by enthusiastic sellers, learn one phrase before all others: *Buyao!* ("I don't want it!")

See Top Tips below for more on bargaining, Beijing-style.

Is anyone going to serve me?

Shéi mài dōngxi? 谁卖东西?

[or to get a salesperson's attention]

Nǐ hǎo! 你好!

I'm just looking.

Kànkàn. 看看。

I'd like to buy that.

Wǒ yào nèigè. 我要那个。

I'd like to buy this.

Wǒ yào zhèigè. 我要这个。

How much does this cost?

Zhèigè duōshǎo qián?

这个多少钱?

That's too expensive.

Tài guì le. 太贵了。

Can you let me have it cheaper?

Piányi diǎnr kěyǐ ma?

便宜点儿可以吗?

That's still too much.

Háishì tài guì le. 还是太贵了。

Go on, cheaper!

Zài piányi yīdiǎnr ma!

再便宜一点儿嘛!

Is it real?

Shì zhēn de ma?

是真的吗?

This is a fake.

Shì jiǎ de.

是假的。

I'll give you 10 yuan.

Wǒ gěi shí kuài.

我给十块。

Forget it.

Nà suàn le.

那算了。

I'd like something like this.

Wǒ yào xiē hé zhèigè xiāngsì

de. 我要些和这个相似的。

Can you show me another one?

Néng gěi wǒ kànkàn lìng yīgè ma?

能给我看看另一个吗?

Can I try it on?

Wǒ néng shì yíxià ma?

我能试一下吗?

I don't like it.

Bù xǐhuān.

不喜欢。

Do you have a mirror?

Yǒu jìngzi ma?

有镜子吗?

It doesn't fit.

Bù héshì.

不合适。

It's too big.

Tài dà le.

太大了。

It's too small.

Tài xiǎo le.

太小了。

I don't want it.

Bùyào.

不要。

Can you show me one in
another colour?

Néng gěi wǒ kànkàn qítā
yánsè de ma?

能给我看看其它颜色的吗?



TOP TIP

Think hard before you offer

Once you suggest a price, you're locked into the bargaining process. Unless you really want the object, don't let any number cross your lips. If you say a price without intending to bargain, you risk creating bad feeling. Equally, the seller may instantly agree and thrust your purchase into your hand. At this point, you can't back down without unpleasantness.

Hurt their feelings!

Chinese people on the whole seem to take little pleasure in bargaining. Salespeople may also come across as rather thin-skinned if you undercut their price by a long way. On some markets this is because the starting prices are not actually too high and the seller feels genuinely affronted. But there are markets where asking prices are regularly five or six times the true value. In the absence of reliable local advice, play it safe and start low – no matter how ridiculous it feels to offer 10 yuan when asked for 100.

Getting By...

At the Supermarket

Zài chāoshì 在超市

There is now little to distinguish Beijing's big supermarkets from their Western counterparts. Indeed, several foreign chains have opened stores here. You can therefore shop quietly and anonymously, but here's a list of common necessities in case you need to ask where they are. Remember, just add "...zài nǎ'r?" after the item's name to ask "Where is...?"

Aspirin

Asipīlín 阿司匹林

Band-Aids

Chuāngkětīē 创可贴

Biscuits

Bǐnggān 饼干

Bread

Miànbāo 面包

Cheese

Nǎilàò 奶酪

Chocolate

Qiǎokèlì 巧克力

Coffee

Kāfēi 咖啡

Comb

Shūzi 梳子

Condoms

Bìyùntào 避孕套

Fruit juice

Guǒzhī 果汁

Insect repellent

Shāchóngjì 杀虫剂

Laxative

Xiè yào 泻药

Milk

Niúǎi 牛奶

Moisturizing cream

Hùfūshuāng 护肤霜

Razors

Tìxūdāo 剃须刀

Sanitary napkins

Wèishēngjīn 卫生巾

Shampoo

Xifàshuǐ 洗发水

Shaving cream/foam/gel

Tìxū shuāng/pàomò/gāo

剃须霜/泡沫/膏

Suntan cream

Fángshài shuāng

防晒霜

Tea

Chá 茶

Tissues

Zhǐjīn 纸巾

Toilet paper

Cèzhǐ 厕纸

Toothbrush

Yáshuā 牙刷

Toothpaste

Yágāo 牙膏

Washing powder

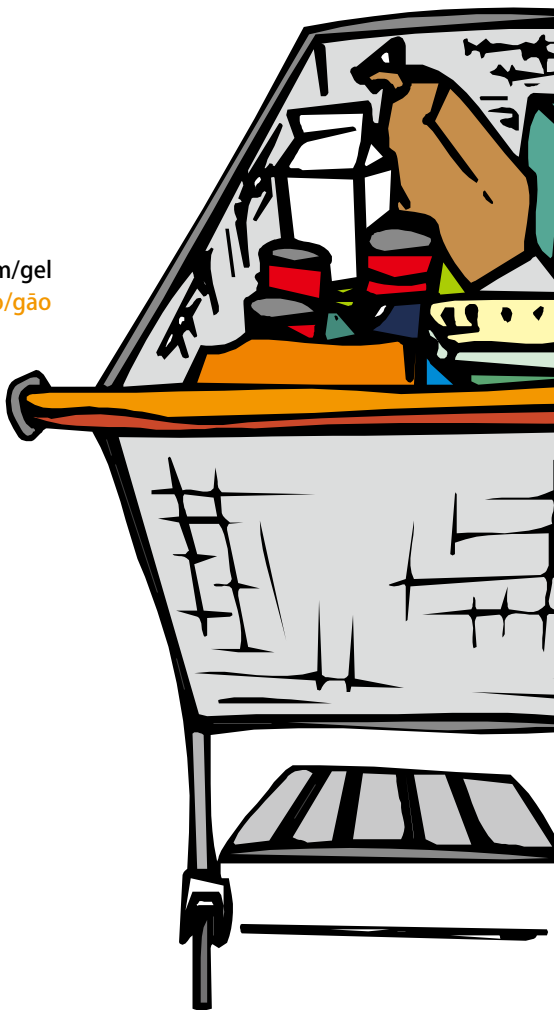
Xìyīfěn 洗衣粉

Soap

Xiāngzào 香皂

Yoghurt

Suānnǎi 酸奶



Getting By...

At the Post Office

Zài yóujú 在邮局

Beijing's post office staff are usually happy to help fill out forms and generally solve foreigners' mail-related problems. For anything complicated, however, it's best to head for the International Post Office.

International Post Office

Guójì yóujú

国际邮局

Envelope

Xinfēng 信封

Stamp

Yóupiào 邮票

Where is the nearest
post office?

Zuìjìn de yóujú zài nǎr?

最近的邮局在哪儿?

I'm sending this to...

Zhèigè jì dào...

这个寄到.....

I want to send a...

Wǒ xiǎng jì...

我想寄.....。

...letter

...xìn 信

...postcard

...míngxìnpìàn

明信片

...parcel

...bāoguǒ 包裹

By air

Hángkōng 航空

By surface mail

Píngyóu 平邮

By EMS

Tèkuài zhuāndì

特快专递

I'd like to send this by registered mail.

Wǒ yào jì guàhàoxìn.

我要寄挂号信。

Can I have the slip with the registered letter number?

Néng bǎ guàhàoxìn de

hàomǎtiáo gěi wǒ ma?

能把挂号信的号码条给我吗？

Do you have to frank it?

Could I have stamps instead?

Wǒ yào tiē yóupiào.

我要贴邮票。

Do you have any nicer stamps?

Yǒu hǎokàn yīdiǎn'ér de yóu-

piào ma? 有好看一点儿的邮票

吗？

TOP TIP

Don't wrap before you send

Chinese post offices want to know what you're sending, as they have definite ideas about what is and is not acceptable to send through the mail. It's therefore best not to package presents or other items before taking them to the post office, as you'll only have to unwrap them again.

I'm sorry, I didn't know I wasn't allowed to send CDs.

Duì bù qǐ, wǒ bù zhīdào bù ràng yóujì guāngpán.

对不起，我不知道不让邮寄光盘。

Could you help me pack this?

[NB: There's a separate desk selling envelopes and packaging materials, where the staff members will help box stuff up for you]

Néng bāng wǒ bāozhuāng yīxià ma?

能帮我包装一下吗？

How much is that?

Duōshǎo qián?

多少钱？



Getting By...

At the Bank

Zài yínháng 在銀行

Not every bank will be able to change money or give you an advance on your credit card. However, any branch should be able to direct you to one that can. Note that large hotels will usually only change money for guests. These days it's very unusual to meet a black-market money changer; ignore them if you do.

Beijing's ATMs are now commonly linked to international networks. There are plenty of exceptions, however, so you may have to search around a bit.

The basic unit of Chinese currency is the *yuan*, which is divided into ten *jiao*. Each *jiao* is divided into ten *fen*, but these are of such minimal value that you don't really need to worry about them. What you do need to bear in mind is that *yuan* are commonly referred to as *kuai* (think "dollar" and "buck"), while *jiao* are always called *mao*.

Is there an ATM nearby?

Fùjìn yǒu qǔkuǎnjī ma?

附近有取款机吗？

I'd like to get a credit card advance.

Wǒ yòng xìnyòngkǎ fùkuǎn.

我用信用卡付款。

I'd like to change money.

Wǒ yào huànrqián. 我要换钱。

What's the exchange rate for...?

...de huìlǜ shì duōshǎo?

.....的汇率是多少？

I'd like to change travelers' cheques.

Wǒ yào huànr lǚxíng zhīpiào.

我要换旅行支票。

US dollars

Měiyuán 美元

British pounds
Yīngbàng 英镑

Euros
Ouyuán 欧元

Where do I sign?
Zài nǎ'r qiānmíng?
在哪儿签名?

I want to see the manager.
Wǒ yào jiàn nǐmen jīnglǐ.
我要见你们经理。

TOP TIP
Carry your passport!

This is actually a requirement of Chinese law, but you will discover its practical necessity if you want to conduct any business in a bank. No passport = no service.



Getting By...

At the Hospital, Dentist & Chemist/Drug Store

Zài yīyuàn, yá kē hé yào diàn 在医院、牙科和药店

Should you be unfortunate enough to fall ill in Beijing, check out one of the service websites at the back of this handbook for good information on foreigner-friendly medical services. Several hospitals have special departments for treating foreigners – always aim for one of these, as ordinary Chinese hospitals are very confusing places if you don't have a local to help you.

For minor ailments, chemists/drug stores can be found all over the city. Note that they are generally divided into a “Western Medicine” section and a “Traditional Chinese Medicine” section.

I'm sick.

Wǒ shēngbìng le.

我生病了。

My friend is sick.

Wǒ péngyou shēngbìng le.

我朋友生病了。

**Is there a chemist/
drug store nearby?**

Fùjìn yǒu yào diàn ma?

附近有药店吗？

Where is the hospital?

Yīyuàn zài nǎ'r? 医院在哪儿？

Where is the chemist?

Yào diàn zài nǎ'r? 药店在哪儿？

Where is the doctor?

Yīshēng zài nǎ'r? 医生在哪儿？

Is there a dentist here?

Yǒu yá yī ma?

有牙医吗？



Is there a doctor who can speak English?

Yǒu huì shuō yīngyǔ de yīshēng ma? 有会说英语的医生吗?

I don't want an IV drip.

(NB: One of the first things done in a Chinese hospital is often to put in-patients on a drip – whether they need one or not.)

Wǒ bù yào shūyè. 我不要输液。

Can he speak English?

Tā huì shuō yīngyǔ ma? 他会说英语吗?

Please use a fresh needle. Show me the packet.

Qǐng yòng yīcìxìng zhēntóu. Gěi wǒ kànkàn bāozhuāng. 请用一次性针头。给我看看包装。

Complaints

I have a headache.

Wǒ tóuténg. 我头疼。

I have a migraine.

Wǒ piān tóuténg. 我偏头疼。

I have a stomach ache.

Wǒ wèiténg. 我胃疼。

I have a sore throat.

Wǒ sǎngzi téng. 我嗓子疼。

I have a cold.

Wǒ gǎnmào le. 我感冒了。

I have a cough.

Wǒ késou. 我咳嗽。

I have a fever.

Wǒ fāshāo le. 我发烧了。

It hurts here.

Zhèlǐ téng. 这里疼。

I feel dizzy.

Wǒ tóuyūn. 我头晕。

I feel weak.

Wǒ gǎnjué hěn xūruò. 我感觉很虚弱。

I have an allergic reaction.

Wǒ guòmǐn.

我过敏。

I have trouble breathing.

Wǒ hūxī kùnnán.

我呼吸困难。

I have a heart condition.

Wǒ yǒu xīnzàngbìng.

我有心脏病。

I've been vomiting..

Wǒ tù le... 我吐了.....。

I have diarrhea.

Wǒ lādùzi. 我拉肚子。

I have constipation.

Wǒ biànmì. 我便秘。

I can't sleep.

Wǒ shīmíán. 我失眠。

I have asthma.

Wǒ yǒu xiàochuǎnbìng.

我有哮喘病。

I have diabetes.

Wǒ yǒu tángniàobìng.

我有糖尿病

I have epilepsy.

Wǒ yǒu diānxiánbìng.

我有癫痫病。

I have food poisoning.

Wǒ shíwù zhòngdú le.

我食物中毒了。

I have indigestion.

Wǒ xiāohuà bùliáng.

我消化不良。

I have an infection.

Wǒ yǒu chuánrǎnbìng.

我有传染病。

It itches here.

Zhèlǐ yǎng. 这里痒。

I have rheumatism.

Wǒ yǒu fēngshībìng. 我有风湿病。

I have arthritis.

Wǒ yǒu guānjiéyán. 我有关节炎。

I have sunstroke.

Wǒ zhòngshǔ le. 我中暑了。

I have venereal disease.

Wǒ yǒu xìngbìng. 我有性病。

I have high/low blood pressure.

Wǒ xuèyā gāo/dī.

我血压高/低。

I have blood in my urine.

Wǒ niàoxiě. 我尿血。

I have blood in my stool.

Wǒ biànxuè. 我便血。

It's sprained.

Niǔshāng le. 扭伤了。

It's broken.

Duàn le. 断了。

It's dislocated.

Tuōjiù le. 脱臼了。

Women's Health

Can I have a female doctor?

Yǒu nǚyīshēng ma?

有女医生吗?

I'm pregnant.

Wǒ huáiyùn le. 我怀孕了。

I'm on the pill.

Wǒ zhèngzài chī bìyùnyào.

我正在吃避孕药

I haven't had my period for four months.

Wǒ sìgè yuè méi lái yuèjīng le.

我四个月没来月经了。

Allergies

I am allergic to antibiotics.

Wǒ duì kàngshēngsù guòmǐn.

我对抗生素过敏。

I am allergic to aspirin.

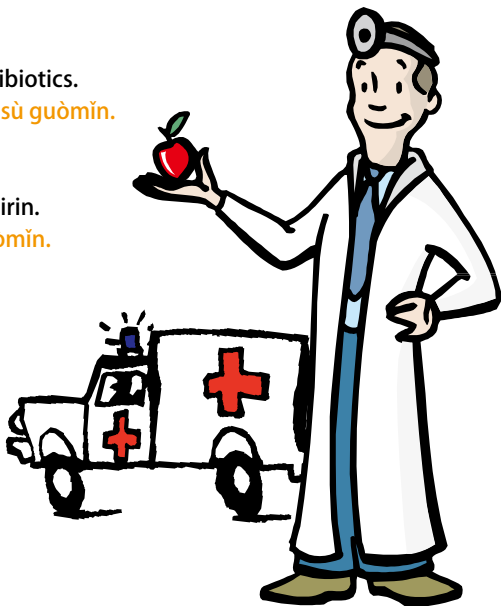
Wǒ duì āsīpīlín guòmǐn.

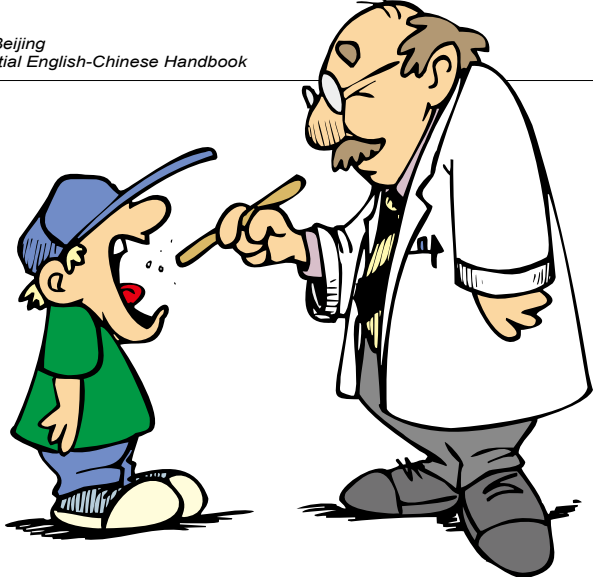
我对阿司匹林过敏。

I am allergic to penicillin.

Wǒ duì qīngméisù guòmǐn.

我对青霉素过敏。



**TOP TIP****Carry cash!**

Unless you happen to be in a Western-funded clinic that has a direct billing arrangement with your insurance company, every step you take in a Beijing hospital will cost money, and don't expect them to accept credit cards.

At the Dentist

I have a toothache.

Wǒ yáténg. 我牙疼。

At the top.

Shàng biānr. 上边儿。

At the bottom.

Xià biānr. 下边儿。

At the front.

Qián biānr. 前边儿。

At the back.

Hòu biānr. 后边儿。

I don't want it taken out.

Wǒ bù yào bá diào.

我不要拔掉。

Give me an anaesthetic!

Gěi wǒ dǎ má zuì yào!

给我打麻醉药!

At the Chemist

How many do I take?

Zěnmě fú? 怎么服?

How many times a day?

Yī tiān fú jǐ cì? 一天服几次?

Getting By...

At the Police Station

Zài pàichūsuǒ 在派出所

It shouldn't happen to you, but...

If you have to visit a police station for any reason, it's best to have someone with you who can interpret. If you're alone, insist that the police find someone who can speak English. Don't worry – they can and will do this for you. Under no circumstances should you surrender your passport until the situation has been made clear to you. If reporting a crime, you will be required to show your passport.

Is there someone here who can speak English?

Zhè'r yǒu rén huì shuō yīngyǔ ma? 这儿有人会说英语吗?

Please find an interpreter.

Qǐng zhǎo yīgè fānyì.
请找一个翻译。

I've been robbed.

Wǒ bèi qiǎngjié le. 我被抢劫了。

Someone picked my pocket.

Yǒu rén tāo le wǒ de kǒudài.
有人掏了我的口袋。

They stole my...

Tāmen tōu le wǒ de.....
他们偷了我的.....。

...wallet

...qiánbāo 钱包

...passport

...hùzhào 护照

...watch

...shǒubiǎo 手表

...mobile phone

...shǒujī 手机



I didn't do it.

Wǒ méi gàn. 我没干。

He hit me first.

Tā xiān dǎ wǒ. 他先打我。

He's not telling the truth.

Tā sāhuǎng.
他撒谎。

I want to make a phone call.

Wǒ yào dǎdiànhuà.
我要打电话。

I'm very sorry.

Fēicháng bàoqiàn. 非常抱歉。

I will show you my passport
after someone explains the situ-
ation to me in English.

Yǒu rén gěi wǒ yòng yīngyǔ
jiěshì wán qíngkuàng hòu, wǒ
huì gěi nǐ kàn wǒ de hùzhào.
有人给我用英语解释完情况后，
我会给你看我的护照。

TOP TIP

Be ready to compromise

Minor disputes between visitors and locals occasionally escalate to involve discussions at the nearest police station. In such cases, the police often prefer to broker a compromise in which one party pays "compensation" to the other. Foreigners occasionally feel aggrieved at such compromises, especially when asked to pay despite feeling that they are the wronged party. It's best to just swallow such feelings, pay and leave. The alternative – pursuing legal proceedings – involves surrendering your passport and probably ruining the rest of your trip.

Trouble Shooter

Beijing Information Websites & Telephone Services

Beijing Information Websites

There is now a wealth of information available online about all aspects of Beijing. In particular, check out the sites listed below under "General, Directories and Classifieds". These have large databases covering everything from the latest restaurants and clubs to medical services and personal ads.

General, Directories and Classifieds

www.thebeijinger.com

www.cityweekend.com.cn/beijing

www.timeout.com/cn/en/beijing

Travel (Flights, Hotels, Car Reservations)

www.elong.net

<http://english.ctrip.com>

Food Delivery

www.beijinggoodies.com

Books & Literary Events

www.beijingbookworm.com

Tickets (events)

www.emma.cn/home.asp

<http://en.piaowutong.com>

Food Aid

www.howtoorderchinesefood.com

www.localnoodles.com

Telephone Services

Be advised that none of the major emergency and information telephone operators in Beijing offers English services. Calling any of the numbers below requires Chinese language skills.

Police

110

Medical emergency

120 or 999

Fire dispatch

119

Traffic accidents

122

Directory enquiries

114

Get By in Beijing

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Executive Editor	Wang Lin, Mercy Sun
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Editor	Rocky Li, Zhao Didi
Design	Wang Xuqing, Liu Jie
Producer	Yue Chuang
Photo Editor	Zhou Bin
Address	Bldg. 10, Fahuananli, Tiyuguan Lu, Chongwen District, Beijing 100061
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Fax	+86 10 6715 2381
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 地址 中国北京市崇文区体育馆路法华南里小区10号楼1层, 100061
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