

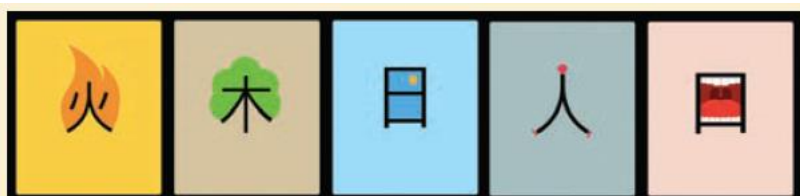
## Radicals and stroke order

First try to get a basic understanding of the basic radicals and basic stroke order and stroke direction. Read about what a radical is and watch the radical related videos on the material page.

### 4 categories of characters:

#### 1) Pictographs

They are based on pictures and therefore comparatively easy to remember.



#### 2) Ideograms

Ideograms are based on symbolic meaning.

Character	一	二	三	上	下	本
Pinyin	yī	èr	sān	shàng	xià	běn
Translation	one	two	three	up	below	root

#### 3) Compound ideographs

A combined character of ideograms or pictographs.

好

on the left it is a woman, on the right her child;

#### 4) Phono-semantic compound characters

Most of the characters belong to this category. One part gives the hint of the pronunciation, the other part gives the hint for the meaning.

马 mǎ	吗 ma	骂 mà	码 mǎ
Radical „horse“	Radical “mouth”) + ma = question particle	Two mouths + ma: to scold	Stone + ma: „number, code“

**For learning pictograms, ideograms and combined ones.**

When you learn a character composed of different elements, you can try to break it down into components. Now you can try to link the meanings of the components to the overall meaning of the character.

好

on the left it is a woman, on the right her child;

The meaning of the character is “good” ( woman + child = good)

You can also sometimes make up your own stories, especially when you learn phonetic/semantic characters.

When you learn a character always also try to learn the pronunciation of the character as well.