**HSK 2 Vocabulary List**

**(HSKNEST- https://vaskarchakma.github.io/hsknest/)**

**(**[**https://vaskarchakma.github.io/**](https://vaskarchakma.github.io/)**)**

I’ve organized these words based on category (e.g. numbers, time, people, and places) because Chinese words are easiest to learn when you associate them with related words.

Enjoy the list!

(HSK1 and HSK2 Vocabularies are available here)

### **15 Chinese Words for Numbers**

Numbers in Chinese are easy to learn as the system is extremely regular. Once you know how to count to ten, it shouldn’t take you more than two minutes to learn the rest. (In case you don’t know how, read [here](https://improvemandarin.com/chinese-numbers/))

Pay attention to 二 (èr) and 两 (liǎng), they are both translated as “two” in English, but are used for different circumstances in Chinese. Essentially, 二 (èr) is the “two” for numbers and 两 (liǎng) is the “two” for measure words. (Read [here](https://improvemandarin.com/er-vs-liang) if you are confused about when to use 二 èr and when to use 两 liǎng)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 零 | líng | zero |
| 一 | yī | one |
| 二 | èr | two |
| 三 | sān | three |
| 四 | sì | four |
| 五 | wǔ | five |
| 六 | liù | six |
| 七 | qī | seven |
| 八 | bā | eight |
| 九 | jiǔ | nine |
| 十 | shí | ten |
| 两 | liǎng | two |
| 百 | bǎi | hundred |
| 千 | qiān | thousand |
| 第一 | dì-yī | first |

Ordinal numbers in Chinese can be formed simply by adding the prefix 第 (dì) to the cardinal number, like 第一 (dì-yī), 第二 (dì-èr). Just note that some nouns can form ordinals without 第 (dì). For example: 二哥 (èr gē) – “the second (oldest) brother”, 三号 (sān hào) – “the third date (of the month)”.

### **10 Chinese Pronouns**

Chinese pronouns don’t change form according to whether they are the subject (doer of the action, e.g. “I”) or object (undergoer of the action, e.g. “me”).

Note while “he”, “she” , “it” (or “him”, “her”, “it”) are represented by three different Chinese characters, they are pronounced in exactly the same way.

The plural personal pronouns in Chinese are formed with the simple addition of 们 (men) to the singular forms, but note that you cannot add it to 您 (nín), as the honorific form only exists for the singular “you”.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 我 | wǒ | I or me |
| 你 | nǐ | you (singular) |
| 您 | nín | you (singular/honorific) |
| 他 | tā | he or him |
| 她 | tā | she or her |
| 它 | tā | it |
| 我们 | wǒmen | we or me |
| 大家 | dàjiā | everybody |
| 这/这儿 | zhè/zhèr | this/here |
| 那/那儿 | nà/nàr | that/there |

Pay attention to 这儿 (zhèr) – “here”, and 那儿 (nàr) – “there”. People in southern China often use **这里 (zhèli)** and **那里 (nàli)** instead as part of the regional differences (both versions are readily understood anywhere in China though).

### **8 Chinese Question Words**

Question words like “what”, “where”, “who” are technically pronouns too. I’ve listed them separately here because I would like to draw your attention to how WH Questions are raised in Chinese.

Essentially, the word order of a WH question in Chinese stays in line with the basic Chinese structure **S-V-O (subject-verb-object)**, that is, you need to keep the word order of the statement and change the “asked part” to the corresponding question word.

This is a key grammar point in HSK 1 and HSK 2 tests.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 哪/哪儿 | nǎ/nǎr | which/where |
| 谁 | shéi | who |
| 什么 | shénme | what |
| 多少 | duōshao | how many or how much |
| 几 | jǐ | how many or how much |
| 怎么 | zěnme | how |
| 怎么样 | zěnmeyàng | how about |
| 为什么 | wèi shénme | why |

### **20 Chinese Words for Time**

These time words required by HSK 2 are often used together with [numbers](https://improvemandarin.com/chinese-numbers/). You can pair numbers up with words like 月 (yuè) to construct the months of the year, like 一月 (yī yuè) – “January”, or 星期 (xīngqī) to construct [days of the week](https://improvemandarin.com/days-of-the-week-in-chinese/), like 星期二 (xīngqī èr) – “Tuesday”.

Note, the [time in Chinese](https://improvemandarin.com/tell-time-in-chinese/) is expressed quite differently than in English. For instance, [the elements of the dates](https://improvemandarin.com/dates-in-chinese/) must be named in ascending order: **year + month + day**, that is, **年 (nián) + 月 (yuè) + 日 (rì)/号 (hào)** (the latter is somewhat more colloquial to express the day of the month).

Words like 早上 (zǎoshàng), 上午 (shàngwǔ), 下午 (xiàwǔ), 晚上 (wǎnshàng), if used, also need to be placed **before the time** to depict the period accurately.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 现在 | xiànzài | now |
| 今天 | jīntiān | today |
| 明天 | míngtiān | tomorrow |
| 昨天 | zuótiān | yesterday |
| 早上 | zǎoshàng | early morning |
| 上午 | shàngwǔ | morning |
| 中午 | zhōngwǔ | noon |
| 下午 | xiàwǔ | afternoon |
| 晚上 | wǎnshàng | evening |
| 点 | diǎn | o’clock |
| 小时 | xiǎoshí | hour |
| 分钟 | fēnzhōng | minute |
| 年 | nián | year |
| 月 | yuè | month |
| 日 | rì | day |
| 号 | hào | [date](https://improvemandarin.com/dates-in-chinese/) or number |
| 星期 | xīngqī | week |
| 时候 | shíhou | a certain point in time |
| 时间 | shíjiān | a period of time |
| 去年 | qùnián | last year |

Notice that there are two words for “time” in Chinese? Don’t get them mixed up! 时候 (shíhou) refers to a point in time, and you use it to ask “when” or “what time” – 什么时候? (shénme shíhou?). 时间 (shíjiān) refers to a duration of time, e.g, “Do you have time tomorrow?” – 明天你有时间吗? (Míngtiān nǐ yǒu shíjiān ma?).

### **72 Chinese Words for People & Things**

HSK 2 expects you to master 72 nouns related to people and things to pass. Some of them are very important in Chinese culture, such as 茶 (chá) – “tea”, and 米饭 (mǐfàn) – “rice”, so they pop up everywhere.

Some of them are less commonly said in daily Chinese, but you still have to learn them. For example, you may think 羊肉 (lamb or mutton) will never show up in the HSK 2 test, and yet it often does. It translates as “sheep meat” or “goat meat”.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 人 | rén | person or people |
| 男人 | nánrén | man |
| 女人 | nǚrén | woman |
| 名字 | míngzì | name |
| 妈妈 | māma | mom |
| 爸爸 | bàba | dad |
| 丈夫 | zhàngfu | husband |
| 妻子 | qīzi | wife |
| 孩子 | háizi | child |
| 儿子 | érzi | son |
| 女儿 | nǚ’ér | daughter |
| 哥哥 | gēge | elder brother |
| 姐姐 | jiějie | elder sister |
| 弟弟 | dìdi | younger brother |
| 妹妹 | mèimei | younger sister |
| 朋友 | péngyǒu | friend |
| 先生 | xiānsheng | Mr or sir |
| 小姐 | xiǎojiě | Miss |
| 老师 | lǎoshī | teacher |
| 学生 | xuésheng | student |
| 同学 | tóngxué | schoolmate |
| 医生 | yīshēng | doctor |
| 服务员 | fúwùyuán | waiter or waitress |
| 身体 | shēntǐ | body |
| 眼睛 | yǎnjīng | eye |
| 生日 | shēngrì | birthday |
| 东西 | dōngxi | thing |
| 钱 | qián | money |
| 水 | shuǐ | water |
| 茶 | chá | tea |
| 咖啡 | kāfēi | coffee |
| 牛奶 | niúnǎi | milk |
| 菜 | cài | dish |
| 米饭 | mǐfàn | (cooked) rice |
| 鸡蛋 | jīdàn | egg |
| 鱼 | yú | fish |
| 羊肉 | yángròu | lamb or mutton |
| 衣服 | yīfu | clothes |
| 书 | shū | book |
| 报纸 | bàozhǐ | newspaper |
| 票 | piào | ticket |
| 桌子 | zhuōzi | table or desk |
| 椅子 | yǐzi | chair |
| 水果 | shuǐguǒ | fruit |
| 苹果 | píngguǒ | apple |
| 西瓜 | xīguā | watermelon |
| 药 | yào | medicine |
| 杯子 | bēizi | cup or glass |
| 手表 | shǒubiǎo | watch |
| 手机 | shǒujī | mobile phone |
| 电视 | diànshì | TV |
| 电脑 | diànnǎo | computer |
| 电影 | diànyǐng | movie |
| 飞机 | fēijī | plane |
| 出租车 | chūzūchē | taxi |
| 公共汽车 | gōnggòng qìchē | bus |
| 自行车 | zìxíngchē | bike |
| 船 | chuán | boat |
| 门 | mén | door |
| 颜色 | yánsè | color |
| 猫 | māo | cat |
| 狗 | gǒu | dog |
| 天气 | tiānqì | weather |
| 雪 | xuě | snow |
| 字 | zì | character |
| 汉语 | Hànyǔ | Chinese (language) |
| 课 | kè | lesson |
| 考试 | kǎoshì | exam |
| 问题 | wèntí | question |
| 题 | tí | question (exam, exercise) |
| 意思 | yìsi | meaning |
| 事情 | shìqing | matter |

### **22 Chinese Words for Places & Directions**

Words for places and directions are always important to know to get by in China. You’ll encounter the following 22 words under this category in the HSK 2 test.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 中国 | Zhōngguó | China |
| 北京 | Běijīng | Beijing |
| 家 | jiā | home or family |
| 房间 | fángjiān | [room](https://improvemandarin.com/house-in-chinese/) |
| 学校 | xuéxiào | school |
| 教室 | jiàoshì | classroom |
| 公司 | gōngsī | company |
| 饭馆 | fànguǎn | restaurant |
| 商店 | shāngdiàn | shop |
| 医院 | yīyuàn | hospital |
| 机场 | jīchǎng | airport |
| 火车站 | huǒchēzhàn | train station |
| 路 | lù | road |
| 上 | shàng | on, above or last |
| 下 | xià | under, below or next |
| 左边 | zuǒbiān | left |
| 右边 | yòubiān | right |
| 旁边 | pángbiān | side |
| 前面 | qiánmiàn | front |
| 后面 | hòumiàn | back |
| 里 | lǐ | inside |
| 外 | wài | outside |

Note that the word 公司 (gōngsi) is perceived as the physical place of the business establishment In Chinese. That’s why you will always hear Chinese speakers say “I am going to the company”, “I am in the company”, when they mean to say “office”.

Pay attention to the word 饭馆 (fànguǎn) as well. It typically refers to those small, traditional Chinese restaurants where rice is served (the word literally means “rice hall”), and it’s not the most commonly used word for “restaurant” in Chinese (but oddly it’s required by HSK 2).

In daily Chinese, people would actually use the word 餐厅 (cāntīng) for “restaurant” in a general sense. It could refer to a fancy Michelin-starred restaurant or just a fast food chain like KFC.

### **10 Chinese Measure Words**

The use of measure words is unique to the Chinese language. There are more than one hundred measure words used for different kinds of things in daily Chinese. Luckily, to pass HSK 2, you only need to learn ten of them.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 个 | gè | generic measure word |
| 元 | yuán | basic monetary unit of China |
| 块 | kuài | basic monetary unit of China |
| 本 | běn | for books |
| 岁 | suì | year (of age) |
| 些 | xiē | some |
| 次 | cì | time (frequency of an act) |
| 公斤 | gōngjīn | kilo |
| 件 | jiàn | for affairs, clothes, [furniture](https://improvemandarin.com/furniture-in-chinese/) |
| 张 | zhāng | for flat objects |

Both 元 (yuán) and 块 (kuài) are the basic monetary unit of China. They are exactly the same, it’s just that 块 (kuài) is more colloquial. Think of them as Chinese “dollars” and “bucks” if it helps.

(We’ ve written a detailed post on how to use these common measure words in Chinese. [Read it here](https://improvemandarin.com/most-common-measure-words/))

### **73 Chinese Verbs**

In the HSK 2 test, you’ll be quizzed on the following 73 verbs. Many of the verbs have multiple meanings, especially when combined with other words. Don’t worry about that for now, but just know there maybe – and usually are, more ways to use them once you get farther in your Chinese studies. For now, I simply included their most common meanings you need to know for taking HSK 2.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 做 | zuò | to do |
| 是 | shì | to be |
| 姓 | xìng | to be surnamed |
| 在 | zài | to be in |
| 有 | yǒu | to have |
| 住 | zhù | to live or to stay |
| 来 | lái | to come |
| 去 | qù | to go |
| 回 | huí | to return |
| 进 | jìn | to enter |
| 出 | chū | to get out |
| 到 | dào | to arrive |
| 想 | xiǎng | to think |
| 要 | yào | to want |
| 吃 | chī | to eat |
| 喝 | hē | to drink |
| 说话 | shuōhuà | to speak |
| 告诉 | gàosù | to tell |
| 问 | wèn | to ask |
| 回答 | huídá | to answer |
| 看 | kàn | to look or to watch |
| 看见 | kànjiàn | to see |
| 听 | tīng | to listen |
| 笑 | xiào | to smile or to laugh |
| 给 | gěi | to give |
| 送 | sòng | to give as a gift or to deliver |
| 叫 | jiào | to call |
| 买 | mǎi | to buy |
| 卖 | mài | to sell |
| 穿 | chuān | to wear |
| 开 | kāi | to drive or to open |
| 坐 | zuò | to sit |
| 读 | dú | to read |
| 写 | xiě | to write |
| 等 | děng | to wait |
| 打电话 | dǎ diànhuà | to make a phone call |
| 介绍 | jièshào | to introduce |
| 认识 | rènshi | to know |
| 知道 | zhīdao | to know |
| 觉得 | juédé | to feel or to think |
| 懂 | dǒng | to understand |
| 找 | zhǎo | to find |
| 让 | ràng | to let |
| 希望 | xīwàng | to hope |
| 帮助 | bāngzhù | to help |
| 玩 | wán | to play |
| 学习 | xuéxí | to learn |
| 工作 | gōngzuò | to work |
| 上班 | shàng bān | to go to work |
| 睡觉 | shuìjiào | to sleep |
| 起床 | qǐ chuáng | to get up |
| 喜欢 | xǐhuan | to like |
| 爱 | ài | to love |
| 唱歌 | chàng gē | to sing |
| 跳舞 | tiào wǔ | to dance |
| 旅游 | lǚyóu | to travel |
| 运动 | yùndòng | to do sports |
| 走 | zǒu | to walk |
| 跑步 | pǎo bù | to run |
| 游泳 | yóu yǒng | to swim |
| 踢足球 | tī zúqiú | to play soccer |
| 打篮球 | dǎ lánqiú | to play basketball |
| 休息 | xiūxi | to rest |
| 生病 | shēng bìng | to get sick |
| 洗 | xǐ | to wash |
| 开始 | kāishǐ | to begin |
| 完 | wán | to finish |
| 准备. | zhǔnbèi | to prepare |
| 欢迎 | huānyíng | to welcome |
| 会 | huì | can (to know how to) |
| 能 | néng | can (to be able to) |
| 可以 | kěyǐ | can (to be permitted to) |
| 下雨 | xià yǔ | to rain |

### **47 Chinese Adjectives and Adverbs**

Coming up next are the most basic Chinese adjectives and adverbs to describe things and actions. You will surely be quizzed on how to link nouns with adjectives on the HSK 2 test. To do that, simply use **很 (hěn), the default connecting word**, like 我很高兴 (wǒ hěn gāoxìng). The literal meaning of 很 (hěn) – “very” is very weak in such cases.

If you actually want to stress the meaning of “very” in a sentence, use other adverbs instead, such as 非常 (fēicháng), a stronger “very”, or [真 (zhēn)](https://improvemandarin.com/chinese-adverb-zhen-express-really/) – “really”.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 好 | hǎo | good |
| 大 | dà | big |
| 小 | xiǎo | small |
| 多 | duō | many |
| 少 | shǎo | few |
| 热 | rè | hot |
| 冷 | lěng | cold |
| 快 | kuài | fast |
| 慢 | màn | slow |
| 远 | yuǎn | far |
| 近 | jìn | near |
| 对 | duì | right |
| 错 | cuò | wrong |
| 长 | cháng | long |
| 高 | gāo | tall or high |
| 新 | xīn | new |
| 贵 | guì | expensive |
| 便宜 | piányi | cheap |
| 黑 | hēi | black |
| 白 | bái | white |
| 红 | hóng | red |
| 晴 | qíng | sunny |
| 阴 | yīn | cloudy |
| 好吃 | hǎochī | tasty |
| 漂亮 | piàoliang | pretty |
| 高兴 | gāoxìng | happy |
| 快乐 | kuàilè | happy |
| 忙 | máng | busy |
| 累 | lèi | tired |
| 很 | hěn | very |
| 非常 | fēicháng | extremely |
| 太 | tài | too… |
| 都 | dōu | both or all |
| 不 | bù | not |
| 没 | méi | not |
| 每 | měi | every |
| 最 | zuì | most |
| 真 | zhēn | really |
| 也 | yě | also |
| 还 | hái | still |
| 再 | zài | again |
| 就 | jiǜ | at once |
| 别 | bié | don’t… |
| 已经 | yǐjīng | already |
| 一起 | yìqǐ | together |
| 可能 | kěnéng | maybe |
| 正在 | zhèngzài | indicating action in progress |

Pay attention to the synonyms 高兴 (gāoxìng) and 快乐 (kuàilè). 高兴 (gāoxìng) is used to describe a temporary state of mind (like “glad” or “delighted” in English), while 快乐 (kuàilè) is used to describe a long-lasting state of mind (a more profound kind of happiness). That’s why you can say 认识你很高兴 (rènshi nǐ hěn gāo xìng) – “nice to meet you”, but never 认识你很快乐 (rènshi nǐ hěn kuàilè).

### **4 Chinese Prepositions**

To pass HSK 4, you are expected to master 4 Chinese prepositions. Learning these prepositions requires a little more attention than learning other parts of speech in Chinese. This is because to use them correctly, you need to pay attention to a bunch of distinctions that do not even exist in English.

Take 离 (lí), for example, it’s often translated as “be away from” in English. It’s a close interpretation, but not an exact 1-1 match.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 从 | cóng | from |
| 向 | xiàng | towards |
| 离 | lí | away from |
| 比 | bǐ | than |

### **8 Chinese Particles**

Chinese particles are those function words that don’t have a concrete meaning on their own, but are used together with another word, phrase, or sentence to serve a grammatical purpose. To pass HSK 2, you need to know four more particles on top of the four required by HSK 1.

Pay special attention to the particle 吧 (ma). Not only can it be used as a question particle at the end of a sentence to seek confirmation, it can also be used to make concessions and raise suggestions in different contexts.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 的 | de | possession particle |
| 得 | de | structure particle |
| 了 | le | aspect particle |
| 着 | zhe | aspect particle |
| 过 | guò | aspect particle |
| 吗 | ma | question particle |
| 呢 | ne | question particle |
| 吧 | ba | question particle |

### **4 Chinese Conjunctions**

You need to know the following 4 Chinese conjunctions to pass HSK 2.

Be aware of 和 (hé)! It is much less versatile than the English “and”, and should only be used to **connect nouns** in Chinese. Never attempt to connect adjectives, verbs, phrases, or sentences with 和 (hé)! (read [this article](https://improvemandarin.com/connect-two-or-multiple-verbs-in-chinese/) to learn what to do instead)

Also, take note that the conjunctions 因为 (yīnwèi) and 所以 (suǒyǐ) are often used together in one sentence in Chinese as a pair to clearly indicate cause and effect. To English speakers, this grammar pattern could take a little getting used to.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 和 | hé | and |
| 但是 | dànshì | but |
| 因为 | yīnwèi | because |
| 所以 | suǒyǐ | so |

### **7 Chinese Expressions**

Finally, there are seven basic expressions that you must master for HSK Level 2 test (you’ll most likely hear them in the Listening Section). Since these expressions are already required by HSK 1, you should definitely be very comfortable using them by now.

Just pay attention to the word 请 (qǐng). In Chinese, you can only use the word **at the beginning of a sentence** to start a request, not at the end. That is, you can say things like “please sit down”, but not “sit down, please”.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chinese** | **Pinyin** | **English** |
| 喂 | wèi | hello (on the phone) |
| 谢谢 | xièxie | thanks |
| 不客气 | bú kèqi | you’re welcome |
| 再见 | zàijiàn | goodbye |
| 请 | qǐng | please… |
| 对不起 | duìbuqǐ | sorry |
| 没关系 | méi guānxi | it’s all right |

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