English

中文

harmony

Opening/ loading

Upon opening the app, the user will see “English” and “中文” merge into a yin yang. That reflects the goal of *harmony* - to help the user learn Cantonese and/or Mandarin through a bilingual experience without getting too stressed. Soothing colors, pleasing visuals, and relaxing music keep the user at peace.

Home page

Tap on a button in the pentagon to dive into that world. Pressing the yin yang in the center takes you to the app’s “About” page.

Most things are labeled in English and Chinese to help the user learn Chinese more quickly, but this (and many other things) can be changed in the settings and preferences.

(Icons in top navigation bar, from left to right: home button, help button, and settings button.)

Dictionary (initial)

When you first open the dictionary, it shows the items you last looked at - your history. The green tabs along the bottom allow you to swipe between items you recently viewed, items you starred, or items most popular with other *harmony* users.

Here, all the characters are in Traditional Chinese because the user left the "Traditional Chinese" checkbox in the search bar checked. The app remembers your choice even after you leave the dictionary section.

By default, the app only shows you the last 15 items you looked at, but you can change this in the settings menu.

The search bar is fixed as you scroll so you can search at any point (instead of having to scroll back up to the top).

Choosing type of input

To begin your search, you'll want to first choose your type of input by pressing the button next to the search field. You can search by:

- ~English
- ~Hanzi (Chinese characters)
- ~ Chinese words (character compounds)
- ~Pinyin (romanized Mandarin)
- ~ Jyutping (romanized Cantonese)
- ~ Radicals

The button is set to English by default, but you can customize the app so the dictionary also remembers your input choice for next time.

Typing in your query

Tapping the search field will make the keyboard pop up and allow you to type in your query.

This is the Apple keyboard. It comes with a variety of Chinese input methods, including pinyin, cangjie, and handwriting. Users will have to download a third-party app if they want other methods (e.g. zhuyin/ bopomofo and jyutping) though.

Results appear as you type, like Google Instant. The Recent, Starred, and Popular pages will disappear though, so to get back to them, you'll have to press the back button.

Exploring results

Long-pressing any card will cause it to partially expand, revealing audio samples for pinying and jyutping, the language(s) the character or term is used in, and audio for an example sentence. To make it contract, simply tap the card again (in the square part).

Tapping the star will mark the character or term for later review and add it to the Starred page. Tapping the "more info" arrow will take you to the full informational page for the character or term. You can also go directly to the full page by tapping on the contracted card (instead of long-pressing it).

Even deeper exploration

Here's a sample dedicated, full page for a term. You can still star the term on this page and play audio samples.

This page will also show the term in traditional vs. simplified characters (if they differ). Pages featuring single characters will also contain information about radicals and different stroke orders.

Underlined terms can be tapped on to take the user to their respective pages, which would look similar to this one.

(Yes, there's a lot of info.)

Depending on the term, the page may display results in Cantonese, Mandarin, or both. In this case, this word is only used in Cantonese, so most of the results are in Cantonese (though the individual characters are used in Mandarin as well).

Tapping on the tab on the bottom will expand the page and reveal more example sentences. These sorts of tabs for hiding could also appear in other sections (say, the "Compounds" section) when there are many items so the user doesn't have to do too much scrolling.

(Credit goes to CantoDict for inspiration and info!)