

**Z, C, S:** When an *i* is combined with this initial set, it makes a short *z* sound and not the normal *ee* sound, as indicated in the list of finals. Thus *ci* is pronounced like *tsz*, and *si* is pronounced like *sz*. Since *z* already makes a *dz* sound, the *i* can be viewed as being silent.

**ZH, CH, SH, R:** Similar to the *z* initial set above, these four initials also can use *i*. With this set, the *i* makes an “er” sound. Thus, *zhi* is pronounced like *jer**ky*, *chi* like *chir**p*, and *shi* like *shir**t*. The *r* already makes this sound, so the *i* can be viewed as being silent in this case.

Now that you have a general idea of initial and final sounds, it’s time to put them together to practice. In the exercise

below, all possible initials and finals are included. The drill proceeds row by row.

ba	po	me	fei	dai
tao	lou	nan	gen	kang
heng	zong	bi	zi	zhi
duo	jiao	qie	xiu	xiong
pin	niang	gua	fu	lia
chuai	shui	ruan	gun	huang
yan	weng	yu	jue	re
xun	quan	sha	lue	ming