



Reading and Writing Chinese: A Guide to the Chinese Writing System

William McNaughton , Li Ying

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This is a complete and easy-to-use guide for reading and writing traditional Chinese characters.

Reading and Writing Chinese has been the leading text for foreign students and teachers of the Chinese writing system since it was first published in 1978. This completely revised edition draws on the lessons learnt from the use of the book in classrooms so as to provide a more convenient and up-to-date introduction to the Chinese writing system. Over 1,100 new combinations of characters have been added, increasing the total vocabulary significantly to about 4,500 items. There are also new notes on usage to give students insight into the contemporary state of the language. The student's ability to read Chinese and write Chinese are reinforced throughout.

For each of the basic 1,062 characters, the pronunciation, definition and derivation are given, with examples of the use of most words and a chart showing how to write each character. Memorization tips and cautionary cross-reference to look-alike characters are also provided, as well as notes to help clarify those overlooked aspects of the Chinese writing system.

Key features of this book:

- The Student's 1,020 List.
- The Official 2,000 List.
- Over 2,000 characters and 2,500 combinations.
- Definitions and explanations. Standard Hanyu Pinyin romanization.
- Memorization hints and stroke-order diagrams.
- Hong Kong/Taiwan and China/Singapore forms.
- Traditional and modern radical systems.

Reading and Writing Chinese: A Guide to the Chinese Writing System Details

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Adam Balshan says

4 stars [Language]

I have read 6 books now on almost nothing but words, but this is my first completed dictionary, of sorts. It is the "Student 1,020" list of characters, supplemented with "The Official 2,000" list, that is, another 980 briefly described. I read most of it 7-8 years ago in Taiwan, and picked it up again a short while ago. It is the best characters-book for the median Western learner that I have seen. (In other words, there might be a shorter book that does a better job explaining with pictures, or a more comprehensive book that does a better job explaining to a scholar.) It features radicals, stroke order, the bastardized "Simplified" character in a corner for reference, and a few common usages.

Hyrum says

Excellent reference book for beginning and Intermediate-level Chinese. Well laid out with several ways to look up characters. Common phrases are also listed with each character. The reader should be aware of some obvious errors in this book that may have been made during the printing. However, they are mostly minor and can easily be corrected with a pen.
