

ASSIMIL[®]

Writing Chinese With Ease

*The Characters
stroke-by-stroke*

汉语
易读

the day-by-day method



Writing Chinese with Ease

The Characters stroke by stroke

by

Philippe Kantor

adaptated for English-speakers by **Clare Perkins**



B.P. 25

94431 Chennevières-sur-Marne Cedex

FRANCE

© ASSIMIL 2005

ISBN : 2-7005-0295-7

CONTENTS

Presentation.....	vii
Chinese writing.....	ix
Models.....	xxvii
Characters stroke by stroke.....	1 à 182
Alphabetical index of characters	184
Table of radicals	218
Bibliography.....	232



Example of jīnwén calligraphy by Yolaine Escande.

西周銅器銘文

The aim of *Writing Chinese* is to initiate the beginner in the art of writing Chinese, using the 800 most common characters of the modern Chinese language.

The introduction of these characters follows the progression of the 105 lessons of *Chinese with Ease*, but it is also possible to use this book independently. If you are less interested in learning to speak Chinese, and are simply keen on learning to write, this book of course will be of great use.

We hope that the explanations in the introduction, the list of radicals (semantic symbols) and the appendices will provide you with the material for acquiring a sound basic knowledge of Chinese writing – of the best aesthetic quality!

At the end of the volume, the bilingual *Index of characters* refers you to the lesson where each character is introduced. This **character index** supplements the **word index** at the end of volumes 1 and 2 of *Chinese with Ease*. Taken together, they form a basic Chinese-English dictionary.



Eight examples of calligraphy of the character 东 dōng
by Yolaine Escande.

PRESENTATION

This method for **learning to write** Chinese characters will help you to complete your study of the Chinese language, the object of volumes 1 and 2 of *Chinese with Ease* being spoken Chinese. Each character is presented stroke by stroke, and all the basic characters introduced during the 105 lessons have been analyzed in this way.

Before beginning the exercises, it is a good idea to read the *Introduction to Writing* several times (pages xviii to xxiv in volume 1), as a reminder of the basic rules of Chinese writing.

At each stage in your apprenticeship, you must devote a certain amount of time to the memorization of the new characters. The best way to do this is to use the age-old method of “lines”. On calligraphy paper with large squares, copy each character at least ten times, or more if you find it hard to remember, until you can easily write it from memory. At the end of each lesson, test yourself on it and on the preceding lessons, to make sure that you remember all the characters and that you can write them all with the strokes in the right order.

If you have forgotten the meaning of a character, you can refer to the corresponding lesson, where it was introduced for the first time.

For each lesson, only the **new** characters are analyzed stroke by stroke. You may find that one of the characters in a word or an expression has already been studied in combination with other characters, with a different meaning. In that case, the stroke by stroke analysis is not repeated. You can refer to the *index* to find the lesson number where the character first appeared.

A good way to test your progress is to check that you know the meaning of each character, that you can pronounce it correctly and that you can use it in a bi-syllabic word or in an expression or sentence from the corresponding dialog.

You will not find any lessons numbered with multiples of seven (7, 14, 21, etc.). These are the revision lessons in *Chinese with Ease*; they refer to the six previous lessons and do not include any new characters.

CHINESE WRITING

Basic strokes	xi
The eight rules for writing	xv
Graphics and presentation	xviii
Radicals.....	xix
Different styles of writing.....	xxi

1 First Lesson

	PINYIN	MEANING	RADICAL	MEANING
你	nǐ	you	亻	person
好	hǎo	good, well	女	woman
饿	è	hungry	饣	food
吗	ma	(question form)	口	mouth
我	wǒ	I	戈	axe
不	bù	not, no	一	one
累	lèi	tired	田	field
走	zǒu	to leave	走	walk

Note. When the character is one that was simplified in the 1956 writing reform, the *complex form* is also given at the end of the line, in grey tint.

STROKE ORDER

ノ 亻 亻 竹 竹 你 你

㇇ 女 女 好 好 好

ノ ㇇ 饣 饣 饣 饣 饣 饣 饣

饿 饿

餓

丨 凵 凵 𠔁 吗 吗

一 一 手 手 我 我 我

一 丂 不 不

丨 凵 田 田 田 田 田 田 田

累 累 累

一 十 土 丰 丰 走 走

These are still in use in Hong Kong, Taiwan and in overseas Chinese community publications.

第	dì	number	竹	bamboo
一	yī	one	一	horizontal
课	kè	lesson	讠	word
练	liàn	} exercise	纟	silk
习	xí		习	ice
完	wán	finish	宀	roof
成	chéng	to become	戈	spear
句	jù	sentence	口	mouth
子	zi	(<i>suffix</i>)	子	son, child

Note. Be careful not to confuse the ice radical 习 (two drops of water) with the water radical 冫 (three drops)!

ノ ㄣ ㄣ ㄣ 竹 竹 竹 竹

第 第 第

一

讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠

课 课

纟 纟 纟 纟 纟 纟 纟 纟

习 习 习

宀 宀 宀 宀 宀 宀 宀 宀

一 厂 厂 成 成 成

ノ 勺 勺 勺 勺

丿 了 子

課
練
習

2 Second Lesson

要	yào	to want	女	woman
饭	fàn	food, cooked rice	饣	food
汤	tāng	soup	氵	water
菜	cài	vegetables, dish	艹	grass
什	shén	} which? what?	亻	person
么	me		丿	curve
面	miàn	flour, noodles	一	one
包	bāo	parcel	勹	to wrap
二	èr	two	一	one

一 一 一 一 一 一 要 要 要

ノ ㄣ 𠃉 𠃉 𠃉 饭 饭 飯

、 丶 氵 汚 汤 汤 湯

一 一 艹 艹 艹 艹 艹 莖

莘 菜 菜

ノ 亻 仁 什 甚

ノ 么 么 麼

一 一 一 一 一 一 面 面 面 面

麵

ノ 勹 勹 勹 包

一 二

Note. For the water radical, be careful to write the third stroke the right way: it is a rising stroke!

3 Third Lesson

买	mǎi	to buy	大	big
书	shū	book	丨	vertical
笔	bǐ	brush, pen	⺮	bamboo
报	bào	newspaper	扌	hand
也	yě	also	丨	vertical
那	nà	so	阝	ear
裤	kù	pants	衤	clothing
三	sān	three	一	one

Advice. For 那 make sure to write the two horizontal strokes before intersecting them in the middle.

一 丿 ㇇ ㇇ 买 买

一 丨 书 书

ノ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇

竺 竺

一 扌 扌 扌 扌 报 报

一 丨 也

丁 丩 丩 丩 那 那

一 丨 衤 衤 衤 衤 衤 衤

衤 衤 衤 衤

一 二 三

買 書 筆 報 褲

For 书 be careful to keep the character symmetrical, the vertical stroke should cross the horizontal elements in the middle. The lower horizontal element should be larger than the upper one.

4 Fourth Lesson

他 tā he 亻 person

是 shì to be 日 sun

谁 shéi shuí who? 讠 word

父 fù father 父 paternal

亲 qīn parent 立 stand

哦 ò ó oh! 口 mouth

就 jiù so, then 宀 lid

呀 ya ah! 口 mouth

亻 亻 亻 他

日 日 日 日 日 早 早 是 是

讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠

谁 谁

誰

亻 父 父

立 立 立 立 立 亲 亲 亲

親

口 口 口 口 吁 吁 吁 哦

哦 哦

宀 宀 宀 宀 京 京 京

京 京 就 就

口 口 口 口 吁 吁 呀

认	rèn	to know	讠	word
识	shí	to know	讠	word
见	jiàn	to see	见	see
过	guo	<i>(occurred suffix)</i>	辶	walk
四	sì	four	囗	surrounding wall

5 Fifth Lesson

这	zhè, zhèi	this, that	辶	walk
儿	r	<i>(suffix)</i>	儿	son
有	yǒu	to have	月	flesh
没	méi	to not have	氵	water
画	huà	drawing	一	horizontal

讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠
 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠 讠
 见 见 见 见
 辶 辶 辶 辶 辶 辶 辶 辶
 囗 囗 囗 囗 囗 囗 囗 囗

Note. For this form of the *walk* radical, strokes 2 and 3 are usually connected and written as a single stroke.

辶 辶 辶 辶 辶 辶 辶 辶
 儿 儿
 月 月 月 月 月 月 月 月
 氵 氵 氵 氵 氵 氵 氵 氵
 一 一 一 一 一 一 一 一

店 diàn shop, store 广 guǎng shelter

邮 yóu postal 卩 jié ear

局 jú office 尸 shī corpse

对 duì exact 寸 cùn inch

起 qǐ to stand up, to get up 走 zǒu walk

五 wǔ five 一 yī horizontal

Note. The meaning given here is for each character in isolation. However, when a character is used with other characters to form a

丶 宀 广 广 广 店 店 店
丨 冂 日 由 由 由 邮 邮 郵
冂 冂 尸 月 局 局 局 局
丿 又 又 对 对 對
一 十 土 丰 丰 丰 走 走 起
起 起
一 丁 五 五

word, the meaning may be fairly different from the meaning of each character taken separately.

6 Sixth Lesson

老 lǎo old 老 lǎo old

李 lǐ plum 木 mù wood

王 wáng king 王 wáng king

一 十 土 老 老 老
一 十 木 木 李 李 李
一 二 干 王

Using this book you will learn the fundamentals of Chinese writing – via the study of the 800 most common characters of modern Chinese.

Writing Chinese with Ease follows the 105 lessons of **Chinese with Ease**, presenting the characters in order of appearance throughout the two volumes. However it is not necessary to have used **Chinese with Ease** in order to study with this book. The explanations given in **Writing Chinese with Ease** can also be followed by students who did not choose the Assimil method to learn how to speak Chinese.

By explaining their composition stroke-by-stroke, this book will teach you to write beautiful Chinese characters.

The useful appendices included at the end of **Writing Chinese with Ease**, such as the bilingual Index to Chinese characters and the Table of Radicals, are the equivalent of your first Chinese-English dictionary.