

# Mandarin 1

## Course Information and Orientation

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<http://dragonnet.hkis.edu.hk/hs/mlanguage/mandarin/butler/default.htm>

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the first level in our sequence of course offerings for learners of Mandarin as a foreign or second language. *Students who have acquired substantial skills in listening comprehension and speaking ability in either Mandarin or another Chinese language/dialect should be enrolled in the “MNN” stream. Please speak with your teacher as soon as possible if you think you may have been misplaced in Mandarin 1.*

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Our course objectives cover the range of skills that incorporate the many facets of language learning.

- 1) Ability to distinguish by ear, pronounce, read and to write in *Hanyu Pinyin* transcription individual syllables, phrases and sentences in Modern Standard Chinese (i.e., Standard Mandarin or *Putonghua*);
- 2) Ability to converse briefly on a variety of familiar topics focusing on self and family (including age, nationality, family composition, personal interests); ability to manage at a rudimentary level in a number of practical everyday situations including ordering food and giving simple directions;
- 3) Ability to engage in simple social interactions, such as making introductions, making informational requests, and using simple courtesies;
- 4) Ability to read in traditional Chinese script (i.e., "characters") sentences and short passages and dialogs reinforcing what you can understand and say;
- 5) Ability to write sentences, passages and dialogs in Chinese characters (traditional or simplified form), with proper proportion and stroke order, for language that you already know how to say and read.
- 6) Ability to analyze (in English) sentences employing the basic grammar and vocabulary introduced in the text *Integrated Chinese Level 1, Part 1 (Lessons 1-5)*;
- 7) Acquire knowledge and awareness of the Chinese cultural environment, of Chinese beliefs, habits and perspectives, as well as awareness and appreciation of the surrounding cultural environment.

## TEXTS AND MATERIALS

**Chief text:** *Integrated Chinese* (Level 1: Lessons 1-5)(traditional and simplified versions available)

Students are able to choose which script type they wish to focus on—either traditional or simplified. The traditional form of characters is native to Hong Kong, and so is ever-present in the daily environment. Those who advance to higher levels of Mandarin will find an increasing Hong Kong’s linguistic landscape increasingly familiar to you. Those who believe their future language and other interests are strongly allied with China may wish to adopt simplified characters. In class, every attempt is made to provide all written language in both forms.

Supplementary materials containing further notes on grammar and usage, as well as homework assignments, will be distributed on a regular basis, or made available online. ***Make sure you have a good system for organizing all the notes, handouts and other references you will be need to have at your disposal. You will be required to purchase a study notebook for daily note-taking and for in-class exercises.***

Your class notebook is your "shadow" teacher. Use it ***every class*** to write down:

- words, phrases and other language notes from class;
- reminders to yourself about what to review or concentrate on;
- grammar rules and diagrams written on the board;
- questions you may have and wish to raise either in class or at some other time;

***\*\* I will regularly check (and sometimes collect) your study notebooks as a means to gauge your level of organization, which forms part of your course grade (See “Grading” below).***

## Audio practice

Listening to audio recordings should comprise a very central component of your language study, both for training pronunciation and listening comprehension, and for extending your learning beyond the classroom. Try to budget in extra time (for example, over the weekends) to listen to lesson dialogs online, or for fun, try tuning in to a tv channel or search for Mandarin online videos (such as YouTube). Of course you’re unlikely to “understand” much of the language used, but there are subtle sound cues in audio and video that can aid your hearing and thus your pronunciation. (Also see the [Learning Resources](#) section of the course web page.)

## Internet resources

Our course web page is: <http://dragonnet.hkis.edu.hk/hs/mlanguage/mandarin/butler/default.htm>

The most important function of the webpage is to keep you informed about daily and weekly assignments. ***It is a course requirement that you use the web page to remain updated about assignments.*** Your course web page includes a preview of assignments for three or four days in

advance, announcements about quizzes, and miscellaneous hints and reminders for study. Also located on the web page are Mandarin language and culture resources that can aid in your study and review. Some of these resources we will be using frequently, others occasionally, and yet others are left for you to explore on your own.

## WORKLOAD

Homework will be given every class meeting, with few exceptions. Be aware that “homework” refers not only to what you may have to pass in on paper, but also to listening practice, writing practice, and review that should also develop as habits of good study and *that are very individual to you*. While it is impossible to predict how much time any one of you may require for any particular exercise, most students will find that between 25-45 minutes per meeting is sufficient to maintain strong standing in the course. Assignments will be of many varied types:

- listening to audio
- memorizing new vocabulary
- completing exercises on new grammar and vocabulary
- composing and rehearsing dialogs
- reading and practicing character writing
- reviewing your study journal

It will be essential that you come prepared to class each day, since what everyone gets out of class period—both teacher and classmates alike—depends so much on each individual’s ability to participate and engage in the language as a group. *We learn from each other.*

To the greatest extent possible, *class will be conducted in Mandarin*. This does not mean “immersion” or “sink or swim”: one of the goals of the course is to help you develop the tools to be able to use Mandarin to learn more Mandarin. Thus the classroom will be a sort of “artificial immersion” environment. It is extremely important for you to begin thinking of Mandarin as a language of genuine communication and functionality, and for some of you, your Mandarin classroom may be the only “authentic” Mandarin environment you have available at this point. You will be encouraged—and soon required—to use only Mandarin both with your teacher and amongst yourselves. At first this will no doubt take some adjustment, but you will be impressed and amazed before long at your level of comprehension and *independence*. There will be scheduled times for questions and clarification about grammar or usage where English is welcome. In fact, many of my descriptions of the language—grammar, usage, and culture—will be done in English.

Of course, there are also times during the day when we can meet, for clarification, for review, or just to chat, and you are encouraged and welcome to drop me an email inquiry at any time ([cbutler@hkis.edu.hk](mailto:cbutler@hkis.edu.hk)). Making up work in a language course can be difficult because of the cumulative nature of the subject matter, so try your best not to let things slide. If you have any difficulties keeping up, be sure to discuss the situation with me before things get out of hand, to avoid even greater problems later.

**POLICIES** (FOR GENERAL POLICIES, PLEASE SEE THE STUDENT HANDBOOK)

**Respect, Honesty, Responsibility, Caring:** that about covers it.

**Food, drink:** Water only. Also, please do not chew gum in class.

**Notification of Absence:** As a general courtesy, please make sure you contact *all* your teachers for any anticipated absence.

**Makeup graded work:** Makeup evaluations (quizzes, tests, etc.) are allowed only in cases of documented medical or personal leave, including school-sponsored activities.

**Late Homework:** Late homework for those with excused absences will follow High School policies. (See Handbook). For all others, tardy assignments will be marked down one incremental grade each day (i.e., from ✓+ to ✓; ✓ to ✓-) except by prior arrangement. Late homework may be accepted, but you must first approach me to work out a reasonable schedule.

**Office hours:** While office hours are not designed to repeat what was covered in class, they present an ideal opportunity for extending the learning environment in a more informal and flexible setting. Don't regard office hours as a last recourse when seized with anxiety over an impending progress report! Do seek me out, by yourself or with a classmate, though do come with focused goals (be it specific question on grammar and usage, a chat on the content of one of the lessons, or a short tutorial on pronunciation, etc.)

**GRADING AND EVALUATION**

Your course grade will reflect a composite of the following:

Homework assignments and preparation: 20% (see grading rubric below)  
 Classroom participation: 10% (see grading rubric below)  
 Other assessments (quizzes, Quests, etc.): 70%

The Quiz is the basic unit of assessment. There will be regular quizzes—maybe 5-8—over the course of a quarter. These include:

- giving the characters for Pinyin and vice-versa
- listening comprehension
- answering questions
- writing from memory
- dictations

There will be other assessment types that will also be graded as quizzes. For example:

- memorized skits
- "show and tell"
- interviews
- “performance quizzes” (where you have to role play)

Finally, expect a major quiz—a “Quest”—at the end of each lesson.

**HOMEWORK AND PREPARATION GRADING RUBRIC (20% of your Grade)**

	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Completeness	No missing assignments.	No more than 2 missing assignments.	More than 2 missing assignments.
Presentation, organization	Neat, legible, organized.	Effort made regarding neatness and organization. May on occasion be asked to resubmit owing to neatness.	Teacher needs Ph.D in hieroglyphics in order to decipher. Frequent rewrites.
Timeliness	Virtually always on time.	Only occasionally late.	Frequently late.
Readiness	Prepared to apply homework and study to class activities.	Generally ready to apply homework to classroom activities.	Unprepared to participate in class activities.

## CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADING RUBRIC (10% OF YOUR GRADE)

	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Preparation and responsibility	High level of preparedness to engage in class activities and apply learning from homework. Seeks clarification and assistance when needed. Study journal is well organized and useful. Keeps teacher informed of scheduled absences. Responsible about makeup. Shows leadership in group activities.	Generally prepared to engage fully in class activities. Responds positively to teacher guidance and suggestions. Seeks clarification and assistance when needed. Study journal shows organization, but is not necessarily up to date or complete.	Frequently unprepared. Needs reminders about classroom expectations or performance. Is unresponsive to suggestions for improvement. Holds up class progress or the learning of others owing to lack of preparation.
Attention to task	Follows directions and keeps to purpose of task. Explores a task/activity to its fullest. Seeks multiple ways of completing a task or activity. Strives to speak Mandarin as much as possible.	Generally follows directions, or asks for clarification if unsure. Participates well in task or activity, and meets the task expectation/objective. Sometimes just settles for the easiest solution. Needs occasional reminder about focus.	Inattentive when directions are being given. Distracts from classmates or language partners by speaking English or showing disinterest. Needs reminders about distraction and attention.
Respect	Demonstrates consistent respect for and interest in views of all class members. Accommodates classmates of different learning strengths and styles. Uses appropriate and respectful means of raising objections and concerns.	Same, though not always consistent.	Has displayed or been reminded of behavior or language that is inconsistent with school values. Is unresponsive to reminders about classroom decorum.
Enthusiasm	Is creative with language and with task roles. Takes risks and is not afraid to make mistakes. Demonstrates interest and success at applying learning outside the classroom. Is interested in more than "what's in the book." Shares learning experiences. Shows willingness to help classmates.	Generally creative and willing to explore with the language. Shows interest and shares experiences using Mandarin outside the classroom setting.	Is negative or indifferent about learning. Learning appears to be a drudgery. Low level of interest affects classmates and teacher negatively.