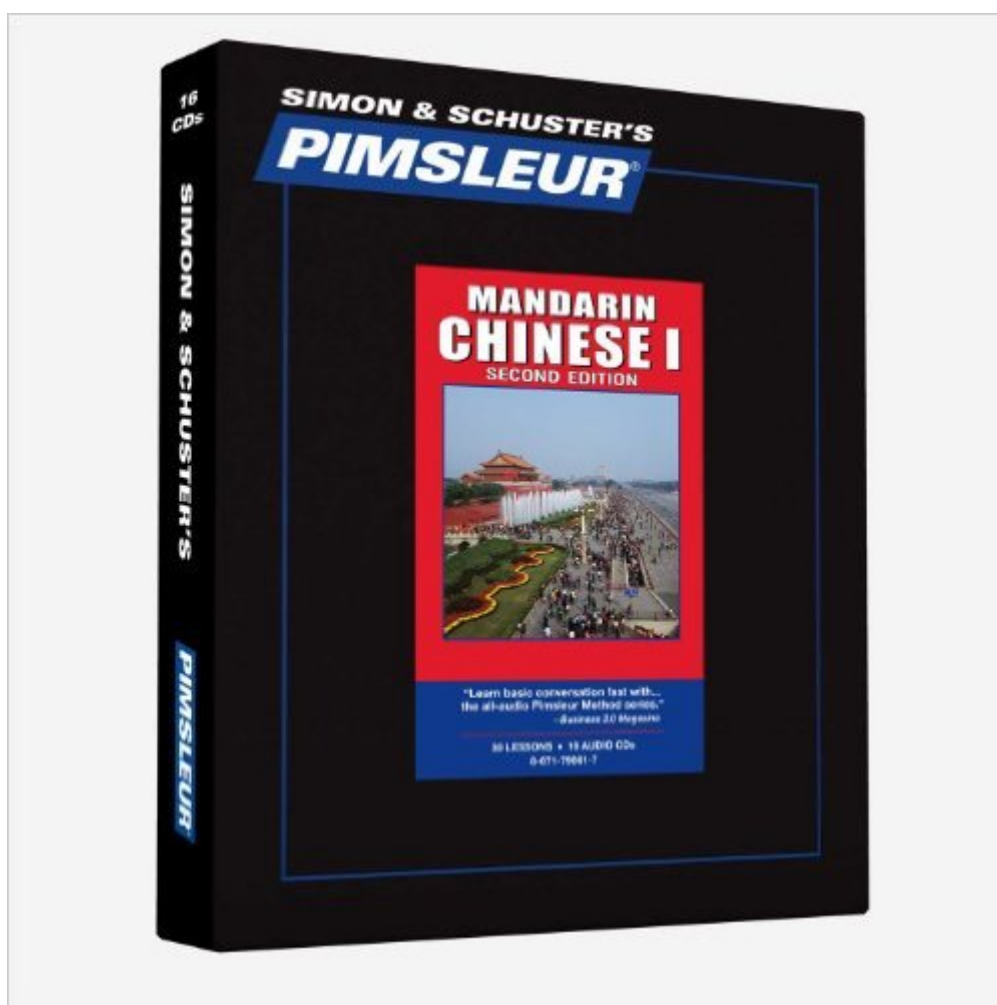


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# Chinese (Mandarin) I



## Synopsis

The Easiest and Fastest Way to Learn Mandarin Chinese Did you know that Mandarin Chinese is the world's most widely spoken language with over one billion native speakers? Once you get the basics down, you'll be surprised how quickly you're able to begin speaking it. And even knowing a little bit of the language will make travel to China far easier, and much more fun. Whether your goal is to travel, communicate with friends or colleagues, reconnect with family, or just understand more of what's going on in the world around you, learning to speak Mandarin Chinese will expand your horizons and immeasurably enrich your life. The best part is that it doesn't have to be difficult or take years to master. Thirty minutes a day is all it takes, and we get you speaking right from the first day. Pimsleur courses use a scientifically proven method that puts you in control of your learning. If you've tried other language learning methods but found they simply didn't stick, then you owe it to yourself to give Pimsleur a try. Why Pimsleur? - Quick + Easy - Only 30 minutes a day. - Portable + Flexible - Core lessons can be done anytime, anywhere, and easily fit into your busy life. - Proven Method - Works when other methods fail. - Self-Paced - Go fast or go slow - it's up to you. - Based in Science - Developed using proven research on memory and learning. - Cost-effective - Less expensive than classes or immersion, and features all native speakers. - Genius - Triggers your brain's natural aptitude to learn. - Works for everyone - Recommended for ages 13 and above. What's Included? - 30, 30-minute audio lessons - 60 minutes of recorded Notes to provide you some insight into Mandarin Chinese culture - In total, 16 hours of audio, all featuring native speakers - a Notes Booklet and a User's Guide What You'll Learn In the first 10 lessons, you'll cover the basics: saying hello, asking for or giving information, scheduling a meal or a meeting, asking for or giving basic directions, and much more. You'll be able to handle minimum courtesy requirements, understand much of what you hear, and be understood at a beginning level, but with near-native pronunciation skills. In the next 10 lessons, you'll build on what you've learned. Expand your menu, increase your scheduling abilities from general to specific, start to deal with currency and exchanging money, refine your conversations and add over a hundred new vocabulary items. You'll understand more of what you hear, and be able to participate with speech that is smoother and more confident. In the final 10 lessons, you'll be speaking and understanding at an intermediate level. In this level, more directions are given in the Mandarin Chinese language, which moves your learning to a whole new plane. Lessons include shopping, visiting friends, going to a restaurant, plans for the evening, car trips, and talking about family. You'll be able to speak comfortably about things that happened in the past and make plans for

the future. One hour of recorded Cultural Notes are included at the end of Lesson 30. These notes are designed to provide you with some insight into Mandarin Chinese culture. A Notes booklet is also included. The Pimsleur Method We make no secret of what makes this powerful method work so well. Paul Pimsleur spent his career researching and perfecting the precise elements anyone can use to learn a language quickly and easily. Here are a few of his "secrets":

- The Principle of Anticipation In the nanosecond between a cue and your response, your brain has to work to come up with the right word. Having to do this boosts retention, and cements the word in your mind.
- Core Vocabulary Words, phrases, and sentences are selected for their usefulness in everyday conversation. We don't overwhelm you with too much, but steadily increase your ability with every lesson.
- Graduated Interval Recall Reminders of new words and structures come up at the exact interval for maximum retention and storage into your long-term memory.
- Organic Learning You work on multiple aspects of the language simultaneously. We integrate grammar, vocabulary, rhythm, melody, and intonation into every lesson, which allows you to experience the language as a living, expressive form of human culture.
- Learning in Context Research has shown that learning new words in context dramatically accelerates your ability to remember. Every scene in every Pimsleur lesson is set inside a conversation between two people. There are no drills, and no memorization necessary for success.
- Active Participation The Pimsleur Method + active learner participation = success. This method works with every language and every learner who follows it. You gain the power to recall and use what you know, and to add new words easily, exactly as you do in English.

**The Mandarin Chinese Language** Over one billion people speak Chinese. The two most common dialects are Mandarin and Cantonese. They are not mutually intelligible. Mandarin is the official language in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Singapore. The Mandarin dialect is used in most Chinese schools, and in most TV programs, movies, and radio stations throughout the country, even in Guangzhou (formerly Canton), where people speak Cantonese in their daily lives. Mandarin is one of the six official languages of the United Nations.

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## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

I've gone through all 3 full sets of Pimsleur Mandarin Chinese. If you'd have asked me immediately after I'd finished them what I thought of the series, I'd have given it 5 stars without hesitation. However, after spending the past year trying to advance past what I've learned via the Pimsleur series, I've come across some reservations which prevent me from giving it a 5 star review anymore. While I do feel the Pimsleur method is incredibly useful and (despite its seeming simplicity) very innovative, I think their Mandarin Chinese series also suffers from simply being "plugged in" to the standard Pimsleur format, rather than receiving the customization that would help users truly understand the Chinese language, which has many quirks unique to it. My reservations: 1) Pimsleur Chinese teaches the Beijing version of Mandarin, which is understandable considering it is the "official" Mandarin dialect according to the Chinese government, but the fact is that the vast majority of overseas Mandarin speakers do not speak Beijing Chinese and may give you puzzled looks when you use the phrases taught in this series. For example, in Beijing the word 'where' is said 'nar', while just about everywhere else (Taiwan, Singapore, and other parts of China) they say 'na-li'. Sure, 90% is probably the same, but that 10% that is different can be very confusing. Occasionally they give alternate ways of saying words, but more often they do not. Native Mandarin speakers may understand your Beijing usage and pronunciation, but you will definitely need to re-learn several key words in order to understand when they speak to you.

When I first started Pimsleur Mandarin I, about six months ago, I gave up after the fourth lesson thinking it was too difficult. I just couldn't get my head around the tones and the difficult pronunciation. It seemed as though every sentence that I tried to make was too slow or had a wrong tone. Then about a week later, I tried it again and it wasn't quite so hard. I made it to lesson eleven, but then took another week-long break out of frustration. When I picked it up for the third time, it was much easier. I had finally figured out how to position my tongue to create most of the non-english

phenomes (pinyin: q, x, j, r, Ā , z, c), and the tones were starting to get easier, although I still had trouble when combining two falling-rising tones. After two months, I managed to finish Mandarin I, and then, with a bit more effort and patience, I finished Mandarin II and III. I can now repeat or say any sentence at full speed, and the tones have become almost entirely subconscious, making the language much more reasonable. This is the main strength of the Pimsleur program, it gets your ears accustomed to the sounds, and it forces you to make correct sentences quickly, with good pronunciation. This is especially important for a tonal language such as Mandarin. Of the three levels, Mandarin I is by far the most difficult and frustrating. This is because the four tones and many of the difficult phenomes are all introduced at once, and it seems almost impossible to master them. I had to listen to the first four lessons about four or five times each. After that, I listened to the remaining twenty-six lessons three times each.

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