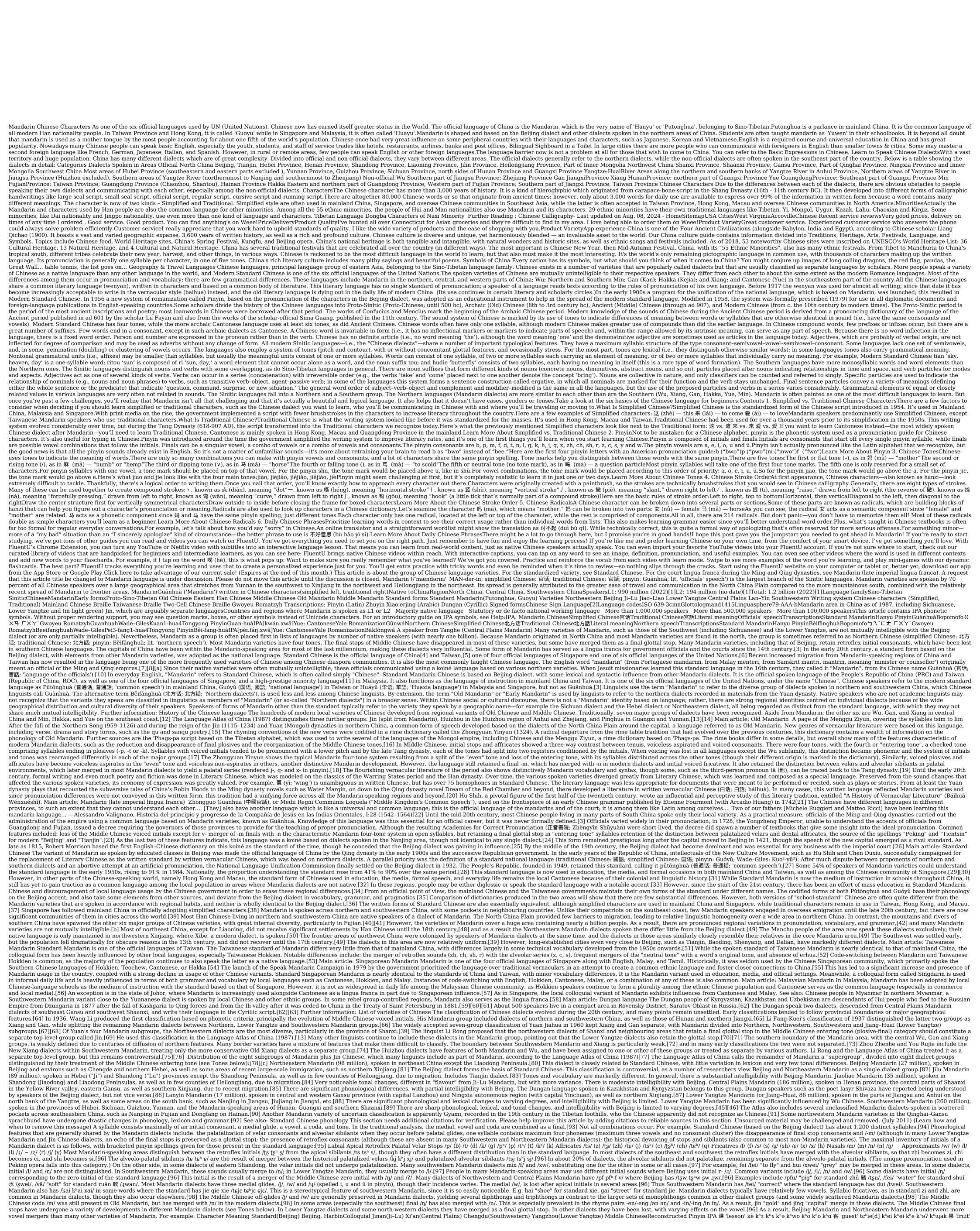
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guǒ kwo kwo kwo kwo ko ko ko ko kwa 国 'country' guó kwei kwe kɔ? kwək R-coloring, a characteristic feature of Mandarin, works quite differently in the southwest the -r replaces nearly the entire rhyme. The syllable ma with each of the
primary tones in Standard Chinese In general, no two Mandarin-speaking areas have exactly the same set of tone values, but most Mandarin-speaking areas have very similar tone distribution. For example, the dialects of Jinan, Chengdu, Xi'an and so on all have four tones that correspond quite well to the Beijing dialect tones of [1] (55), [41] (35), [41]
(214), and [1] (51). The exception to this rule lies in the distribution of syllables formerly ending in a stop consonant, which are treated differently in different dialects the
voicing is generally lost, yielding voiceless aspirates in syllables with a Middle Chinese level tone and non-aspirates in other syllables. [39] Of the four tones of Middle Chinese level tone has split into two
registers, conditioned on voicing of the Middle Chinese initial, while rising tone syllables with voiced obstruent initials have shifted to the departing tone. [100] The following examples from the standard language illustrate the regular development common to Mandarin dialects (recall that pinyin d denotes a non-aspirate /t/, while t denotes an aspirate
tone 1 (yīnpíng) 2 (yángpíng) 3 (shǎng) 4 (qù) In traditional Chinese phonology, syllables that ended in a stop in Middle Chinese (i.e. /p/, /t/ or /k/) were considered to belong to a special category known as the "entering tone". These final stops have disappeared in most Mandarin dialects, with the syllables distributed over the other four modern tones
in different ways in the various Mandarin subgroups. In the Beijing dialect that underlies the standard language, syllables beginning with original voiceless consonants were redistributed across the four tones in a completely random pattern.[101] For example, the three characters 積脊跡, all tsjek in Middle Chinese (William H. Baxter's transcription),
are now pronounced jī, jǐ and jì respectively. Older dictionaries such as Mathews' Chinese-English Dictionary mark characters whose pronunciation formerly ended with a stop with a superscript 5; however, this tone number is more commonly used for syllables that always have a neutral tone (see below). In Lower Yangtze dialects, a minority of
Southwestern dialects (e.g. Minjiang) and Jin Chinese (sometimes considered non-Mandarin), former final stops were not deleted entirely, but were reduced to a glottal stop as a trailing h.) This development is shared with Wu
Chinese and is thought to represent the pronunciation of Old Mandarin. In line with traditional Chinese phonology, dialects such as Lower Yangtze and Minjiang are thus said to have five tones instead of four. However, modern linguistics considers these syllables as having no phonemic tone at all. Reflexes of the Middle Chinese entering tone in
Mandarin dialects[102] subgroup Middle Chinese initial voiced sonorant voiced 
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influence from the neighbouring Wu dialects. Mandarin dialects frequently employ neutral tones in the second syllables of words, creating syllables also occur in non-Mandarin dialects, but in many southern dialects the tones of all syllables
are made clear.[101] There are more polysyllabic words in Mandarin than in all other major varieties of Chinese except Shanghainese[citation needed]. This is partly because Mandarin has undergone many more sound changes than southern varieties of Chinese have, and needed to deal with many more homophones. New words have been formed by
adding affixes such as lao- (老), -zi (子), -(e)r (儿; 兒), and -tou (头; 頭), or by compounding, e.g. by combining two words of similar meaning as in congmáng (匆忙), made from elements meaning "hurried" and "busy". A distinctive feature of southwestern Mandarin is its frequent use of noun reduplication, which is hardly used in Beijing. In Sichuan, one
hears bāobāo (包包) "handbag" where Beijing uses bāor (包儿). There are also a small number of words that have been polysyllabic since Old Chinese, such as húdié (蝴蝶; 'butterfly'). The singular pronouns in Mandarin are wǒ (我; 'I'), nǐ (你 or 妳, 'you'), nín (您; "you (formal)"), and tā (他,她 or 它; 牠, "he", "she", "it"), with -men (们; 們) added for the
plural. Further, there is a distinction between the plural first-person pronoun zánmen (咱们; 咱們), which is inclusive of the listener, and women (我们; 我們), which is inclusive of the listener. Dialects of Mandarin agree with each other quite consistently on these pronouns. While the first and second person singular pronouns are cognate with
forms in other varieties of Chinese, the rest of the pronominal system is a Mandarin innovation (e.g., Shanghainese has 侬; 儂; non; 'you' and 伊; yi; 'he', 'she').[104] Because of contact with Mongolian and Manchurian peoples, Mandarin (especially the Northeastern varieties) has some loanwords from these languages not present in other varieties of
Chinese, such as hútòng (胡同) "alley". Southern Chinese varieties have borrowed from Tai,[105] Austroasiatic,[106] and Austronesian languages. There are also many Chinese words which come from "bikini", and hànbǎo bāo (汉堡包) from "hamburger". In general, the greatest
variation occurs in slang, in kinship terms, in names for common crops and domesticated animals, for common verbs and adjectives, and other such everyday terms. The least variation occurs in "formal" vocabulary—terms dealing with science, law, or government. Further information: Chinese grammar Chinese varieties of all periods are considered
prime examples of analytic languages, relying on word order and particles instead of inflection or affixes to provide grammatical information such as person, number of particles in a similar fashion to suffixes, they are still strongly analytic.[107] The
basic word order of subject-verb-object is common across Chinese dialects, but there are variations in the order of the two objects of ditransitive sentences. In northern dialects the indirect object precedes the direct object (as in English), for example in the Standard Chinese sentence: 我wŏI给gěigive你nǐyou—本yìběna书shūbook[我給你一本書]我 给 你 一
本 书wǒ gěi nǐ yìběn shūl give you a book In southern dialects, as well as many southwestern and Lower Yangtze dialects, the objects occur in the reverse order.[108][109] 我wǒI给gěigive—本yìběna书shūbook给gěito你nǐyou[我給一本書給你]我 给 一本 书 给 你wǒ gěi yìběn shū gèi nǐl give a book to you Most varieties of Chinese use post-verbal particles to
indicate aspect, but the particles used vary. Most Mandarin dialects use the particle le (了) to indicate the perfective aspect and zhe (着; 著) for the progressive aspect. Other Chinese varieties tend to use different particle guo (过; 過) is used more widely, except in
Southern Min.[110] The subordinative particle de (的) is characteristic of Mandarin dialects, and a few Lower Yangtze dialects, preserve an older pattern of subordination without a marking particle, while in others a classifier fulfils the role of the Mandarin particle.[112] Especially in conversational Chinese, sentence-
final particles alter the inherent meaning of a sentence. Like much vocabulary, particles can vary a great deal with regards to the locale. For example, the particle ma (嘛), which is used in most northern dialects to denote obviousness or contention, is replaced by yo (喲; 哟) in southern usage. Some characters in Mandarin can be combined with others
to indicate a particular meaning just like prefix and suffix in English. For example, the suffix -er which means the person who is doing the action, e.g. teacher, person who teacher. In Mandarin the character 師 has the same function, it is combined with 教, which means 'teacher, person who teacher. List of several common Chinese prefixes and
suffixes: Affix Pronunciation Gloss Example Example Example gloss 们; 們 men plural for human nouns, same as -s, -es 学生们; 學生們, 朋友們 'students', 'friends' 可 kě same as re- (again) 重做, 重建, 重新 'redo', 'rebuild', 'renew' 第 dì same as -th, -st, -nd 第二, 第一 'second', 'first' 老 lǎo old, or
show respect to a certain type of person 老头; 老頭, 老板; 老闆, 老师; 老師, 老師; 老師 'old man', 'boss', 'teacher' 化 huà same as -ize, -en 公式化、制度化、強化 'officialize', 'scientist', 'artist' 性 xìng same as -ness, -ability 可靠性、實用性 [实用性]、可理解性 'reliability'
'usability', 'understand-ability' 鬼 guǐ usually used in a disparaging way, similar to -aholic 煙鬼、酒鬼、膽小鬼 [胆小鬼] 'smoker', 'alcoholic', 'coward' 匠 jiàng a technician in a certain field 花匠, 油漆匠, 木匠 'gardener', 'painter', 'carpenter 迷 mí an enthusiast 戏迷; 戲迷, 球迷, 歌迷 'theater fan', 'sports fan', 'groupie (of a musician)' 师; 師 shī suffix for
occupations 教师; 教師, 厨师; 廚師, 律师]; 律師 'teacher', 'chef', 'lawyer' From Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Chinese (Mandarin):[113]人人Rénrén生shēng而ér自由,zìyóu,在zài尊嚴zūnyán和hé權利quánlì上shàng一律yīlù平等。píngděng.他們Tāmen賦有fùyǒu理性lǐxìng和hé良心,liángxīn,並bìng應yīng以yǐ兄弟xiōngdì關係guānxì的de精神
jīngshén互相hùxiāng對待。duìdài.人人 生 而 自由, 在 尊嚴 和 權利 上 一律 平等。 他們 賦有 理性 和 良心, 並 應 以 兄弟 關係 的 精神 互相 對待。Rénrén shēng ér zìyóu, zài zūnyán hé quánlì shàng yīlù píngděng. Tāmen fùyǒu lǐxìng hé liángxīn, bìng yīng yǐ xiōngdì guānxì de jīngshén hùxiāng duìdài.All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
 They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.[114] Language portal Chinese characters Written Chinese Languages of China List of varieties of Chinese Linguistic Atlas
of Chinese Dialects List of languages by number of native speakers ^ A folk etymology deriving the name from Mån dà rén (满大人; 'Manchu big man') is without foundation.[9] ^ For example: In the early 1950s, only 54% of people in the Mandarin-speaking area could understand Standard Chinese, which was based on the Beijing dialect.[43]
"Hence we see that even Mandarin includes within it an unspecified number of languages, very few of which have ever been reduced to writing, that are mutually unintelligible." [44] "the common term assigned by linguists to this group of languages implies a certain homogeneity which is more likely to be related to the sociopolitical context than to
linguistic reality, since most of those varieties are not mutually intelligible."[45] "A speaker of only standarin might take a week or two to comprehend even simple Kunminghua with ease—and then only if willing to learn it."[46] "without prior exposure, speakers of different Mandarin dialects often have considerable difficulty understanding
each other's local vernacular even if they come from the same province, provided that two or more distinct groups of Mandarin are spoken therein. In some cases, mutual intelligibility is not guaranteed even if the Mandarin are spoken therein.
Zhenjiang dialect (a Jianghuai (Lower Yangtze) Mandarin dialect spoken in the Jiangsu province), it is impossible for her to understand the Nantong dialect (another Jianghuai Mandarin dialect spoken around 140 kilometers away in the same province)."[47]
the Language Atlas of China.[79] ^ The development is purely due to the preservation of an early glide which later became /j/ and triggered palatalization, and does not indicate the absence of a vowel merger. ^ a b c Mandarin Chinese at Ethnologue (28th ed., 2025) ^ 台灣手語簡介 (Taiwan shouyu jianjie) (2009) ^ a b c Norman (1988), p. 136.
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