

MOST COMMON CHINESE MEASURE WORDS

PEOPLE AND ANIMALS

Chinese	Usage	Example
个 gè	Person, general measure word	四个人 sì gè rén Four people 
位 wèi	More respectful than 个, and used only for people	一位老师 yī wèi lǎoshī A teacher 
名 míng	People with status, typically used for a person's occupation	一名医生 yī míng yīshēng A doctor 
口 kǒu	Family members, households (rarely used in speech)	一家四口人 yī jiā sì kǒu rén. A family of four 
只 zhī	Most animals including birds	一只大象 yī zhī dà xiàng An elephant 
头 tóu	Bigger animals, normally livestock	两头猪 liǎng tóu zhū Two pigs 
匹 pǐ	Horses, mules etc.	一匹马 yī pǐ mǎ A horse 
条 tiáo	Long, thin animals like fish, snakes, dragons etc.	一条蛇 yī tiáo shé A snake 

BODY PARTS


Chinese	Usage	Example
张 zhāng	Measure word for face, mouth	一张脸 yī zhāng liǎn A face 
根 gēn	Thin, slender body parts e.g. finger, a hair	一根手指 yī gēn shǒu zhǐ A finger 
只 zhī	For body parts, this means "one of a pair"	一只耳朵 yī zhī ěr duo An ear 
条 tiáo	Long, narrow body parts	一条腿 yī tiáo tuǐ A leg 

NOTE: some words are in multiple sections




双	shuāng	A pair of body parts	—双眼睛 yì shuāng yǎnjīng. A pair of eyes	
颗	kē	Small, normally round body parts	—颗心 yì kē xīn A heart	

FOOD AND DRINK







Chinese	Usage	Example
碗	wǎn For food in bowl	—碗面 yì wǎn miàn A bowl of noodles 
份	fèn For a meal of a fixed menu in a restaurant	—份米饭 yí fèn mǐfàn An order of rice 
串	chuàn A skewer	—串肉 yī chuàn ròu A skewer of meat 
盘	pán A dish, and can be used for a plate of food	—盘饺子 yì pán jiǎozi A plate of dumplings 
锅	guō Pot, pan, boiler	—锅汤 yì guō tāng A pot of soup 
笼	lóng Bamboo or wooden utensil for steaming food	—笼包子 yì lóng bāozi An order of baozi 
碟	dié Small plate	—碟醋 yì dié cù A dish of vinegar 
顿	dùn A meal	—顿早餐 yí dùn zǎocān A breakfast 
片	piàn Thin slice of food	—片面包 yí piàn miànbāo A slice of bread 
块	kuài A portion, piece or thick slice of food	—块蛋糕 yí kuài dāngāo A piece of cake 
包	bāo Pack, packet or bag	—包薯片 yī bāo shǔ piàn. A bag of crisps 
盒	hé Box or carton	—盒巧克力 yì hé qiǎokèlì A box of chocolate 

瓶	píng	Bottles	两瓶啤酒 liǎng píng pǐjiǔ Two bottles of beer	
杯	bēi	Glasses or cups	一杯茶 yī bēi chá A cup of tea	
听	tīng	A can	一听可乐 yì tīng kělè A can of cola	
罐	guàn	Jar, pot, tin	一罐蜂蜜 yí guàn fēngmì A jar of honey	





PLANTS

Chinese	Usage	Example
棵	kē For trees, grass etc. (also includes cabbages)	一棵树 yī kē shù A tree 
株	zhū Smaller trees/plants, flower still in the ground	三株花 sān zhū huā Three flowers 
朵	duǒ For flowers, clouds or things similar to them	一朵玫瑰 yī duǒ méiguī A stem of rose 






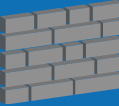
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Chinese	Usage	Example
根	gēn Long slender objects; thin, flexible strands	一根胡萝卜 yì gēn húluóbo A carrot 
颗	kē Small objects that are usually roundish in shape	一颗樱桃 yì kē yīng táo A cherry 
粒	lì Grain; classifier for small round things	六粒米 liù lì mǐ Six grains of rice 
头	tóu Bulb	一头洋葱 yì tóu yángcōng An onion 
瓣	bàn For segment, section, clove (normally 儿 is added)	一瓣儿蒜 yí bànr suàn A clove of garlic 
把	bǎ For a quantity of things that can be held in one hand	一把香蕉 yì bǎ xiāngjiāo A bunch of bananas 



VEHICLES







Chinese	Usage	Example
辆 liàng	For most wheeled vehicles	一辆汽车 yí liàng qìchē A car 
艘 sōu	For ships and vessels	一艘船 yì sōu chuán A ship 
列 liè	For trains etc. (列 is used for a series or row of things)	一列火车 yí liè huǒchē A train 
架 jià	For airplanes (also used for pianos and machines)	一架飞机 yí jià fēijī An aeroplane 

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES






Chinese	Usage	Example
座 zuò	For big buildings, mountains, bridges	一座桥 yí zuò qiáo A bridge 
栋 dòng	For buildings	一栋房子 yí dòng fángzi A house 
间 jiān	Room	一间教室 yì jiān jiàoshì A classroom 
所 suǒ	For buildings whose purposes are explicitly stated	一所医院 yì suǒ yīyuàn A hospital 
家 jiā	For families or businesses	一家宾馆 yí jiā bīnguǎn A hotel 
面 miàn	Wall	一面墙 yí miàn qiáng A wall 



HOUSEHOLD AND EVERYDAY ITEMS









Chinese	Usage	Example
张 zhāng	Rectangular or flat objects	一张照片 yí zhāng zhàopiàn. A photo 
本 běn	For books, magazines, notebooks etc.	三本书 sān běn shū Three books 

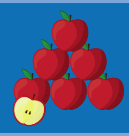


件	jiàn	For some items of clothing, presents or problems/matters.	一件礼物 yī jiàn lǐwù A present	
把	bǎ	Objects that can be grasped or objects with a handle	一把勺子 yī bǎ sháozi A spoon	
床	chuáng	For bedsheets (床 chuáng is also the word for bed)	一床棉被 yī chuáng miánbèi. A quilt	
条	tiáo	Towel, tablecloth	一条毯子 yī tiáo tǎnzi A towel	
台	tái	Heavy electronic objects (TVs, computers, etc.)	一台电视 yī tái diànshì A television	
部	bù	For small devices, films, machines, dictionaries, etc.	一部手机 yī bù shǒujī A mobile phone	
盏	zhǎn	For lamps	一盏灯 yī zhǎn dēng A lamp	
扇	shàn	Doors or windows etc.	一扇门 yī shàn mén A door	

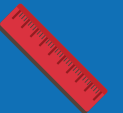

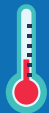
CLOTHING AND JEWELLERY

Chinese	Usage	Example
件	jiàn Article of clothing	一件衬衫 yī jiàn chènshān. A shirt 
条	tiáo A long article of clothing or jewellery	一条领带 yī tiáo lǐngdài A necktie 
套	tào A set/suit of clothing	一套西装 yī tào xīzhuāng. A suit 
双	shuāng A pair	一双袜子 yī shuāng wàzi A pair of socks 
只	zhī One of a pair	一只手套 yī zhī shǒutào A glove 
顶	dǐng For things that have a top e.g. hats	一顶帽子 yī dǐng màozi A hat 






枚	méi	Small objects e.g. rings, brooches	一枚戒指 yī méi jièzhǐ A ring	
对	duì	For certain pairs of objects	一对耳环 yī duì ěrhuán A pair of earrings	









TIME				
Chinese		Usage	Example	
秒	miǎo	Second	一秒钟 yī miǎo zhōng One second	
分	fēn	Minute, fraction	一分钟 yī fēn zhōng One minute	
天	tiān	Day	一天 yī tiān One day	
日	rì	Day (used in written form)	一日 yī rì One day	
周	zhōu	Week (used in written form)	一周 yī zhōu One week	
年	nián	Year	一年 yī nián One year	
代	dài	Era, generation	上一代 shàng yī dài The previous generation	
次	cì	A time	一次 yī cì Once	

UNITS OF MEASURE				
Chinese		Usage	Example	
斤	jīn	Chinese unit of weight equivalent to 0.5 kg	八斤苹果 bā jīn píngguǒ Four kilos of apples	
吨	dūn	Ton	两吨 liǎng dūn Two tons	
磅	bàng	Pound (lb)	一磅糖 yī bàng táng A pound of sugar	

寸	cùn	One inch (different to western inch – 3.333cm)	12寸 shí èr cùn Twelve inches	
尺	chǐ	One foot (different to western foot – 1/3 m)	六尺高 liù chǐ gāo Six feet tall	
里	lǐ	Chinese unit of length equivalent to 0.5 km	六公里 liù gōng lǐ Six kilometres	
块	kuài	Colloquial measure word for 1 元 yuán	一百块钱 yībǎi kuài qián。 100 yuan	
毛	máo	Colloquial measure word for 1 角 jiǎo (1/10 yuan)	四毛钱 sì máo qián Four jiao	
笔	bǐ	An unspecified sum of money	一笔钱 yī bǐ qián A sum of money	
升	shēng	1 litre	三升啤酒 sān shēng píjiǔ Three litres of beer	
斗	dǒu	10 litres	一斗水 yī dǒu shuǐ Ten litres of water	
度	dù	Degree, level (e.g. angle, temperature, etc.)	四十度 sìshí dù Forty degrees	

PAIRS, COLLECTIONS AND GROUPS

Chinese	Usage	Example
双	shuāng Pair of identical objects	一双筷子 yī shuāng kuàizi A pair of chopsticks 
副	fù Pair of complementary objects	一副刀叉 yī fù dāo chā A knife and fork 
对	duì For couples e.g. man and wife	一对夫妻 yī duì fūqī A man and wife 
些	xiē A few	一些糖果 yī xiē tángguǒ A few sweets 
种	zhǒng A kind	一种动物 yī zhǒng dòngwù A type of animal 

群	qún	Group, flock	一群羊 yī qún yáng A flock of sheep	
众	zhòng	A crowd	一众人 yī zhòng rén A crowd of people	
组	zǔ	Set, series	一组邮票 yī zǔ yóupiào A set of stamps	
帮	bāng	A group or a band	一帮贼 yī bāng zéi A group of thieves	
班	bān	A class	一班学生 yī bān xuéshēng A class of students	
排	pái	A row, queue	一排电杆 yī pái diàn gān A row of electrical posts	
队	duì	A team, battalion	一队军人 yī duì jūnrén A battalion of soldiers	
打	dá	A dozen	一打鸡蛋 yī dá jīdàn A dozen eggs	
叠	dié	A stack	一叠钱 yī dié qián A stack of money	