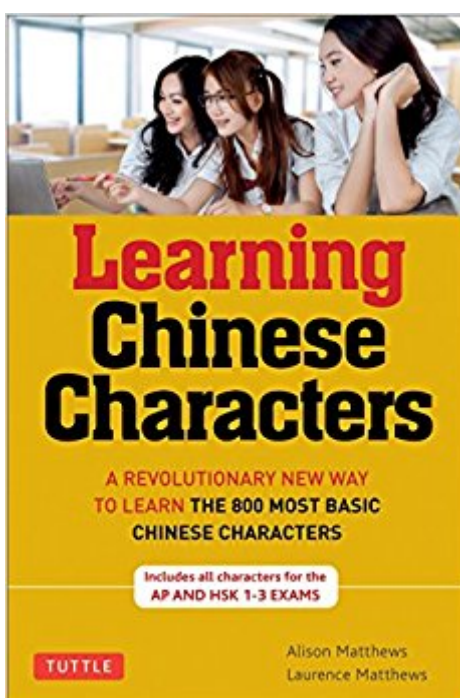


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# Tuttle Learning Chinese Characters: (HSK Levels 1-3) A Revolutionary New Way To Learn And Remember The 800 Most Basic Chinese Characters



## Synopsis

This user-friendly book is aimed at helping students of Mandarin Chinese learn and remember Chinese characters. At last, there is a truly effective and enjoyable way to learn Chinese characters! This book helps students to learn and remember both the meanings and the pronunciations of over 800 characters. This otherwise daunting task is made easier by the use of techniques based on the psychology of learning and memory. Key principles include the use of visual imagery, the visualization of short "stories," and the systematic building up of more complicated characters from basic building blocks. Although Learning Chinese Characters is primarily a book for serious learners of Mandarin Chinese, it can be used by anyone with an interest in Chinese characters, without any prior knowledge of Chinese. It can be used alongside (or after, or even before) a course in the Chinese language. All characters are simplified (as in mainland China) but traditional characters are also given, when available. Key features: Specially designed pictures and stories are used in a structured way to make the learning process more enjoyable and effective, reducing the need for rote learning to the absolute minimum. The emphasis throughout is on learning and remembering the meanings and pronunciations of the characters. Tips are also included on learning techniques and how to avoid common problems. Characters are introduced in a logical sequence, which also gives priority to learning the most common characters first. Modern simplified characters are used, with pronunciations given in pinyin. Key information is given for each character, including radical, stroke count, traditional form, compounds, and guidance on writing the character. This is a practical guide with a clear, concise and appealing layout, and it is well-indexed with easy lookup methods. The 800 Chinese characters and 1,033 compounds specified for the original HSK Level A proficiency test are covered.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"When I got Tuttle Learning Chinese Characters, I immediately knew that I had found the answers to all those years of searching. This book is everything I would have wished for learning basic Chinese." [Â -â •Hanban.com blog](#)"A great Memorization Tool for Characters."

[Â -â •VirginiaLynn.hubpages.com blog](#)"Outstanding approach for mnemonics to learn the Chinese characters. Easy and well structured, it builds on itself. Generally I can read about half the Chinese characters I see now, and I have a framework for learning the remainder. A great place to start Mandarin studies." [Â -â •Goodreads](#)"Studying Chinese characters is an exercise in getting individual masses of strokes to form meaning in one's mind. Learning Chinese Characters: A Revolutionary New Way to Learn and Remember the 800 Most Basic Chinese Characters, published by Tuttle, helps this process with a comprehensive method using story and image."

[Â -â •Vision Times blog](#)"I highly recommend this approach to learning Chinese characters, especially for those who aren't native speakers and need motivation in the learning process."

[Â -â •8Asians.com blog](#)"Tuttle Learning Chinese Characters by Alison Matthews and Laurence Matthews is an excellent beginners book! I really wanted to learn this for making some fun and beautiful cards and messages on scrapbook pages! Plus, the bonus of learning characters in Chinese! I know how popular characters are for tattooing and always wondered how about making some decorative cards with a character or few to design it!" [Â -â •Test Try Results blog](#)"The teaching strategy of this book uses mnemonics for Chinese character learning. It introduces the formation methods of Chinese characters and break down the characters to basic parts (radicals). This is a good teaching resource and reference for non-native speaking parents." [Â -â •Miss Panda Chinese](#)

Alison Matthews is a statistician who has worked in the oil, aviation, tourism, medical and software industries. Laurence Matthews is the author of the Kanji Fast Finder and Chinese Character Fast Finder books.

I was misled to think this book was going to have the back story of each character... I.e. history + linguistics + culture. It did have some of that for certain characters, but mostly it was just random little madeup stories to help you memorize the characters better. Sometimes the sentences or

stories would be completely random and unrelated to the character. I gave it 3 stars because I think they do a good job at what they intend, but it's not what I was hoping for. I can make up random sentences or stories to help me memorize characters, but I really wanted to learn more about the actual components and meaning behind each character. I had to supplement this book with other websites to help me better decipher and breakdown the characters.

This is an excellent manual and learning tool for learning Chinese characters. It would also be great as a textbook in a course on the subject. I highly recommend this book for self study of writing and reading Chinese characters. I'm learning spoken Chinese, using pinyin, so this book helps in learning to recognize the written characters in Mandarin.

A very unique and creative approach to learning Chinese. Overall, very good. I did wish that the format was a little better suited for going out and practicing. Some of the characters are placed at the beginning introductory chapters and some are placed later making it necessary to not just use the book but to create your own cards. Mainly though quite a lot of thought went into this work on how we learn to speak another language, and many ingenious methods and clues are given to help guide a student into a deeper understanding and more thorough knowledge of each character. These include images which help guide the reader in using raised, middle or even tones, which characters are absolutely fundamental and so on. All in a consistent manner which is a task that is more difficult than it might seem, as any one who has gone about learning Chinese on their own would surely attest to.

Nothing special here -- no "secret" shortcuts, really. The key is practice, practice, practice. Book is useful for that purpose.

The book is OK but I can't get into their method of creating stories to remember the characters. It seems like I'm trying to learn to follow their story line way of remembering the characters more than just learning the characters. It would have been better to connect the characters to some actual historical background that would have been more interesting to remember.

Just started. So far so good. I hope this helps me to remember these characters. Will keep you all up to date

I use this book to teach my 10 and 6 year-olds Chinese. The pictogram references help them memorize the words, and they enjoy drawing their own pictures to make connections. For each character, there is a "story" section giving you cues on how the characters are put together, making it very visual. This is a very comprehensive book for studying Chinese characters, if you have already learned the pronunciations.

I'm coming back to buy my third copy of this great mnemonic book, so it wouldn't be fair to give less than five stars, my first two copies having been worn through. Scanning other reviews, I see a lot of talk about the limits of using this book in isolation; I hope that nobody takes those as a reason not to get this... of course, you'll need other resources too, but for the learning aspect this is aimed at, it is by far the best. What it does very well is to assist in recall of (certain) meaning(s) of 800 simplified hanzi. You may think that having worn through two copies and still needing a third isn't a massive endorsement of the method, but please compare that with the years of study dedicated to this in the Chinese school system, or the sheer scale of the task (plus, I'm forgetful & don't always treat the book very carefully). The mnemonic stories told in this book are more powerful than those told in others, because they are longer and because they are hooked into the pinyin. (Complexity in the stories is a massive advantage from a memorization perspective, not a disadvantage - at least in my experience.) This link to the pinyin makes the recall effect stronger and gives more ways back into the symbol's meaning, and confidence in that meaning; it connects the verbal and the written learning. In fact, the pinyin mnemonics do not work that well on their own, so this assistance with pronunciation should be considered supplementary (to learning meaning). The problems with the pinyin side of the learning are that: (a) The tone-marking-archetypes are not tied strongly enough into the story; often the faerie and the teddy are interchangeable, (b) some characters have pinyin links & others do not; for a learner, there's no way to remember which of these are which, and that can raise doubts in my mind about whether I have recalled the full story (the longer the story and the more details it contains then better I'll remember it). The book would be even stronger if: (a) story plot or setting rigidly defined tone or archetype, and (b) all characters had pinyin (even invented pinyin, where a fragment not used independently must be defined). Anyway, I've found no book that is anywhere near as effective as this one in teaching hanzi recognition. But, in a way, that's a problem... Where is volume two? This book's very title teases us about subsequent volumes, but its conclusion says that authors are too exhausted to produce one, and that -in any case- it is more effective to "make up the rest of the stories yourself". That's very frustrating as a reader, and inconsistent: if it is so hard to make up these stories (the authors note how much strain it has been

on them through the book) then why would it be faster to invent another 2,200 of them than to read more Tuttle books? That doesn't add up logically or economically... What publishing company doesn't want to satisfy a demand for more books? How can we petition for "Tuttle Learning Chinese Characters, Vol. 2"?

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