

Level: Elementary

Lesson 2 Pronunciation Part 2

Some double Finals:

Group 1: ai ao an ang

ai is pronounced as the letter “i” in English.

ao is pronounced as “ou” in “ouch”.

an is pronounced similarly as the British English “ann”. You could start with “a” sound, then glide to “n”, don’t stop until you reach the “n”. Don’t mix it with the American English “ann”!

ang is pronounced like “aun” in “aunt”, again in British English. The difference is the “ng” has more back nasal sound. Thus “a” is slightly further back than normal “a”.

kāi	open	开
bāo	bag	包
gān	dry	干
fáng	house	房

Group 2 : ei en eng

ei is pronounced as the letter “a”. Try not to mix it with “ai “. You can differentiate it by dividing this into two parts: “e” and “i” , then try to melt them together such as “e—i—e—i---ei “.

en is pronounced as “an” in “woman”. Try not to add too much nasal sound and restrict the sound within your mouth mostly.

eng is pronounced as “en “ plus “ng”. “e” is further back than normal “e”.

fēi	fly	飞
mén	door	门
fēng	wind	风

Group 3 : ou ong

ou is pronounced as “oa” in “boat”.

ong is pronounced like “own “ but with “ng”.

tōu	steal	偷
lóng	dragon	龙

Group 4 : in ing

in is pronounced as “ine” in “machine”, note it’s not the “in”.

ing is pronounced as “in” plus “ng”. Again “i” is further back than normal “i”.

pīn	spell	拼
bīng	ice	冰

Initials :

Group 4 : j q x + i

j is very similar to “j” in “jeep” .

q is very similar to “ch” in “cheese” .

x is very similar to “sh” in “sheep” .

The difference between the English ones and Chinese ones lies here: in the Chinese ones the tip of your tongue touches the back of your lower front teeth, while in the English ones the tip touches the gum close to your upper front teeth, which is close to the roof of your mouth, where the bony part is. Thus there is more friction in the English sounds.

jī	chicken	鸡
qī	seven	七
xī	west	西

Group 5 : z c s + i (special i only spelt with z , c , s)

z Try “ds” in “birds” by adding voice to it.

c Try “ts” in “cats” by adding voice to it.

s Try “s” in “see” by vibrating the tip of your tongue. Never pronounce it as “see” though.

To pronounce this group, put the tip of your tongue close to the back of your lower front teeth.

zāng	dirty	脏
cāi	guess	猜
sān	three	三

Group 6: zh ch sh r + i (special i only spelt with zh, ch, sh, r)

zh Try to pronounce the initial “j” , keep the position but curl the tip of your tongue to touch the roof of your mouth, the bony part.

ch With the same method as above, try “q” first, then curl your tongue to get ch.

sh Try “x”, curl your tongue to get “sh”.

r The last one “r” is not easy but try not to pronounce it as “r” in “red” ! First make sure you get that “sh” sound, then vibrate your tongue more, you should hear more voice in this one compared to “sh”. It does take a lot of practice to get the correct one !

Last but not least, do not over-curl your tongue when you try this group.

zhōng	middle, China	中
chī	eat	吃
shì	to be, am, is , are	是
rì	the sun, Japan	日