Characters and their strokes

Before focusing on the strokes that compose a character and the way to write it, we first need to look at characters that accompany and encircle the main characters. Those are categorized into 8 types of characters:

- **Above:**

  一 宀 艹 𥫗

  Example: huā ； wáng
  花   亡

- **On the left side:**

  亻 ⺍ 彳

  Example: rèn ； yì
  任   役

- **At the bottom:**

  儿 灬 皿 廾

  Example: nòng ； dào
  弄   盗

- **On the right side:**

  刂 卩 阝 欠

  Example: kān ； jiāo
  刊   郊

- **Covering at the top:**

  厂 尸 广

  Example: è ； chuáng
  厄   床

- **Left or bottom support:**

  辶 廴 走

  Example: yán ； qǐ
  延   起

- **Proper letters:**

  木 用 立 白 生 石 禾 車

- **surrounding bodies:**

  匚 凵 ⼞ 門 勹 囗

  Example: pī   ；   bì
  匹   閉

1) Strokes composing characters

Chinese characters can have up to 17 strokes ! Those strokes are also called *keys*. They are indexed in Chinese dictionaries, so everytime you want to look for a character, you need to count the number of strokes composing it and refer to the right key listed in the dictionary.

Let's now see examples to understand how complex they can be:

- 1 stroke:

一　丨　丶　ノ　乙　亅

- 2 strokes:

二　亠　人　儿　亻

- 3 strokes:

口　土　夂　夕　大

- 4 strokes:

心　戈　戶　手　支

- 5 strokes:

玉　瓜　生　用　皿

- 6 strokes:

竹　米　网　羊　而

- 7 strokes:

見　谷　豕　豸　走

- 8 strokes:

金　長　門　隹　雨

- 9 strokes:

面　韭　音　首　香

➕ <u>10 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

馬　高　鬥　鬲　鬼

</div>

➕ <u>11 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

魚　鳥　鹿　麥　麻

</div>

➕ <u>12 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

黃　　黍　黑　黹

</div>

➕ <u>13 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

黽　鼎　鼓　鼠

</div>

➕ <u>14 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

鼻　齊

</div>

➕ <u>15 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

齒

</div>

➕ <u>16 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

龍　龜

</div>

➕ <u>17 strokes:</u>

<div align="center">

龠

</div>

⚠️ : The above list is not complete and not all the keys are indexed. Here is just an example to give you an idea of what they can look like.

2) <u>Strokes order</u>

➕ Basic strokes:

丶	一	丨	丿	㇏	㇀	亅
点 diǎn	横 héng	竖 shù	撇 piě	捺 nà	提 tí	竖钩 shùgōu
dot	*horizontal*	*vertical*	*left-ward*	*right-ward*	*upward*	*vertical with*

a hook

NB: When drawing the characters, you should always start with the horizontal strokes, then draw the vertical ones and finish adding the dots.