Numbers

Numbers in Chinese are rather easy to learn and understand as the way of counting is very logical and mathematical. It is also very similar to the way Western languages work…up to 9,999 anyway! Furthermore, foreign students can identify better to their own mother tongue.

But, before we go deeper into the subject, let's start with going through the 10 first numbers as they will represent a strong basis for the rest.

1) **Numbers from 1-10**

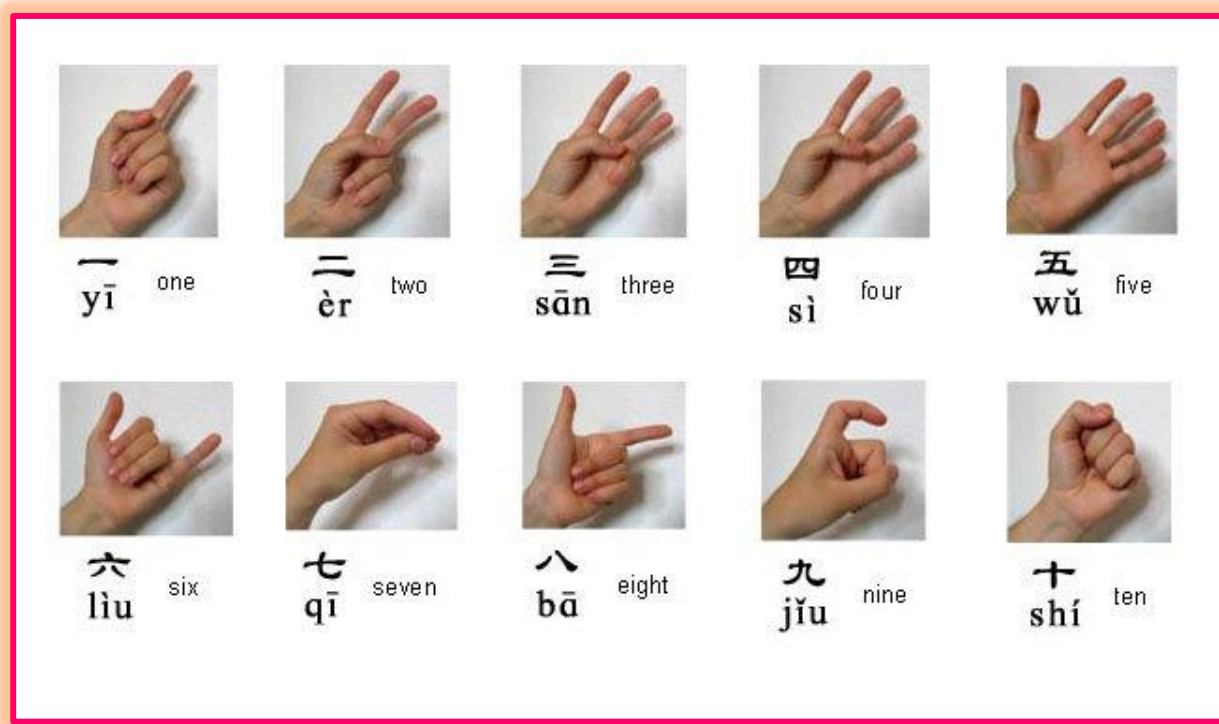一 [Yī]   二 [Èr]   三 [Sān]   四 [Sì]   五 [Wǔ]

六 [Liù]   七 [Qī]   八 [Bā]   九 [Jiǔ]   零 [Líng]

十 [Shí]

⚠️ : When counting or giving a number using their fingers, Chinese people use signs that are different from Western ones. Check below!

2) Tens, Hundred, Thousand

In Chinese, saying or writing numbers from 11 to 9,999 is very easy as it is just necessary to know the 10 first basic numbers and to do the sum to obtain the final number that one is looking for. In other words ➔ *ex*: Eleven is 10 + 1, so in Mandarin Chinese, one should say 十一. See below.

11:	十一	60:	六十
12:	十二 *(10 +2)*	70:	七十
13:	十三	80:	八十
		90:	九十
20:	二十	100:	一百 [Yī bǎi]
21:	二十一 *(2 x 10 +1)*	101:	一百零一 *(100 + 0 +1)*
30:	三十 *(3 x 10)*	110:	一百十 *(100 + 10)*
40:	四十	1,000:	一千 [Yī qiān]
50:	五十	1001:	一千零一 *(1000 + 0 + 1)*

1010: 一千零十 *(1000 + 0 + 10)*   3,680:三千六百八十 *(3000 + 600 + 80)*

9,999:九千九百九十九

(9000 + 900 + 90 + 9)

1,100: 一千一百 *(1000 + 100)*

1,500: 一千五百 *(1000 + 500)*

3) 10,000 and above

Now, for numbers above 10,000, it is a bit tricky for a western mind as Asian languages do not use the same logic as seen before. In English, one counts every 1,000, while in Chinese it's every 10,000. See below:

> In English, it would be
> 100,000 ➔ *(100 x 1000)*

10,000:   一万 [yīwàn]

100,000:   十万 [shíwàn] ➔ *(10 x 10 000)*

1,000,000:   一百万 [yībǎiwàn] ➔ *(100 x 10 000)*

10,000,000:   一千万 [yīqiānwàn] ➔ *(1000 x 10 000)*

100,000,000:   一亿 [yīyì]

4) Exercise

Translate the following numbers into Chinese characters:

21 : ....   59 : ....

99 : ....   613 : ....

14 : ....   12 : ....

357 : ....   2,418: ....

1,634: ....   75 : ....

73 : ....   952: ....

5) <u>Days of the week</u>

Now that we have seen numbers, it will be much easier to understand how to say the days of the week and the months of the year. Enjoy, it is very easy!!

All you have to do is write the word 星期 [xīngqī] which means *week*. It is composed of the character 星 *(star)* and 期 *(date)*, so basically *date of the star*, and to add the number that belongs to each day.

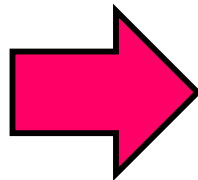|	
Monday is 1	星期一
Tuesday is 2	星期二
Wednesday is 3	星期三
Thursday is 4	星期四
Friday is 5	星期五
Saturday is 6	星期六
Sunday is 7	星期七

6) <u>Months of the year</u>

For months, it is the same logic. Like in English, months are counted from 1 to 12 and in the same order. But instead of putting the character 月 [yuè] which means *moon*, before the number like for days, you need to put it after.

January	February	March
yī yuè 一月	èr yuè 二月	sān yuè 三月
April	May	June
sì yuè 四月	wǔ yuè 五月	liù yuè 六月

July	August	September
qī yuè 七月	bā yuè 八月	jiǔ yuè 九月
October	November	December
shí yuè 十月	shí yī yuè 十一月	shí èr yuè 十二月