

The CJKI Chinese Learner's Dictionary

CJKI 汉英学习词典

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0. Overview

The primary goal of this dictionary is to give the learner a thorough understanding of how Chinese characters (hanzi) are used in contemporary Chinese by providing instant access to a wealth of useful information on the meanings, readings, and compounds for the most frequently used characters. Thanks to the use of a revolutionary lookup method, the user can locate characters as quickly as in alphabetical dictionaries.

1. Key features

- **Over 2,782** entry characters and more than 19,811 compound words
- **Multiple lookup methods**, including the revolutionary SKIP system
- **Core meanings** instantly convey each character's fundamental concept
- **Precise meanings** show how characters contribute to the meanings of compounds
- **Frequency statistics** based on a corpus of one billion words
- Detailed **stroke-order diagrams**
- Various **character codes**, including Unicode
- **Fully supports HSK** – all words included, classified by level
- **Useful Appendixes** to aid the reader
- **Attractive layout** for relaxed browsing
- Accurate **part-of-speech** codes

2. Why a new Chinese dictionary?

Though the number of Chinese learners in the world exceeds 30,000,000, existing dictionaries have various drawbacks (discussed below) that make them unsuitable for learners. **The *CJKI Chinese Learner's Dictionary*** answers the urgent need for an easy-to-use Chinese character dictionary, compact enough to be easily carried around, yet detailed enough to satisfy the practical needs of the serious learner.

Here, for the first time, is a totally new work that enables learners to gain an in-depth understanding of how Chinese characters are used in contemporary Chinese. The new dictionary is based on *The Kodansha Kanji Learner's Dictionary* (KALD), which has become a standard reference work for learning Japanese kanji and has enjoyed the praise of world-renowned scholars and countless learners worldwide. This dictionary inherits the outstanding features that has made KALD so popular, and fully responds to the Chinese learner's specific needs, such as full coverage of words and characters required for the HSK proficiency tests.

3. How is this dictionary different?

This dictionary was designed specifically to overcome the various deficiencies found in existing Chinese learner's dictionaries by providing many distinct features that put it in a class of its own.

Core Meaning. The *core meaning* is a unique and valuable feature, a concise keyword that defines the most dominant meaning of each character, which is followed by in-depth meanings that clearly show how a few thousand basic building blocks are combined to form countless compound words. For example, BREAK conveys the essential meaning of 破 as an easy-to-remember *thought package*, and shows how the various senses are variants of the same concept, so the reader can grasp both their differences and similarities.

Up-to-Date Coverage. The contents are up to date and include common neologisms that other dictionaries miss, such as 博客 bókè 'blog' and 刷卡 shuākǎ 'swipe a card, pay by card'.

SKIP System. Another unique feature is the *System of Kanji Indexing by Patterns* (SKIP), an indexing system that enables the user to locate characters as quickly and as accurately as in alphabetical dictionaries. Originally developed for Japanese kanji, this efficient system can be learned in a very short time and is easy to use. Widely used in various paper and electronic dictionaries, SKIP has gained widespread popularity throughout the world.

Character Meanings. Many dictionaries often do not provide character meanings on the word building level. Even in the cases where it is given, the meaning is often too vague or abstract. Clear, complete, and accurate *character meanings*, illustrated by numerous compounds, are grouped around the core meaning in a logically structured manner that allows them to be perceived as an independent word (free) or word element (bound), and how countless compounds are generated from a few thousand basic units.

In-depth Meanings. The meanings are presented in clusters around a core meaning so that they can be perceived as a logically structured, psychologically integrated unit. Each sense is illustrated by numerous compounds arranged in a way that shows how they are formed from their constituents.

Pinyin Readings. This dictionary gives accurate pinyin for every Chinese word and character. In some dictionaries, the pinyin is only given for the character itself, while in others pinyin is not given for compounds.

Reference Data. This dictionary is also an excellent reference tool. It provides a host of supplementary information such as the Traditional Chinese and Japanese character forms, Japanese readings, character codes, frequency ranking, the HSK level, and more.

Attractive Design. Another distinctive feature is a layout that is both visually attractive and easy to use. Typographical design with the aid of cutting-edge font technology is used to achieve a harmonious blend of font styles and weights, resulting in an esthetically pleasing design that stimulates a desire to browse and to truly enjoy studying Chinese characters.

Stroke Order. Unlike other dictionaries, which rely heavily on cross-referencing, the order of the writing is presented stroke-by-stroke for every character to ensure maximum convenience to the user.

Compliance with HSK. The *Hànyǔ Shuǐpíng Kǎoshì* (汉语水平考试) is the world's most well-known Chinese language proficiency test aimed at assessing learners' language skills. This dictionary includes all characters and words used in all HSK levels and indicates the HSK level for each word.

4. Is it easy for beginners to use?

For the first time, learners of Chinese have at their fingertips a wealth of information on Chinese characters that is linguistically accurate and carefully adapted to their practical needs. Modern linguistic theory has been effectively integrated with sophisticated information technology to produce a powerful learning tool.

Many Chinese character dictionaries are not designed with the beginner in mind. Often, confusing organization and/or lookup methods hinder the learner from finding the desired entry, assuming that the reader has some background knowledge before using the dictionary. The lack of an efficient system for ordering Chinese characters has long been a source of frustration to learners of Chinese. The traditional method of looking up by radicals is time-consuming and unreliable. To overcome these difficulties, this dictionary uses the popular lookup method called SKIP (invented by the author).

This system has gained popularity among users of Japanese kanji dictionaries and dictionary software, since it enables even beginners to locate characters as quickly and as accurately as in alphabetical dictionaries. Since the system can be learned in a very short time and is easy to use, this dictionary is an extremely convenient learning tool.

5. What are the drawbacks of existing dictionaries?

The most common drawbacks of existing dictionaries, all of which this dictionary has successfully addressed, are listed below.

- Many dictionaries do not provide character meanings on the word building level.
- Current dictionaries are not up to date and don't include very common words like 打车 and 充值.
- Compound words do not always have pinyin.
- Stroke order for every element of the character on a stroke-by-stroke basis is not commonly shown.
- Stroke order diagrams are sometimes unsuitable as a model for writing.
- English equivalents are often too vague.
- The lookup methods are not always intuitive for beginners, often assuming some background knowledge.
- Some dictionaries are large and clumsy to use or hold.
- The design is poor, resulting in fonts that are sometimes too small and illegible.



6. System of Kanji Indexing by Patterns (SKIP)

汉字型式檢字法

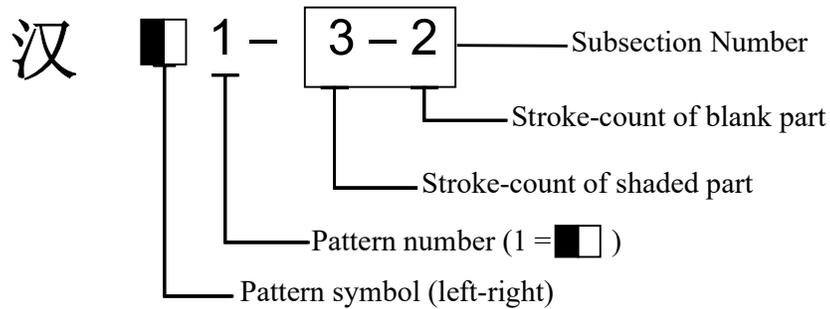
No	Pattern	Classification	Examples
1	 LEFT-RIGHT	clear space	相 ₄₋₅ 代 ₂₋₃ 情 ₃₋₈ 小 ₁₋₂ 川 ₁₋₂ 州 ₂₋₄ 順 ₁₋₁₁ 傾 ₂₋₁₁
		conceptual space	扱 ₃₋₃ 級 ₆₋₃ 歡 ₁₁₋₄ 街 ₃₋₉ 町 ₅₋₂ 翻 ₁₂₋₆ 髓 ₁₀₋₉ 伺 ₂₋₅
2	 UP-DOWN	clear space	示 ₁₋₄ 二 ₁₋₁ 三 ₁₋₂ 言 ₁₋₆ 公 ₂₋₂ 谷 ₂₋₅ 父 ₂₋₂ 多 ₃₋₃
		conceptual space	芳 ₃₋₄ 合 ₂₋₄ 響 ₁₁₋₉ 桑 ₂₋₈ 系 ₁₋₆ 雀 ₄₋₇ 券 ₆₋₂ 春 ₅₋₄
		horizontal line	寺 ₃₋₃ 空 ₃₋₅ 文 ₂₋₂ 亭 ₂₋₇ 忘 ₂₋₅ 学 ₅₋₃ 索 ₄₋₆ 義 ₃₋₁₀
		frame element	古 ₂₋₃ 点 ₂₋₇ 免 ₂₋₆ 早 ₄₋₂ 堯 ₂₋₆ 当 ₃₋₃ 南 ₂₋₇ 支 ₂₋₂
3	 ENCLOSURE		進 ₃₋₈ 辻 ₄₋₂ 起 ₇₋₃ 延 ₃₋₅ 魅 ₈₋₇ 直 ₁₋₇ 匕 ₁₋₁ 止 ₂₋₂
			旬 ₂₋₄ 載 ₆₋₇ 刀 ₁₋₁ 司 ₁₋₄ 可 ₂₋₃ 戒 ₄₋₃ 鳥 ₇₋₄ 馬 ₆₋₄
		 	麻 ₃₋₈ 庄 ₂₋₃ 尾 ₃₋₄ 病 ₅₋₅ 石 ₂₋₃ 考 ₄₋₂ 着 ₇₋₅ 斗 ₂₋₂
		 	間 ₈₋₄ 岡 ₂₋₆ 風 ₂₋₇ 向 ₃₋₃ 肉 ₄₋₂ 凶 ₂₋₂ 山 ₂₋₁ 画 ₂₋₆
		 	医 ₂₋₅ 臣 ₃₋₄ 瞿 ₂₋₉ 丑 ₂₋₂
		  	回 ₃₋₃ 国 ₃₋₅ 田 ₃₋₂ 日 ₃₋₁ 目 ₃₋₂ 四 ₃₋₂ 𠂇 ₃₋₂
4	 SOLID	 1 top line	下 ₃₋₁ 耳 ₆₋₁ 雨 ₈₋₁ 子 ₃₋₁ 凸 ₅₋₁ 口 ₃₋₁ 亜 ₇₋₁ 爾 ₁₄₋₁
		 2 bottom line	上 ₃₋₂ 七 ₂₋₂ 亡 ₃₋₂ 丘 ₅₋₂ 由 ₅₋₂ 自 ₆₋₂ 坐 ₇₋₂ 重 ₉₋₂
		 3 through line	中 ₄₋₃ 十 ₂₋₃ 手 ₄₋₃ 本 ₅₋₃ 求 ₇₋₃ 乘 ₉₋₃ 毛 ₄₋₃ 肅 ₁₁₋₃
		 4 others	人 ₂₋₄ 九 ₂₋₄ 女 ₃₋₄ 火 ₄₋₄ 犬 ₄₋₄ 成 ₆₋₄ 寿 ₇₋₄ 為 ₉₋₄

* The examples shown in the above table apply to Japanese kanji only



7. How SKIP works

Each character is classified under one of four easy-to-identify patterns. Within each group the characters are further subdivided into smaller subgroups. For example, 汉 is classified under pattern 1, left-right. 汉 has three strokes in the shaded part and two strokes in the blank part, and thus appears under pattern 1, subsection 3-2.



8. Page Sample for “liu”

1-11

留

KEEP ▶ STAY

liú

① 留 ② 留

田	HSK-4	S10-5-5	GB3384
102	B0741	㊦2580	U7559

1646

2-5-5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

留级 *liújí* *VO* fail to advance in school grade
 留学 *liúxué* *VO* study abroad
 停留 *tíngliú* *VB* stay temporarily, stop over

b 留美 *liúMěi* *VO* study in the U.S.
 留日 *liúRì* *VO* study in Japan

- ① [original meaning] **KEEP** in place, ask (someone) to **STAY** *VB*[△]
 - b **KEEP** for future use, reserve, leave behind[△]
 - c **KEEP** in custody, detain[△]
 - d **KEEP** one's mind on, concentrate on[△]
- a 我们留她吃晚饭。 *Wǒmen liú tā chī wǎnfàn* *EH* We asked her to stay for dinner.
 留步 *liúbù* *EA* don't bother to see me out (said by departing guests to host)
 挽留 *wǎnliú* *VB* urge [persuade] someone to stay
- b 留言 *liúyán* *VO* leave a message [comments]; *NC* short message
 留念 *liúniàn* *VB* keep[accept] as a souvenir; *NC* souvenir
 保留 *bǎoliú* *VB* reserve, retain; *NC* reservation
- c 扣留 *kòuliú* *VB* detain, arrest
 拘留 *jūliú* *VB* detain, intern
- d 留心 *liúxīn* *VO* be careful, take care
 留意 *liúyì* *VO* be careful, look out, keep one's eyes open
- ② (**KEEP** one's hair growing) **grow** (one's hair), wear *VB*[△]
 - 留长发 *liú chángfà* *EH* wear long hair
 - 留胡子 *liú húzi* *VO* grow a moustache [beard]
- ③ (remain in a given condition) **STAY**, remain *VB*[△]
 - b **STAY** abroad to study[△]
- a 大战后, 她一直留在中国。 *Dàzhàn hòu tā yízhí liú zài Zhōngguó* *EH* She has remained in China since the war.

9. Introducing Jack Halpern

President & CEO, The CJK Dictionary Institute

Editor-in-Chief, Kanji Dictionary Publishing Society

Research Fellow, Showa Women's University

Jack Halpern (春遍雀來) is the CEO of the CJK Dictionary Institute (CJKI) in Japan. The institute, which is one of world's prime sources for CJK (Chinese, Japanese and Korean) dictionaries, specializes in the compilation of comprehensive CJK and Arabic lexical databases for the NLP industry. A lexicographer by profession, for sixteen years he engaged in the compilation of the *New Japanese-English Character Dictionary*, and as a research fellow at Showa Women's University (Tokyo) was editor-in-chief of several kanji dictionaries for learners, which have become standard reference works.

Jack Halpern, who has lived in Japan over 40 years, was born in Germany and lived in six countries including France, Brazil and the United States. An avid polyglot who specializes in Japanese and Chinese lexicography, he has studied 15 languages, ten of which he speaks mostly fluently, and has devoted several decades to the study of languages and lexicography. Winner of first prize in the International Speech Contest in Japanese, Jack Halpern is the founder and director of the Japan Yiddish Club, he has taught his native Yiddish to Japanese students. His favorite language is Brazilian Portuguese, which he speaks fluently and considers "God's mother tongue."

Jack Halpern published over twenty books and dozens of articles and academic papers, mostly on the Japanese writing system and CJK information processing, has given over 600 public lectures on Japanese language and culture, and presented several dozen papers at international conferences.

On a lighter note, Jack Halpern loves the sport of unicycling. Founder and long-time president of the International Unicycling Federation, he has promoted the sport worldwide for several decades, has started the unicycling in Japan, and is a director of the Japan Unicycling Association. Currently, his passion is playing the quena and improving his Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic.