CHINESE BOOST

Ancient Chinese science Chinese vocabulary list

58 words with pinyin, 繁體 and meanings, 38 of them with an example sentence.
Every word here links to its entry on the site.

Parts 1 2 3 4

Ancient Chinese science Chinese vocabulary list on the web
The same words as a CSV, for Anki or a spreadsheet
A free account, which keeps 简体 or 繁體, pinyin or 注音 and the rest of how you read Chinese on every device

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Elementary (HSK 1-3)

数学 數學
shùxué mathematics

> 你数学好吗?
> Nǐ shùxué hǎo ma?
> Are you good at mathematics?

Intermediate (HSK 4-6)

科学 科學
kēxué science / scientific knowledge / scientific / rational

> 我不喜欢科学。
> Wǒ bù xǐhuan kēxué.
> I do not like science.

技术 技術
jìshù technology / technique / skill

> 他的技术是公认的。
> Tā de jìshù shì gōngrèn de.
> Everyone recognized his skill.

发明 發明
fāmíng to invent / an invention / to elucidate / to develop with insight

> 爱不过是发明。
> Ài búguò shì fāmíng.
> Love is only an invention.

科学家 科學家
kēxuéjiā scientist

> 他想成为科学家。
> Tā xiǎng chéngwéi kēxuéjiā.
> He wants to be a scientist in the future.

古代
gǔdài ancient times

> 他喜欢读古代经典。
> Tā xǐhuan dú gǔdài jīngdiǎn.
> He likes reading the ancient classics.

造纸术 造紙術
zàozhǐshù papermaking process

印刷术 印刷術
yìnshuāshù printing / printing technology

火药 火藥
huǒyào gunpowder

> 很多发明家都研究过火药。
> Hěn duō fāmíngjiā dōu yánjiūguo huǒyào.
> Many inventors have studied gunpowder.

四大发明 四大發明
sìdàfāmíng the Four Great Inventions (papermaking, printing, the compass, and gunpowder, traditionally regarded as the four major inventions of ancient China)

> 你知道四大发明是什么吗?
> Nǐ zhīdào sìdàfāmíng shì shénme ma?
> Do you know what the Four Great Inventions are?

中医 中醫
zhōngyī traditional Chinese medical science / a doctor trained in Chinese medicine

> 中医有几千年的历史。
> Zhōngyī yǒu jǐqiān nián de lìshǐ.
> Traditional Chinese medicine has a history of several thousand years.

成就
chéngjiù accomplishment / success / achievement / to achieve (a result) / to create / to bring about

> 从无到有，这叫成就。
> Cóng wú dào yǒu, zhè jiào chéngjiù.
> Going from not having to having – that's success.

发明家 發明家
fāmíngjiā inventor

> 很多发明家都研究过火药。
> Hěn duō fāmíngjiā dōu yánjiūguo huǒyào.
> Many inventors have studied gunpowder.

中药 中藥
zhōngyào traditional Chinese medicine

> 中药通常要煮很久。
> Zhōngyào tōngcháng yào zhǔ hěn jiǔ.
> Chinese herbal medicine usually has to be boiled for a long time.

指南针 指南針

zhǐnánzhēn compass

> 最早的指南针像一把勺子。
> Zuì zǎo de zhǐnánzhēn xiàng yì bǎ sháozi.
> The earliest compass looked like a spoon.

天文

tiānwén astronomy

> 哥哥在大学学天文。
> Gēge zài dàxué xué tiānwén.
> My older brother studies astronomy at university.

阴阳 陰陽

yīnyáng yin and yang

五行

wǔxíng five phases of Chinese philosophy: wood 木, fire 火, earth 土, metal 金, water 水

> 五行是哪五种东西?
> Wǔxíng shì nǎ wǔzhǒng dōngxi?
> Which five things are the five elements?

历法 曆法

lìfǎ calendar science / calendar system

二十四节气 二十四節氣

èrshísìjiéqi the 24 solar terms, calculated from the position of the sun on the ecliptic, that divide the year into 24 equal periods

> 你知道二十四节气吗?
> Nǐ zhīdào èrshísìjiéqi ma?
> Do you know about the twenty-four solar terms?

活字印刷

huózìyìnshuā printing with movable type

> 活字印刷让书变得便宜多了。
> Huózìyìnshuā ràng shū biànde piányi duō le.
> Movable-type printing made books much cheaper.

地动仪 地動儀

dìdòngyí the world's first seismograph invented by Zhang Heng 張衡|张衡[Zhang1 Heng2] in 132

张衡 張衡

zhānghéng Zhang Heng (78-139) great Han dynasty astronomer and mathematician

祖冲之 祖沖之

zǔchōngzhī Zu Chongzhi (429-500), astronomer and mathematician

蔡伦 蔡倫

càilún Cai Lun (-121), the inventor of the papermaking process

> 因为蔡伦，纸才变得便宜。
> Yīnwèi Cài Lún, zhǐ cái biànde piányi.
> It was thanks to Cai Lun that paper became cheap.

毕昇 畢昇

bìshēng Bi Sheng (990-1051), inventor of movable type

华佗 華佗

huàtuó Hua Tuo (c. 145–208), physician of the Eastern Han dynasty

> 我奶奶常给我讲华佗的故事。
> Wǒ nǎinai cháng gěi wǒ jiǎng Huà Tuó de gùshi.
> My grandma often tells me stories about Hua Tuo.

李时珍 李時珍

lǐshízhēn Li Shizhen (1518-1593), Ming botanist and pharmacologist, author of Compendium of Medical Herbs 本草綱目|本草纲目[Ben3 cao3 Gang1 mu4]

> 李时珍写了一本药书。
> Lǐ Shízhēn xiěle yìběn yào shū.
> Li Shizhen wrote a book about medicine.

Advanced (HSK 7-9)

针灸 針灸

zhēnjiǔ acupuncture and moxibustion / to give or have acupuncture and moxibustion

> 针灸对失眠有效吗?
> Zhēnjiǔ duì shīmián yǒuxiào ma?
> Is acupuncture effective for insomnia?

养生 養生

yǎngshēng to maintain good health / to raise a child or animal / curing (of concrete etc)

> 她喜欢早睡早起来养生。
> Tā xǐhuan zǎoshuìzǎoqǐ lái yǎngshēng.
> She likes to go to bed and get up early to keep healthy.

农历 農曆

nónglì the traditional Chinese calendar / the lunar calendar

> 今天是农历几号?
> Jīntiān shì nónglì jǐhào?
> What day of the lunar calendar is it today?

节气 節氣

jiéqi solar term

> 立春是第一个节气。
> Lìchūn shì dì yī gè jiéqi.
> The Beginning of Spring is the first solar term.

浑天仪 渾天儀

húntiānyí armillary sphere (astronomy)

圆周率 圓周率

yuánzhōulǜ the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter (π)

> 古人很早就算过圆周率。
> Gǔrén hěn zǎo jiùsuànguo yuánzhōulǜ.
> People in ancient times calculated pi very early on.

算盘 算盤

suànpán abacus / plan / scheme

> 别猜了，我知道他的算盘。
> Bié cāile, wǒ zhīdào tā de suànpán.
> Stop guessing, I know what he's up to.

扁鹊 扁鵲

biǎnquè 秦越人[Qin2 Yue4 ren2] (407-310 BC), Warring States physician known for his medical skills, nicknamed Bian Que after the earliest known Chinese physician allegedly from the 黃帝|黄帝[Huang2 di4] era

> 你读过关于扁鹊的书吗?
> Nǐ dúguo guānyú Biǎn Què de shū ma?
> Have you read any books about Bian Que?

本草纲目 本草綱目

běncǎogāngmù Compendium of Medical Herbs 1596, compiled by Li Shizhen 李時珍|李时珍[Li3 Shi2 zhen1]

黄帝内经 黃帝內經

huángdìnèijīng The Yellow Emperor's Internal Canon, medical text c. 300 BC

都江堰

dūjiāngyàn Dujiangyan in Sichuan, a famous water engineering project and World Heritage Site

> 都江堰两千多年前就已经建成了。
> Dūjiāngyàn liǎng qiān duōnián qián jiù yǐjīng jiànchéngle.
> Dujiangyan was already built more than two thousand years ago.

天人合一

tiānrénhéyī oneness of heaven and humanity / the theory that man is an integral part of nature

> 天人合一是什么意思?
> Tiānrénhéyī shì shénme yìsi?
> What does the unity of heaven and man mean?

经络 經絡

jīngluò energy channels / meridian (TCM) / trick / tactic

穴位

xuéwèi acupuncture point / location of a grave

> 按摩时要找准穴位。
> Ànmó shí yào zhǎo zhǔn xuéwèi.
> When giving a massage, you need to find the right acupuncture points.

司南

sīnán ancient Chinese compass

九章算术 九章算術

jiǔzhāngsuànshù The Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Art

沈括

shěnkuò Shen Kuo (1031-1095), Chinese polymath, scientist and statesman of Song dynasty, author of Dream Pool Essays 夢溪筆談|梦溪笔谈[Meng4 Xi1 Bi3 tan2]

> 梦溪笔谈是沈括写的。
> Mèngxībǐtán shì Shěnkuò xiě de.
> Dream Pool Essays was written by Shen Kuo.

梦溪笔谈 夢溪筆談

mèngxībǐtán Dream Pool Essays by Shen Kuo 沈括[Shen3 Kuo4], book on various fields of knowledge, the first to describe the magnetic needle compass

> 我哥哥在读梦溪笔谈。
> Wǒ gēge zàidú Mèngxībǐtán.
> My older brother is reading Dream Pool Essays.

日晷

rìguǐ sundial

孙思邈 孫思邈

sūnsīmiǎo Sun Simiao (c. 581-682), doctor and herbalist of the Sui and Tang dynasty, author of Prescriptions Worth a Thousand in Gold 千金要方[Qian1 jin1 Yao4 fang1]

> 你听说过孙思邈吗?
> Nǐ tīngshuōguo Sūn Sīmiǎo ma?
> Have you heard of Sun Simiao?

鲁班 魯班

lǔbān Lu Ban, legendary master craftsman, called the father of Chinese carpentry

> 你听说过鲁班的故事吗?
> Nǐ tīngshuōguo Lǔ Bān de gùshi ma?
> Have you heard the stories about Lu Ban?

墨子

mòzǐ Mozi (c. 470–391 BC), founder of the Mohist School 墨家[Mo4 jia1], which flourished during the Warring States period (475–220 BC)

> 墨子不但会思考，还懂得造机械。
> Mòzǐ búdàn huì sīkǎo, hái dǒngde zào jīxiè.
> Mozi could not only think deeply but also build machinery.

赵州桥 趙州橋

zhàozhōuqiáo Zhaozhou Bridge over Xiao River 泜河[Xiao2 He2] in Zhao county 趙縣|赵县[Zhao4 Xian4], Shijiazhuang, Hebei, dating back to the Sui dynasty 隋代[Sui2 dai4] (581-617) and the world's oldest extant stone arch bridge

> 赵州桥已经有一千多年了。
> Zhàozhōu Qiáo yǐjīng yǒu yì qiān duōnián le.
> Zhaozhou Bridge is already more than a thousand years old.

冶炼 冶煉

yěliàn to smelt metal

炼丹 煉丹

liàndān to concoct pills of immortality

草药 草藥

cǎoyào herbal medicine

> 山上有很多可以做草药的植物。
> Shānshàng yǒu hěn duō kěyǐ zuò cǎoyào de zhíwù.
> There are many plants on the mountain that can be used as herbal medicine.

本草

běncǎo a book on Chinese (herbal) medicine / Chinese materia medica

> 你对本草感兴趣吗?
> Nǐ duì běncǎo gǎnxìngqù ma?
> Are you interested in Chinese materia medica?

Outside HSK

齐民要术 齊民要術

qímínyàoshù Essential skill to benefit the people, sixth century encyclopedia of agricultural knowledge by Jia Sixie 賈思勰|贾思勰[Jia3 Si1 xie2]

格物致知
géwùzhìzhī to study the underlying principle to acquire knowledge (idiom) / pursuing knowledge to the end

炼金术 煉金術
liànjīnshù alchemy