

50 Essential Travel Phrases

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## I created this for travelers like Dennis.

He was heading to Taiwan for his first big holiday. He was excited —but nervous.

He didn't speak any
Mandarin, didn't want to
rely on his phone , and
hated the idea of pointing
at menus or getting lost
in the streets.



He told me, "I just want to do things on my own—order food, ask directions, buy stuff at the night market. I don't want to feel helpless."

### So we gave him the tools.

- **■**Day 1: Dennis could introduce **2** d himself.
- ■Day 3: He was ordering bubble tea and asking prices without using Google Translate.
- By Day 7: He was asking for directions <sup>↑</sup>, shopping <sup>™</sup> confidently, and enjoying Taiwan like a local.

### This guide is designed to do the same for you.



Each day is **short**, **focused**, **and practical**—so you always have the right words at the right time.

You don't need to speak perfectly. You just need to start.!!!!

Ready to stop guessing and start exploring? Let's go. 🚊 O"You won't understand a word.

It takes years to learn Chinese.

And if you speak badly people will laugh."

That's what many travellers believe.

And it's exactly what holds them back.

**✓**But here's the truth:

You don't need years.
You don't need perfect grammar.
And no one's laughing.

With just a few key phrases, you can start speaking Mandarin—with confidence.

A study from the **University of Chicago** found that travellers who learn essential phrases before a trip feel **less anxious**, **more prepared**, and build better connections with locals.

It's not about fluency. It's about being ready.

### **DAY 1: AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION**

#### Learn phrases to navigate airports, taxis, and trains.

Where is the airport? - 机场在哪里? 🌂(Jī chǎng zài nǎ lǐ?) Breakdown ◆ 机场 (Jīchǎng): Airport ◆在哪里 (Zài nǎlǐ): Where is it? Example ◆请问机场在哪里? (Qǐng wèn jī chǎng zài nǎ lǐ?) Excuse me, where is the airport? I want to go to the train station. - 我要去火车站黨(Wǒ yào qù huǒ chē zhàn.) **✓** Breakdown ◆去 (Qù): Go ◆ 我要 (Wǒ yào): I want to ◆火车站 (Huŏchē zhàn): Train station Example ◆请我要去火车站,请问怎么走? (Wǒ yào qù huǒ chē zhàn, qǐng wèn zĕn me zǒu?) I want to go to the train station, how do I get there? How much to the airport? - 多少钱到机场? ∭(Duōshǎo qián dào jī chǎng?) **✓** Breakdown ◆多少钱 (Duōshǎo qián): How much money ◆到 (Dào): To ◆机场 (Jīchǎng): Airport Example ◆从这里到机场多少钱? (Cóng zhè lǐ dào jī chăng duō shǎo qián?) How much is it from here to the airport? Please drive slower. - 请开慢一点。 🚗 (Qǐng kāi màn yī diǎn.) Breakdown ◆请 (Qǐng): Please ◆开 (Kāi): Drive ◆慢一点 (Màn yīdiǎn): A bit slower Example ◆司机,请开慢一点。(Sī jī, qǐng kāi màn yī diǎn.) Driver, please drive slower. What time does it leave? - 几点出发? 🖰 (Jǐ diǎn chū fā?) **✓** Breakdown ◆ 几点 (Jǐ diǎn): What time ◆出发 (Chū fā): Depart **✓ Example** ◆火车几点出发? (Huŏchē jǐ diǎn chūfā?) What time does the train leave? I need help. - 我需要帮助。⇛(Wǒ xūyào bāngzhù.) Breakdown ◆我 (Wŏ):। ◆ 需要 (Xūyào): Need ◆帮助 (Bāngzhù): Help Example ◆我需要帮助。(Wǒ xūyào bāngzhù) I need help. This is my passport. - 这是我的护照。 록 (Zhè shì wǒ de hùzhào.) **✓** Breakdown ◆护照 (Hùzhào): Passport ◆这是 (Zhè shì): This is ◆ 我的 (Wǒ de): My **✓** Example ◆ 这是我的护照和机票。(Zhè shì wǒ de hùzhào hé jīpiào.)This is my passport and flight ticket.

### Day 2: Hotel Check-In

### Learn phrases for checking into hotels, confirming bookings, and asking for services.

01. I have a reservation. 我有一个预订。 (Wǒ yǒu yī gè yùdìng.)

#### **✓** Breakdown

- ◆ 我 (Wŏ): I
- ◆有 (Yǒu): Have
- ◆一个 (Yī gè): One
- ◆预订 (Yùdìng): Reservation

#### **Example**

◆我有一个预订,名字是Anna。 (Wǒ yǒu yī gè yùdìng, míngzì shì Anna.) I have a reservation under the name Anna. 02. What time is breakfast? 请问早餐几点? (Qǐng wèn zǎocān jǐ diǎn?)

#### **V** Breakdown

- ◆请问 (Qǐng wèn): Excuse me, may I ask
- ◆早餐 (Zǎocān): Breakfast
- ◆几点 (Jǐ diǎn): What time

#### **Example**

◆ 请问早餐几点开始? (Qǐng wèn zǎocān jǐ diǎn kāishǐ?) Excuse me, what time does breakfast start?



o3. Is there Wi-Fi in the room? 房间里有Wi-Fi吗? (Fángjiān lǐ yŏu Wi-Fi ma?)

#### Breakdown

- ◆房间 (Fángjiān): Room
- ◆里 (Lǐ): Inside
- ◆有 (Yǒu): Have
- ◆ Wi-Fi (Wi-Fi): Wireless Internet
- ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle

#### **Example**

◆房间里有免费的Wi-Fi吗? (Fángjiān lǐ yǒu miǎnfèi de Wi-Fi ma?) Is there free Wi-Fi in the room? 04. I need to change rooms. 我需要换房间。 (Wǒ xūyào huàn fángjiān.)

#### Breakdown

- ◆我 (Wŏ): I
- ◆需要 (Xūyào): Need
- ◆换 (Huàn): Change
- ◆房间 (Fángjiān): Room



#### **Example**

◆我需要换房间,因为这里太吵了。 (Wǒ xūyào huàn fángjiān, yīnwèi zhèlǐ tài chǎo le.) I need to change rooms because it's too noisy here.

05. Can you help me check? 可以帮我看看吗? (Kěyǐ bāng wǒ kàn kàn ma?)

#### **V** Breakdown

- ◆可以 (Kěyǐ): Can
- ◆帮 (Bāng): Help
- ◆我 (Wŏ): Me
- ◆看看 (Kàn kàn): Check/Look
- ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle

#### **Example**

◆可以帮我看看我的预订吗?

(Kěyǐ bāng wǒ kàn kàn wǒ de yùdìng ma?) Can you help me check my reservation? 06. I'd like to extend my stay. 我想延长住宿。 (Wǒ xiǎng yáncháng zhùsù.)

#### **✓**Breakdown

- ◆我 (Wŏ): l
- ◆想 (Xiǎng): Would like to
- ◆延长 (Yáncháng): Extend
- ◆住宿 (Zhùsù): Stay

### H

#### Example

◆ 我想延长住宿两天。

(Wǒ xiǎng yáncháng zhùsù liǎng tiān.) I'd like to extend my stay by two days.

<sub>07.</sub> I'm checking out.我退房。(Wǒ tuì fáng.)

#### Breakdown

- ◆ 我 (wŏ): I
- ◆退房 (Tuì fáng): Check out

#### **Example**

◆我现在退房,谢谢。

(Wǒ xiànzài tuì fáng, xièxiè.)/m checking out now, thank you.



### Day 3: Ordering Food

### Master phrases for menus, ordering dishes, and dietary preferences.

Where is the menu? - 菜单在哪里? 圓(Càidān zài nǎlǐ?) Breakdown Example 菜单 (Càidān): Menu ◆服务员,请问菜单在哪里? ·在哪里 (Zài nǎlǐ): Where is it? (Fúwùyuán, qǐng wèn càidān zài nǎlǐ?) Waiter, where is the menu? What is this dish? - 这个菜是什么? ♠(Zhège cài shì shénme?) Breakdown **Example** ◆这个菜是什么?看起来很好吃。 ·这个 (Zhège): This (Zhège cài shì shénme? Kàn qilái hĕn hǎochī.) 菜 (Cài): Dish What is this dish? It looks delicious. ◆是什么 (Shì shénme): What is it? Please don't add spice. - 请不要放辣酱(Qǐng bú yào fàng là.) **Example ✓** Breakdown ·请 (Qǐng): Please ◆我不能吃辣,请不要放辣。 (Wǒ bùnéng chī là, qǐng bú yào fàng là.) · 不要 (Bú yào): Don't I can't eat spicy food, please don't add spice. ▶放 (Fàng): Add/Put ◆辣 (Là): Spice I'd like an order of fried rice. - 我要一份炒饭❷(Wǒ yào yī fèn chǎofàn.) Example ✓ Breakdown · 我要 (Wǒ yào): I want ◆我要一份炒饭和一杯茶。 (Wǒ yào yī fèn chǎofàn hé yī bēi chá.) ▶一份 (Yī fèn): An order I'd like an order of fried rice and a cup of tea. ◆炒饭 (Chǎofàn): Fried rice Can I have another glass of water? - 可以再来一杯水吗? 『(Kĕyǐ zài lái yī bēi shuǐ ma?) Breakdown Example ▶可以 (Kěyǐ): Can ◆服务员,可以再来一杯水吗? (Fúwùyuán, kĕyǐ zài lái yī bēi shuǐ ma?) ◆再来 (Zài lái): Bring again Waiter, can I have another glass of water? ◆一杯 (Yī bēi): A glass ◆水 (Shuǐ): Water ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle The bill, please. - 结账,谢谢@(Jiézhàng, xièxiè.) Example Breakdown ◆我们吃完了,结账,谢谢。 ·结账 (Jiézhàng): Bill (Wŏmen chī wán le, jiézhàng, xièxiè.) 谢谢 (Xièxiè): Thank you We're finished eating, the bill please, thank you. Delicious! - 好吃! ⇔(Hǎochī!) Example Breakdown ·好 (Hǎo): Good ◆这个菜真的很好吃! (Zhège cài zhēn de hěn hǎochī!) 吃 (Chī): Eat This dish is really delicious! I have a food allergy. - 我有食物过敏。ዼ(Wǒ yǒu shíwù guòmǐn.) **Breakdown** Example 我 (Wǒ): I ◆有 (Yǒu): Have ◆我有食物过敏,请不要放花生。 食物 (Shíwù): Food (Wǒ yǒu shíwù guòmǐn, qǐng bú yào fàng huāshēna.) I have a food allergy, please don't add peanuts. 过敏 (Guòmǐn): Allergy

### Day 4: Shopping

### Learn essential shopping phrases for bargaining and asking for prices.

#### **01** How much is this?

这个多少钱? (Zhège duōshǎo qián?)

#### **✓** Breakdown

- ◆这个 (Zhège): This
- ◆多少钱 (Duōshǎo qián): How much money

#### **Example**

◆请问,这个多少钱? (Qǐng wèn, zhège duōshǎo qián?) Excuse me, how much is this?

#### **02** Can it be cheaper?

可以便宜一点吗? (Kěyǐ piányí yīdiǎn ma?)

#### Breakdown

- ◆可以 (Kěyǐ): Can
- ◆便宜 (Piányí): Cheaper
- ◆一点 (Yīdiǎn): A bit
- ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle

#### Example

◆这个太贵了,可以便宜一点吗? (Zhège tài guì le, kěyǐ piányí yīdiǎn ma?) This is too expensive, can it be cheaper

#### 03 I'm just looking.

我只是看看。(Wǒ zhǐshì kàn kàn.)

#### **✓** Breakdown

- ◆ 我 (Wŏ): I
- ◆只是 (Zhǐshì): Just
- ◆看看 (Kàn kàn): Look

#### **Example**

◆谢谢,我只是看看。 (Xièxiè, wǒ zhǐshì kàn kàn.) Thank you, I'm just looking.

#### **04** Does this come in other colors?

这个有其他颜色吗? (Zhège yǒu qítā yánsè ma?)

#### **✓** Breakdown

- ◆这个 (Zhège): This
- ◆有 (Yǒu): Ḥave
- ◆其他 (Qítā): Other
- ◆颜色 (Yánsè): Colors
- ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle

#### **Example**

◆请问,这个有其他颜色吗? (Qǐng wèn, zhège yǒu qítā yánsè ma?) Excuse me, does this come in other colors?

#### **05** I want this.

我要这个。(Wǒ yào zhège.)

#### **V**Breakdown

- ◆我要 (Wǒ yào): I want
- ◆这个 (Zhège): This

#### **Example**

◆我喜欢这个,我要这个。 (Wǒ xǐhuān zhège, wǒ yào zhège.) I like this, I'll take it.

#### 06 Can I pay by card?

可以刷卡吗? (Kěyǐ shuākǎ ma?)

#### **✓**Breakdown

- ◆可以 (Kěyǐ): Can
- ◆刷卡 (Shuakă): Pay by card
- ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle

#### **Example**

◆请问可以刷卡吗? (Qǐng wèn kĕyǐ shuākǎ ma?) Excuse me, can I pay by card?

#### 07 I need an invoice.

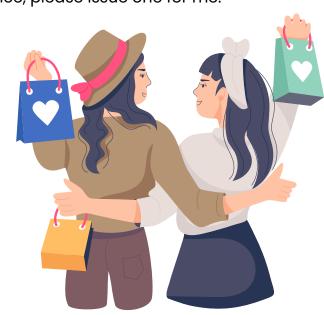
我需要发票。(Wǒ xūyào fāpiào.)

#### **V** Breakdown

- ◆ 我 (Wŏ): I
- ◆需要 (Xūyào): Need
- ◆发票 (Fāpiào): invoice

#### Example

◆我需要发票,请开一张发票给我。 (Wǒ xūyào fāpiào, qǐng kāi yì zhāng fāpiào gĕi wǒ.) I need a invoice, please issue one for me.



### Day 5: Emergencies

Cover phrases for asking for help, calling a doctor, and reporting problems.



This is my health insurance, how do I use it?

### Day 6: Directions and Navigation

#### Practice asking for directions and understanding basic responses.



Excuse me, where is this place? 请问,这里是哪里? (Qǐng wèn, zhèlǐ shì nǎlǐ?)

#### **Breakdown**

◆地铁站 (Dìtiě zhàn): Subway station ◆怎么走 (Zĕnme zǒu): How to go

#### **Example**

◆请问,地铁站怎么走? (Qǐng wèn, dìtiĕ zhàn zĕnme zǒu?) Excuse me, how do I get to the subway station?







Go straight ahead. 往前走。 (Wăng qián zǒu.)

#### **Breakdown**

- ◆左转 (Zuǒ zhuǎn): Turn left ◆还是 (Háishì): Or
- ◆右转 (Yòu zhuǎn): Turn right

#### **Example**

◆我要去银行,请问是左转还是右转? (Wǒ yào qù yínháng, qǐng wèn shì zuǒ zhuǎn háishì yòu zhuǎn?) I want to go to the bank, should I turn left or right?



How far is it from here? 离这里有多远? (Lí zhèlǐ yǒu duō yuǎn?)

#### **Breakdown**

◆走路 (Zǒulù): Walk ◆要 (Yào): Need/Take ◆多久 (Duōjiǔ): How long

#### **Example**

◆到酒店走路要多久? (Dào jiǔdiàn zǒulù yào duōjiǔ?) How long does it take to walk to the hotel?





Please stop here. 请在这里停车。 (Qǐng zài zhèlǐ tíngchē.)

- ◆请问 (Qǐng wèn): Excuse me, may I ask
- ◆这里 (Zhèlǐ): Here/This place
- ◆是 (Shì): Is ◆哪里 (Nălĭ): Where

#### **✓ Example**

◆请问,这里是哪里?我迷路了。 (Qǐng wèn, zhèlǐ shì nălǐ? Wǒ mílù le.) Excuse me, where is this place? I'm lost.

#### 02.

How do I get to the subway station? 地铁站怎么走? (Dìtiě zhàn zěnme zǒu?)



#### **✓** Breakdown

- ◆往 (Wǎng): Toward ◆前 (Qián): Forward
- ◆走 (Zǒu): Walk

#### Example

◆从这里往前走,地铁站在右边。 (Cóng zhèlĭ wăng qián zŏu, dìtiĕ zhàn zài yòubiān.) Go straight ahead from here, the subway station is on the right.

#### 04.

Left or right turn? 左转还是右转? (Zuǒ zhuǎn háishì yòu zhuǎn?)



#### **✓** Breakdown

- ◆离 (Lí): From ◆这里 (Zhèlǐ): Here
- ◆有 (Yǒu): Have/Is ◆多远 (Duō yuǎn): How far

#### Example

◆请问,火车站离这里有多远?

(Qǐng wèn, huǒchē zhàn lí zhèlǐ yǒu duō yuǎn?) Excuse me, how far is the train station from here?

#### 06.

How long does it take on foot? 走路要多久? (Zǒulù yào duōjiǔ?)



#### Breakdown

- ◆请 (Qǐng): Please ◆在 (Zài): At
- ◆停车 (Tíngchē): Stop (a vehicle) ◆这里 (Zhèlǐ): Here

#### Example

请在红绿灯前面停车。

(Qǐng zài hónglǜdēng qiánmiàn tíngchē.) Please stop in front of the traffic light.

### Day 7: Exploring Attractions

### Learn phrases for visiting tourist attractions, taking photos, and joining tours.

#### Is this a museum?

#### 这是博物馆吗? (Zhè shì bówùguǎn ma?) Breakdown:

- ◆这 (Zhè): This ◆是 (Shì): Is
- ◆博物馆 (Bówùguǎn): Museum
- ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle

#### **Example:**

◆请问这是博物馆吗?

(Qǐng wèn zhè shì bówùguǎn ma?) Excuse me, is this a museum?

#### I'd like to visit the Forbidden City.

#### 我想参观故宫。(Wǒ xiǎng cānguān Gùgōng.)

#### Breakdown:

- ◆我 (Wǒ): I ◆想 (Xiǎng): Want to
- ◆参观 (Cānguān): Visit
- ◆故宫 (Gùgōng): The Forbidden City

#### **Example:**

◆我想参观故宫,请问怎么走?

(Wǒ xiǎng cānguān Gùgōng, qǐng wèn zěnme zǒu?)
I'd like to visit the Forbidden City, how do I get there?

#### Can I take pictures here?

#### 这里可以拍照吗?**(**Zhèlǐ kěyǐ pāizhào ma?)

#### Breakdown:

- ◆这里 (Zhèlǐ): Here ◆可以 (Kěyǐ): Can
- ◆拍照 (Pāizhào): Take pictures
- ◆吗 (Ma): Question particle

#### Example:

◆请问这里可以拍照吗?

(Qǐng wèn zhèlǐ kĕyǐ pāizhào ma?) Excuse me, can I take pictures here?

#### Where is the ticket office?

#### 请问售票处在哪里? (Qǐng wèn shòupiàochù zài nǎlǐ?)

#### Breakdown:

- ◆请问 (Qǐng wèn): Excuse me, may I ask
- ◆售票处 (Shòupiàochù): Ticket office
- ◆在哪里 (Zài nằlǐ): Where is it

#### Example:

◆请问售票处在哪里?

(Qǐng wèn shòupiàochù zài nălǐ?)

Excuse me, where is the ticket office?

### Until what time is this attraction open?

这个景点开放到几点?(Zhège jǐngdiǎn kāifàng dào jǐ diǎn?)

#### **Breakdown:**

- ◆这个 (Zhège): This ◆景点 (Jǐngdiǎn): Attraction
- ◆开放 (Kāifāng): Open ◆到 (Dào): Until
- ◆ 几点 (Jǐ diǎn): What time

#### **Example:**

◆请问这个景点开放到几点?

(Qǐng wèn zhège jǐngdiǎn kāifàng dào jǐ diǎn?) Excuse me, until what time is this attraction open?

### Please help me take a photo.

请帮我拍一张照片。(Qǐng bāng wǒ pāi yì zhāng zhàopiàn.)

#### Breakdown:

- ◆请 (Qǐng): Please ◆帮 (Bāng): Help
- ◆我 (Wǒ): Me ◆拍 (Pāi): Take
- ◆一张 (Yì zhāng): one

(used for flat objects like photos)

◆ 照片 (Zhàopiàn): Photo

#### Example:

▶ 请帮我拍一张照片好吗?

(Qǐng bāng wǒ pāi yì zhāng zhàopiàn hǎo ma?) Could you please help me take a photo?

#### I like the scenery here.

#### 我喜欢这里的风景。(Wǒ xǐhuān zhèlǐ de fēngjǐng.)

#### Breakdown:

- ◆我 (Wǒ): I ◆喜欢 (Xǐhuān): Like
- ◆这里的 (Zhèlǐ de): Here's
- ◆风景 (Fēngjǐng): Scenery

#### Example:

◆这里很漂亮,我喜欢这里的风景。

(Zhèlí hěn piàoliang, wǒ xǐhuān zhèlí de fēngjǐng.) This place is beautiful, I like the scenery here.





Use these scenarios to practice the phrases you've learned in real-life contexts. Adjust details as needed to suit your travel situation.

**01.Booking a Hotel** 



Guest

你好,我有一个预订。名字是Anna。

(Nǐ hǎo, wǒ yǒu yī gè yùdìng. Míngzì shì Anna.)

Hello, I have a reservation under the name Anna.

请稍等,我帮您查一下





早餐几点开始?房间里有Wi-Fi吗?

Please wait a moment, I'll check for you.

(Zăocān jǐ diǎn kāishǐ? Fángjiān lǐ yǒu Wi-Fi ma?)

What time does breakfast start? Is there Wi-Fi in the room?

### **02.Ordering Food**



Guest

服务员,菜单在哪里?

(Fúwùyuán, càidān zài nălǐ?)

Waiter, where is the menu?

菜单在这里。您要点什么?



(Càidan zài zhèlǐ. Nín yào diăn shénme?)

Here is the menu. What would you like to order?



Guest

我要一份炒饭,请不要放辣。

(Wǒ yào yī fèn chǎofàn, qǐng bú yào fàng là.)

I'd like an order of fried rice, and please don't add spice.

好的,请稍等



(Hǎo de, qǐng shāo děng.)

Sure, please wait a moment.

### **03.Asking for Directions**



Guest

请问地铁站怎么走?

(Qǐng wèn dìtiĕ zhàn zĕnme zŏu?)

Excuse me, how do I get to the subway station?



往前走,然后左转,地铁站在右边。

(Wăng qián zŏu, ránhòu zuŏ zhuăn, dìtiĕ zhàn zài yòubiān.) Go straight, then turn left. The subway station will be on your right.

Local



Guest

谢谢! 离这里远吗?

(Xièxiè! Lí zhèlĭ yuǎn ma?)

Thank you! Is it far from here?

不远,走路大概五分钟。



(Bù yuăn, zŏulù dàgài wǔ fēnzhōng.)

Not far, about a 5-minute walk.

# You're Ready to Travel China with Confidence

Well done-

you've done something most people only talk about.

In just 7 days, you've picked up 50 essential travel phrases. That's enough to get around, ask for help, book a room, order food—and enjoy your trip your way.

### **!! No more staring**

at signs! or fumbling with apps: ...

You've now got real, usable Mandarin in your pocket.

### But don't stop here.

The more you use these phrases, the more natural they'll feel.

You've already proven something most people never will:

Learning Chinese doesn't have to be hard—or overwhelming.

Now imagine what you could do in 30 days. Or 90.

Sometimes, a few words is all it takes to feel at home in a whole new place.

So go explore.

Be brave.

Start conversations.

And most of all—enjoy every moment.

Safe travels and happy



### Found this guide helpful?

Share it with a friend who's planning a trip to China. Let's help more people travel smarter—and feel less lost.

Share with a fellow traveller