

The Book of CHINESE NAMES

A GUIDE TO AUSPICIOUS AND ELEGANT NAMES



取名寶典

REVISED
EDITION

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How To Use This Book

Firstly, reading Chapters 1 and 2 will give you a good idea of the origin and importance of Chinese names, as well as an adequate understanding of what constitutes a good name. Then choose a method and/or combination of methods from Chapters 3 and 4 in order to devise a name. Alternatively, you could refer to Chapter 5 to choose a combination of characters that have been organised into theme to come up with a name.

For example, if you wish to give your child a name that is related to success in business, simply refer to the *Business* theme in Chapter 5. A list of characters is provided. After selecting a character that you like, you may wish to do one of three things:-

1. Combine this character with any of the 10 suggested characters below it to form a name,
2. Combine this character with any other characters under the same theme, or
3. Combine this character with any other characters from any other themes within the chapter to form names that have meanings spanning different themes.

Let us examine the example of the character 威 (Wei), meaning prestige, might and power, from the *Business* category.

威	w ē i	prestige; impressive; might; power
~泓	h ó n g	deep (of water), great power
~仁	r é n	powerful and benevolence
~迪	d í	enlighten; lead
~嵘	r ó n g	impressive and outstanding
启~	q í	open, enlighten
俊~	j ù n	good-looking and impressive
谨~	j ĩ n	careful; earnestly
摄~	s h è	control over; govern; absorb
德~	d é	virtuous and powerful

We may:-

1. Combine it with [~泓] (Hong) to form 威泓 or [启~] (Qi) to form 启威,
2. Combine it with 耀 (Yao), also from the same category, to form the name 耀威, or
3. Combine it with 光 (Guang) from the Nature category to form 威光.

With this system alone, we are able to create almost limitless combinations of names that are beautiful, elegant and uniquely meaningful.

If you encounter difficulties in finding the correct Chinese character that fits the meaning you wish to have for your child, you may refer to the *Index of Meanings* provided at the end of this book. By looking up the English meaning of the character

you wish to have in your child's name, the index will provide a quick reference to the Chinese character with the equivalent meaning. For example, simply look up "beautiful" or "clever" from the index in order to find Chinese characters that symbolise these qualities, as well as suggestions as to how to combine the characters.

The purpose of this book is to provide ideas and suggestions, as well as to introduce traditional Chinese methods of naming, in order to help parents devise elegant and auspicious names for their children. It is important to choose the name you prefer or feel is right for your child. It is hoped that you will develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the beauty and meaning of Chinese names as you read this book.

If in doubt, you may choose to select one of the fully formed names that have been provided under some sections and theories. Be assured that these names have been very carefully chosen and devised not simply for the sake of the topic being discussed in the different chapters. The suggested names are chosen because they sound pleasant, possess good visual form and do not have any associations to negative homophones, meanings and idioms. We hope you enjoy this book and wish you a pleasant time creating the very first gift you will ever give your child.

名 [Formal name] – 笙 (Sheng)

笙 is a type of ancient Chinese musical wind instrument.

字 [Familiar name] – 古声 (Gu Sheng)

古 means ancient while 声 means sound.

From here, we may see that the familiar name is related to the formal name as 古声 means “ancient sound” and refers to the sound produced from the ancient wind instrument 笙.

Even though the 字 is known as the familiar name, it is chosen with much care as it is believed to influence the success and happiness of the child. This name would be used by strangers, and sometimes, people of the same generation.

After being given his familiar name, he may go on to devise other familiar names for use within different social groups. For instance, if he were a painter, he may give himself a more elegant and artistic name to reflect his artistic interests and abilities for use amongst his friends in the art circle. Hence, we may see that 名字, which we so commonly use to refer to the word “name”, was actually two separate and distinct names in the past. As it is now uncommon to have more than one Chinese name, the characters 名 and 字 are now used together to refer to the western concept of “name”.

The Uniqueness of Chinese Names

The modern Chinese name is made up of two characters. As each character expresses a specific meaning, the combination of two characters gives rise to a diversity of meanings and allows for the creation of more subtle, profound and elegant names. While the number and meaning of Western names are fixed, each Chinese name is unique as it can be devised to give a distinct, desired meaning by selecting and combining the appropriate characters. In this sense, the devising of a Chinese name is an art limited only by the literary competence and inventiveness of the person creating the name.

What Constitutes a Good Name

A good name should possess the following qualities:-

1. It should sound good and be easy to pronounce
2. It should have good meaning
3. The surname and name should go well together
4. It should be elegant
5. It should possess good visual form

1. Sounding Good

A good-sounding name is one that is rhythmic and easy to pronounce. This can be achieved by choosing characters with different vowel, consonant and level tones in order to vary them. The following are some guidelines to follow when considering the sound of a name:

1. Avoid having all 3 characters with the same consonant

Example: 任 rén 人 rén 荣 róng

All three characters begin with the same “r” consonant and hence the name sounds flat.

2. Avoid having all 3 characters with the same vowel

Example: 龚 gōng 荣 róng 隆 lóng

The three characters contain the **ng** consonants and the vowel **o**. This makes the name sound odd as the “**ong**” sound is repeated at the end of every character.

3. Avoid having 2 or more characters with consonants that are quite similar in sound

Example: 石 shí 思 sī 志 zhì

The surname and first character of the name begin with the **sh** and **s** consonants. This does not sound good since they are so similar. It is also worsened by the repetition of the **i** vowel sound found in all three characters.

4. Avoid names with “triple vowel” and “triple consonant”

Example: 邢 xíng 心 xīn 欣 xīn

Male and Female Names

Female Names

Traditionally, few female names have meanings related to wisdom, talents or achievements. This may be explained by the low status accorded to women in the past and the Chinese's preference for boys over girls. The Chinese saying 女人无才便是德 (Nu Ren Wu Cai Bian Shi De), which means a virtuous woman is one who possesses no talents, sums it up. As a result, female names are often devised using characters representing only what is thought of as feminine qualities. Names of flowers, precious stones and jewels, and other characters related to appearance are just some of them. Amongst these characters that are often selected in devising a female name is a group of them that are no longer utilised in today's modern society as they debase a woman's dignity. These words are mostly related to a woman's place or station that include characters such as:

闺 (Gui)	A woman's dressing room
阁 (Ge)	A woman's chamber
妃 (Fei)	An imperial concubine
媚 (Mei)	Seductive and charming (for ulterior motives)

The words 闺 and 阁 were commonly used in the past as women were not allowed to leave the house on their own and had to be confined to their own chamber and dressing room in order to be considered virtuous. This is no longer so and thus such characters no longer need to be used. As women are sometimes perceived to be more thoughtful and pensive in nature, do also avoid words that have to do with negative

feelings and emotions, such as 忧 (You) [worry], 愁 (Chou) [depression], 冷 (Leng) [cold] etc.

Even though most female names are very feminine in nature, less feminine female names did exist in the past. Some examples of famous strong female names are:-

李清照 Song Dynasty Poet

刘敦诗 Qing Dynasty Painter

陆庆瀚 Qing Dynasty Painter

In our modern society, where there is greater sexual equality and women are given equal opportunities to compete, it is no longer practical or desirable to restrict female names to those simply of feminine qualities. Instead, names which express high hopes, aspirations and success, and names which praise the talents, virtues and elegance of women can and should be considered.

The following are some examples of good female names:-

婉仪 韵宜 淑均

徽玉 晚芳 水清

静婉 德容 兰贞

宁照 贤媛 明娟

冰如 冰月 碧池

佩珩 兰孙 云衣

凤鸣 静珊 彤芝

鼠 The Rat

Characteristics

Rats are known to be active and lively creatures. They are clever, resourceful and quick-witted, reacting well to changes and to their environment. They tend to be gifted in terms of being acute in perception and adept in understanding others. They also tend to be neat and have a wide variety of interests.

Recommended radicals

米 (Mi), 豆 (Dou), 鱼 (Yu), 田 (Tian), 月 (Yue), 木 (Mu),
草 (Cao)

Radicals to avoid

金 (Jin), 弓 (Gong), 水 (Shui), 火 (Huo), 皮 (Pi), 石 (Shi),
夹 (Jia)

Recommended characters

精 (Jing), 灵 (Ling), 机 (Ji), 智 (Zhi), 敏 (Min)

Recommended names

(M)

子首 (Zi Shou), 子初 (Zi Chu), 子新 (Zi Xin), 子荣 (Zi Rong),
子昂 (Zi Ang), 子元 (Zi Yuan)

(F)

子端 (Zi Duan), 子瑞 (Zi Rui), 子敏 (Zi Min), 子英 (Zi Ying),
子筠 (Zi Yun), 子裕 (Zi Yu)

牛 The Ox

Characteristics

Oxen are honest, hard-working and dependable. They are firm and steady, and not easily influenced by others or their environment. They are also often conservative, with strong moral values and differentiate clearly between right and wrong. Oxen are well-known for their perseverance and are regarded as symbols of wealth

Recommended radicals

米 (Mi), 豆 (Dou), 木 (Mu), 草 (Cao), 水 (Shui)

Radicals to avoid

田 (Tian), 石 (Shi), 金 (Jin), 车 (Che), 马 (Ma), 山 (Shan), 力 (Li), 皮 (Pi), 皿 (Min)

Recommended characters

勤 (Qin), 忠 (Zhong), 奋 (Fen), 实 (Shi)

Recommended names

(M)

丰禾 (Feng He), 嘉粮 (Jia Liang), 民殷 (Min Yin), 国富 (Guo Fu), 业兴 (Ye Xing), 田茂 (Tian Mao)

(F)

青原 (Qing Yuan), 绿茵 (Lu Yin), 沐春 (Mu Chun)
和禾 (He He), 牧笛 (Mu Di), 塘嬉 (Tang Xi)

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The aim of this book is to help parents devise meaningful and elegant names. You will learn what makes a good name and the steps in creating an auspicious name.

This book provides:

- **Creative Methods For Naming:** Number of Strokes Theory, Chinese Horoscope, The Five Elements, Chinese Idioms, Chinese Symbols and many more:
- **Easy Selection of Characters For Naming:** Chinese characters and baby names are categorised into specific themes such as Auspicious, Artistic, Moral, Business, Nature, etc. Contains thousands of auspicious and inspiring names.
- **Easy Search and Combination of Characters:** The English index of meanings provided lets you search and combine characters to form the names you desire.

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invaluable
guide for
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parents in
Singapore
and
Overseas

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