

Unit 1

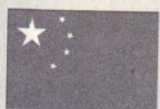
Welcome 欢迎

In this unit you will learn:

- information about China, Chinese language, Chinese characters, and Chinese pronunciation
- numbers 0 to 10
- how to write Chinese characters

Task 1 China

Location and national flag



China is located in East Asia, with Russia and Mongolia to the north, Pakistan and India to the west, Thailand and Vietnam to the south, with Korea and Japan to the east. The national flag has five stars on a red background.



The highest mountain in the world

Mount Everest, with a height of 8,844 metres (29,017 ft) is situated at the edge of the Tibetan Plateau (Qing-Zang Gaoyuan), on the border between Nepal and China.

China descends in elevation step by step from the west to the east. Mountains and hills make up 69.4% of the total area, including 6 other mountain peaks reaching higher than 8,000 metres.

Size of China

The total area of China is 9,596,960 sq km.

- Similar in size to the United States;
- About 40 times the size of the United Kingdom;
- Sichuan, one province in central China which is famous for its spicy cuisine, is as big as France with a population of more than 100 million.

Economic growth

The annual economic growth rate has stood at more than 7% since 1995.

Currency

The Chinese currency is called Renminbi (RMB), meaning "people's currency". Units of RMB are popularly referred to as *yuan*. One *pound* is equal to about 14 *yuan* (2008).



Ex. 1.1 Answer the following questions about China.



1. Name 4 neighbouring countries of China:
_____, _____, _____ and _____.
2. The colour of the national flag is _____. There are _____ stars on it.
3. The highest mountain, Mount Everest, is _____ metres tall, i.e. _____ feet.
4. What is the total area of China in sq km ?
5. What is the name of the Chinese currency? £100 can buy how many *yuan* at present?

Task 2 Chinese language and cities

Chinese language

Chinese is one of the 5 working languages of the United Nations.

The national language is Putonghua (普通话, common speech) or Mandarin. This is also called Guoyu (国语) in the Taiwan area and Huayu (华语) in Singapore and Malaysia. As a written language, Chinese has been in use for over 4,000 years.

Putonghua is used as a spoken language in more and more areas in China. Most people who live in areas where different dialects are spoken can also understand Putonghua.

Southern Chinese have a long tradition of working overseas and Chinese immigrants have built up Chinatowns around the world, such as those in London, Manchester, Los Angeles, New York and Vancouver.

Cantonese is one of the local dialects of southern China and is widely used in overseas Chinese communities. "Dim sum" is a typical Cantonese food.

As a working language in the United Nations, Chinese has the most users in the world. About 1.5 billion people in the world speak Chinese.

Population and cities

China has about 22% of the total population of the world. Its population reached 1.3 billion in 2006. Eleven cities have a population of over 2 million, including Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

The following map shows some cities in China.

