



Literal Translation Sheet

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Chinese words often make more sense than you think.

Many Chinese words combine smaller meaningful pieces. When you learn to spot those pieces, vocabulary can feel less random and easier to remember.

Memory tip: Read the character breakdown first. Then guess the real meaning before checking the answer.

See the pieces inside each word

火车

huǒchē

火 huǒ = fire · 车 chē = vehicle

→ fire vehicle = train

电脑

diànnǎo

电 diàn = electric · 脑 nǎo = brain

→ electric brain = computer

手机

shǒujī

手 shǒu = hand · 机 jī = machine

→ hand machine = mobile phone

飞机

fēijī

飞 fēi = fly · 机 jī = machine

→ flying machine = airplane

电话

diànhuà

电 diàn = electric · 话 huà = speech

→ electric speech = telephone

生日

shēngrì

生 shēng = birth / life · 日 rì = day

→ birth day = birthday

地铁

dìtiě

地 dì = ground · 铁 tiě = iron

→ ground iron = subway / metro

外国

wàiguó

外 wài = outside · 国 guó = country

→ outside country = foreign country

Literal translations are memory hooks. They help you notice patterns, but they do not replace dictionary definitions or historical etymology.

Use them as memory handles when new vocabulary feels random.

**Try it yourself**

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Can you guess the real meaning from the character pieces and literal meaning? Write your guess on the line.

房间 fángjiān

房 fáng = house · 间 jiān = space → house space

耳机 ěrjī

耳 ěr = ear · 机 jī = machine → ear machine

机场 jīchǎng

机 jī = machine · 场 chǎng = field / place → machine field / place

饭店 fàndiàn

饭 fàn = meal · 店 diàn = shop → meal shop

地图 dìtú

地 dì = ground · 图 tú = picture → ground picture

BONUS PHRASE**小心** xiǎoxīn

小 xiǎo = small · 心 xīn = heart → small heart

Answer key is upside down below so you can cover it while practicing.

ANSWER KEY 房间 = room · 饭店 = restaurant · 耳机 = headphones · 地图 = map · 机场 = airport · 小心: be careful

