

Reference research:

Character learning resources,

Yabla- an online Chinese dictionary- provides multiple options for each translation that may be dependent on context, giving the pinyin below the characters with the option to view the stroke order. This makes it a helpful resource for learning writing as well as association of characters with meanings and their pinyin equivalent. However, for correct grammar some cross referencing is needed, there is more to this like videos grammar lessons, vocabulary lessons but its hidden behind a paywall.

Chinese Skill- an app with a lot of pandas- this app helps with character learning as at certain sections the user is asked to identify the hanyu translation of English words, backed up by a picture or caricature to help the user figure out what characters mean what. Furthermore, this app has segments where the user is asked to write characters in a single tian zi ge square with the pinyin at the top and with the pronunciation of whatever word to further help learning.

Comprehensive course resources,

Memrise- an app that provides multiple tiers of learning from beginner to master, however its usefulness is limited by its £44 p/y subscription fee (and cannot improvise with the language providing very direct translations e.g "ni jiao shenme mingzi"). This app is useful with keeping atop of new learning as it constantly sends notifications and even provides a service where you can contact native speakers to help clear any ambiguity.

Chinese skill- fun games and challenges provide an easy way to learn, however it does not explain grammatical rules but merely throws them at you.

Speaking and Listening,

Memrise- has short video clips of natives from all backgrounds and ages pronouncing the words the user is currently learning, but does not ask the user to speak back to it in any of the tasks. It's better for listening skills.

Chinese Skill- uses text to speech software to give you some idea of the pronunciation whilst testing you on the meaning of characters, or how to write them.

Reading and Writing,

Yabla- again helps to identify both the pinyin and characters with meanings and shows you the stroke order for independent practice.

Chinese skill- interactive segments make the user write characters with their fingers, and also has segments whereby only the characters are shown on screen and the user has to write the pinyin- through slow association this app also helps with reading.

Grammar,

Chinese skill- although a bit daunting at first, this app throws the user in the deep end starting off with basic short sentences or phrases instead of single words allowing the user to piece together the grammar as they go forming a deeper understanding rather than just knowledge of the patterns. Getting more complex as the topics continue you have to keep up otherwise you're left with some very sad pandas.

Concise Handbook of Chinese Grammar- would assume it's useful given its name, but don't know it won't arrive till January.

Fluent in mandarin.com (youtube)- easy to understand and has an understandable layout in the designs of his videos, one which requires limited editing skills on his behalf I imagine. Breaking down sentences to show the grammatical rules which allows the viewer to gain a better understanding of the grammatical rules, the channel also helps with vocabulary and character association with the pinyin and translation. Although without a direct explanation it can be a bit difficult to follow. He also has a book on sale which might be useful.

HSK test (hanbridgemandarin youtube)- varying quality of videos and can be quite difficult to understand based on the quality of the audio- not with the presenters- the channel isn't very beginner friendly and is occasionally off-putting as it's meant for more advanced students, but would no doubt be useful in the future.