

HSK 0 · Recognise characters and useful components

Pre-HSK foundations; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Characters are Lego

Characters are Lego, not calligraphy: pictures that grew up, built from parts with jobs.

The oldest photos

Draw as you say

日 sun in a window; 月 crescent moon.

水 flowing lines; 火 flames with sparks.

人 walking legs; 山 three peaks.

The water family

The left part carries the topic

氵 water: 河 river, 海 sea, 喝 to drink.

口 mouth: 吃 to eat, 叫 to call, 唱 to sing.

木 tree: 树 tree, 林 forest (two trees), 森 woods (three).

Sound parts

A hint, not a promise

妈 ma: 女 female + 马 the sound ma.

你 ni: the right part hints ni.

Confirm the hint before trusting it.

Watch out

Two guards

Components hint, they do not rule: 喝 is water-family but means drink.

Components are not words: 氵 never stands alone; 水 does.

Check yourself

Four checks

Which picture character means fire?

What topic does 氵 hint, and name one water-family character.

In 妈, which half hints the sound?

Why is 林 two trees?