

Chinese Names

In China, Japan, and Korea, surnames commonly come first in both speaking and writing. For example, in the name Sun Yat-sen, Sun is the surname, or family name, and Yat-sen is the given name. This book uses the Chinese method

for Chinese names. Sun Yat-sen became provisional president of the Republic of China. His title then was President Sun. Mao Zedong as leader of the Communist Party was referred to as Chairman Mao.

Romanization and Pronunciation of Chinese Words

The People's Republic of China adopted the *pinyin* romanization system in the 1950s. It has become the system commonly used in scholarship and journalism, largely replacing the older Wade–Giles system. For the most part, Western letters in the *pinyin* system indicate English sounds that are similar to Chinese sounds—with a few notable exceptions represented by the letters **q** and **x**.

<i>Pinyin</i>	Pronunciation
q	ch
x	sh

<i>Pinyin</i> spelling	Pronunciation
Qin	chin
Xin	shin

Another important rule applies to the letter **a**, always pronounced as ah.

Tang	tahng
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For some names this book uses the Wade–Giles system because the older spelling is widely recognized in the West. For example, we use Chiang Kai-shek instead of Jiang Jieshi.

Although the book generally uses the *pinyin* system, students should also familiarize themselves with the Wade–Giles spellings of the names of important historical figures, places, and dynasties. Many important works on China use Wade–Giles, as does the government of Taiwan.

The following table shows *pinyin* spellings and pronunciations for Chinese words in this book. Words in excerpted materials are shown as they appear in their original source, spelled phonetically or in the Wade–Giles system.

<i>Pinyin</i>	Pronunciation	Wade–Giles or other
Anhui	ahn hway	Anhwei
Aomen	ow mun	Macao
Beijing	beh jing	Peking
Beiping	beh ping	Peiping
Changan	chahng ahn	Ch'angan
Changsha	chahng sha	Changsha
Chengdu	chehng doo	Ch'engtu
Chongqing	chohng ching	Ch'ungking
Cixi	tz she	Tz'u-hsi