**前言：**

There are two distinct sets of WRITTEN SCRIPTS for the Chinese language - the Traditional Chinese and the Simplified Chinese. You might be wondering: why the Chinese people write in two different versions? what are the **differences between the Traditional and Simplified Chinese**? Which version should I choose for my purpose? To make things easier, let's first put out some very basic and core facts as below:

**Traditional Chinese**: As its name indicates, it's a traditional version of text/scripts that had been written by Chinese people and continuously evolved for thousands of years. Nowadays, it's the WRITING system that is mainly used in [**Hong Kong & Taiwan**](https://www.actranslation.com/chinese/chinese-hongkong-taiwan.htm).

**Simplified Chinese**: A writing system containing characters with fewer strokes and simpler structures (compared to the Traditional version). It was adopted as the official written text in China after the end of civil war in 1950's. People in **Mainland China & Singapore** write / read in this version of Chinese text.

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Dive deeper:

**为什么有两套书写体系：**

**Traditional & Simplified - Why Do the Chinese People Write in Two Different Sets of Characters?**

There was basically ONLY ONE writing system - before 1950's.

As its name indicates, Traditional Chinese (sometimes also as "Chinese Traditional") is a traditional version of text that had been written by Chinese people for thousands of years (with many variants as you can imagine). Actually there wasn't a concept/name for "Traditional Chinese" previously - until the "Simplified Chinese" system was built up in comparison in the modern time.

In the 1950s, the Chinese government decided to "simplify" the written forms of many complex characters, with a purpose to make the reading and writing the language text easier for its then largely illiterate population. The Ministry of Culture and the Text Reform Committee of China published the official list of standard Simplified Chinese characters, marking the national roll-out of Simplified Chinese system. (P.S. This ambitious attempt turned out to be highly successful and the literacy rate of China today is among one of the highest in the world.)

That was the beginning of the divide of two distinct writing systems for Chinese language.

**使用地区：**

Traditional Chinese is used in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan region, as well as many overseas Chinese communities, for example, in many Chinatowns in the North America, particularly those old ones, it's more often to see things written in traditional characters.

Simplified Chinese is the official language text in Mainland China and Singapore. However, it's also becoming increasingly common in overseas Chinese communities, especially those new ones, as more and more people emigrated from Mainland China to these places.

**字形差异：**

**The Core Difference Between the Traditional and Simplified Chinese - the Structure of Characters**

The most noticeable difference between the Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese might be the appearance / structure of the characters. The Traditional characters are usually more complicated and use more strokes / radicals, while the Simplified characters are in simpler structure with fewer strokes.

As its name indicates, Traditional Chinese (sometimes also as "Chinese Traditional") is a traditional version of text that had been written by Chinese people for thousands of years. It’s a very complicated writing system – as you know, Chinese language doesn't use alphabetic/phonic letters the way Western languages do – we use characters that can stand for a variety of things. These characters have grown very subtle and complex over the long time of history, and learning to write Chinese characters could sometimes be a challenge even for the natives.

Simplified Chinese (sometimes also as "Chinese Simplified ") is exactly that – simplified. The Simplified Chinese script originally was absolutely no different from Traditional Chinese in terms of either vocabulary and syntax, just in the fact that most of the characters used to write out the text were literally simplified – many subtleties were removed and the characters were reduced to more basic patterns that were easier to memorize and write out.

All Chinese characters, be it Simplified or Traditional, were originally the same. In light of this, while some complicated characters were changed into simpler versions in the simplified Chinese system, a certain number of them still carried over without any change. This was because these unchanged characters were already so simple that there was no need to re-structure them for further simplification. Therefore, we can see that both the Traditional and Simplified system share many characters in identical forms..

**Different Numbers of Characters in These Two Sets**

Besides re-structuring the individual characters for simplification, the Simplified Chinese also employs a less number of characters in its system. Originally, the Traditional Chinese expresses each different meaning/concept/word using one unique character. In Simplified Chinese, one single character sometimes could represent a few different words of different meanings that have same pronunciations.

In addition, not every Chinese characters had been simplified -only some of the characters with very complicated structures had been changed. The others remained the same. So you can safely assume that the Simplified Chinese has fewer characters than the Traditional system - this might be a good news for those who wish to learn Chinese language.

In year 1955, the Ministry of Culture and the Text Reform Committee of China had published the "First Batch of the Variant Chinese Characters List", in which 1,055 variant Chinese characters were abrogated. In year 1964, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture and the Text Reform Committee of China had jointly issued the "General List of Simplified Chinese Characters", which contain a total of 2,238 Simplified Chinese characters, the average numbers of strokes of the Simplified characters being reduced to 8-11 from the average 16-19 in their Traditional counterparts.

**简化方式：**

汉字简化的方法有六种。一是更换偏旁，二是删除局部，三是同音替代，四是全部改造，五是简化类推，六是草书楷化。

There were 6 methods employed to simplify the Chinese characters, namely: 1) change of radicals; 2) deletion of parts; 3) homophone substitution; 4) total remake; 5) simplified analogy; 6) regularization of cursive script.

繁体字简化为简体字的原则是：“述而不作”、“约定俗成，稳步前进”，也就是说尽量采用已经在民间长期流行的简体字，只作收集整理和必要的修改，遵照“约定俗成、稳步前进”的原则进行简化。包括两个方面：一是精简字数，废除同音同义不同形的异体字。

Simplification of complex Chinese characters followed the principles of “simple elaboration of the theories of the predecessors with no original ideas of one's own”, “respect of established rules with steady and gradual advance”. That means that we must preserve as many as simplified forms that have long been popular among the folks with best efforts by simple collection, collation and modification in compliance with the principle of “respect of established rules with steady and gradual advance”. It refers to reduction of numbers and abolishment of variant Chinese characters of the same meaning and pronunciation.

**词汇差异：**

Besides the different written forms of individual characters, we can also see the different use of words / vocabulary between the Simplified and Traditional.

For example, "ball pen" is called “圆珠笔” in Simplified Chinese but “原子筆” in Traditional Chinese, Stallion is called “斯大林” in Simplified Chinese but “史達林” in Traditional Chinese, and North Korea is called “朝鲜” in Simplified Chinese but “北韓” in Traditional Chinese.

However, such differences are not inherent in the "two languages" but rather in the groups of people who are using them. Especially, exchange between Mainland China and Taiwan was very few due to political reasons, which resulted in the difference in languages, resulting in the different language habits that had been more obvious in technical terms since the 1980s. What’s more, there are also differences between Traditional-Chinese speaking regions such as Taiwan and Hong Kong. Therefore, some pointed out that the more precise terms should be “Taiwan Chinese” or “Hong Kong Chinese” , instead of “Traditional Chinese”.

In computer terms, Traditional Chinese usually refers to “Taiwan Chinese” because Taiwan was earlier in developing computers in Chinese and had more population using them. Therefore, Traditional Chinese versions of most software are using phrases and translations from Taiwan, which are popular in Hong Kong, Macau and other Traditional-Chinese speaking communities. However, the increasingly different phrases of Taiwan and Hong Kong have caused many open-source software to publish two versions for Taiwan Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese that each uses translations from respective places, such as GNOME and KDE.

汉字的简化,也如世间的万事万物一样,具有双面性,其中好处有三点：1、随着时代的发展,汉字的书写简化可以省略了好多繁琐的笔画,节省了书写的时间.2、汉字简化后,更具有时代美感.3、汉字是音、形、意的结合体,即使简化了,也并没有损伤汉字的此项功能.更何况,许多汉字的无论是读音,还是外形上有很多相似之处（即我们常说的形近字）.例如：“叟”,读“ sou”,与此字有关的汉字除了“瘦”字读“ shou”之外,其余全读"sou" 音,便于识记.

Like all beings in the world, simplification of Chinese characters comes with two sides. On one hand, there are 3 advantages: 1. Simplified Chinese have less strokes to reduce time of writing as demanded by developments. 2. Simplified Chinese has more beauty of the time. 3. Simplified Chinese does not comprise the combination of phone, form and meaning. Moreover, many Chinese characters are similar in pronunciations and forms (characters with similar forms). For example, “叟” reads “sou” as do many related characters except “瘦” that reads “shou”, which is very easier to remember.

当然,不妥之处在于：1、汉字中有好多形声字,一旦汉字简化后,字义就容易令人费解.如：“江”字本身是形声字,但是,如果按照偏旁部首去断定该字的读音以及造字方式的话,就很难知道该字是形声字.2、汉字的繁体字,同样也具有古典美.我国的汉字和国画是不分家的,看到一个美丽的繁体字,其实,本身就是一副完美的国画.令人心生敬意.如“丽 ”是“丽”的繁体字,我们能说这个字不美吗?3、汉字中有好多是象形字和会意字,如“日”“月”“旦”“采”,看到这个字,就知道该字是什么意思了.望文生义,即是这个道理.

Of cause, there are inappropriate aspects: 1. May phonological characters are bewildering in meaning once simplified. For example, “江” is a phonological character that is hard to guess its pronunciation from parts and coinage style. 2. Traditional Chinese has the classical beauty. Chinese calligraphy and traditional Chinese painting are thought of as the same school of art. Traditional Chinese characters are in themselves beautiful traditional Chinese paintings that inspire respect out of people. For example, “丽” is the Traditional Chinese of “丽”. Isn’t a beauty? 3、There are many pictographic characters and meaning-joint characters, such as “日”, “月”, “旦” and “采”, which meaning is known by its shape, hence the expression of knowing by watching.

繁体中文和简体中文汉字字形本身存在着明显差异。

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繁体字简化为简体字的原则是：“述而不作”、“约定俗成，稳步前进”，也就是说尽量采用已经在民间长期流行的简体字，只作收集整理和必要的修改，遵照“约定俗成、稳步前进”的原则进行简化。包括两个方面：一是精简字数，废除同音同义不同形的异体字。

繁体中文和简体中文除了汉字本身（如繁体字和简化字间，以及各地汉字写法规范）的差异外，通常认为还存在词汇的差异。例如简体中文中多用的“圆珠笔”，在繁体中文中多用“原子笔”，简体中文里的“斯大林”在繁体中文里被称为“史达林”，简体中文里的“朝鲜〔此处特指北朝鲜〕”在繁体中文里被称为“北韩”等。由于有这种差异，“繁体用语”这种说法随之产生。不过其实这并非繁简中文本身的差异，而主要是由于使用两者的人群，尤其是中国大陆和台湾由于在20世纪中叶由于政治原因分隔后交流较少，造成了用词习惯的差异。这种现象在1980年代以来由于科技术语的不同而更加明显。而且，在同样使用繁体中文的台湾、香港等地也存在一些用词习惯的不同。因此，有人指出正确的提法应为“台湾用语”、“香港用语”等，而非“繁体用语”。

由于台湾较早开始发展中文电脑和人口较多，电脑中的“繁体中文”一直以来其实代指“台湾中文”，意即绝大部份软件的“繁体中文版”使用的是台湾的用语和翻译，此等软件亦通行于香港、澳门或其他使用繁体字的社群。但由于台湾和香港的用语分别越来越大，不少开源软件，例如 GNOME 和 KDE 的繁体中文版都已经分拆为“台湾中文版”和“香港中文版”两个版本，分别使用两地的翻译用词。词汇的差异，例如简体中文中多用的“圆珠笔”，在繁体中文中称“原子笔”。

汉字的简化,也如世间的万事万物一样,具有双面性,其中好处有三点：1、随着时代的发展,汉字的书写简化可以省略了好多繁琐的笔画,节省了书写的时间.2、汉字简化后,更具有时代美感.3、汉字是音、形、意的结合体,即使简化了,也并没有损伤汉字的此项功能.更何况,许多汉字的无论是读音,还是外形上有很多相似之处（即我们常说的形近字）.例如：“叟”,读“ sou”,与此字有关的汉字除了“瘦”字读“ shou”之外,其余全读"sou" 音,便于识记.

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**Historical Evolution of the Traditional and Simplified Chinese**

Chinese characters (汉字, Hanzi) are one of the world's oldest ideogram, with a long history of over 3,500 years of development and evolution. The oracle inscriptions on bones or tortoise shells of the Shang Dynasty (商朝 c. 16th-11th century B.C.) unearthed in Yin-Xu (殷墟) has been the earliest "well-developed" Chinese characters (Hanzi) ever discovered and identified.

After its inception and early development, the Chinese characters have gone through a long period of evolution. Since the earliest Chinese language symbols were carved into animal bones and tortoise shells 3,500 years ago, countless characters had fallen in and out of use, and strokes / radicals have been added and removed after that.

We call all of the different forms / styles / variations as Traditional Chinese characters - in a broader sense. To some extent, we may say that even the Traditional Chinese characters themselves are the results of a constantly simplification process - **they are the simplified abstractions of various graphic symbols**

In modern times, the standards of Traditional Chinese (mainly used in Hong Kong and Taiwan) is believed to derive from the Royal Standardized Characters (同治版《钦定正体字》) published in Year 1874 by the Qing Dynasty government, a biggest list to include the most of the standardized characters by then.

In the 1950s, as part of a movement to raise the literacy rate of the nation, the new Chinese government decided to restructure and simplify some of the most complex characters, hence the divide between 繁体字 (fántǐzì, traditional characters, or more literally the “complex characters”) and 简体字 (jiǎntǐzì, simplified characters, or literally the "simple characters").

The simplification process was completed and new character system adopted before 1960, and it's been in use in Mainland China ever since. Singapore and Malaysia also developed their own sets of simplified characters, which happen to be the same as that used in Mainland China.

[](https://gss0.baidu.com/-Po3dSag_xI4khGko9WTAnF6hhy/zhidao/pic/item/377adab44aed2e7390d45b958a01a18b87d6fa4e.jpg)

**利弊：**

汉字的简化,也如世间的万事万物一样,具有双面性,其中好处有三点：1、随着时代的发展,汉字的书写简化可以省略了好多繁琐的笔画,节省了书写的时间.2、汉字简化后,更具有时代美感.3、汉字是音、形、意的结合体,即使简化了,也并没有损伤汉字的此项功能.更何况,许多汉字的无论是读音,还是外形上有很多相似之处（即我们常说的形近字）.例如：“叟”,读“ sou”,与此字有关的汉字除了“瘦”字读“ shou”之外,其余全读"sou" 音,便于识记.

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简体字和繁体字相比有什么优点 有什么好处： 简体字和繁体字相比有如下优点.：1从甲骨文到楷书，汉字在演化过程中不断简化。除中国大陆外，新加坡、马...

简化汉字比起繁体字有哪些弊端： 整体上，简化汉字都是非常成功的一次进化，容易写，容易认，现代的语言都朝着这个方向发展。 大的弊端基...

为什么会有简体中文和繁体中文的区别呢： 繁体中文（中国台湾地区官方以及部分华人称之为正体中文），是现代中文的一种标准化写法，与简体中文相对。...

香港都回归了为什么还使用繁体字？： 当初简化汉字是为了普及教育、促进汉字拼音化改革。现在看来，第一个问题香港和台湾已经通过其他方式解决了...

为什么简体汉字与繁体字是一一对应的： 简体字是建国以后从国家层面发起的一次对汉字汉字简化的改革，目的是为了让更多的人能识字并书写，是为了当...

为什么日语歌词中的汉字有的是简体有的是繁体?： 这个跟繁不繁体没什么关系吧 日语汉字里面有很多字和我们的繁体一样 有的又是我们的简体 有的汉语里根...

为什么中国要把汉字化繁为简： 　　一、简化符合汉字历史发展的规律 汉字字形演变的总趋势是简化,这个结论是以汉字发展史上的无数事实...

康熙字典与繁体字典有什么区别？： 康熙字典与繁体字典的区别：康熙字典没有简体字；繁体字典是简体和繁体的对照查找。前者是汉字大全，后者收...

异体字和繁体字有何区别？： 1．异体字是形体不同而音义完全相同,古代在任何情况下都可以互相代替的字。 例如:猫-猫(义符不同)

Traditional Chinese: Traditional Chinese refers to Chinese characters that does not contain newly created characters or character substitutions performed after 1946.

Where are traditional Chinese characters used: Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau.

Advantage: The traditional Chinese, most of them are hieroglyphic. It conveys more significant than simplified Chinese. Here are some examples:

traditional and simplified Chinese

爱 ài (love) : As we saw it in the picture, left one with many strokes form is traditional characters and right one is simplified characters. In the traditional characters of love, there is a heart (心 xīn) in the mid of word, but the simplified character is without heart (心 xīn). So a lot of people will say, now the love is not the same as before, they love someone or something without heart.

乡 xiānɡ (Native place ): When i return to my native place, but my darling (郎lánɡ) is gone.

鱼 yú (fish): 60 years ago, the most of fish in the water, but 60 years later, the fish almost in the plate.

Disadvantage: Some traditional Chinese characters are too complicated to write. Complex strokes make writing Chinese more difficult.

Simplified Chinese: Simplified Chinese refers to standardized Chinese characters prescribed in the Xiandai Hanyu Tongyong Zibiao 现代汉语通用字表 (List of Commonly Used Characters in Modern Chinese) for use in mainland China.

Where are simplified Chinese characters used: Chinese mainland, Singapore, Malaysia.

Advantage:

1. Use more widely: simplified Chinese is an inevitable trend of the development history of the Chinese characters. Now only in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan North America used traditional characters, and the number is about more than three thousand. Simplified Chinese used in mainland China, Malaysia, Singapore and southeast Asian Chinese community, using the number of more than one billion three hundred million. In addition, like Japan, South Korea also has some characters, simplified characters have been appeared in recent years.

2. Simplified decreases the number of Chinese character strokes and the number of Chinese characters, which reduces the difficulty of learning Chinese characters, accelerate the speed of writing at the same time, is beneficial to popularization education, and easy for public to communication.

3. In computers, cell phones, PDA, digital equipment, limited size, simplified Chinese characters stroke are relatively simple, show more clearly.

Disadvantage: It is not good for spreading the Chinese culture. After characters simplified, lots of Chinese people cannot read the ancient classical literature. It also lost the original aesthetic of the traditional Chinese characters.

**是否能够相互阅读理解**

The existence of two different sets of characters can hinder communication between different parts of the Chinese-speaking world, but it’s not as big of a problem as you might think. After all, many characters are the same in both systems, and for those characters that do have different forms, the difference is often a familiar component, like a radical. That’s why learning the traditional and simplified forms of radicals can be so helpful.

Most educated Chinese speakers have at least passing familiarity with the character set they don’t usually use. Users of simplified characters must know at least some traditional characters in order to read historical documents and other texts written in classical Chinese (not to mention the other decorative contexts we mentioned above).

**正统之争：**

但是还有另外一个值得关注的问题就是简体字和繁体字到底谁是正统。

我们都知道简体自己是四九年建国之后才开始在我国大陆地区陆续推行，而台湾、香港和澳门地区由于历史原因一直都是使用繁体字，这无疑给我们引来了更多的对比和争议，一个很严肃的问题就是说繁体字和简体字到底那个好？繁体字是传承中华文化，而简体字就是数典忘祖吗？

firstly, the Chinese characters that emerged from the simplification process in the 1950s are too crude and lack aesthetic beauty and scientific meaning. For example, the traditional Chinese character for "love" ('愛') expresses both love and heart, but the simplified form "爱" has omitted the part "心" which means heart. Therefore, we now see only "love" without "heart".

Secondly, applying the original complex characters nowadays could be just as easy as using the simplified forms, since most people use computers to write.

Thirdly, reviving the original complex forms might also prove helpful to the unification of China as Taiwan has maintained the traditional characters, which are deemed official there. Taiwan even intends to apply to UNESCO for the recognition of traditional characters as Intangible Cultural Heritage, which might also create the impression that the mainland authorities have not done enough to protect them.

One group, represented by famous Chinese linguist and translator Ji Xianlin, along with other celebrities from the literary and arts circles, are right behind Pan.

But Wang Liqun, professor of Henan University and an advocate of the simplified forms, takes a different view. "I don't think Pan's reasoning is sustainable," says Wang. "First of all, the simplified characters should not be deemed "too crude" and "in conflict with aesthetic beauty and scientific meaning". He maintains that the Committee for Language Reform of China, which was responsible for the work of simplification, had a considerable understanding of the ancient traditions and did thorough research work.

Wang also criticizes Pan's second argument: "Our current primary education begins in Grade One. At this stage pupils write by hand, and do not use computers. Even with a computer, handwriting cannot be abandoned. All signatures must be hand-written, both in China and abroad, so handwriting can never be abolished, whatever technological progress is achieved with computers."

As for the third reason, Wang believes that Pan has exaggerated the role of characters on relations between Taiwan and mainland. He says that reunification is a general trend, and the path towards union lies in the strength of mainland society and economy.

Professor Su Peicheng from Peking University is of the view that the process of simplifying characters has largely been successful, and restoring the original complex forms would be difficult. Available data suggest that over 95 percent of mainlanders write in simplified forms, and less than 1 percent use the complex forms. Another 4 percent use both. "It is likely to be difficult to persuade over 95 percent of the population to abandon the simple forms in favor of the complex," says Su.

记得有人说过，汉子简化之后，直接引来的问题就是“聖无听，愛无心，親不见”，也就是说汉字简化之后所带来的一系列文化缺失，圣人的圣字少了“听”这个动词，爱心的爱字少了一颗心，亲人的亲自少了看见的见，这还只是其中一些小小的例子，所以很多人就开始抓着这一条信息对简化汉字进行猛烈的攻击。那么我们在这里就提出一个问题，简体字和繁体字之间到底哪个更加优秀？到底哪个是“正统”。

“The simplified form of ‘love’, is without ‘heart’,” says Wang enthusiastically while writing the Chinese character “ai” in the air with his finger. “In traditional Chinese, there is a ‘heart’ in the middle of the character and it means something.”

Wang believes traditional Chinese characters are not only structurally beautiful, but educational as well because of their intrinsic meaning. And since he regards learning traditional Chinese an “acculturation”, an integral part of Chinese culture, he is appalled that some of his Chinese friends cannot read traditional characters at all.

He was even more dismayed when he heard that Hong Kong had started using simplified Chinese characters for official notices. Wang believes different regions of China should have their own culture and retain features unique to their region. He fears the use of simplified characters is a sign that Hong Kong is becoming more like the mainland.

Today, the advocates in favour of returning to the traditional forms of Chinese characters argue, among other things, that the 1956 simplifications were crude and ill-judged, both aesthetically and linguistically. One favourite example is that of the character for 'love', 愛ai, the simplification of which—爱—has expunged the 'heart' 心 from the traditional character and replaced it with 'friend' 友. Critics lambast the simplified form for denoting 'heartless love'. Another reason to reintroduce complex characters, it is argued, is that with the increased use of computers, literacy does not depend on simplifications. Thirdly, it is claimed that the universal use of simplified characters would make it easier for the People's Republic and the Republic of China to be united. In his 2008 article, Wang Gan had also remarked that the traditional form of written Chinese was the soul of the nation's culture and literature, and to have abandoned them had been culturally counterproductive.

Those in favour of the status quo argue that the simplifications are now universally recognized in mainland China and that to replace them with the older forms would be difficult and result in unnecessary and time-wasting confusion. Then there are those who believe that both forms should co-exist. The issue of vertical and horizontal printing does not seem to have been a major issue.

毫无疑问，更加优秀的一定是简体字，因为中国历朝历代，除了清朝为了限制汉人识字率将汉字“由简化繁”以外，所有的朝代（元朝太短不算），文人墨客和朝廷士大夫都在潜意识里将汉字由繁化简，以前的小篆到隶书到后面的楷书、行书、草书你都可以看到汉字简化的历史轨迹，汉子简化的最大好处在于提高国民识字率，老百姓有了文化不是对政府的威胁，而是对政府治理的一种巨大帮助，更不要说识字能让贫民阶层更加具有机会向高层阶级流动，给社会带来无形中的公平公正。

答案可能也令某些繁体字拥趸寒心，因为简体字才是中华文化的“正统”，为什么？因为中华文化的正统是“求变”，《大学》里面说：“周虽旧邦，其命维新”，中华文化是常新求变的，繁体字简化为简体字就是这种“求变”的最佳体现。

就功用性和生产力的节约来说，任何时代，文字的演变都要遵从快捷、省时、高效的原则。为什么简体字替代了繁体字，得以普及？正因为它易学好记省时、省力。

很多人对简体字的普及不高兴，认为繁体字是中国五千年文明的沉淀，简体字简直就是践踏文化，但他们没有意识到的是，中国文字一直在发展，繁体字也是发展了五千年的结果。难道文字发展到繁体字后，就不许发展了吗？当然不行。

所以我们四九年建国以来的扫盲运动是动用了国家意志来推行汉字简化的，那时候的决策对于现在中国大陆整体国民文化素质的提高起到了怎样的作用大家都显而易见，而与之带来的是就算普通的民工也具有识字算数能力，给我过经济腾飞带来了相对高素质的劳动力，铸造了现在这个经济体量。

The debate on traditional Chinese characters and simplified Chinese characters is an ongoing dispute concerning Chinese orthography among users of Chinese characters. It has stirred up heated responses from supporters of both sides in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and among overseas Chinese communities with its implications of political ideology and cultural identity.[1] Simplified characters here exclusively refer to those characters simplified by the People's Republic of China (PRC), instead of the concept of character simplification as a whole. The effect of simplified characters on the language remains controversial for decades after their introduction.

Pro simplified characters

Proponents say that the Chinese writing system has been changing for millennia: it passed through the Oracle Script, Bronzeware Script, Seal Script and Clerical Script stages. Moreover, the majority of simplified characters are drawn from conventional abbreviated forms that have been used in handwriting for centuries[4] such as the use of 礼 instead of 禮,[5] and some simplified characters are in fact restorations of ancient forms that had become more complicated over time. For instance, the character for "cloud" was originally 云, but the character was borrowed to write a homophonous word meaning "to say". To disambiguate the two uses of the character, the "rain" radical (雨) was added on top when it meant "cloud", forming the current traditional character 雲. The homophonous word meaning "to say", however, has become archaic in modern Chinese, though 雲 continues to be used for "cloud". The simplified version simply restores 云 to its original use as "cloud".[5]

Pro traditional characters

While some simplified characters were adopted from conventional abbreviated forms that have existed for a long time, those advocating the simplified forms often fail to point out that many such characters in fact had multiple vernacular forms out of which just one was chosen, arbitrarily, and then privileged by the designers of the simplified character scheme. Many of the changes can be seen as ideological, such as the removal of the "heart" (心) from the word "love" (愛) into the new character (爱) without heart. To some, the new 'heartless' love character is an attack on Confucianism, which emphasizes the virtues of filial piety and humanity in relationships so as to maintain a harmonious society.[6] On the other hand, supporters of simplification claim that the use of the character 愛 to represent the meaning of "love" is a rather new invention and was not recorded in the Shuowen Jiezi (of course, still far more ancient than many of the modern simplified character innovations), implying a Han dynasty or later date for the creation of the modern traditional form. According to Duan Yucai's authoritative commentary of the Shuowen Jiezi, which compiled philological information on Chinese characters and traced their origins, the character first used to write the word was 㤅, which was later supplanted by 愛.[7] Supporters of simplification argue that the removal of the heart radical occurred in the context of calligraphy in ancient times and was not viewed in an anti-Confucian light. A variant form without the heart radical appears in the Kangxi Dictionary under the head character 愛.[8] Moreover, the simplified form 爱 is well-attested in the semi-cursive script calligraphy from imperial times, appearing in the work of Sui dynasty calligrapher Zhi Guo (智果) and Emperor Taizong of Tang and has appeared in calligraphic works from the Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties.[9][10]

Pro-traditional commentators argue that the changes through the history are almost exclusively alterations in writing styles, especially vernacular writing, and not in the fundamental structure of the characters—especially after the Qin standardization. They have alleged that simplified characters were arbitrarily schematized and then imposed by the PRC on its people with the intention of subverting and eradicating selected elements of traditional Chinese culture, in order to carry out what the PRC viewed as necessary revolutionary modernization. These critics point out that many of the fundamental characteristics underlying Chinese characters, including radicals as well as etymological and phonetic elements, were deliberately omitted in their simplified form at least partly for this reason (i.e. disrupting continuity with traditional Chinese culture). One frequently-cited example is the character for "sage" or "holy", 圣 in simplified and 聖 in traditional. The simplified character lacks the king radical (王), replacing it with soil (土). Supporters of simplification appeal to the fact that that 圣 was often used, in handwriting, as a simplified variant of 聖 long before the PRC itself came into being.[6] The Shuowen Jiezi furthermore classifies 聖 as a xingsheng character with phonetic component 呈.[11] Thus the origin of the character may have nothing to do with any cultural connection to kings or royalty.

**WHICH ONE SHOULD I LEARN?**

There isn’t really a straightforward answer to this question--it really depends on your purpose for studying Chinese.

First, consider the kinds of Chinese speakers with whom you are likely to interact. If you expect to communicate mostly with people from Taiwan, Hong Kong, or Macau, or to travel to one of those places, traditional characters may be your best bet. If you expect to deal mostly with Mainlanders, go with simplified characters.

If you want to study Chinese history, art, or early literature, you’ll likely find it helpful to have a strong foundation in traditional characters. If you are learning Chinese to further an interest in business or technology, simplified characters may serve you better. These aren’t necessarily hard-and-fast rules: many historical texts and early works of literature are available in simplified characters, and plenty of science and business is conducted in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau.

Both sets of characters come with their own rewards and challenges. If you stick with learning Chinese long enough, familiarizing yourself with both systems will only deepen your understanding and appreciation of the Chinese language. At the very least, you should learn your radicals.

Which character set should I learn as a beginner?

This question is either easy or impossible to answer. For most people, simplified Chinese is the obvious choice, because most Chinese speaking people in the world use it. People living in Taiwan or Hong Kong naturally learn traditional Chinese to a larger extent. So, I’d say that the question is answered automatically by where you live or where you plan to live. Even if you don’t live in a Chinese speaking environment, the course you take or the teacher you have might decide for you which set to learn.

If none of this applies to you and you don’t know which one to choose, I’d still say that the default character set for most people should be simplified Chinese, even though I can come up with a few reasons why learning traditional Chinese first might be more beneficial in some situations. This, however, is not within the scope of this article.

Which characters will you learn?

So, that’s a major difference between Simplified and Traditional characters. Thank you for learning with us here at 222222. If you want to take one of our one-on-one Chinese classes (in Simplified or Traditional!) then sign up for a free trial class. We have spoken Chinese courses, business Chinese courses, HSK Chinese courses, kids Chinese courses, and more. Take your free class and then choice the course and level right for you!

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以后备用：

With approximately 1.197 billion speakers, Chinese is the most widely spoken in the world!

Naturally, there is a great and ever growing need to translate content into the Chinese language. But when you’re looking to create content targeted toward the nation of China, or native Chinese speakers throughout the world, there are some important considerations that will influence whether you need Simplified Chinese or Traditional Chinese.

‘Chinese’ may also refer to three distinct written languages: Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Classical Chinese. These forms of Chinese are written and read by subsets of the speakers of almost all of the different spoken Sinitic languages. Thus, Simplified Chinese may be read by some speakers of (among others) Mandarin, Cantonese or Shanghainese, just as Traditional Chinese may be read by some speakers of Mandarin, Cantonese and Hokkien (inter alia).

Westerners tend to think of China as a single entity, but the country and the Chinese language are extremely varied. This short guide will help you understand and decide if you need to translate into Simplified Chinese or Traditional Chinese – or both.

And what exactly does Simplified Chinese refer to? Simplification in respect of Chinese characters refers to the writing system created after the orthographic reforms promulgated by the Chinese Communist government in 1956 and 1964. These reforms affected about two thousand commonly used Chinese characters, structurally simplifying some, merging others, eliminating variant forms and so on. These changes were made in areas controlled by the Chinese Communist Party and later adopted by the government of Singapore (1976) and by Chinese-language schools in Malaysia (1981). Simplified characters have not been adopted in Taiwan, Hong Kong or Macau.

What was the point of simplifying Chinese? Essentially the idea was to make it easier to learn to read and write. The Chinese writing system (along with many other elements of Chinese culture) came in for a lot of criticism, up to and including floccinaucinihilipilification, during the May Fourth Movement of the 1920s, and it was members of this movement who established the Chinese Communist Party. Once the CCP got into power it set about upending Chinese culture, and the characters underwent simplification as a result. Simplification does not in fact make Chinese any easier to learn at all, as the process of learning the characters is in and of itself mnemonic and simplifying the characters does nothing to help one memorise them, but it does make them quicker to write by hand – indeed, some of the simplified forms that were adopted officially as part of the CCP’s policy had been used unofficially for centuries for the very reason that they were easier on the wrist, so to speak.

A huge majority of simplified characters are based on systematic simplification of radicals and/or character parts. The above examples using 釒/钅 are typical, so I didn’t include them just to make you feel good. This means that just by learning these patterns (such as 釒-> 钅) , you can understand most of what’s written using the character set you’re not familiar with.

These patterns are usually (but not always) very easy and can be learnt simply by looking at them a few times, meaning that you will absorb them naturally when reading. Understanding that 訁becomes 讠 or that 糹becomes 纟really isn’t that hard, even if it takes some time getting used to the new forms.

That being said, there are some characters that have been morphed beyond recognition or that make use of ancient variants that look very different indeed. This means that there are around five hundred “tricky cases” that you need to learn.

However, learning 500 characters isn’t very hard on an advanced level and can be done in a matter of weeks. I learnt traditional before learning simplified and it took me less than a month to be able to read books in simplified Chinese. Sure, reading quickly and comfortably takes more time than that, but I can understand simplified Chinese without too much trouble. Writing is harder, but wouldn’t be too hard with some practice.

Since China has a much larger population and economy, learning simplified Chinese character is often the de-facto way for foreigners looking to learn Mandarin. Plus, they are much more friendly to learn than complicated-looking traditional characters.

. It has thousands of years ago, It is the Chinese national culture has made the indelible historical contributions. From the original oracle to today's regular script, Chinese characters form change constantly.

Traditional Chinese was originally the standard in all Chinese-speaking regions. Some say that characters were simplified in writing throughout history, likely out of convenience. Simpler forms of characters have also been said to exist in documents dating back as far as the Qin dynasty. However, most of the simplified characters used today were developed in the 1950s and 1960s by the government of the People's Republic of China. The government implemented an official system of simplified Chinese, with hopes that it would help improve China’s literacy rates.

Simply Put: Simplified Chinese – Uses fewer characters and strokes and is used prominently throughout mainland China as well as Singapore and Malaysia. Traditional Chinese – Has a longer history of use and is more complex using more characters and strokes per character and is used broadly in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and is still used by Chinese communities around the world. Simplified and Traditional Chinese refers only to the written word while Mandarin and Cantonese refer to dialects of the spoken word. Therefore Mandarin or Cantonese cannot be used for document translation nor can interpretation be done in Simplified or Traditional Chinese.