

guistic environment in which a given word occurs in order to decide how it should be written. Consider the following sentence pairs:

{ yidòng jiù kū 一动就哭 (burst into tears readily) (yidòng means “easily, readily”);
yī dòng jiù téng 一动就疼 (to start aching as soon as one moves)

(dòng means “to move,” while yī is part of the construction yī...jiù..., “as soon as... then...”).

{ yīqì pǎole wǔ lǐ 一气跑了五里 (ran five miles without stopping) (yīqì 一气 means “without stopping”);
yī qì jiù líkāile jiā 一气就离开了家

(left home as soon as one got angry) (yī qì 一气 means “as soon as one gets angry”).

{ yīlái kàn shū, èrlái chá zīliào 一来看书, 二来查资料
(first to read books, secondly to consult reference materials)(yīlái 一来 means “first”);

yī lái jiù zuòxià kàn shū 一来就坐下看书
(sit down and start reading as soon as one arrives)
(yī lái 一来 means “as soon as one arrives”).

Measure Words

Measure words express units of measure for objects or actions. Measure words for objects are the more common of the two types; they appear frequently in Putonghua, most often in the

construction “numeral + measure word + noun” to indicate the amount or quantity of an object. Measure words are written separately from the words that precede and follow them:

yī gè rén 一个人 (one person) (numeral + measure word + noun);

sān wǎn fàn 三碗饭 (three bowls of rice) (numeral + measure word + noun).

Other elements may be inserted into this structure. In this situation, all components are still written separately:

sān dà wǎn fàn 三大碗饭 (three big bowls of rice); (numeral + adjective + measure word + noun).

Measure words are divided into two main subcategories, noun measure words and verb measure words, in the discussion below.

4.5 Noun Measure Words

Noun measure words are units used to show the number or amount of an object. There are at least a hundred measure words in common use in modern Putonghua. Accepted usage determines which measure word is used with which nouns; while there is a certain logic to the matching, the student of Putonghua must be prepared to spend some time memorizing measure words and mastering their usage. Noun measure words are divided into four types in the discussion below.

1) Measure words for individual units

bǎ 把: used for objects which can be grasped in the hand.

- yī bǎ dāo 一把刀 (a knife);
yī bǎ cháhu 一把茶壶 (a teapot);
yī bǎ shànzi 一把扇子 (a fan);
yī bǎ mǐ 一把米 (a handful of rice);
yī bǎ húzi 一把胡子 (a beard).

bàn 瓣儿: used for flower petals, leaves and sections of fruit.

- yī bàn méihuā 一瓣梅花 (a plum blossom petal);
yī bàn júzi 一瓣橘子 (a section of tangerine).

bāo 包: “bundle”; used for objects in bundles or packages.

- yī bāo yīfu 一包衣服 (a bundle of clothes);
yī bāo tángguǒ 一包糖果 (a bag of candy).

bēi 杯: “glass, cup”; used for measuring liquids.

- yī bēi chá 一杯茶 (a cup of tea);
yī bēi niúniǎi 一杯牛奶 (a glass of milk).

běn 本: used for books, notebooks, and other bound objects.

- yī běn shū 一本书 (a book);
yī běn bǐjì 一本笔记 (a notebook full of notes);
yī běn zázhì 一本杂志 (a magazine).

bǐ 笔 : used for sums of money, Chinese characters, and calligraphy.

yī bǐ qián 一笔钱 (a sum of money);

yī bǐ kuǎnzi 一笔款子 (a sum of money);

yī bǐ hǎo zì 一笔好字 (good handwriting).

bǐng 柄 : used for objects, particularly tools, having handles.

yī bǐng fūzi 一柄斧子 (an axe);

yī bǐng gāngchā 一柄钢叉 (a steel fork (a kind of weapon)).

bù 部 : used for books, movies, machines and cars.

yī bù cídiǎn 一部词典 (a dictionary);

yī bù yǐngpiàn 一部影片 (a movie);

yī bù jīqì , 一部机器 (a machine).

cè 册 : “volume”; used for individual books in a series or set.

yī cè shū 一册书 (a volume);

yǔwén kèběn dì-sān cè 语文课本第三册 (the third volume of a language textbook).

céng 层 : used for objects in layers, or for floors of a building.

yī céng lóu 一层楼 (one story of a building);

yī céng huī 一层灰 (a layer of dust).

chū 出 : used for plays and dramas.

yī chū xì 一出戏 (a play).

chù 处 : used for places or the things occupying them.

yī chù dìfāng 一处地方 (a place);

yī chù shānghén 一处伤痕 (a scar).

chuàn 串 : “string”; used for objects strung together or resembling a string.

yī chuàn zhēnzhū 一串珍珠 (a string of pearls);

yī dà chuàn rén-mǎ 一大串人马 (a long string of troops).

dài 袋 : “sack”; used for objects in bags or sacks.

yī dài miànfěn 一袋面粉 (a sack of flour);

yī dài dànmǐ 一袋大米 (a sack of rice).

dào 道 : used for rivers and other long, narrow objects; also used for doors and windows, commands and examination questions.

yī dào hé 一道河 (a river);

yī dào dàmén 一道大门 (a door);

yī dào mìnglìng 一道命令 (a command);

yī dào shùxué tímù 一道数学题目 (a math problem).

dī 滴 : “drop”; used for drops of liquid.

yī dī shuǐ 一滴水 (a drop of water);

yī dī yǎnlèi 一滴眼泪 (a tear).

dǐng 顶 : used for objects having a peak.

yī dǐng màozi 一顶帽子 (a hat);

yī dǐng wénzhàng 一顶蚊帐 (a mosquito net).

dǔ 堵 : used for walls.

yī dǔ qiáng 一堵墙 (a wall).

duàn 段 : used for long, narrow objects, or for intangible things which may be visualized as being long and narrow.

yī duàn mùtóu 一段木头 (a length of wood);

yī duàn shíjiān 一段时间 (a period of time);

yī duàn huà 一段话 (a talk, a statement).

duǒ 朵 : used for flowers and clouds.

yī duǒ méiguīhuā 一朵玫瑰花 (a rose);

yī duǒ bái yún 一朵白云 (a white cloud).

fèn 份儿 : used for newspapers and documents, as well as for other objects made up of elements matched together.

yī fèn fàn 一份儿饭 (a set meal);

yī fèn bào zhǐ 一份儿报纸 (a newspaper).

fēng 封 : used for objects which can be put in envelopes.

yī fēng xìn 一封信 (a letter).

fú 幅 : used for textiles and paintings.

yī fú bèimiàn 一幅被面 (a quilt cover);

yī fú huàxiàng 一幅画像 (a portrait).

gǎn 杆 : used for objects having shafts.

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yī gǎn qiāng 一杆枪 (a rifle);

yī gǎn hóngqí 一杆红旗 (a red flag).

gè 个 : a generally applicable measure word. Can be used for people, as well as for many tangible and intangible objects.

yī gè rén 一个人 (a person);

yī gè píngguǒ 一个苹果 (an apple);

yī gè gùshi 一个故事 (a story).

gēn 根 : used for long, slender objects.

yī gēn gāngguǎn 一根钢管 (a steel tube);

yī gēn tóufa 一根头发 (a hair).

gǔ 股 : used for objects in strips, as well as for odors, gases, and groups of people.

yī gǔ xiàn 一股线 (a thread);

yī gǔ xiāngwèir 一股香味儿 (a fragrant aroma);

yī gǔ tǔfēi 一股土匪 (a gang of bandits).

háng 行 : “row, line”; used for objects in rows.

yī háng zì 一行字 (a line of Chinese characters);

yī háng dàyàn 一行大雁 (a line of wild geese).

hé 盒 : “box”; used for objects in boxes.

yī hé bǐnggān 一盒饼干 (a box of biscuits);

yī hé huǒchái 一盒火柴 (a box of matches).

jiā 家 : used for households or business enterprises.

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yī jiā cáizhǔ 一家财主 (a wealthy family);

yī jiā fànguǎn 一家饭馆 (a restaurant);

yī jiā shūdiàn 一家书店 (a bookstore).

jià 架 : used for certain mechanical objects.

yī jià fēijī 一架飞机 (an airplane);

yī jià dǎzìjī 一架打字机 (a typewriter).

jiān 间 : used for small architectural units—rooms and houses.

yī jiān fángzi 一间房子 (a house);

yī jiān jiàoshì 一间教室 (a classroom).

jiàn 件 : used for certain household objects, articles of clothing, and affairs.

yī jiàn xínglǐ 一件行李 (a piece of luggage);

yī jiàn chèn yī 一件衬衣 (a shirt);

yī jiàn shìqing 一件事情 (an affair, a piece of business).

jié 截 : used for long, slender objects which are in some way cut off.

yī jié diànxìàn 一截电线 (a length of wiring);

yī jié shùzhī 一截树枝 (a tree branch).

jié 节 : used for sections of segmented objects.

yī jié huǒchē 一节火车 (one car of a train);

yī jié gānzhe 一节甘蔗 (a section of sugarcane);

yī jié kè 一节课 (a class, one meeting of a class).

jù 句 : unit of speech or writing.

yī jù huà 一句话 (a word, a remark);

yī jù shī 一句诗 (one line of verse).

juǎn 卷 : used for rolled-up objects.

yī juǎn pùgai 一卷铺盖 (a roll of bedding);

yī juǎn gǎozhǐ 一卷稿纸 (a roll of drafting paper).

kē 棵 : used for trees and for certain plants which grow like trees.

yī kē shù 一棵树 (a tree);

yī kē báicài 一棵白菜 (a head of Chinese cabbage).

kē 颗 : used for small, round objects.

yī kē zǐdàn 一颗子弹 (a bullet);

yī kē huángdòu 一颗黄豆 (a soybean).

kǒu 口 : used for people (in counting population, members of a household, etc.), pigs, and inanimate objects having a mouth.

yī kǒu rén 一口人 (a person);

yī kǒu zhū 一口猪 (a pig);

yī kǒu jǐng 一口井 (a well).

kuài 块 : used for objects in the form of pieces or slices. *kuai* is also a unit of money, equivalent to *yuan* 元.

yī kuài bǐngān 一块饼干 (a biscuit);

yī kuài shǒupà 一块手帕 (a handkerchief);

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yī kuài qián 一块钱 (one *yuan*).

lì 粒 : used for objects in pellet form.

yī lì mǐ 一粒米 (a grain of rice);

yī lì zì dàn 一粒子弹 (a bullet).

liàng 辆 : used for wheeled vehicles.

yī liàng qì chē 一辆汽车 (an automobile);

yī liàng zì xíng chē 一辆自行车 (a bicycle).

liè 列 : used for objects in rows, and for trains.

yī liè huǒ chē 一列火车 (a train);

yī liè shì bīng 一列士兵 (a row of soldiers).

lǚ 缕 : used for very slender objects, and for thoughts and feelings.

yī lǚ tóu fǎ 一缕头发 (a hair);

yī lǚ qíng sī 一缕情思 (a feeling of love).

méi 枚 : used for medals, badges, and similar small objects; also used for ammunition.

yī méi jiǎng zhāng 一枚奖章 (a medal);

yī méi zhà dàn 一枚炸弹 (a bomb).

mén 门 : used for guns, technical skills, and academic courses.

yī mén dà pào 一门大炮 (a cannon, a gun);

yī mén gōng kè 一门功课 (a course, a subject);

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yī mén xuéwèn 一门学问 (a branch of learning).

miàn 面 : used for flat objects.

yī miàn jìngzi 一面镜子 (a mirror);

yī miàn hóngqí 一面红旗 (a red flag).

míng 名 : used for persons of a specified status or occupation.

yī míng yǎnyuán 一名演员 (a performer);

yī míng fānyì 一名翻译 (an interpreter).

pái 排 : used for objects in rows.

yī pái yǐzi 一排椅子 (a row of chairs);

yī pái guǒshù 一排果树 (a row of fruit trees).

pán 盘 : “plate”; used for objects in dishes, as well as for objects resembling plates.

yī pán cài 一盘菜 (a plate of food);

yī pán wénxiāng 一盘蚊香 (a coil of mosquito-repellent incense);

yī pán qí 一盘棋 (a game of chess).

pén 盆 : “basin”; used for objects in pots or basins.

yī pén shuǐ 一盆水 (a basin of water);

yī pén lánhuā 一盆兰花 (a pot of orchids).

pǐ 匹 : used for horses and mules, as well as for bolts of cloth.

yī pǐ mǎ 一匹马 (a horse);

yī pǐ chóuzi 一匹绸子 (a bolt of silk).

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yī pǐ bù 一匹布 (a bolt of cloth).

piān 篇 : used for paper, pages of a book, written articles and essays.

yī piān zhǐ 一篇纸 (a sheet of paper);

yī piān lùnwén 一篇论文 (a dissertation).

piàn 片 : used for objects in slices, flat, level objects, and certain abstract objects.

yī piàn miànbāo 一片面包 (a slice of bread);

yī piàn cǎodì 一片草地 (a lawn);

yī piàn shēnqíng 一片深情 (a deeply felt emotion).

píng 瓶 : used for objects in bottles.

yī píng jiǔ 一瓶酒 (a bottle of wine);

yī píng qìshuǐ 一瓶汽水 (a bottle of soda).

shàn 扇 : used for doors and windows.

yī shàn dà mén 一扇大门 (a door);

yī shàn bōlichuāng 一扇玻璃窗 (a glass window).

shēn 身 : used for suits of clothing and other things that cover the body.

yī shēn xīn yīfu 一身新衣服 (a new suit);

yī shēn hànshuǐ 一身汗水 (sweat from head to toe).

shǒu 首 : used for poems and songs.

yī shǒu shī 一首诗 (a poem);

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yī shǒu gēqǔ 一首歌曲 (a song).

shǒu 手 : used for talents or skills which employ the hands.

yī shǒu hǎo zì 一手好字 (good handwriting);

yī shǒu hǎo zhēnxiàn 一手好针线 (good needlework).

shù 束 : used for objects in bunches.

yī shù xiānhuā 一束鲜花 (a bouquet of fresh flowers);

yī shù xìnjiàn 一束信件 (a sheaf of letters).

sōu 艘 : used for large ships.

yī sōu lúnchuán 一艘轮船 (a steamship);

yī sōu jūnjiàn 一艘军舰 (a warship).

suǒ 所 : used for buildings, schools, hospitals, and other large establishments.

yī suǒ fángzi 一所房子 (a house, a building);

yī suǒ xuéxiào 一所学校 (a school);

yī suǒ yīyuàn 一所医院 (a hospital).

tái 台 : used for machines, equipment, and stage performances.

yī tái diànshìjī 一台电视机 (a TV set);

yī tái huàjù 一台话剧 (a play);

yī tái hǎo xì 一台好戏 (a good performance).

tiáo 条 : used for long, narrow objects, and for items of a series.

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- yī tiáo hé 一条河 (a river);
yī tiáo yú 一条鱼 (a fish);
yī tiáo jiē 一条街 (a street);
yī tiáo xīnwén 一条新闻 (an item of news).

tóu 头 : used for cattle, donkeys, sheep, and certain other domestic animals.

- yī tóu shuǐniú 一头水牛 (a water buffalo);
yī tóu lú 一头驴 (a donkey);
yī tóu luózi 一头骡子 (a mule).

tuán 团 : used for objects in balls or clumps.

- yī tuán miánhua 一团棉花 (a ball of cotton);
yī tuán lièhuǒ 一团烈火 (a heart full of raging fire).

wèi 位 : used for people; carries respectful overtones.

- yī wèi xuézhě 一位学者 (a scholar);
yī wèi kèrén 一位客人 (a guest).

wō 窝 : used for a group of animals born or hatched at the same time.

- yī wō xiǎozhū 一窝小猪 (a little of piglets);
yī wō xiǎojī 一窝小鸡 (a brood of chicks).

xiàng 项 : used for items in a series.

- yī xiàng rènwu 一项任务 (a task);
yī xiàng yánjiū kètí 一项研究课题 (a research topic).

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yàng 样 : "sort"; used to indicate a certain sort of object.

sān yàng cài 三样菜 (three dishes);

yībǎi duō yàng shāngpǐn 一百多样商品 (over a hundred kinds of merchandise).

yè 页 : used for pages of a book.

yī yè shū 一页书 (one page of a book).

yuán 员 : used for generals (most often seen in novels and dramas).

yī yuán dàjiāng 一员大将 (a general).

zhǎn 盏 : used for lights and lamps.

yī zhǎn diàndēng 一盏电灯 (an electric light);

yī zhǎn méiyóudēng 一盏煤油灯 (a kerosene lamp).

zhāng 张 : used for paper, hides, beds, tables, mouths, and certain other objects.

yī zhāng zhǐ 一张纸 (a sheet of paper);

yī zhāng niúpí 一张牛皮 (a cowhide);

yī zhāng mùchuáng 一张木床 (a wooden bed);

yī zhāng zhuōzi 一张桌子 (a table);

yī zhāng zuǐba 一张嘴巴 (a mouth).

zhī 只 : used for certain animals and utensils, as well as for single components of a pair.

yī zhī jī 一只鸡 (a chicken);

yī zhī lǎohǔ 一只老虎 (a tiger);

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yī zhī xiāngzi 一只箱子 (a suitcase);

yī zhī fānchuán 一只帆船 (a sailboat);

yī zhī ěrduo 一只耳朵 (an ear);

yī zhī wàzi 一只袜子 (a sock).

zhī 枝 : used for sticklike objects and for branches bearing leaves or flowers.

yī zhī gānbǐ 一枝钢笔 (a fountain pen);

yī zhī méihuā 一枝梅花 (a branch of plum blossoms);

yī zhī yángliǔ 一枝杨柳 (a willow branch).

zhī 支 : used for troops, songs, and certain other objects.

yī zhī duìwǔ 一支队伍 (a contingent of troops);

yī zhī mǐngē 一支民歌 (a folksong).

zhǒng 种 : “sort”; used to indicate a certain sort of person or object.

sān zhǒng rén 三种人 (three kinds of people);

liǎng zhǒng bù 两种布 (two kinds of cloth);

yīqiān duō zhǒng shāngpǐn 一千多种商品 (over a thousand kinds of merchandise).

zhū 株 : used for trees and plants.

yī zhū sōngshù 一株松树 (a pine tree);

yī zhū mǔdān 一株牡丹 (a peony bush).

zhuāng 桩 : used for affairs or pieces of business.

yī zhuāng shìr 一桩事儿 (an affair).

zhuàng 幢 : used for buildings, particularly those of several stories.

yī zhuàng dàlóu 一幢大楼 (a (multi-storied) building).

zhuō 桌 : used for meals and banquets.

yī zhuō jiǔxí 一桌酒席 (a feast);

yī zhuō kèrén 一桌客人 (a table of guests (at a banquet)).

zuò 座 : used for large, immovable objects.

yī zuò shān 一座山 (a mountain);

yī zuò tiěqiáo 一座铁桥 (an iron bridge);

yī zuò tóngxiàng 一座铜像 (a bronze statue).

2) Measure words for collectives

bān 班 : used for groups of people.

láile yī bān péngyou 来了一班朋友 (a group of friends arrived);

yī bān xuésheng 一班学生 (a class of students).

bāng 帮 : used for groups of people.

láile yī dà bāng rén 来了一大帮人 (a big group of people arrived);

yī bāng tǔfēi 一帮土匪 (a gang of bandits);

cóng 丛 : used for plants growing in clumps.

yī cóng júhuā 一丛菊花 (a patch of chrysanthemums);

yī cóng guànmù 一丛灌木 (a clump of bushes).

dié 叠 : used for objects stacked in layers.

yī dié zhǐ 一叠纸 (a stack of papers);

yī dié xìnfēng 一叠信封 (a stack of envelopes);

yī dié yīfu 一叠衣服 (a pile of clothes).

duī 堆 : used for piles of things.

yī duī nítǔ 一堆泥土 (a pile of earth);

yī duī lājī 一堆垃圾 (a pile of trash).

duì 队 : used for people drawn up in ranks or rows.

yī duì xuéshēng 一队学生 (a row of students);

yī duì rén-mǎ 一队人马 (a row of troops).

duì 对 : used for pairs of people or objects.

yī duì liànrén 一对恋人 (a pair of lovers);

yī duì ěrhuán 一对耳环 (a pair of earrings).

fù 副 : used for sets of things.

yī fù shǒutào 一副手套 (a pair of gloves);

yī fù xiàngqí 一副象棋 (a Chinese chess set).

huǒ 伙 : used for groups of people.

yī huǒ xuéshēng 一伙学生 (a group of students);

yī huǒ fěitú 一伙匪徒 (a gang of bandits).

pī 批 : used for large quantities of merchandise or large

groups of people.

yī pī záhuò 一批杂货 (a lot of dry goods);

yī pī jūnrén 一批军人 (a group of soldiers).

qún 群 : used for groups of people or animals.

yī qún hái'zǐ 一群孩子 (a group of children);

yī qún yáng 一群羊 (a flock of sheep).

shuāng 双 : used for pairs of objects.

yī shuāng xié 一双鞋 (a pair of shoes);

yī shuāng shǒu 一双手 (a pair of hands).

tào 套 : used for sets of objects.

yī tào kèběn 一套课本 (a set of textbooks);

yī tào jiājù 一套家具 (a set of furniture).

zǔ 组 : used for organized groups of people or objects.

yī zǔ xuéshēng 一组学生 (a group of students);

yī zǔ diàncí 一组电池 (a set of batteries).

3) Measure words for weights and measures

Léngth: fēn 分 ($= \frac{1}{3}$ cm);

cùn 寸 ($= 10$ fēn, or $3 \frac{1}{3}$ cm);

chǐ 尺 ($= 10$ cùn, or $33 \frac{1}{3}$ cm);

zhàng 丈 ($= 10$ chǐ, or $3 \frac{1}{3}$ m);

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lǐ 里 (= 150 zhàng, or 500m);

lí mǐ 厘米 (centimeter);

mǐ 米 (meter);

gōng lǐ 公里 (kilometer);

hǎi lǐ 海里 (nautical mile);

Yīng lǐ 英里 (mile).

Weight:

qián 钱 (= 5 gm);

liǎng 两 (= 10 qián, or 50 gm);

jīn 斤 (= 10 liǎng, or 500 gm);

kè 克 (gram);

gōng jīn 公斤 (kilogram);

dūn 吨 (ton).

Area:

fēn 分 (= $66 \frac{2}{3}$ sq m);

mǔ 亩 (= 10 fēn, or $6 \frac{2}{3}$ are);

píng fāng cùn 平方寸 (square cùn);

píng fāng chǐ 平方尺 (square chǐ);

píng fāng mǐ 平方米 (square meter).

Volume:

lì fāng cùn 立方寸 (= .000037 cub m);

lì fāng chǐ 立方尺 (= .037 cub m);

4) Indefinite measure words

There are only two indefinite measure words in Putonghua. **xiē 些** (some, a few) and **diǎnr 点儿** (a little, a bit).

xiē 些 : indicates a fairly large number or amount. It can follow the numeral **yī 一** (one), a demonstrative pronoun **zhè 这** (this) or **nà 那** (that), or certain other modifiers. It is written as one unit with the component it follows:

- yīxiē 一些** (some);
- zhèxiē 这些** (these);
- nàxiē 那些** (those);
- hǎoxiē 好些** (a lot of).

diǎnr 点儿 : indicates a small number or amount. It can follow **yī 一** (one), a demonstrative pronoun **zhè 这** (this) or **nà 那** (that), or certain other modifiers. It is written as one unit with the component it follows:

- yīdiǎnr 一点儿** (a bit, a little);
- zhèdiǎnr 这点儿** (this bit, these few);
- nàdiǎnr 那点儿** (that bit, those few).

When **xiē** or **diǎnr** are preceded by a verb, however, they are written separately from it:

- chī xiē dōngxi 吃些东西** (eat something);
- xiě xiē wénzhāng 写些文章** (do some writing);
- chī diǎnr dōngxi 吃点儿东西** (eat a little something);
- xiě diǎnr wénzhāng 写点儿文章** (do a little writing).

4.6 Verb Measure Words

Verb measure words are used to show the number of times an action is carried out. Not many of these words are used in Putonghua; the most important few are introduced below. Verb measure words are written separately from the numerals that precede them.

cì 次 : used to indicate the number of times an action is performed.

Zhège diànyǐng wǒ kànle sān cì. 这个电影我看了三次。
(I've seen this movie three times.)

huí 回 : used to indicate the number of times an action is performed. *huí* is often used with actions indicating motion, as coming or going.

Tā jiā wǒ qùguo liǎng huí. 他家我去过两回。 (I've been to his house twice.)

xià 下 : used to indicate the number of times an action is performed. Used only with actions that take a short period of time to perform.

Wǒ qīngqīng de zài tā de bèi shàng pāile liǎng xià. 我轻轻地在他的背上拍了两下。 (I lightly patted him twice on the back.)

dùn 顿 : used to indicate the number of times an action is performed. It is used mainly for the actions of eating, scolding,

beating, and giving advice.

Wǒmen měi tiān chī sān dùn fàn. 我们每天吃三顿饭。

(We eat three meals a day.);

Tā bèi rén mǎle yī dùn. 他被人骂了一顿。

(He got a scolding.).

zhèn 阵 : indicates that an action took up only a short period of time.

Jīntiān xiǎo le yī zhèn yǔ, mǎshàng jiù qíng le. 今天下了一阵雨，马上就晴了。 (It rained for a little while today and then cleared up immediately.).

Dōngbian xiǎngle yī zhèn qiāngshēng. 东边响了一阵枪声。 (There was a sound of gunfire to the east.).

chǎng 场 : used for theatrical and artistic performances, movies, and sports activities.

Zuótiān wǒmen dǎle yī chǎng qiú. 昨天我们打了一场球。

(We played ball yesterday.);

Wǎnshàng yǒu liǎng chǎng diànyǐng. 晚上有两场电影。

(There are two movies being shown tonight.).

tàng 趟 : used to indicate a number of trips or journeys taken.

Jīnnián wǒ què le yī tàng Chéngdū. 今年我去了一趟成都。

(I made a trip to Chengdu this year.).

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biàn 遍 : used to indicate the number of times an action is carried out in entirety.

Qǐng nǐ zài shuō yī biàn. 请你再说一遍。 (Could you say that again?);

Wǒ bǎ kèwén cóng tóu dào wěi kànle liǎng biàn. 我把课文从头到尾看了两遍。 (I read the text twice from beginning to end.).

zāo 遭 : indicates the number of times a journey is taken.

Dào Běijīng wǒ hái shì dì-yī zāo. 到北京我还是第一遭。 (This is my first trip to Beijing.).

fān 番 : used to indicate the number of times a relatively strenuous action is performed.

Wǒ sīkǎole yī fān, zhōngyú bǎ wèntí nòng míngbai le. 我思考了一番，终于把问题弄明白了。 (I thought about the problem for a while before I finally got it straightened out in my mind.).

One can also use the names of tools or parts of the body as measure words for certain actions:

kǎnle yī dāo 砍了一刀 (took a chop at), dāo 刀 (knife);
dǎle yī qiāng 打了一枪 (took a shot at), qiāng 枪 (gun);
tīle yī jiǎo 踢了一脚 (kicked), jiǎo 脚 (foot);
yǎole yī kǒu 咬了一口 (bit), kǒu 口 (mouth);
kànle liǎng yǎn 看了两眼 (took a look at), yǎn 眼 (eye);

dāi sān quán 挨了三拳 (got beaten up), quán 拳 (fist).

4.7 Compound Measure Words

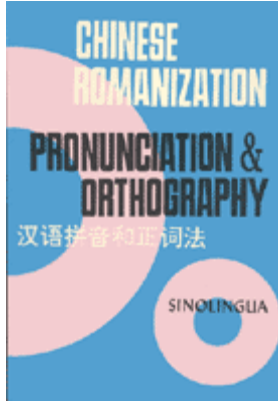
A compound measure word is made up of two measure words, and expresses a compound unit of measure. In writing, a hyphen links the two components. The most common few compound measure words are listed below:

jià-cì 架次 (sortie; measures the number of airplanes flying over a given period of time);

rén-cì 人次 (person-time; measures the number of people taking part in a given activity over a given period of time);

mǎo-mǐ 秒米 (meters per second);

mǎo-lìfāngmǐ 秒立方米 (cubic meters per second).



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