

## Six Categories of Chinese Character Construction

	Categories	Explanations	Examples*	
1	<b>Pictographic Characters</b>	Characters created by drawing a sketch to depict a material object	人 person	木 tree
2	<b>Indicative Characters</b>	Characters created by 1) drawing an abstract sign to indicate an abstract concept or 2) adding or changing a stroke to an existing pictographic character to indicate a new concept	上 upper	本 root
3	<b>Associative Characters</b>	Characters created by combining two or more pictographic components to infer a new meaning	木 + 木 = 林 tree + tree = woods	人 + 木 = 休 person + tree = rest
4	<b>Picto-phonetic Characters</b>	Characters created by combining a pictographic component that represents a meaning category and another component that indicates the sound of the whole character	氵 + 林 = 淋 water+(sound)=shower	氵 + 木 = 沐 water + (sound) = wash
5	<b>Explanative Characters</b>	Characters created with a pictographic component to help explain the meaning added to another component that represents both the sound and meaning of the whole character	木 + 支 = 枝 tree + branch = branch (sound)	氵 + 益 = 溢 water + spill = spill (sound)
6	<b>Phonetic Loan Characters</b>	Characters originally created for one concept but borrowed to represent another concept with the same pronunciation	六 six (originally "hut")	北 north (originally "back")

## ***Definitions for Terms about Chinese Characters***

Terms	Definitions	Examples
Inherited characters 传承字	Characters that were created and officially accepted before the 20 <sup>th</sup> century, the structures of which have remained the same since the “clerical change”	日 月 水 火 sun, moon, water, fire
Simplified characters 简化字	Characters that have been simplified, systemized, or standardized since the 1950's and have been officially accepted	车 马 它 泪 cart, horse, it, tears
Complex characters 繁体字	Characters that have been replaced by the simplified characters	車 馬 牠 淚 cart, horse, it, tears
Traditional Chinese Characters 传统汉字	Characters that consist of a) inherited characters and b) complex characters that have been simplified	a) 日 月 水 火 b) 車 馬 牠 淚
Normalized Chinese Characters 规范汉字	Characters that consist of a) inherited characters and b) simplified characters	a) 日 月 水 火 b) 车 马 它 泪
Modern Chinese Characters 现代汉字	Another term for “normalized Chinese characters”	Same as above