# MANDARIN PHONEMIC INVENTORY

Please remember that dialectal differences exist for each language and should be considered when using the phonemic charts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labiodental</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Alveopalatal</th>
<th>Postalveolar</th>
<th>Retroflex</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plosive</strong></td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p^h</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t^h</td>
<td></td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k^h</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nasal</strong></td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
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<td><strong>Trill</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tap or Flap</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fricative</strong></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>s̠</td>
<td>s̠</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affricate</strong></td>
<td>ts</td>
<td>ts^h</td>
<td>ts̠</td>
<td>ts̠^h</td>
<td></td>
<td>ṯs</td>
<td>ṯs^h</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Glides</strong></td>
<td>(Approximant)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Liquid</strong></td>
<td>(Lateral Approximant)</td>
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</table>

1 Chart based on information gathered from the following:
Facts on Mandarin Phonology

- Mandarin is a tonal language. Each syllable has a tone and each tone changes the semantics of a word. The tones are as follows:
  - high level,
  - rising,
  - falling–rising,
  - falling, and
  - neutral.
- There are no consonant clusters.
- Words are monosyllabic.
- The sounds /n/ and /ŋ/ are the only consonants that can occur in word-final position.
- Phonemes in English that are not found in Mandarin include the following:
  - /v/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /ʧ/, /ʤ/, /θ/, /ð/
- In addition to final consonant deletion, common substitution errors for Mandarin speakers learning English include the following:
  - /s/ for /θ/ in initial, medial, or final position;
  - /f/ for /θ/ in final position;
  - /d/ for /ð/ in initial or medial position;
  - /z/ for /ð/ in initial or medial position;
  - /f/ for /v/ in initial or medial position; and
  - /w/ for /v/ in initial or medial position.