THE CHINESE LEARNING MOTIVATION PLAYBOOK

Motivate, inspire and boost your Chinese learning skills
SAY YES TO NEW ADVENTURES
Foreword

If your dream is to learn to speak Mandarin Chinese, welcome!
You've come to the right place.

Deciding to learn Chinese can be daunting and we, at Ninchanese, know that. This guide was written to give you the best advice on how to learn Chinese. To get you started because we know that once you've done that, you'll be on a roll and ready to do anything.

In this guide, you'll find methods and tips on how to reach your dreams of fluency in Chinese. We'll take a look at the mindset you want to be in to make learning Chinese a smooth and enjoyable adventure, and you'll be inspired by some of the greatest Chinese masters to push forward, to face your fears, overcome your obstacles and become who you want to be.

Some advice will work great for you; some may not suit you as much. See what works, take what you need, and build yourself the toolset YOU need to reach your goals.

Learning a new language is a journey you’re taking yourself on. Believe in yourself, it’s your dream, your journey!

**The journey is just as fun as the result and we want to help you see that. Ready to embark on your new adventure and to have fun on your learning journey?**

Note: This guide was designed to work great with Ninchanese as your learning tool to learn Chinese.

If you're learning another language, this guide may also inspire you to seek the best in your learning and in yourself.

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Getting Started Guide

Want to ask your question live? Join the Ninchanese Chat
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Part I:

Getting Started

Start your language learning journey on the right tracks
A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES MUST BEGIN WITH A SINGLE STEP
Say Yes and Start Walking

You’re a baby dragon, experiencing life among cats that speak a foreign language, and that’s not an easy thing to do.

The wise 老子 (Lǎo zǐ) one day said:

千里之行，始于足下
Qiānlǐ zhī xíng, shǐ yú zúxià

“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.”

老子 was a great philosopher from the Zhou dynasty (1066 - 256 BC). He highlighted something essential: the key to any successful journey is to start.

As in every journey, taking the first step is the hardest. So, be brave, dare to do things you’ve never done before. Don’t be afraid to try new things. Say yes to new adventures.

You’ll never know what lays ahead unless you take that first step. Say yes and start walking.

Once you have, little dragon, you’ll live many adventures! You’ll discover tons of new things and meet new people. A brand-new world, full of different ways of thinking and living awaits you. You’ll improve a lot, and possibly find yourself a better self.

To experience this, all you need to do is take that first step.

What do you think of the idea of adventures waiting to be had? Or a journey to go on?

Ready to take that first step?

Ready to say yes?

Yes?

Then let’s go.
First Things First

How did you like Lao Zi's saying? I'm sure it worked well for you, I can feel your motivation from here! Now that you've taken your first step, let's think about where you're going to go next. Every good adventure starts with a little planning. You want to be ready for what's ahead!

Get A Notebook to Journal Your Journey

A notebook is a good companion to have on your journey. Paper or virtual, text or video, they're all great. It's a place where you can write down the characters you'll see or just the ones you love, list your ideas, scribble away your worries, describe encounters you make in Chinese and more. By writing down your feelings and thoughts, you'll be able to chart your progress and measure the journey you've done so far.

You'll set goals for yourself. You'll see your day-to-day evolution and enjoy seeing yourself improve, learning session after session. It'll also be a good reminder, as you set and adjust goals in your journal, of the path you have yet to take.

Once you know what direction to take, the rest will follow. Now, let's set a direction for your adventure. How do you know which to pick? Easy! It's time to make yourself a learning plan.

What's in Your Learning Plan?

First, in a learning plan, you need a goal.

Take a minute to think about your final goal. Why are you learning Chinese? Picture that reason. That's going to be your motivation. Write it down :)

Ok, now, think of how you can reach that goal. Imagine the steps you'll need to take to get there. How do you achieve your main goal? Identify stages in your progress, each getting you closer to your goal. Choose three main stages you want to reach on the way to your goals. Write them down, too. For example:

- I want to be able to introduce myself
- I want to be able to read a newspaper
- I want to work in China.

If your goals evolve in the future, and chances are they will just adjust them to what suits you the best! Remember to write down your updated Chinese learning plan in your notebook. As for the learning content itself, Ninchanese.com is here to guide you and teach you all you need to know, step by step.

Try It Out!

Choose the most meowsome notebook you own and write down your Chinese learning plan. Remember to write down your main goal and the steps you'll have to take to reach it. No matter what happens during your Chinese learning journey, keep this language journal close to you from now on. You are already preparing yourself to fly like a dragon into the Chinese world. Now, let's have fun. Go achieve the three first stages of Ninchanese!
GOOD THINGS TAKE TIME

Ninchanese
Give Yourself Time

How did creating your learning plan go? Did you figure out what drives you to learn Chinese? That's great and it's certainly going to help you all along your journey, little dragon. Knowing what you want to achieve is very motivating.

Now that you have your goal in mind, you may worry about whether or not you'll be able to reach the main goal of your Chinese learning plan or the stages you've outlined. Will I make it to the end? Will I make mistakes? Will I be able to learn all the characters?

The answer is: YES, you will. (Yes, even to the making mistakes part!) No pressure. Go at your own pace. Give yourself time and everything will go well.

Time to Adapt

Chances are you're going to find Chinese is clearly different to your native language and the other foreign languages you've learned. No alphabet, no spaces between words, tones used in speaking and so on. So many new things to discover! You'll need to adapt to it — adaptation also takes time.

So, ease yourself in, give yourself time to get familiar with Chinese, to explore the platform, and get into the story and the exercises! You're a baby dragon, experiencing life among cats that speak a foreign language, and that's not an easy thing to do. As you enter Ninchanese, the method will gradually introduce you to Chinese, teach you simple words and the logic behind Chinese words.

Time to Make Time

Learning Chinese is something new in your life. Something you're adding to your daily routine. Just like anything new in your routine, you'll want to make some time for it. Pick a time in your day where you want to practice your Chinese and learn new things on Ninchanese, and try to stick to it. Making time for a new activity... takes time, you guessed it.

Time to Play

Let time be your best friend! Give yourself time to learn Chinese and to have fun doing it; this is a key to mastering successfully Chinese. Give yourself time to adapt and learn all the basics of Chinese.

Time to Try

Find a period of your day when you're free to practice Chinese. It may be in the evening after work/school, in the morning before leaving home or during lunch time. Choose your favorite time and schedule a Chinese learning session then! Pick a time that suits you. Write down your feelings during or after your learning session in your notebook. For example, you can try to write the character you have difficulty remembering.
LITTLE BY LITTLE ONE TRAVELS FAR
Small Goals Will Lead You to Big Things

Did you find a time to learn some Chinese in your day? That's a great start! Setting aside a specific time to do some Chinese during your day is a great start to an efficient learning routine. Now that you have a time set aside, let's think about you want to achieve in that learning session. Having a small goal to work towards during that learning session is great for motivation!

Avoid Information Overload

As a beginner in Chinese, you certainly want to improve very fast and learn as much as you can to master Mandarin quickly. That's wonderful motivation! But trust me, trying to go too fast isn't a good idea. You'll suffer from information overload. By setting high goals like learning 100 new words a day, your brain is going to freeze, and you're going to tire easily.

Start Small

Instead, set small goals, to reach, for example learning 10 new words in the next learning session and doing your reviews. Then, your next learning session can be redoing 5 speaking stages with Ninchanese. Small goals are made to be easily achieved in a day, so don't overdo it and set tons of small goals for yourself to reach each day.

Small Implies Repetition

If you have small goals, you'll reach them more often. That'll motivate you to continue as you'll know you're on the right track. Constancy is key. You'll learn better by studying a little bit every day rather than by doing intensive sessions from time to time.

You know what they say: small goals every day, keep the doctor away! Don't they? They should.

You'll learn better by studying a little bit every day rather than by doing intensive sessions from time to time.

And by seeing yourself reaching your goals day after day, you'll feel very proud and motivated! Quickly you'll see all the benefits. Small goals will surely lead you to big things.

Today’s Task

Select small goals for each day of the week. Think about learning 10 new words one day.

Or, practice a grammar exercise you've done before every day, to make sure you remember the grammar rules. You can also practice the writing stages. You'll feel motivated and confident in your learning. Keep it simple, start very small and stay constant. And when you'll feel like you're ready to learn more, adjust the number of things you do every day.
WHEN A FLOWER DOESN’T BLOOM YOU FIX THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH IT GROWS, NOT THE FLOWER
Make Yourself at Home

Meowsome, you've successfully learned how to make time for your Chinese learning! Chinese learning is yours now. Now, you need to create space for it. Yes, learning Chinese is an adventure both in space and time. Why not dedicate it a special place in your home or somewhere you are comfortable?

A Secret Place

In your home, there's a special place for everything, right?! The food is in the kitchen, the car in the garage, your homework on your desk, what about your Chinese learning?

Chinese learning is like your special little secret garden now. It's important to find a place at home to learn and grow your Chinese knowledge in good conditions. It can be on the armchair near the window, on your bed, near the fireplace, in your wardrobe or wherever you feel good waves to learn.

A Happy Place

Devoting a special place for Chinese will help you stay focused and comfortable. It's your special happy learning space. Each time you'll go to this place, you'll see how much better you feel and better you are at learning.

Of course, besides learning at home, you can find other places that'll make you thirsty of learning Chinese! :)

Try It Out for Yourself!

From now on, look for a special place you can devote to your Chinese learning. It can be at home but also somewhere else, as long as you feel comfortable enough there to learn properly. I'm sure you'll love to customizing your new Chinese learning place!
THE KEY IS NOT TO PRIORITIZE WHAT’S ON YOUR SCHEDULE BUT TO SCHEDULE YOUR PRIORITIES.
Turn Learning Chinese Into a Habit

Did you find a time for your Chinese learning? Good. We'll give you more tips later on how to find the best time in your day if you end up not liking the time you chose. Now, about making learning Chinese also something you want to come back to regularly? Making learning Chinese into a habit is the best way to progress and get you ready to speak the language.

Aim for Consistency

Consistent learning sharpens your mind and improves your learning abilities. Set up regular learning sessions, don't quit, and you'll quickly see results. Similar to an athlete doing daily workouts, you need to practice your Chinese a little every day!

A Little Often Is Good

Take your time, and do a little each day. No need to plan a 3-hour session, 15-20 minutes on Ninchanese regularly is enough to turn learning Chinese into a habit. That's just the amount of time needed to do your reviews and a new stage.

Give Your Brain What It Needs

It's very easy to learn new words, the hardest part is to remember them! Make Chinese into a something you stick to and do regularly during the week and you'll remember what you learn a lot more lastingly than if you just do a 3-hour session once in a blue moon.

Besides, Ninchanese is here to help you: The Nincha Machine knows where you're at in your learning and tells you what to review and when. All you have to do is show up! Thanks to the Nincha Machine, your brain is able to remember the new words you learn. Pretty cool, huh?!

Your Mission

Your goal for this week? Turn Chinese into a habit!

Find your own method. Remember how being consistent can make you improve quickly. Set aside time each day to learn something new. If you have no idea where to start, here's a 3-day schedule that might help you build your own program:

- Day 1: Do all your reviews
- Day 2: Do some time-attack stages
- Day 3: Practice a listening stage 3 times

When your schedule is set, stick to that routine for several weeks and see how you like it!

Let us know how it goes at hello@ninchanese.com.
THE SECRET TO SUCCESS: STOP WISHING, START DOING.
Your Challenge for The Week!

That's it! You've done the first steps of this guide, making time and getting in the habit of learning Chinese.

Congratulations Little Dragon!

You're all set to start learning Chinese and have the keys to good preparation. You have set your objectives, planned a time to achieve them and turned them into a habit. That wasn't so hard, was it?

How about adding a little challenge to your program? Don't be afraid, Little Dragon, you're ready to face this challenge. And if you're feeling worried, know that **taking risks and accepting challenges is what makes you improve.** They help you evolve, instead of remaining at the same stage, inside your comfort zone.

Your challenge for the week: use the words you learned so far as much as you can.

Pick 3 words you already know, write them down in your notebook, then look them up in Ninchanese so you can see how they're used in context.

Not sure which words to start with? How about picking easy words like **hello, thank you and OK** in Mandarin? They're really easy to use and very important to know! Got your 3 words? Good! Now, try to use them as much as you can in your daily life with your entourage and explain them.

A key to becoming fluent in Mandarin is to seize every opportunity you get to speak and practice Chinese.

Good luck Little Dragon and let me know how you're doing!

If you need advice or motivation for this challenge, don't hesitate to email me at hello@ninchanese.com
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO FAST, YOU JUST HAVE TO GO.
How Is It Going So Far?

You are now several sessions in your motivation program, meowsome!

I thought I’d check in to see how it’s going for you so far. Have you found the perfect time and place to learn Chinese? Is it a habit now?

It takes time to fix a schedule and create new habits. Did you experience any doubt or difficulties? That’s totally normal, just so you know.

What about your challenges, did you do them? How did they go? It doesn’t really matter if you failed or succeed, as long as you tried!

Are you ready to continue this adventure?

Next, you’ll discover how to create an efficient learning routine. Let’s make sure you get the most out of your learning, to make your Chinese learning journey a success!
Part II:

Create an Efficient Learning Routine

Inhale, exhale. You got this.
THERE ARE ONLY TWO OPTIONS: MAKE PROGRESS OR MAKE EXCUSES.
Don’t Break the Chain

What about all the new words you've learned by now? Can you remember them all? It’s okay if they’re not perfectly committed to memory, as long as you keep trying. “Try again. Fail again. Fail better.”, right? What if I told you there’s a way to remember Chinese words forever? It’s all about not breaking the chain.

Daily Workouts

How do athletes reach their goals? By working out day after day. By practicing a little bit each day, athletes keep their muscles in shape, become stronger and more resistant. Daily workouts are more effective than intense but spaced out workouts. Regular short and sweet learning sessions are the key to success.

Become the Athlete

You can become an athlete in Chinese learning too. How? Improve your learning abilities in Chinese by setting up regular learning sessions. Similar to an athlete doing daily workouts, you need to practice your Chinese a little bit regularly to improve! Study a little bit every day, don't break the learning chain, and you’ll see results quickly.

If one day, you’re feeling super motivated and two hours go by on Ninchanese without you noticing, that's great. The next day, if you feel exhausted and only spend 2 minutes on it, that's okay. Just don't stop. The key is not to break the chain in your learning, and to expose yourself to Chinese, even if it's just seeing and hearing Chinese words every day.

How Do You Set Up Daily Workouts?

Write down in your notebook your scheduled lessons. And each time you are done with one, put a checkmark next to it. Don’t forget to write down your thoughts and remarks after each session. Set up sessions: today you're going to redo the speaking exercises, tomorrow you'll learn new words, and so on. See?

Your Turn!

Schedule your learning sessions on Ninchanese for this week and put a checkmark each time you do one. Stay constant, that's the key.
I DON'T HAVE TIME IS THE GROWN-UP VERSION OF THE DOG HATE MY HOMEWORK.
How to Make Time for Chinese Learning

Now that you’re busy trying to maintain your learning streak, you’ve surely noticed that it’s not always easy to make time to achieve the Chinese learning goals you set for yourself. Still, it’s very important to stay constant to keep on improving. Let’s explore a few tricks to help you make time.

Everyone’s Busy
You may think that you’re too busy to learn Chinese so you always postpone your learning sessions. Let me tell you something Little Dragon: everyone’s busy! You just need to learn how to make time for Chinese learning. **Find the right time** for you to learn Chinese: in the morning, at during your coffee break or in the evening. Then, get rid of the time-consuming tasks and you’ll be able to do everything you’ve planned.

Keep an Eye Out for The Time-Consuming Tasks
A good start to making time for your Chinese learning session of the day is to look for time robbers. What are these mischievous things we’re talking about? They’re all the little distractions that make you lose your focus.

Ask yourself how many times you compulsively check your social networks a day for instance. Do you really need to check [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com), [Twitter](https://twitter.com) or [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com) 12 times a day? Wouldn’t that be a time-robber to work on? Reduce the time you spend on social media and you’ll make time for something else. Do you really need to spend that much unproductive time on your phone, when you could be having fun progressing in Mandarin? Look for time robbers, kill them and free up some time for your Chinese!

Think About Today
When waking up, the first thing you can do is to create a mental to-do list of all the fun things you’re going to do today to improve your Chinese. Once you know what and when you’re going to learn Chinese, it’s easier to focus on these tasks and see where to remove the time robbers.

The Dead-Time Method
Boarding a train for a 1-hour commute? Waiting 15 minutes at the bus stop for your bus to arrive? Instead of doing nothing, take this opportunity to learn Chinese and do some reviews. You won’t notice you’ve been waiting, time flies fast when you’re spending it learning on [Ninchanese](https://www.ninchanese.com). Be careful not to miss your bus!

Try It Out for Yourself
Remember that it’s okay to feel busy because we all have a lot to do each day. But that doesn’t mean you can’t find a special time for your learning sessions. Take a look at everything you do, and identify the time robbers in your day by sticking to the essential tasks. Finally, plan each day’s learning sessions as soon as you wake up. Make it a treat you look forward to each day, and you’ll stay focused! Try to make time for your Chinese learning sessions and you’ll see how fast you can learn Chinese on [Ninchanese](https://www.ninchanese.com)! 
I DON'T HAVE TIME IS THE GROWN-UP VERSION OF THE DOG HATE MY HOMEWORK.
Pick the Best Time: Try A Morning Routine

Did you pick out time-robbers in your day? Now that you've made time in your day, you can think about finding the best time to learn Chinese. How about in the morning? Did you know that's when your brain has the most potential?

Champions Rituals

Channel the NinChaolin monks, the masters of morning rituals. These brave monks get up at 5:30 a.m., have breakfast and go practice meditation, chants and Kung Fu every morning. Jet Li and Jackie Chan, two other great champions, also have a specific morning routine, and always start their day with a ritual of breakfast and sports. Then, they're all fired up for the day. All these inspiring persons always wake up at the same time and repeat the same habits every morning. They create healthy practices for themselves that energize them. You can too.

Create A New Morning Ritual

Let's imagine you usually get up at 7 a.m. Start your day in a smart and productive way. Stretch and do some Taiichi or physical exercises to stay in shape. Then you can have breakfast and do a 15-minute Chinese learning session on Ninchanese to wake up the right way. Start your day in a smart and productive way. This new morning ritual is going to help you find time to learn Chinese on Ninchanese. Plus, as your brain has maximum energy in the morning, you'll remember better the words you've just learned.

Try the Athlete’s Method

Are you more the kind of person that likes to lay in bed and do nothing after their alarm clock wakes them up? Wouldn't it be awesome to use that time to learn new words or to build new sentences in Ninchanese instead of doing nothing? To make the method work, preparation is key. Grab your learning tool: your phone. Place your phone next to your bed just like athletes often put their sport shoes near their bed before they go to sleep, to be ready to run. Then use the 7 most effective minutes of your brain's day to learn Chinese when you wake up! Perfect for a quick review session!

Time to Get in The Ring!

Morning rituals are very important to find consistency. Consistency leads you to improving quickly and then to success. Try these new morning rituals and see how you can organize your timetable in the morning - don't forget to write it down in your notebook to see it clearly. Become as wise as the NinChaolin monks and as strong as our well-known champs.

Your Mission

Your challenge, this week, is to follow this new timetable for a week and see how it goes. That's all for today Little Dragon!
Some of the best moments in life are the ones you can’t tell anyone about.
Pick the Best Time: When It’s Right for You

Have you tried out the Morning Routine yet? Did you like it? Not everyone is a morning person, but you cannot know without trying. If you’re not a morning person, I’ve got a few tips and solutions for you too. Since we know you’re not at your best in the morning, let’s figure out how to choose the time that suits you and your timetable.

The Purrfect Time of The Day

If you have to go to work early or are not a morning person, that’s ok. The key to success in learning Chinese is to do it your way and find YOUR own routine. Choose a moment when you’re available. After work, after school, at lunch time? Adjust the previous morning routine to your favorite time of the day. Make learning Chinese a relaxing moment, in which you stop thinking about work and let yourself go! :)

Adjust Your Routine

You may not find the routine that suits you best in one go. Trial and error are how you’ll find your perfect routine. Give your new routine a try and see how it goes. Thought that you were more inclined to learn Chinese after school but in the end, you’re more focused in the evening after dinner? Adjust your routine. It’s your own learning session, only you can choose when and how you learn best.

Your Mission

Pick a moment in the day and make it your learning session time! Try to stick to it for few days and see how it goes. If you can’t stick to it, then adjust your routine time. Take notes to see why it did not work and what did. Write down your routine time and thoughts about your sessions in your notebook. That way, you can follow and trace back your progress during each session. Let me know how it goes for you!
WE SPEND TOO MUCH TIME OVER-ANALYZING, OVER-THINKING, AND OVER-REACTING
How to Avoid the Endless To-Do List Syndrome

I guess you've learned a few new words since the previous advice. **How many words do you know now?** Are still making small goals to reach in each learning session? Small goals are made to be easily achieved in a day, so don't overdo it and set tons of small goals for yourself to reach each day.

**Make Yourself a To-Do List**

Put your small goals in a to-do list for the day, or for the week, to clearly see what your tasks of the day are. That'll also help you stay focused and motivated on what you have to do. The smaller your lists are, the faster you reach your goals, simple as that. You're going to love the to-do lists!

**Stay Small and Keep It Simple**

It can be really tempting to add many small tasks to your to-do list but resist doing it. Slow down the motion. You don't want to bite off more than you can chew. Endless to-do lists will make you feel bad about yourself, because, as their name tells you, they can never be finished, and you'll lose confidence in yourself.

When you have 15 or more goals, it's depressing because you know you won't have time to achieve them all in your day. Feeling overwhelmed with too many tasks to do and never having the time to finish your to-do list is the best way to discourage yourself and to stop doing things everything.

Don't turn your list into something impossible to manage. Instead, KISS your to-do list: Keep It Simple and Sustainable!

**Stick to The Essential**

- Target the main tasks you want to do today. Pick tasks you can actually do and not everything you'd like to do. Think about what's vital and what's not for your learning session.
- Put 3 or 4 tasks maximum to do on your list. No more.

Try your to-do-list like that and if you really feel comfortable, add more tasks. But again, don't over-do it!

**Try It Out for Yourself!**

Avoid the endless to-do list syndrome. Pick only the 3 essential tasks to do each day in your Chinese learning session. For instance, today on Ninchanese, you can focus on your reviews, do a listening exercise and a time attack of previous vocabulary stages.
ONCE YOU NEED LESS, YOU WILL HAVE MORE
How to Minimize Your Goals

In the previous advice, you learned how to avoid the endless to-do list syndrome, but it’s easy to say and harder to apply, right little dragon? That’s why you may be interested in these great methods to minimize your goals and shorten your to-do list.

Here’s what you need to do to reduce your to-do list and be more lenient with yourself:

- Take a step back, look at your main goal and see where you are at. Take the next main goals you want to achieve and break it down into stages you’ll need to reach.
- Then try to divide these stages into many small, concrete, goals.
- Select 3 goals to do today.
- Add them to your schedule, plan them.

If you think that your goals are still too big to all get done in one go, then pick fewer goals to do per day. For instance, if you put on your to-do list: “Do 6 stages a day on Ninchanese”, it implies doing two sets each of the vocabulary, grammar, and speaking stages! That’s a lot of information to swallow in a row, don’t you think?

Instead of 6 stages; just pick 2 or 3 you feel like doing, and do them the smart way. Don’t rush through. If it’s a speaking exercise, then redo it till you get a good score. Get Yocha to give you a 100 % in the sentence-building stages. Take your time, learn Chinese the smart way and you’ll remember better the pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar rules.

Try This Method

Divide your main goals into as many small goals as you can. Add them to your lists. Pick 3, take the time to tackle each of one on your to-do list, one by one and make sure you take the time to enjoy each goal you’ve finished.
I MAY NOT BE THERE YET, BUT I'M CLOSER THAN I WAS YESTERDAY
How Is It Going So Far?

We bet you’re seeing yourself making progress now, by reaching your goals each time in your learning sessions. Congrats, you’re doing great!

Speaking of them, are you comfortable with your learning sessions now? Did you find the best time for you to learn?

Stay Flexible

What works now for you may not work as well later on. That’s normal, you know. Your life changes and you may need to find a new way to fit Chinese in your schedule. The tips you just read will be always there to help you do that.

Let’s Meow

Let’s have a chit-cat, I mean, chit-chat about your progress! Come to the Nincha chat to meet other people and tell us about what you’re proud to have achieved so far!
YOUR DREAM DOESN’T HAVE AN EXPIRATION DATE

TAKE A DEEP BREATH

TRY AGAIN
Give Yourself a Time-Out

You've been working very hard since day 1! You can be proud of yourself! How are you feeling?

Have you ever noticed that when studying for too long without eating or having a break, learning new things becomes harder? If you're feeling tired or less motivated than usual, then maybe it's time for you to have a break.

It's because your brain has too much information to process. You can't focus anymore; your body is asking for a break.

Listen to your body, go eat something! Don't overdo it. Slow and steady wins the race, remember?

Take A Deep Breath and A Break

You need motivation to learn efficiently. If you feel forced to learn, you will lose motivation. Whenever you start feeling that way, stop. Breathe deeply. Have a 15-minute break, think about something else, do something different, and then go back to your Chinese learning.

Think about all the good things learning Chinese has brought to you. Look at the progress you made so far, you'll feel motivated to get back to Ninchanese!

What Can You Do During Small Breaks?

- Listen to music
- Journal
- Color
- Practice Tai Chi Chuan
- Meditation
- Have a walk
- Have a nap

There're so many other things you can do in 15 minutes! Have some me-time.

Remember, missing Chinese is a good thing. Then you'll be eager to go back in Ninchanese! :)
WHEN THE ROOTS ARE DEEP, THERE IS NO REASON TO FEAR THE WIND.
Congratulations on Making It So Far Little Dragon!

You're doing great!

You've learned of all the key techniques to remain focused and organized during your learning sessions.

You now know:

- To be consistent and regular in your learning
- To pick goals you can work towards
- To choose steps to take to reach your goals small and feasible,
- To be nice to yourself, to take it little by little, and to allow yourself to make mistakes

Apply all this advice and you'll see it'll really help you learn Chinese well!

You know, when people build a skyscraper, they need to build good foundations to make the skyscraper strong and able to resist everything. Same for you, little dragon! This advice will help you build the foundations to keep you strong and motivated to face any obstacles in your Mandarin learning. These techniques provide you with all you need to love learning Chinese and not give up.

Now that you've learned the keys to learning Chinese well and effectively, you're ready for the next part of your training program: how to find inspiration and motivation in your learning.
Part III:

Put yourself in the mindset for success

Be inspired
FEEL THE FEAR AND DO IT ANYWAY.
Overcome Your Fears

I know that when you dive into Chinese learning, it can be scary. All these characters to remember, this new way of thinking, and the new pronunciation that just entered your life, it's ok to feel afraid of something unknown and new. But it's also good to know how to take action against those fears. Fears are keeping you from fulfilling your dreams and reaching your goals. Let me show you how to overcome your fears and after that, you'll be confident enough to claim that learning Chinese is easy!

A Far-Off Look

The very first step to overcoming your fears is to be aware of what they are. Don't deny or reject your fears, they're human! And as far as I know, you're a human, right? OK, on Ninchanese, you're half dragon half person but still, fears are a natural thing for both human beings and animals. Plus, avoiding your fears will make them even bigger and scarier!

Take your notebook and go for it! Write down all your fears and questions about Chinese learning, China and more. There's nothing to be ashamed of! Recognize your fears, identify and express them. Get familiar with your fears, they mustn't be unknown to you. Review all the aspects of Chinese learning and decide whether or not you're scared of something. Get specific about what you're afraid of. This is the most important step, the identification of your fears.

Then think about them now to understand failure. Why are you afraid? How did it happen? Take a look at your thoughts, write them down, and you'll see the key to overcoming your fears is to understand them.

From now on, don't get mad at yourself for not being perfect, no one is! It is totally normal to make mistakes in the beginning. Try to learn from your mistakes, and you'll see, they'll happen less and less.

Then, you'll be ready to for the final step, to talk about them. Telling your fears out loud to someone will help you to come to terms with them.

Your Challenge!

Overcome your fears by following these different steps: be aware that you have fears, identify what you fear exactly, write them down, try to understand the failures and keep journaling all along.

Here's your mission for this week: Write down 3 to 5 fears you have regarding Chinese learning and find ways to overcome them.
THE GOAL OF MEDITATION ISN’T TO CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS.

IT’S TO STOP LETTING THEM CONTROL YOU.
Meditation Helps with Motivation

Have you ever heard of meditation? Meditation has become very popular lately in Hollywood. All the celebrities try meditation to disconnect from the outer world and redefine their priorities. It feels good to reconnect with yourself. That’s one of the benefits meditation can offer. But did you know meditation was also very good to increase your focus? Indeed, the more you practice meditation, the better you focus.

Chinese learning requires focus and motivation. Through Ninchanese quests, missions, fun exercised and adorable characters, you’ll surely find motivation. But the focus is up to you. For that, nothing beats practice.

Meditation Breaks

Try during your next small breaks to practice meditation. Close your eyes, breathe deeply and think about an object like a ball or the sea. Focus on this. Observe it. Once you’re focused enough, start letting go. Let your thoughts about Chinese learning flow.

Get rid of frustration, anger, doubts, hesitations about Chinese and find peace. Remember your goals. Clear your spirits.

The Benefits

- Think better and deeply.
- Focus on your goals and fears.
- Analyze your fears, doubts, and goals.
- Let go everything, whether it’s a positive and a negative feeling. You’ll feel relieved.
- Get rid of stress, and pressure.

Try Meditation!

Take short breaks during your day, before your learning sessions, and let go of your thoughts. You’ll see how good it feels. Try meditation, and your focus is going to increase day after day!
WHERE FOCUS GOES ENERGY FLOWS
The Importance of Building (Your) Focus

So, which dialogue did you pick? How did you deal with the distractions? It's not always easy to stay focused for a long time, so don't forget to allow yourself small breaks from time to time. Before we go on, let's make sure: do you know the difference between relaxation and distraction?

Relaxation makes you more focused on your learning. That's why breaks from time to time are so essential! Distractions, on the other hand, make you lose your focus. Potential distractions are all around you: the window, the noise in the street, your computer, your phone... Let me give you some advice so you can build your focus and rely on it when you need it the most!

Clear Your Mind

Clearing your thoughts is the best way to free your mind and get ready for a learning session on Ninchanese. A mind at ease can focus immensely better, so how about clearing our mind together?

Here's a secret: the more you keep yourself from thinking about something, the more you'll want to think about it. Letting your thoughts wander is the key to a focused mind. Having problems at work? Got exciting plans for this weekend? Are thoughts rushing through your brain? Take a couple minutes to think about them deeply! Let your thoughts flow, and take the time to think about everything that is happening to you. That's how you'll set your mind at ease.

So, clear your thoughts, it'll help you focus better and prepare for your next learning session.

Avoid Distractions

Mind clear? Good. Now, let's tackle distractions. Don't worry, little dragon, I'm not asking you to study in a cave removed from technology and the modern world. I just have a tip to help you focus if you're easily distracted by websites. Here's what you can do:

- Close all the tabs you know are going to tempt you. Block some websites if needed. Or use a plugin that will do that for you.
- Go full screen. (F11 button on your keyboard)
- Silence your notifications, yes, on your phone too!
- Schedule your learning session.
- Set a timer to time your learning session.

Once you've done all that, you'll be ready to learning Chinese with a strong focus!

Put Yourself "In the Zone"

Another proven technique to focus yourself when you feel your thoughts wander is to listen to alpha waves. Music using alpha waves helps stay focused by acting on your brain. It's totally safe and scientifically proven. Look for alpha waves music to keep you in the zone. If alpha waves aren't your thing, try background sounds and noises, they work great for focus.
Your Turn Little Dragon!

For the next 3 days, try to focus 10 minutes on Ninchanese without doing anything else. Set a timer and after these 10 minutes, you'll be able to do everything you want, including checking your favorite social network. Yeah! Keep on building your focus, Little Dragon, and you'll be able to reach all your goals!
CHALLENGE
ACCEPTED!
Focused Work: Your Week’s Challenge!

You now know all the secrets to building your focus like the great Master Yocha does. Therefore, I think you’re ready for a challenge! Next time you go onto Ninchanese, here’s your mission:

- Pick one of Baimei’s dialogues
- Practice this dialogue 3 times
- Your goal: Get a score of more than 60% in the end

This challenge will help you figure out if you can stay focused, and show you that you can do great things when you put your mind to it. And if you can't remain focused while practicing, then you'll know what you have to work on.

So, what do you say, challenge accepted?

Take a deep breath, picture your goal inside your head and fly little dragon!
THE MASTER MAY TEACH, BUT PROGRESS IS UP TO THE HARD WORK OF THE STUDENT.
Progress Is Within Your Reach

So, which dialogue did you pick? Aren't you glad you did that hard work? It's rewarding to see yourself progress.

In Chinese, there's a very famous quote saying:

师傅领进门，修行在个人。

Shīfù lǐng jìn mén, xiū xíng zài gèrén.

The master may teach, but progress is up to the hard work of the student.

What great inspiration, don't you think?

Master Nincha Will Teach You

Ninchanese guides you in your learning: it teaches you all the vocabulary you need, helps you discover the grammar rules and practice to improve your Mandarin pronunciation. But, learning the content is up to you. Nincha, Yocha, and Baimei definitely are your mentors, but they won't study for you. That's something you must do yourself. Because you're the master of your own ship, little dragon, and the learning is all yours.

Improve Your Skills on Your Own

You're the only one who can decide how far you want to go. Then you decide how. You set your own terms: You choose when, and how long you're going to learn. Find a method you like to organize your learning sessions and stick to it! Progress is within your reach. You just need to do it.

Upgrade Your Skills

Learning a language requires several skills, and you want to make sure you're up to speed in all of them. So, it's good to sometimes pinpoint areas you want to improve and focus on upgrading those for a time. Choose what you need to work on and give your skills an upgrade. There's nothing more rewarding than hard work that pays off.

Consolidate Your Skills

Explore what you learn! Consolidate your skills by going on tangents, it's a fun part of the adventure. Like a word you just learned? Go look at the other words it's in, see the components in it, learn what it means, see it used in context; it'll strengthen your knowledge of that word. Be curious, live and explore life in Chinese, listen to Chinese music, watch TV shows in Chinese and you'll see it'll help you memorize everything more easily!

Try It Out!

Start with a plan. Grab your notebook, make yourself a nice hot drink and think about how your learning is going. Is there an area you feel less comfortable with? Maybe your listening comprehension is improving in bounds, but your speaking skills are lagging behind? Make that a priority you'll work on in your next study session! Progress is within your reach.
WE ARE WHAT WE REPEATEDLY DO. EXCELLENCE, THEN, IS NOT AN ACT, BUT A HABIT.
Meowsome Tip Alert: Space Up Your Life

Previously, we talked about how you could improve your skills on your own, to go where you want. This all made us think of a cool tip we wanted to give you.

What You Usually Do

Let’s imagine you just learned 10 new words. You’ve been practicing them on Ninchanese and the Nincha Machine is helping you remember the words and characters lastingly by giving you a nudge when it’s time to repeat them. But what after your session? You just go back to your normal life until the next session, right. Understandable, but definitely improvable! Can you guess how? To learn Chinese properly, you need to surround yourself with as much Chinese as possible. If you hear people speaking Chinese all day long, in total immersion, you can improve your understanding. That’s good if you have the chance to live in China, but if you don’t, how can you be surrounded by Chinese all day long? Perfect timing to teach you my nifty tip:

Turn the words you learn into a habit. How?

Adapt the Spaced Repetition System in Real Life

Write down the new words and characters you just learned on notes. Then pin them everywhere on your walls. You’ll see how much seeing the words all the time will help you remember them!

If you’d rather, you can also use this technique to pin the characters on their corresponding actions or objects. For instance, if you learn the words:

香蕉 - xiāngjiāo - banana: pin the word on bananas you have at home.

牙刷 - yáshuā - toothbrush: pin 牙刷 on your toothbrush

Each time you see the object, pronounce its name in Mandarin aloud. By associating the Chinese words with their corresponding objects in real life, then you’ll remember them better. You’ll also get more chances of getting your reviews 100% right.

See how this tip works? Isn’t this a great way to create immersion and surrounded yourself with Chinese all day long when you’re not on Ninchanese, even if you’re not in China?

Learning Chinese characters is really important and if you want to know more about them, check out this post: How many Chinese characters do I need to learn?

Try It Out for Yourself

Ready to give this meowsome tip a try?

1. Take 3 new words you’ve learned today and write them down on 3 post-its. Then pin them on a wall, your mirror or somewhere you’ll be passing by often.
2. Write down the word 牙刷 - yáshuā - toothbrush and pin it on your toothbrush! Every time you’ll brush your teeth, you’ll be reminded of that word and trust me, you’ll remember that Chinese word forever! Go Little Dragon!
YOU WANT TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MASTER AND A BEGINNER?

THE MASTER HAS FAILED MORE TIMES THAN THE BEGINNER HAS EVEN TRIED
Failure Is the Mother of Success

So far, we've seen that motivation, focus, dedicating time and hard work are essential to succeed in learning Chinese. But something is missing in that winning formula: failure. Wait. What?

You read right. Failure. Sometimes, learning a language can be difficult and it may be hard to feel good about making mistakes. But here's something you need to know: it's OK to get it wrong sometimes! Not only that, but mistakes are necessary to making real progress in Chinese.

In fact, the Chinese say:

失败是成功之母
Shībài shì chénggōng zhī mǔ
Failure is the mother of success

Why You Need to Fail
Failing is important because it's integral to your learning process. Making mistakes has many benefits I bet you didn't expect. Here's what failing from time to time can bring you:

- **Experience**: understanding your mistake makes you improve
- **Knowledge**: you'll know how to avoid repeating the same mistakes
- **Strength**: you can run into obstacles, stand up again, go forward and try again.
- **Motivation**: all you can do after failing is to bounce back and improve!

Embrace Failure

In life, there are small failures that encourage you to go further and try again until you succeed: it's called learning. It's OK to not reach 50% in one of BaiMei's dialogue on your first try. You faced a small setback. We know it's not easy to admit you failed, but it's no biggie, you're still alive and nothing bad happened. You'll try again, improve and gradually get better at it.

Ups and downs are great because they make you experience the Chinese language and not be just a viewer. Once you're in a “down” moment, you'll enjoy the “up” moments that comes after even better.

Adjust Your Goal

When you fail at something, take this opportunity to think about why that happened. It's not because you didn't reach your Chinese learning goal as fast as you wanted to that you failed terribly. Maybe you were being a bit too demanding with yourself and set unrealistically high expectations? Failing is the sign you may need to adjust your goals, change your routine or how you organize your learning method. Ninchanese will be waiting for you, ready to adapt, so once you have your new action plan, you can practice anywhere you.
Today's Task

Embrace your flaws and failures little Dragon and you’ll be in better conditions to learn Chinese! Fail and learn from your failure, know yourself better and it will teach you to be stronger and will give you experience and knowledge. Pick an exercise in Ninchanese, practice as usual and if you fail at something, observe what your mistakes are. Then practice again and try to improve! :) I believe you can do it Little Dragon!
KEEP SMILING AND GOOD LUCK WILL COME TO YOU
Think Positive

Accepting failure is not a piece of (moon) cake! How do you recover from falling or making a mistake? Well, you can start by keeping this Chinese proverb as your mantra or go-to positive sentence:

笑口常开，好运自然来!
Xiào kǒu cháng kāi, hǎo yùn zìrán lái

Keep smiling and good luck will come to you

Good Things to Come

Think positive and positive things will come to you. Keep a positive outlook on bad things as much as possible. Find the goodness in bad things and it’ll be easier for you to accept making mistakes. Remember also that a smiling person is more attractive than a grumpy one. People would rather spend time with someone smiling than someone pouting! ;)

Just like in Chinese, think positive: you can do it, you can get more than 50% in the speaking stages. Send out positive vibes and positive things will come your way. I’m sure you’ll make it! And if you don’t, then try again until you succeed. Never give up and keep smiling!

Be Healthier!

According to studies, positive thinking has an impact on your brain and body. In short, thinking positive and smiling makes you healthier. People that think negatively tend to fall ill more often than optimistic people. So, if you want to stay healthy you need to think positive as much as possible.

Today’s Mission

Smile and think positive, then you’ll be able to do everything you want! Want to be fluent in Chinese? Or want to get a perfect in Ninchanese’s sentence-building stages? Tell yourself you can do it! Never mind the mistakes, just trust yourself and you’ll succeed. Fail again. Fail better. Succeed.
CONFIDENCE IS LIKE A MUSCLE, THE MORE YOU USE IT, THE STRONGER IT GETS.
Become More Confident in Chinese

Motivation is key to becoming a great Chinese speaker, but you know what else is important? Confidence! You need to feel confident enough to dare talk to someone in Chinese and practice. It can be scary, at first, to talk Chinese in front of strangers, you may be afraid of being mocked or observed. But if you don't try, you'll never reach your goal. Don't let shyness rule your fluency!

I can't give you a tip to build confidence that will work like magic in a minute. There's no such thing. But I can show you the path to successfully overcome shyness and grow confident.

Get A Vaccine!

For some diseases, you can get a vaccine. What happens when you do? When you get a vaccine, small particles of the disease are injected into your body to make you used to the disease. Little by little, your body grows accustomed to it and learns to fight it. That way you'll never suffer badly from this disease. Take the same approach with shyness. Identify your problem and face it: you want to familiarize yourself with it so you can better overcome it. Say, you don't dare speak Chinese because you're afraid of being mocked. There, it's said. Once you've faced the cause for your shyness, you can deal with it.

Get Out of Your Comfort Zone and Try

To get rid of too much shyness, the best cure is to leave your comfort zone, little by little. Take small steps, so you’re confident enough to reach them. Just add a pinch of danger, of unfamiliar to each step. The goal is to get out your comfort zone, little by little. Seize every opportunity you get to try to speak Chinese.

Try just a little 你好 to the Chinese you meet. If you don't try, you'll never improve. Next time you could try 你好吗? Do it, step by step. It feels good.

Remember that “Improve your skills on your own” advice? Well, it has the same aim. You need to improve your speaking skills. You have a secret tool to train and practice: Ninchanese’s speaking stages. Whenever you’re about to meet Chinese speakers, practice first on Ninchanese and then use that to try to present yourself in Chinese. Or try to ask something in Mandarin you learned on Ninchanese. Get my point?

Your Mission to Be More Confident in Chinese

Get out of your comfort zone and dare to speak even if it's 1 or 2 words in Chinese! Try to find solutions to say goodbye to shyness. Take small steps.

1. Head to a Chinese shop in your town and dare to say 你好 to the sellers. Don't be afraid, little dragon, you would love to hear a few words in your mother tongue too if you were them.
2. Say 你好 and next time you'll try to say 谢谢 xièxiè (thank you) and 再见 zàijiàn (goodbye). Great, you've started your journey to be confident enough to say full sentences.
SIMPACT, PATIENCE, COMPASSION. THESE THREE ARE YOUR GREATEST TREASURES.
Patience Is a Virtue

Did you dare talk to someone in Chinese? How did it go? If you made mistakes while speaking, don't worry about it. You tried and that's a great step forward. Don't be too demanding with yourself. All you need is to keep on practicing and be patient. As dear Confucius once said:

“Patience is a virtue”

I know it's hard to be patient sometimes, that is why Confucius calls it a virtue. It's a good quality to have when learning as it makes you enjoy your Chinese learning journey.

Not quite there yet? Let me tell you a secret, you can be as patient as a tortoise too with a little bit of practice.

Build Your Patience

So how can you build your patience?

- Stick to your schedule and Chinese learning plan.
- You won't be tempted to do something else or learn too much at a time.
- Convince yourself you can do it.
- You will be fluent! It's just a matter of time. Look at yourself in a mirror and say these exact words: “I'm strong enough. I will be fluent. I can do it.”
- Face your fears
- As said in the advice “Overcome your fears”, get to know your fears and control them.

Fears bring dark feelings; you need to remove that darkness from your learning sessions.

Keep Dark Feelings at Bay

Keep fear, anger or any thoughts of self-doubt away. These are your enemies. How do you fight them? Do or think about something that makes you happy. You'll be fluent soon, that's good news, isn't it? Think positive! Once the dark feelings are gone, you can enjoy the time you spend learning Chinese better.

Stop and Smell the Roses

To enjoy your journey, even more, take the time to appreciate all the steps you're taking. Remember, it's not just about the outcome, it's also about the journey. Take the time to live out your learning experience. Pause for a while and observe your journey. Can you see all the words you've already learned and the progress you've made? That's awesome! Slow the motion, rushing into things will make you impatient and you'll forget to take pleasure in what you're doing. So, enjoy every little success and take the time to celebrate them!

Your Mission Little Dragon!

Little Dragon, you have it in you to make it. Push away dark thoughts, stick to your routine and learning plan, and always believe you're strong enough to make it. You are! Look at yourself in the mirror once a day and say “I will be fluent”. Write down your feelings and thoughts in your notebook and remember to enjoy your success.
THERE IS NO PATH TO HAPPINESS: HAPPINESS IS THE PATH.
Borrow Jet Li’s Recipe for Success

Did you try to build your focus? Did Confucius's proverb help you? I bet you’re on the right path to building patience! It takes time, but don’t worry you’ll master it soon. That reminds me of another Master. The notorious Jet Li. For him, having good energy and never feeling let down no matter what were key. Here's what he said:

“During training, you need to think about happy things. If you're angry, then you're like, ‘Grrr,’. I can guarantee the bad energy inside is bothering you. Even if you train for 2 hours, it will still be bothering you for the other 22.”

Jet Li knows that relieving his stress before practicing makes his sessions more efficient. Borrow from Jet Li's principles for your Chinese learning sessions! Think positive during the learning sessions, it's important. It helps you remain focused, motivated and patient, which helps you learn more easily.

Have Fun Learning

Thinking positive also applies to how you're learning: are you enjoying the way you’re learning?

Make it something you look forward to doing. Although speaking Chinese to the level you wish is the goal, make sure you're also enjoying the journey. Don't let your goal stop you from appreciating what you’re doing and living what you’re learning. If you’re happy and having fun while you learn, you don't see time fly by and learning becomes much easier. This is something we strongly believe and want to give you in Ninchanese. Happy learning is just more fun.

Your Mission

Remember Jet Li's wise words little dragon: think happy things and feel happy when practicing Chinese. They'll help you stay focused and master Chinese!
LIFE IS BETTER WITH FRIENDS
The More, The Merrier!

Little dragon, one more piece of advice before you fly off on your own. Once you've said yes to new adventures, find old and new friends to join you on them. The more, the merrier, especially when it comes to learning Chinese.

Turn Your Friends into Your Chinese Learning Cheerleaders

In life, whenever you feel a bit down, the first persons you reach out for help are your friends or relatives. If you're feeling unmotivated, talking to your friends about your Chinese learning goals can and keeping them updated is a good idea. They'll know how to cheer you up and advise you when you feel down.

Or into Learning Buddies

If you have a friend that is also learning Chinese, you two will make an excellent learning duo. What's best that doing something you love with a friend? You can help, support each other and play Ninchanese together. It's way more motivating to learn Chinese when you're doing it with a friend. Especially when you can battle in the Ninchallenges. Who's going to win?

What If You Have No Friends That Are Learning Chinese Too?

It's easy to make friends and share your journey with other learners of Ninchanese's community. All you need to do is to head to the Nincha chat to meet other learners just like you.

Your Challenge

Head to the Ninchanese chat and introduce yourself to the other learners. They'll be glad to meet a Chinese learner like them.

Your second mission: play a Ninchallenge a day! Bonus points if you play with someone from the chat!
Closing Words

Little dragon, you've done well. You now know everything you need for your journey to learn Chinese in the best possible way.

Congrats! You’re ready to fly! Brilliant new adventures await you in Chinese, once you take your first step!

The Real Secret

As you see, there’s no secret that will teach you to learn Chinese super-fast in 30 days or 30 hours. That all depends on you. Your approach, your learning style, your perseverance and your motivation. The learning you put in.

What you have in your (virtual) hands are the keys to learning well, maximizing your study sessions so you learn in the most efficient way possible.

Because that's how you’ll learn the language you want to learn.

Believe in Yourself, Get Started, Organize Yourself and The Rest Will Go Fine.

Use Ninchanese and you'll know you have a strong learning partner to learn on. Every step of the way our Chinese Teaching Cats will be with you, accompanying you in your learning, helping you progress and to answer your questions.

Learning Chinese is a journey, and like every journey, there'll be ups and downs.

A goal, a positive mindset, focus, motivation, a strong desire to feel and live the language, and not hide behind fear and excuses are what you need to reach your dream.

Keep this playbook near you, and reread it regularly, especially when you're feeling a little discouraged, or demotivated, or stuck.

You'll always find in it a new way to look at things and a new lesson to apply to yourself. Renewed inspiration and motivation to help you continue towards your goals of speaking Chinese.

For the rest and what to learn in Chinese, check out https://ninchanese.com

Have fun learning Chinese!

Yours meowfully,

The Nincha Team