

Chinese 101: Phone Setup Guide

Setting up Chinese (Traditional) typing and Skritter for character practice

Part 1: Typing Chinese (Traditional) on Your Phone

Both iPhone and Android let you add a Chinese keyboard for free. Use the Pinyin layout — this is the input method we use for this class.

iPhone (iOS)

1. Open Settings → General → Keyboard → Keyboards
2. Tap Add New Keyboard
3. Select Chinese, Traditional
4. Choose Pinyin – QWERTY (shown as 繁體拼音) — this is the option to use for this class
5. Tap Done

To type: tap the globe icon (bottom-left of the keyboard) to switch to Chinese, or tap-and-hold it to choose from a list.

Tip: if a Pinyin syllable uses “ü,” type “v” instead — it produces the same result.

Android (Gboard)

1. Open any app you can type in and tap into a text field
2. Tap the Gboard settings icon, or go to Settings → System → Languages & input → On-screen keyboard → Gboard → Languages
3. Tap Add keyboard
4. Search for and select Chinese (Traditional)
5. Choose the Pinyin layout (not Zhuyin or Cangjie)
6. Tap Done

Switch keyboards while typing by holding the space bar and sliding to Chinese, or tapping the globe icon.

If Gboard's Traditional Chinese Pinyin option seems limited on your phone, try the “Google Zhuyin Input” app from the Play Store as a backup — it also supports a Pinyin layout for Traditional characters.

Note: phones often list Simplified Chinese first — make sure to choose “Chinese, Traditional” specifically.

Part 2: Setting Up Skritter

Skritter is the app we'll use to practice writing Chinese characters by hand. It gives you instant feedback on your stroke order and helps schedule reviews so you retain what you learn.

Set up your account

1. Download the Skritter app from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play (Android). Skritter also works at skritter.com in a browser.
2. Open the app and create an account with your email address.

3. Go to account/subscription settings and enter the activation code provided by your instructor (check your email). This unlocks all premium features on your account until it expires in August 2027.
4. Join the class by opening this link and logging into your Skritter account: see link below. Enter your real name when prompted so your instructor can match your account to you.
5. In study settings, set the character set to Traditional and the reading display to Pinyin.

Join the UPS Chinese 101 Classroom: <https://skritter.com/classrooms/5654047264210944/join/875007>

How to practice

- Study/Learn: new words are introduced with audio, the definition, and an animated stroke-order demo.
- Review: due cards resurface automatically (spaced repetition) — write, recall the tone, and/or the definition.
- Practice Pad: a free space to doodle or practice any character without it counting as a review.

A short daily session (5–10 minutes) is usually enough. The app tracks your retention over time so you can see your progress.

A couple of reminders

- Each student needs their own individual Skritter account before joining the classroom.
- Double-check your settings are set to Traditional characters and Pinyin, since Skritter's defaults can vary.