

# Tone Change Rules in Mandarin Chinese

## 1. THIRD TONE

V + V → / + V

A third tone followed by another third tone changes to the second tone. If there are three or more third tones in a row, change every other third tone before the last.

When followed by a first, second, fourth, or neutral tones, a third tone should change into a half third tone (that is, a tone that falls and does not rise).

## 2. NEUTRAL TONE

The neutral tone, when following the first, second and fourth tones is pronounced low. Ex: 爸爸. However, when following the third tone, it is pronounced high. Ex: 奶奶

## 3. Bù 不

Bù (meaning "no") is pronounced in the fourth tone when it stands alone.

ˋ + ˋ → / + ˋ

It is also pronounced in the fourth tone when it precedes a first, second, or third tone. However, it is pronounced in the second tone when it precedes a fourth tone.

## 4. Yi 一

Yi (meaning "one") is pronounced in the first tone when it stands alone.

- + ˋ → / + ˋ

It is pronounced in the fourth tone when it precedes a first, second, or third tone. However, it is pronounced in the second tone when it precedes a fourth tone

