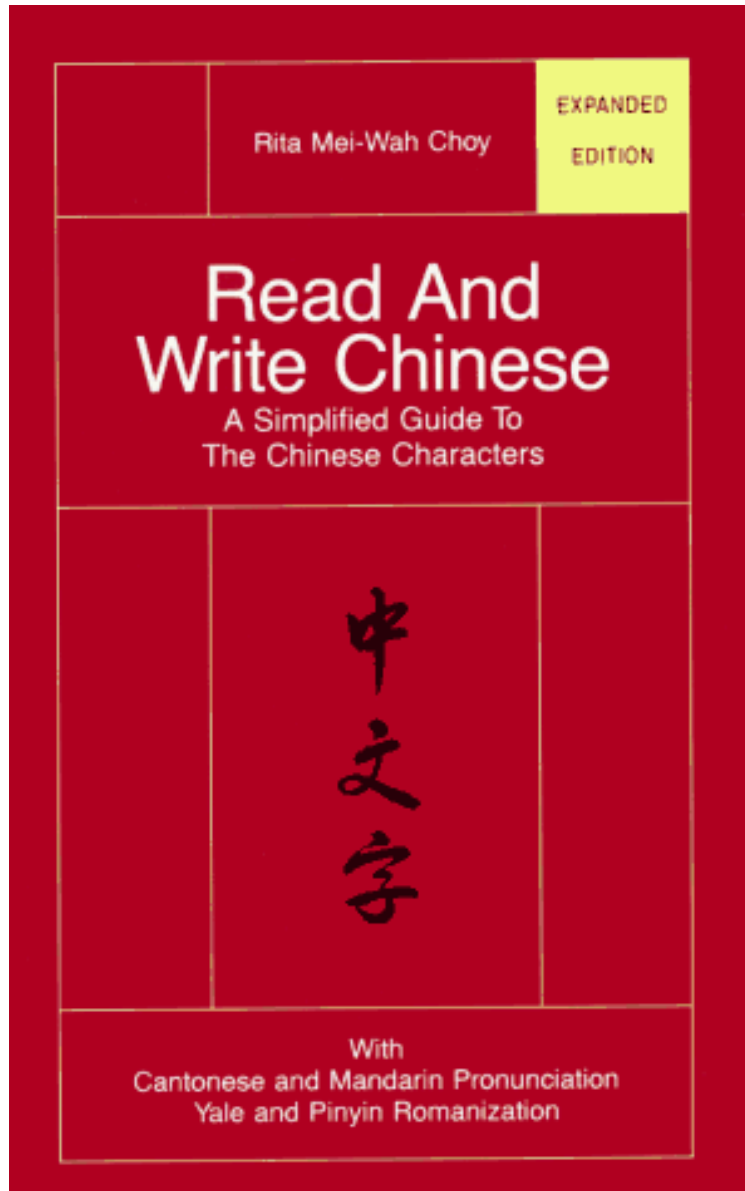


Read and Write Chinese: A Simplified Guide to the Chinese Characters

Rita Mei-Wah Choy

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Rita Mei-Wah Choy : Read and Write Chinese: A Simplified Guide to the Chinese Characters before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Read and Write Chinese: A Simplified Guide to the Chinese Characters:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. More important now, than ever
By Everything Stops at Half Past 3 for Tea
I gave this book 4 out of 5 stars because there are typo's and the "how to" draw the characters are small and hand written. I'm using this book to learn to read and write in chinese. I find this book very useful and I believe it's very important because mainland China is in the process of phasing out Cantonese as a language. Cantonese speakers read in traditional chinese which is complete characters versus simplified chinese which is a form of short hand that was instituted by chairman Mao. Chairman Mao was a poor farmer who wasn't educated and had trouble learning to read and write. He decided to "simplify" the written word and invented simplified chinese. Taiwan, Hong Kong, and all the Western Nations use traditional chinese. I believe this book is very important because we're beginning to lose a language that introduced chinese culture to the western world. People have very short memories, they don't know what they have until it's gone. Walking through Chinatown in San Francisco, it was evident that books with traditional chinese was being quietly phased out and in the very near future it will be impossible to find books written with whole words. This book is more valuable now because it will be rare to find books like this that can teach you chinese in both languages.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not without its drawbacks, but a great reference
By Alex Boylston
Although a bit shorter than I expected, "Read and Write Chinese" does its job by providing an exemplary job of selecting, categorizing, writing, and pronouncing traditional Chinese characters that students are bound to encounter in their studies. One of the selling points of this book, at least to me, was the fact that it included both Mandarin and Cantonese (Yue) pronunciation of the characters featured in it. It is hard to find a book about Cantonese that has characters spelled out phonetically, much less one including actual characters themselves. If you are a student of Cantonese or a student of Mandarin curious about Cantonese (like me), this book is an absolute must-have and an indispensable guide that helps fill in some blanks left by courses. For students of Mandarin, this book is both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing because of the detail paid to organization and quick reference to characters. The book has four plus indexes, enabling a student to look up a word that they want to know by radicals, number of strokes, Mandarin reading, Cantonese reading, and even English translation. It is almost impossible to not find a basic character you are looking for in this book. Earlier in the review, I stated that the book used traditional Chinese characters. This is the curse. While I personally enjoy traditional characters more than simplified ones due to their culture and complexity, they are not exactly practical to learn anymore if you want to travel to or live in mainland China (If you want to live in Hong Kong or Taiwan, however, then by all means ignore learning simplified characters). This book, in its preface, mentioned that simplified characters were "beyond the scope of this book," which is essentially telling you to pursue outside resources or supplements for learning simplified characters. Now, the previous statement about does not mean that you should not buy this book and instead focus on simplified characters. Any person learning Mandarin Chinese (Cantonese only use traditional characters, so go buy yourself a copy of this book if you are learning Cantonese) needs to be well-versed in simplified AND traditional characters to get around. Usage of each varies frequently by region, so why would you want to not know how to read a store front written in simplified characters or a restaurant menu written in traditional characters? You need to learn both to function in China. As a student who is only being taught simplified characters, I feel that I am missing out sometimes. With this and other supplements, I now feel like I can learn all of what Chinese has to offer. My only other drawback about this item is their diagrams for stroke order. I feel that it would have been more effective to stretch the book out from 13 characters a page to maybe 6 or 7 to just make those diagrams larger and easier to distinguish. Otherwise, this is a fantastic book for looking up traditional characters. You will not regret buying it!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great resorce for learning Chinese.
By Lensman
A very useful Chinese dictionary for students. Includes Mandarin and Cantonese definitions for English words. Also, the Chinese text is written large enough to see clearly and shows the order of strokes in writing them properly. The only downside is that it deals with single character words... which is why I would also recommend the companion book entitled, "Understanding Chinese" by Choy, which presents compound words in the same format as this book.

Book by Choy, Rita Mei-Wah

Language Notes
Text: English, Chinese