

Colloquial V.S. Textbook Chinese Pronunciation

Part 1

这: zhè/zhèi

In most cases, you can pronounce it as “zhèi” or “zhè”, for example,

这个: zhège/zhèige this

这些: zhèxiē/zhèixiē these

这样: zhèyàng/zhèiyàng this way

这边: zhèbiān/zhèibiān this way

这地方: zhè dìfang/zhèi dìfang this place

这孩子: zhè háizi/zhèi háizi this kid

But for “这里” and “这么”, you can only say “zhèlǐ” and “zhème”.

这里: zhèlǐ here

这么: zhème so

Part 2

那: nà/nèi

Apart from “nà”, you can often hear “nèi” in spoken Chinese, for example,

那个: nàge/nèige that

那些: nàxiē/nèixiē those

那样: nàyàng/nèiyàng that way

那边: nàbiān/nèibiān that way

那地方: nà dìfang/nèi dìfang that place

那孩子: nà háizi/nèi háizi that kid

Note that for “那里” and “那么”, we usually say “nàlǐ” and “nàme”.

那里: nàlǐ there

那么: nàme so

Part 3

哪: nǎ/něi

The third word “哪” has two pronunciations, “nǎ” and “něi”. When “哪” is followed by a measure word, <https://www.everydaychinese.com>

you can pronounce it as either “nǎ” or “něi”, for example,

哪个: nǎge/něige which one

哪位: nǎwèi/něiwèi who is it

哪天: nǎtiān/něitiān which day

哪些: nǎxiē/něixiē which

Note that you have to pronounce it as “nǎ” in two situations.

Situation 1: When “哪” is used instead of “哪里”, for example,

Nǐ zhù zài nǎr?

你住在哪儿? Where do you live?

Nǐ nǎr téng?

你哪儿疼? Where is it painful?

Situation 2: When “哪” is used in a rhetorical question to negate something, for example,

Wǒ bú xìn, nǎ yǒu zhèyàng de shìr?

我不信, 哪有这样的事儿? I don't believe. Things like this don't happen.

Yí liàng chē nǎ néng zuò de xià zhème duō rén?

一辆车哪能坐得下这么多人? How could a bus carry so many people?

Part 4

谁: shéi/shuí

“谁” has two pronunciations, “shéi” and “shuí”. In spoken Chinese, most people tend to say “shéi”, for example,

Zhè shì shéi de bǐ?

这是谁的笔? Whose pen is this?

Nǐ zhīdào tā shì shéi ma?

你知道他是谁吗? Do you know who he is?

Part 5

喂: wèi/wéi

We learned that “喂” can be used to say hello, for example,

Wèi, nǐ qù nǎr?

喂，你去哪儿？ Hello, where are you going?

Wèi, nǐ de qián diào le.

喂，你的钱掉了。 Hey, you dropped your money.

But when we make a phone call, 90% of people would say “wéi”, for example,

Wéi, qǐngwèn Lǐ xiānsheng zài ma?

喂，请问李先生在吗？ Hello, may I speak to Mr. Li?

Wéi, māma.

喂，妈妈。 Hello, mom.

Part 6

一会儿: yíhuìr/yìhuǐr

Apart from saying “yíhuìr”, we also say “yìhuǐr” in daily conversations, for example,

等一会儿: děng yíhuìr/děng yìhuǐr Wait a sec.

一会儿见: yíhuìr jiàn/yìhuǐr jiàn See you around.