

小 黃 鸝 鳥  
Xiao Huang Li Niao  
[ɕiau huaŋ li niau]  
Small Oriole bird  
Little Oriole

小 黃 鸝 鳥 兒 呀, 你 可 曾 知 道 嗎?  
Xiao huang li niao er ya, ni ke ceng zhi dao ma?  
[ɕiau huaŋ li niau ər ja ni ky tsəŋ tʂɿ dau ma]  
Small Oriole bird ah, you to be able already to know that?  
Little Oriole, do you know?

馬 靴 上 繡 著 龍 頭 鳳 尾 花。  
Ma xue shang xiu zhe long tou feng wei hua.  
[ma ɕyɛ ʃaŋ ɕiou tʂy lɔŋ tɔu fəŋ wei hua]  
Horse boots on to be embroidered with dragon head phoenix tail pattern.  
Our riding boots are embroidered with motifs of dragon head and phoenix tail.

兩 朵 花 兒 呀 繡 一 隻 鞋 呀,  
Liang duo hua er ya xiu yi zhi xie ya,  
[liɑŋ duo hua ər ja ɕiou ji tʂɿ ɕiɛ ja]  
Two individual pattern ah to be embroidered one single shoe ah,  
Two motifs are embroidered on each boot,

共 有 四 朵 花。  
gong you si duo hua.  
[gɔŋ jɔu sɿ duo hua]  
total to have four individual flowers.  
totalling four motifs.

我 和 你 兩 個 四 朵 湊 成 了 八 朵 呀。  
Wo he ni liang ge si duo cou cheng liao ba duo ya.  
[wɔ hɿ ni liɑŋ gɿ sɿ duo tsɔu tʃəŋ liau ba duo ja]  
Me and you two unit four individuals to gather to make eight individuals ah.  
You and me, two fours make a total of eight.

Notes:

- Diphthongs and triphthongs that begin with ‘u’ or ‘i’ should have a [w] or [j] glide element even as each vowel is sounded, for example:
  - o ‘xiao’ is both [ɕiau/ɕjau]; ‘niao’ is [niau/njau]; ‘liao’ is [liau/ljau]
  - o ‘huang’ is both [huan̩/ hwan̩]
  - o ‘xiu’ is both [ɕiou/ ɕjou]
  - o ‘hua’ is both [hua/hwa]
  - o ‘liang’ is both [liɑŋ/ ljɑŋ]
  - o ‘duo’ is both [duo/ dwɔ]
  - o ‘xie’ is both [ɕie/ ɕje]
- The ‘e’ of ‘er’ is a sliding vowel that is connected to the ‘u’ final of ‘niao’ and ‘a’ final of ‘hua’ that precedes it
  - o For ‘niao er’, there is almost a [w] glide connecting the words, as in [niau(w)ər]
  - o For ‘hua er’, the jaw continues to release as it goes toward ‘er’
  - o In both cases, as you go toward the [ər], curl the tongue inward & slightly release the jaw as the sound slides
- Give special attention to the [ɤ] vowel of ‘ke’, ‘zhe’, ‘he’, and ‘ge’, which requires simultaneously having the mouth open with slight ‘smile’ of [e], a flat tongue slightly raised in back, and raised soft palate
- Carefully distinguish between certain related but distinct initial consonants
  - o ‘x’ and ‘sh’ – The tongue position is different for ‘xue’ and ‘shang’ [ɕyɛ ʃɑŋ]
    - For ‘xue’, flatten & raise your tongue blade near the mouth roof – there is a [w] slight glide as in [ɕy(w)ɛ]
    - For ‘shang’, the tip of the tongue curls backward & its bottom touches the mouth roof
  - o ‘c’ and ‘ch’ - The tongue position is different for ‘cou’ and ‘cheng’ [tsou tʃəŋ]
- The [ɔ] vowel for ‘gong’ [gɔŋ] is open but also slightly higher and more forward, with an element of the [ʊ] vowel included
- The [ɔ] vowel of ‘duo’ [duo] is only slightly opened from the close [o] vowel; it should be midway [o/ɔ]
  - o Form a slight ‘w’ in the lips before intoning the ‘d’
- Remember that the [ɿ] and [ʅ] symbols used for ‘si’ [sɿ] and ‘zhi’ [dʒʅ] were created to represent specific Mandarin ‘i’ sounds and are not officially recognized as IPA
  - o Here, the ‘i’ of ‘si’ is a short buzzed continuation – resonate the vocal folds on the preceding ‘s’ consonant, slightly longer and more forward than ‘si’ of ‘possible’
  - o The [ʅ] vowel of ‘zhi’ [dʒʅ] is higher and slightly more forward than ‘er’ final syllables in English words like ‘father’;
    - It is a long buzzed continuation – resonate vocal folds on preceding ‘zh’ consonant, sung similarly to a prolonged first syllable of ‘germ’
  - o Refer to the Mandarin Pronunciation Guide for details