



WILLYCHINA

名字

The Chinese Naming Kit

How to choose one, and why it works.

50 girls' names · 50 boys' names · 124 surnames

How Chinese names are actually built

The sound test, and what to avoid

A shortlist worksheet · printable A4

How a Chinese name is built

Three things surprise people first, and all three change how you choose.

1 The family name comes first.

In 李雪 (Lǐ Xuě), 李 is the family name and 雪 the given name. Written the other way round it reads as a mistake, the way “Smith John” does in English.

2 Given names are one or two characters.

Two is the modern default. One is shorter and blunter, and was more common a generation or two ago. Three-character given names are rare and read as unusual rather than elegant.

3 Every character is chosen for its meaning.

There is no fixed list of “names” the way there is in English. A Chinese name is assembled from ordinary characters, which is why it can be read like a short phrase — 雪 is simply *snow*.

What this means for you. You are not picking from a catalogue. You are choosing one or two characters whose meaning you want, that sound right next to the family name, and that a Chinese speaker would read as a name rather than as a word. The rest of this kit is about those three tests.

On generational names. In some families the middle character is fixed for everyone of the same generation, set in advance by an elder or a family record. If you are naming into a Chinese family, ask — it is not something to guess at, and getting it right matters a great deal to the people who keep it.

Girls' names

50 names, grouped by what they carry. Each is a real name in current use.

NATURE

雪	Xuě	snow — purity and quiet beauty
兰	Lán	orchid — refinement and grace
晓彤	Xiǎotóng	dawn glow — the red of early morning
若兰	Ruòlán	like an orchid — graceful and pure
晴	Qíng	clear, fine weather — bright skies

BEAUTY & GRACE

美丽	Měilì	beautiful and lovely
婉清	Wǎnqīng	gentle and pure
丽华	Lìhuá	lovely and resplendent
玉	Yù	jade — precious, pure and beautiful
美琳	Měilín	beautiful as fine jade

VIRTUE & WISDOM

慧敏	Huìmǐn	wise and quick-minded
思颖	Sīyǐng	thoughtful and bright
慧	Huì	wisdom and intelligence
婉如	Wǎnrú	gentle and gracious in manner
贤	Xián	virtuous and worthy

梅	Méi	plum blossom — resilience in winter
莲	Lián	lotus — purity rising from the mud
紫萱	Zǐxuān	purple day-lily — the flower said to dispel worry
秋月	Qiūyuè	autumn moon — serene and clear
露	Lù	dew — fresh and delicate

雅婷	Yǎtíng	elegant and graceful
语嫣	Yǔyān	charming speech and a captivating smile
婷婷	Tíngtíng	graceful and slender — doubled for affection
婉	Wǎn	gentle, graceful and tactful
颖	Yǐng	clever and gifted

静怡	Jìngyí	calm and contented
淑芬	Shūfēn	virtuous and fragrant
静	Jìng	serene, quiet and composed
晓慧	Xiǎohuì	understanding and wise
婉莹	Wǎnyíng	gentle and lustrous, like jade