

Chinese Internet Slang: 18 Words to Get You Chatting Online Like a Native

fluentu.com/blog/chinese/chinese-internet-slang/

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Just as English speakers use a whole dictionary of special words, contractions, memes, and acronyms when chatting online, Chinese native speakers do the same.

While it may seem confusing at first, **Chinese internet slang** can be very rewarding to learn and opens up a whole new sphere of communication with fellow Chinese netizens.

What's more, Chinese internet slang isn't that hard to learn. By following a few simple rules, and retaining knowledge of only a few obscure memes, you'll be chatting like a native in no time.

Let's get surfing!

Contents

Our Chinese Internet Slang List

In the table below, we've listed the top 18 Chinese internet slang used, followed by their *pinyin* and English translations.

Once you've familiarized yourself with the list of Chinese internet slang, we've broken them down into five categories for you: explaining their forms, and functions, as well as example sentences on how and where they can be used.

Chinese	Pinyin	English
NB 牛逼	<i>niú bīa</i>	cool or awesome
7451 气死我了	<i>qì sǐ wǒ le</i>	I am very angry.
ZF 政府	<i>zhèng fǔ</i>	government
TMD 他妈的	<i>tā mā de</i>	F'ing
GCD 共产党	<i>gòng chǎn dǎng</i>	communist party
GG 哥哥	<i>gē ge</i>	brother/bro
88 bā bā 叭叭	<i>bā bā</i>	Bye! Bye!
995 jiù jiù wǒ 救救我	<i>jiù jiù wǒ</i>	Help me!
520 wǒ ài nǐ 我爱你	<i>wǒ ài nǐ</i>	I love you.
土豪	<i>tǔ háo</i>	UNKNOWN
富二代	<i>fù èr dài</i>	rich, second generation
火星人	<i>huǒ xīng rén</i>	somebody from Mars
P民	<i>pī mǐn</i>	rabble
凸	<i>tū</i>	emoji (giving the finger)
五毛党	<i>wǔ máo dǎng</i>	50-cent party
FQ 愤青	<i>fèn qīng</i>	UNKNOWN
和谐/河蟹	<i>hé xié/hé xiè</i>	River Crabs
草泥马/尕你妈	<i>cǎo ní mǎ/cào nǐ mā</i>	The Grass-mud Horse

1. Chinese Alphanumeric Slang

Probably the most common form of Chinese internet slang, and indeed the most confusing at first glance, is “**alphanumeric**” slang. This form of slang replaces Chinese characters or words with Roman capital letters or numbers and requires an advanced level of Chinese

language skills.

The primary purpose behind this kind of slang, similar to English, is to reduce the number of keystrokes needed to build a word.

For the capital letter acronyms, each letter corresponds to the first letter of a *pinyin* syllable.

NB 牛逼—*niú bīa* (Cool!) or (Awesome!)

Alternatively, for numeric slang, numbers are used for words whose *pinyin* sounds somewhat similar to the character the number represents.

7451 气死我了—*qì sǐ wǒ le* (I am very angry.)

88 bā bā 叭叭—*bā bā* (Bye bye!)

Example: 我必须睡觉！88！*wǒ bì xū shuì jiào! 88!* (I have to sleep! Bye-bye!)

995 jiù jiù wǔ 救救我—*jiù jiù wǒ* (Help me!)

Example: 995！我不知道怎么做！*995! wǒ bù zhī dào zěn me zuò* (Help me! I don't know what to do!)

520 wǔ èr líng 我爱你—*wǒ ài nǐ* (I love you)

Example: 我觉得你真可爱—520！*wǒ jué de nǐ zhēn kě ài – 520!* (I think you are really cute – I love you!)

The best way to practice and identify this slang type is to see it used in authentic Chinese situations. For that I recommend [FluentU](#)!

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< 第一次约会 (Dì yī cì yuēhuì)



谢谢，张伟。这些花真好。
 Xièxiè Zhāng Wéi Zhèxiē huā zhēn hǎo

Thank you, Zhang Wei. These flowers are wonderful (lit. really good).

00:45 / 01:12

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2. Internet Slang Acronyms

ZF 政府 —*zhèng fǔ* (government)

Example: 那个ZF太腐败。 *nà ge ZF tài fǔ bài* (The government is too corrupt.)

TMD 他妈的 —*tā mā de* (F'ing...) Literal: your mother

Example: 我的朋友TMD醉了。 *wǒ de péng you TMD zuì le* (My friend is f'ing drunk.)

GCD 共产党 —*gòng chǎn dǎng* (Communist Party)

Example: GCD不让我们抗议。 *GCD bú ràng wǒ men kàng yì* (The Communist Party doesn't let us protest.)

GG 哥哥 —*gē ge* (brother/bro)

Example: 我的GG有一位非常漂亮的女朋友。 *wǒ de GG yǒu yī wèi fēi cháng piào liang de nǚ péng you* (My bro has a very beautiful girlfriend.)

3. Insulting Slang

As with many languages, Chinese has a huge number of specific slang insults used in its internet slang. While it might not be a good idea to use these slang words toward anyone, they are worth knowing for the odd occasion when you are truly annoyed at somebody.

Additionally, and probably more importantly, it is very useful to know these kinds of words to be able to follow the comments of other people—especially when they are complaining online.

General Insults

土豪 —*tǔ háo*: (unknown translation): Rich, uncultured people, materialistic people.

富二代 —*fù èr dài* (rich second generation): the sons and daughters of well-connected business and political figures. Their extravagant lifestyles are mocked by the general population.

火星人 —*huǒ xīng rén* (somebody from Mars): Someone who is very strange, or weird.

P民 —*pī mǐn* (Rabble): Used to describe the way the Chinese government views the people.

凸 —*tū*: Due to pictographic similarity, this character functions as an emoji representing giving somebody the finger.

Political Insults

五毛党 —*wǔ máo dǎng* (50-cent party): There is a widely believed theory—with some supporting evidence—that the Chinese government pays online posters to write pro-government posts. They are known as the *wǔ máo dǎng* or “50-cent party” due to the fact that they are allegedly paid 50 cents per pro-government post.

FQ 愤青 —*fèn qīng* (unknown translation): This is a disparaging term used to describe overly nationalistic young people who buy into government propaganda more than others.

4. Metaphoric Chinese Slang

One final category of slang seen on the internet is that which is intended to fool the censors. China’s internet is notoriously controlled and restricted. Alongside the censorship of political topics, the Chinese government also actively censors words that it considers to be overly rude or insulting.

Posts using such banned words find themselves rapidly removed from social media, and should a user draw too much attention from the authorities, they could find their online accounts removed too.

The good news is, that native Chinese speakers have developed a whole new vocabulary of metaphoric, homophone-based slang to get around this kind of censorship.

This slang has developed into its own unique internet meme, called “The 10 Mythical Creatures of Baidu,” with Baidu being China’s main search engine: equivalent to Google. These mythical creatures form the names of strange animals, which are pronounced in very similar ways to censored words.

Among the most common mythical creatures are the “**River Crabs.**”

Pronounced in Mandarin as *hé xiè*, this word sounds very similar to the word Harmony/Harmonize (*hé xié*).

The word “harmonize” began to be censored due to the fact that it was simultaneously used to describe something being actively censored (eg. “This popular Weibo account was harmonized”). This led to people on the Chinese internet using the slang form in its place.

和谐/河蟹 —*hé xié/hé xiè* (River Crabs)

Another very well-known Chinese mythical creature is the so-called “**Grass-mud horse.**”

Pronounced in Mandarin as *cǎo ní mǎ*, this word sounds very similar to 你妈 (*cào nǐ mā*), a crude Chinese insult meaning “f&\$k your mother.”

This slang has grown to become a popular meme of its own in China: used to ridicule government censorship of often mundane content.

草泥马/你妈 —*cǎo ní mǎ/cào nǐ mā* (The Grass-mud horse)

5. Where Chinese Slang Can Be Used

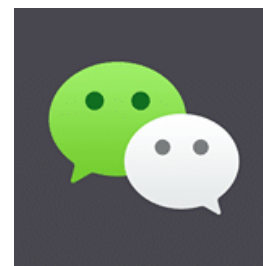
Now that you’ve learned many new Chinese internet slang words, let’s take a look at where it’s appropriate to use them, and when you would be better served to use more conventional Chinese vocabulary.

WeChat/Weixin

Currently, the most likely place a Chinese speaker or learner would encounter internet slang is on 微信 (*wēi xìn*) also known by its English name **WeChat**.

This is a hugely popular messaging and social media app, which has taken China by storm in the last few years.

Rather than mobile phone numbers, Chinese people are now more likely to exchange WeChat IDs and use this service to keep in touch with each other. Given that this is a popular form of informal, interpersonal communication in China, it's a hotbed of Chinese online slang.



Social Media

Like the rest of the world, social media portals are immensely popular in China.

Websites like *RenRen* (similar to Facebook) and *Weibo* (similar to Twitter) are some of the most common ways that Chinese people communicate online.



Much of the internet slang currently in use originated on social media sites like these, and they continue to be filled with unique expressions, which you would never find in offline media.



While public profile pages are somewhat more formal, slang is particularly prevalent in the associated chat functions of these sites.

Dating Apps

It would be an understatement to say that Chinese people take dating (and searching for partners) seriously. As such, there are a huge number of popular dating apps, ranging from the more conventional, to so-called "hookup" apps like 陌陌 (*Mò mò*).



Within these apps, Chinese speakers generally use a large vocabulary of internet slang and popular double entendres to communicate and flirt with the opposite sex.

On such apps, knowledge of slang is key to avoiding embarrassing faux pas or accidentally offending a prospective partner.

Now that you've become familiar with several Chinese internet slang words, you're also equipped with knowledge of the basic rules of this slang vocabulary. If a word comes up online that you're not familiar with, you'll be able to quickly identify if it's slang or just a wholly new word.

So what are you waiting for?

Get online and start using Chinese internet slang—a whole new world of lingo is waiting for you!