

earworms

Chinese Memory Hooks

A large part of language learning, especially in the first stages has to do with memorising words and phrases and the sounds of those words and phrases. Of course, there is a lot more to learning than just memorising, and earworms introduces the learner to the so-called lexical approach to language learning, i.e. decoding the language (breaking down the language into its component parts and comparing the word order with English), practising them, and then reconstructing them into sentences. Nonetheless, memorising is a prerequisite for learning.

The earworms basic approach to this is rhythmic repetition, which has been proven time and time again to be extremely effective. After listening several times, these words and phrases are rhythmically burned into your long-term memory. More importantly, you have the correct original pronunciation ringing in your ears, and it doesn't take much to jog your memory.

To complement and support this, you might want to try some of the techniques used by the memory masters, associating the sounds of the words with other familiar words and visual images. Of course, you have to have listened to the songs beforehand.

There are no hard and fast rules about the kind of associations to make, as long as they help you to remember – sometimes the weirder, the better! And they don't need to sound exactly like the word or term you are trying to remember, maybe they just rhyme or the first few letters are the same, putting your memory on the right track.

For example, I recall the Greek for 'excuse me' with 'messy oil heater' because it sounds something like 'me-see-oreeter'.

The hook links in to your auditory cortex which will call up the sounds of the words stored there by listening to the earworms songs.

Here, for each language we have provided you with a starter pack of memory hooks, but as each individual thinks differently, it is probably better to make up and use your own – indeed using your imagination in this way enhances the learning process. It is also a bit of fun!

If you would like to share your own personal memory hooks with other earworms learners, please send them to info@earwormslearning.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours creatively,

the earworms team.

English

Chinese sound

Memory hook

and sugar	her tung	And sugar on her tongue.
tea	cha	A cup of cha . Of course, the word cha comes from Chinese.
beer	pee jio	Think of Joe peeing after drinking too much beer !
water	shwey	Feng – Shui = wind - water
wine	po tao jio	Think of 'po ta to' wine or a glass of wine with a potato in it.
red	hong	Imagine Hongkong painted red .
white	buy	Where can I buy white wine?
a bottle	ee ping	Ping a bottle with 'e' written on it!
a glass of...	ee bay...	Imagine buying a fantastic antique Chinese glass on Ebay for a song.
Cheers.	gan-bay	Gan-bay rhymes with cham-pagne. Cheers/cham-pagne/gan-bay!
Don't mention it.	buh ker chee	Thanks for tying a bow in my kerchief . Don't mention it for the bow-kerchief!
Sorry.	dway buh chee	Sorry. Duane burnt cheese!
no	may yoh	No, may you not!
to eat	chrr	Sounds like ' chew '.
Enjoy your meal.	wake o how	Imagine someone asleep in the restaurant. Waiter: "Wake up now (wake o how) and enjoy your meal."
How much...?	door shao...	Door shout . Someone shouts through the door : " How much money? "
one	ee	ee for easy. Number one is eesy .
two	are or 'R'	Think of two 'R's 'RR' standing for Rolls Royce.
three	san	Think of three tiny grains of sand .
four	sue	A four year old girl. Sue .
five	awe	All the fives : 555!
six	leo	Leo the lion with a tag round his neck with the no. 6 on it.