

The number 4 in Chinese sounds like the word for 'death' and is therefore considered to be an unlucky number. To avoid the use of this 'unlucky' number, it is not unusual for buildings to have no fourth floor which can make for an interesting elevator ride!

Numbers 0-5

0 líng = zero

1 yī = one





2 èr = two

3 sān = three

4 sì = four

5 wǔ = five

Pronunciation

1st Tone	2nd Tone	3rd Tone	4th Tone	Neutral tone
				
a single, constant pitch, almost like you are singing	a rising tone	a dipping tone	an 'angry' tone, abruptly falling in pitch	Neutral tone words are said lightly and without emphasis
yī, sān	líng	wǔ	èr, sì	



Extension

Because numbers and especially prices are so important, Chinese people have a finger counting system to back up the words. You can see photos and a discussion of these hand signals at:

www.laputanlogic.com/articles/2004/05/11-0001.html