

4. Family Members & "?" (To Be)

New Vocabulary

Character	Pinyin	Literal Character Meaning	English Usage
是	shì	be	am/is/are
弟弟	dìdì	younger + younger	younger brother
哥哥	gēge	older + older	older brother
谁	shéi	who	who
绿	lǜ	green	green
姓	lǚ	(surname)	surname Lǚ

Possessive Phrases with Family Members

Chinese	Pinyin	Character-by-Character	English Usage
我妈妈	wǒ māma de	I + mother + mother + possessive	my mom's
我的妈妈	wǒ de māma	I + possessive + mother + mother	my mom
他妈妈	tā de māma	he + possessive + mother + mother	his mom
她爸爸	tā de bàba	she + possessive + father + father	her dad
我们妈妈	wǒmen de māma	I + plural + possessive + mother + mother	our mom
他们妈妈	tāmen de māma	he + plural + possessive + mother + mother	their mom

Important Sentence Patterns

Chinese	Pinyin	Character-by-Character	English Usage
他是我的弟弟	tā shì wǒ de dìdì	he + be + I + possessive + younger + younger	He is my younger brother

Chinese	Pinyin	Character-by-Character	English Usage
我是哥哥	wǒ shì gēge	I + be + older + older	I am the older brother
我是 Jack	wǒ shì Jack	I + be + Jack	I am Jack
他是谁	tā shì shéi?	he + be + who	Who is he?
他们是谁	tāmen shì shéi?	he + plural + be + who	Who are they?

Pronunciation Notes

J, Q, X with ü Sound

Character	Pinyin	Notes
ü	lǚ	Uses ü sound
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- The ü sound is written as 'u' after j, q, x
- The dots are only written in other cases (like in 你 nǚ)

Grammar Points

? (shì) Usage:

- Links subject with predicates
- Used for identification
- Cannot be used alone like English "yes"

Possession Patterns:

- Both Person + family member + 的 and Person + 的 + family member are correct
- 们 (men) indicates plural
- 的 (de) indicates possession

Looking Ahead

Next concept: 认识 (rèn + shi) = recognize + know → to know/recognize someone

Common Pattern Notes

- Family terms are doubled (哥哥 , 弟弟) with second character in neutral tone
- Possessive marker 的 comes after the owner
- Plural marker 们 comes after the pronoun
- Question word 谁 (shéi) comes at the same position as the answer would be

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