

Nǐ Xǐhuān Football mā?

Chinese words are written in symbols (“characters”) that represent meaning rather than sound, and the Chinese writing system consists of thousands of these characters. When writing **foreign names** in Chinese, a selection of these characters is used based not on what they mean, but on how they sound. In the table below you will see how some names of English football teams are written in Chinese. The transliteration system is not entirely straightforward however:

- (1) Generally each character represents a syllable (V, CV or CVC), but
- (2) some English consonant combinations are not possible in Chinese, so they are split into two syllables, e.g. “spin” might be “s(u)+pin”.
- (3) Chinese does not have the same set of vowel and consonant sounds as English, so some sounds are mixed up – you probably know that R and L sound the same to a Chinese speaker. There are a few other pairs like that.
- (4) Finally, sometimes meaningful characters are used instead of phonetic ones. For example, in the Chinese for “Liverpool”, the sign for “pool” is used – it’s not pronounced “pool”.

Study the following examples. Remember that the renderings are phonetic: they are based on pronunciation, not spelling.

阿森纳	Arsenal
阿斯顿维拉	Aston Villa
博尔顿	Bolton
切尔西	Chelsea
富尔姆	Fulham
利兹联队	Leeds United
莱斯特城	Leicester City
利物浦	Liverpool
曼彻斯特城	Manchester City
米德尔斯堡	Middlesbrough
纽卡斯尔联队	Newcastle United

(1) Identify the following four names from the list of seven possible answers given on the right.

a.	曼彻斯特联队	Birmingham Blackpool Charlton Doncaster Everton Manchester United Preston
b.	物阿米姆	
c.	埃物顿	
d.	查尔顿	

(2) How do you think the place name **Boston** would be written in Chinese?

(3) Fill in the table below showing the correspondence between individual characters and English sounds

森	
	KA
西	
	LA
顿	