

BÓYÌ 博弈 · WEEK 15

diào hǔ lí shān

调虎离山

Lure the tiger away from the mountain.

Monday morning your boss calls you in: a new project, big and public, his idea, and he wants you to lead it. Everyone calls it a promotion. Three months later the project is cancelled, and someone else sits at your desk. Nobody did anything wrong. In 199 AD a general emptied a city the same way, without a single siege — he just made the man in it want to leave. This week you'll learn to write four characters: 调, 虎, 离, 山.

Stratagem No. 15 of 36 · one story, one lesson, four characters.

本周学：调虎离山 · 练字：调、虎、离、山

THE GOVERNOR WHO TOOK EVERYTHING



The camp gate closed on the treasure he had just taken.

In 199 AD, the old warlord died. His officers took his troops and treasure west, to join the young man winning.

At the edge of Lujiang they were stopped. The governor there, Liu Xun, took the troops, the treasure, and everything they carried.

He did not fight anyone. He just arrived first.

Sun Ce heard. He had an army. He did not use it. He sent a message instead: let us be allies.

《三国志》卷46 孙破虏讨逆传+裴注《江表传》（袁术部众挟棺投刘勋于皖城）

THE EMPTY MOUNTAIN



The city gate opened from the inside, and the guard lamps went out one by one.

In Lujiang, the new troops had to be fed. The governor of Lujiang had stores, and now twice the mouths.

The answer came back: the families at Shangliao owe us thirty thousand bushels. Go and collect.

He came back with a few thousand bushels, and one sentence: rich families, no guards. Then the young general said the same thing, in his own voice: Shangliao is worth taking. Go yourself.

The governor of Lujiang took his main force and went.

The young general split his army. Eight thousand men waited on the road home, under his cousins. Wan was taken the same night.

He came back with nothing, to a city with someone else's flag on it. The mountain was empty because the tiger walked out of it.

《三国志》卷46 孙破虏讨逆传+裴注《江表传》（策劝勋攻上繇、轻军夜袭拔庐江）

WHY IT WORKED

Step	Who vs who	中文·pinyin	Result
First	wait for bad weather	天 tiān	Wait until the sky is against him
Second	use people to pull him	诱 yòu	Use people to move him
Third	the road back	连 lián	Come back and tie him

等到天时对他不利，再用人事把他引出来；前面难走，就往回收、把他牵住。调虎离山 diào hǔ lí shān

THE ORIGINAL LINES

《三十六计·第十五计 调虎离山》

The Thirty-Six Stratagems, No. 15 — "Lure the tiger away from the mountain"

1

dài tiān yǐ kùn zhī

待天以困之，

Wait for adverse weather

2

yòng rén yǐ yòu zhī

用人以诱之，

use people to lure him out.

3

wǎng jiǎn lái lián

往蹇来连。

When the road is hard, turn back and draw him in.

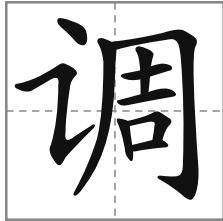
Fourteen characters, one idea: move the man, not the wall. This is not about a tiger. It is about the ground under him.

原文十四个字。这一计跟老虎没关系，讲的是他脚下那块地：动的是人，不是墙。

PRACTICE · 调 DIào · 虎 Hǔ

Follow the numbers. Write each stroke in order.

先描一遍分解格，再在田字格里写5遍。「调」这里读 diào，不读 tiáo。

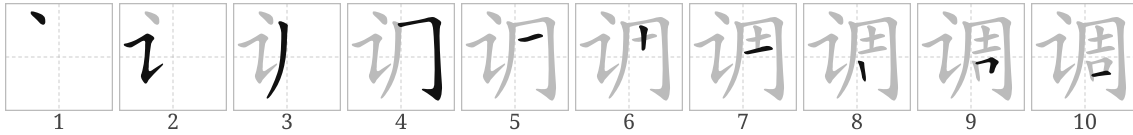


diào

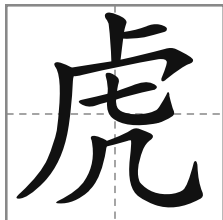
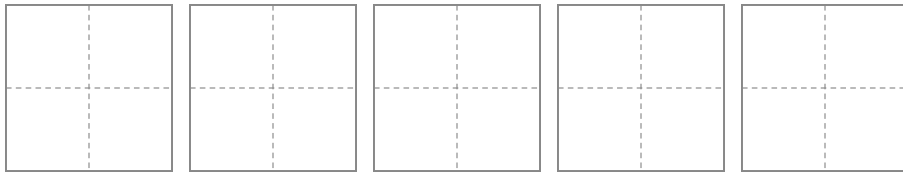
to move

10 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN

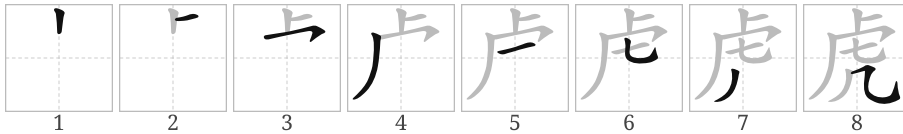


hǔ

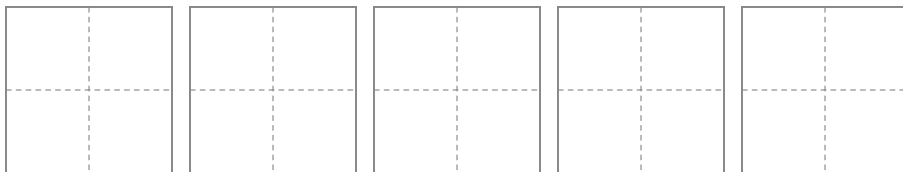
tiger

8 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN



PRACTICE · 离 LÍ · 山 SHĀN

Same order again. Write slowly, and say the sound out loud.

写完 4 个字，再回到第 7 页连写整句。

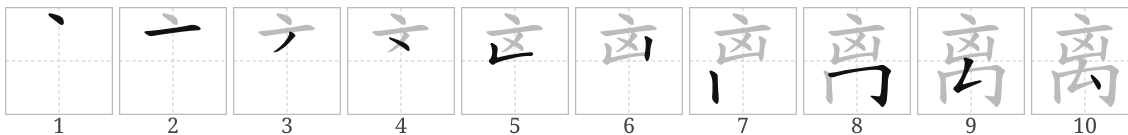


lí

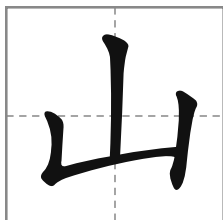
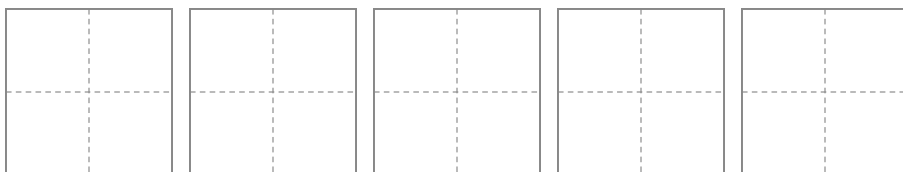
to leave

10 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN

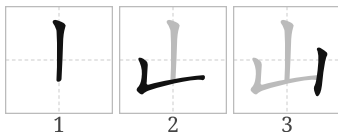


shān

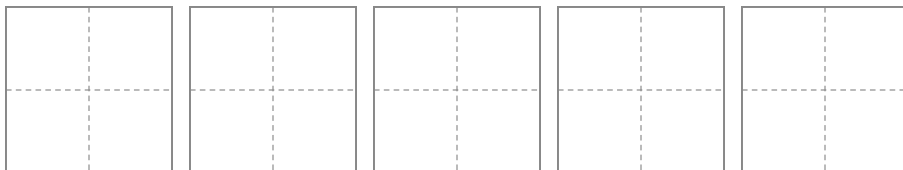
mountain

3 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN



PRACTICE · 调虎离山 DIÀO Hŭ LÍ SHĀN

Trace the first row, then write the whole phrase four times. Say it out loud each time.

diào	hǔ	lí	shān
调	虎	离	山

调虎离山 · Move the tiger, leave the mountain.

THREE MORE WORDS

kōng

1 空

empty.

shān kōng le yīn wèi lǎo hǔ zì jǐ zǒu le chū qù

山空了，因为老虎自己走了出去。

The mountain was empty because the tiger walked out of it.

The seat is empty because he left it, not because you pushed him.

wèi

2 位

seat; position.

shéi zuò wǒ de wèi zi

谁坐我的位子？

Who gets my desk?

Ask about the seat before you accept the title.

dì

3 地

ground; place.

huàn dì bú huàn rén

换地，不换人。

Change the ground, not the man.

On his own ground he is stronger than his numbers.

SPOT IT · STOP IT 识破 · 防住

Back to that Monday morning. Nothing he told you was a lie. He moved you, and the chair you left filled itself. That is the whole move: not a trick, a change of address.

调走 <i>Move him: he walks out himself</i> tā zì jǐ zǒu chū qù 他自己走出去 <i>He walks out himself</i> yǐ wéi shì tā zì jǐ de zhǔ yì 以为是他自己的主意 <i>And thinks it was his idea</i> ān jìng de 安静的 <i>Quiet</i> 	推开 <i>Push him: you both end up in the open</i> dōu zhàn dào míng chù 都站到明处 <i>Both out in the open</i> shéi dōu kàn de jiàn 谁都能看得见 <i>Everyone sees</i> dǎ jià 打架 <i>A fight</i>
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Two ways to empty a chair. Move him: he walks out himself, and thinks it was his idea. Push him: you both end up in the open, and everyone sees. The first one is quiet. The second one is a fight.

想让一把椅子空出来，只有两条路。让他走：他自己走出去，还以为那是他的主意。推开他：你们俩都站到明处，谁都看得见。第一条是安静的，第二条是打架。

SEVEN DAYS, SEVEN QUESTIONS

Day 1 Which offer in your life looked like a promotion — and what did it move you away from? 调 diào

Day 2 What did you hand over the week before you left? 交 jiāo

Day 3 Who gets your desk if you say yes tomorrow? 位 wèi

Day 4 What is the thing you would be offered — and is it real? 真 zhēn

Day 5 Which meeting are you still holding in their room, at their table, on their clock? 地 dì

Day 6 Where are you the tiger being walked out of your own mountain? 山 shān

Day 7 Which door would you walk through this week — and is it a real door? 门 mén

WEEK 15 REVIEW

Yoko
Read the 36 Stratagems with Yoko

第 15 计 / 36

调虎离山

diào hǔ lí shān

可以请，不许许下你不做的承诺。

待天以困之，用人以诱之，往蹇来连。

古 THEN	等天困他 WAIT FOR TIME	→	用人引他 DRAW HIM OUT	→	回路牵住 CHANGE THE ROAD
理 THE LOGIC	他的主场 HIS OWN GROUND	→	换个地址 CHANGE HIS ADDRESS	→	机会必须真 A REAL OFFER
今 TODAY	更香的机会 A BETTER OFFER	→	谁坐我的位子 WHO GETS MY CHAIR	→	不是升是挪 YOU ARE BEING MOVED
正用 DO IT CLEAN	搬出他的屋子 LEAVE THEIR ROOM	→	中性场地 NEUTRAL GROUND	→	换地不换人 CHOOSE THE GROUND

The one-page summary of this week. 本周一图总结。

1. In one sentence: why did the governor leave his own city?

2. What does 调虎离山 mean, in your own words?

3. Which of this week's four characters can you write now without looking: 调, 虎, 离, or 山?

4. Which meeting are you still holding on someone else's ground?

Invite, yes. Promise nothing you will not do.

可以引，不能骗。

Kě yǐ yǐn, bù néng piàn.