

# A Lexicon of Chinese Correspondence of Literary Style with English

## Translation and Notes

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### **Preface**

The format of traditional Chinese correspondence had changed from time to time. During the Qing dynasty, a well-accepted norm was finalized and it consists of rules regarding the layout and structure, as well as a set of vocabulary and phrases frequently used by letter authors. It remained predominant in the early Republic period and even today, some people are still following the norm in writing letters, although the majority in mainland China have accepted a new letter format as a result of the “Vernacular Movement.”

Since they are closer to our time, the letters of the Qing and early Republic are better reserved than earlier dynasties and they are important materials for the research of Chinese history of the time, a significant transition from imperial China to modern China. In comparison with the earlier letters, however, most of the letters of the above-mentioned period have not yet been published and edited, let alone English translation. Similarly, researchers can find in reference books the

meanings of the words and phrases used in the letters of earlier dynasties but they can hardly find the Qing and Republic words and phrases in current reference books. In this consideration, we edit this lexicon focusing on the letters of the Qing dynasty and early Republic period.

We wish by publishing this lexicon, we could benefit researchers and scholars who are studying various aspects of pre-modern and modern China to decode the letters of the periods.

We started this project in 2015 and the contributors of this lexicon are the students, professors, and visiting scholars of a Brandeis course called “Yin Yu Tang Documents” (Chin140a) with emphasis on decoding the letters written by businessmen of Anhui and Shanxi provinces in late Qing and early Republic period. In editing this lexicon, we have received significant supports from the Peabody Essex Museum, World Furniture Foundation, Nancy Berlinger of Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Family Correspondence Collection of the Museum of Renmin University of China, Erqian Xu of Harvard University, and many others.

We understand that the current entries of this lexicon are limited and we encourage the users to inform us if they cannot find a word or a phrase so that we can add more in the future. We also wish the users could help us correct mistakes

and errors in understanding and/or translation. In so doing, please contact Jian Wei ([jianwei@brandeis.edu](mailto:jianwei@brandeis.edu)) or Yu Feng ([yfeng@brandeis.edu](mailto:yfeng@brandeis.edu)).

### **Notes on the Use of the Lexicon**

The criterion of entry selection is simple: We hope to include words, short phrases, and long phrases frequently used in the letters of the period, but not frequently used in other forms of writings and/or hardly found in reference books.

The entries are in the conventional pinyin order followed by most of the Chinese dictionaries.

For each entry, we provide the following: 1) The traditional Chinese characters, the dominant form of correspondences of this style, and then simplified Chinese characters in parenthesis in case there differences between the two sets of characters; 2) The standard Chinese pinyin; 3) The English Translation; 4) Note (if necessary) in smaller font.

Instead of trying to find equivalent English expressions used in correspondence, we use the method of direct translation to help the user understand the original meaning of a word or phrase even though the English might seem weird.

### **Structure of Traditional Letter**

Generally, a typical Chinese letter of literary or classical style consists of the following parts:

The first part is to address the recipient. This may include the following: a) name of the recipient (usually the self-claimed literary name), b) the relationship between the writer and the recipient, and c) special respectful words based on the relationship or the job/profession of the recipient. In some letters, however, to address the recipient may move to and combined with part 10 or complimentary close.

The second part is to state the purpose of writing this letter. For example, to acknowledge to have received a letter from the recipient or express concerns about why the recipient did not respond to the writer's previous letter or letters.

The third part is to greet the recipient, usually seasonal or holiday greetings. It may also include reporting the current state/situation of the writer.

The fourth part is the main body or the substantial part of the letter whose contents vary greatly. It may express gratitude to the recipient. It may express the author's acceptance of the recipient's request, or apologize for being unable to fulfill the request by the recipient. It may congratulate the recipient's marriage, birthday, birth of children, or promotion, or express condolence for the loss of the recipient's parents, spouse, siblings, other relatives, or friends. It may ask the

recipient for help, make an appointment with the recipient, or ask clarification. It may also discuss and comment on some issues.

The fifth part is to mention attached gift or gifts if any.

The six part is to urge the recipient to reply or to comment on certain issue(s).

The seventh part is complimentary close. The most common contents are wishes.

The eighth part is to sign, often with words of self-humiliation, and date, often using traditional Chinese calendar.

The ninth part is additional remarks, usually the request for conveying regards to someone in the place of the recipient.

Some of the above-mentioned parts are optional.

While governmental correspondences are usually written in regular script, most business or personal letters are in running or cursive style. It is noteworthy that the respectful phrases in part eleven may put two Chinese characters together.

## **Notes on the Grammatical Characteristics of the Traditional Correspondence**

There are several important grammatical characteristics seen in traditional Chinese letters. First, many sentences are without subject, but we can certainly know the agent of the action or the receiver of the action by different verbs and different adjectives. For example, “respectfully submitting a letter” implies the author sent or is sending a letter to the recipient while “throwing down a letter” implies the reverse. “Grand letter” clearly indicates that this is a letter from the recipient while “an inch-short letter” clearly indicates that this is a letter sent to the recipient.

Second, similar to other traditional writings, no punctuation is used for the traditional correspondence. A unique rule is that when the recipient is directly or indirectly mentioned, the author will start a new line or leave a space for at least three characters to show respect. The rule is also good for the parents or grand parents of the recipient or high ranked authority. By contrast, when the author wants to mention oneself directly or indirectly, he or she will use half-size characters centered on the right (horizontally).

Third, the usage of some words in letters may follow different grammatical rules. For example, 並 (bing) in other writings can only connect two verbal phrases, but in traditional letters, it becomes the first choice to connect two nouns.

## A

愛鑒（爱鉴）

àijiàn

[I am writing this letter] with love for you to read.

Usually used for husband to wife at the beginning part of a letter, similar to “my darling.”

## B

把臂

bǎbì

[We shall] link each other’s arm and meet.

Usually used to express the eagerness to meet each other

把晤

bǎwù

[We shall] shake hands and meet.

Usually used to express the eagerness to meet each other

白

bái

[I] write

Usually used for addressing someone who is of a younger generation to the author.

百拜

bǎibài



Bow a hundred times

Used either at the beginning part or the ending part of a letter.

拜賀

bàihè

Bow and congratulate

拜上

bàishàng

Bow and send [this letter]

Usually used at the end of a letter

拜托之處，乞費神代辦，不勝感荷。（拜托之处，乞费神代办，不胜感荷。）

bàituō zhī chù, qǐ fèishén dàibàn, búshèng gǎnhè

Should you make painstaking efforts to fulfill what I am begging you to take care of for me, I would have no way to express my thanks enough.

寶號（宝号）

bǎohào

Your precious store/company

“Precious” is only an “empty” praising word without any substantial implication.

備荷關照，銘戢五內（备荷关照，铭戢五内）

Bèihè guānzhào, míngjí wǔnèi

Being thoroughly taken care of, [I] have inscribed [your favor/helps] in all my inner organs.

備悉壹是（备悉壹是）

bèixīyìshì

Fully and thoroughly know what [you] have said [in your letter]

敝處（敝处）

bìchù

My poor place

Usually means my institute, my department, or my office. “Poor” is an “empty” word only to show modesty.

鄙等碌碌如常，魚魚自守（鄙等碌碌如常，鱼鱼自守）

bǐděng lùlùrúcháng, yúyú zìshǒu

[I] the humble and [my] colleagues have been doing the routine jobs as usual without any creative work and simply following each other the same as a school of fish without a clear direction to move forward.

便中間詢（便中问询）

biànzhōng wèn xún

When it's convenient for you, please greet/ask [someone/something] for me.

別後縈思，愁腸日斷（别后萦思，愁肠日断）

Biéhòu yíngsī, chóucháng rìduàn

Yearning has been hanging with me since parting with you and the bitterness caused by missing is unbearable each day.

別後月餘，殊深馳繫（别后月余，殊深驰系）

Biéhòu yuèyú, shūshēn chíxì

My thought has flied afar to reach and tie with you in the deepest way since I parted with you for over a month ago.

別來良久，甚以為懷（别来良久，甚以为怀）

Biélái liángjiǔ, shèn yǐ wéi huái

It has been long since I parted with you and I miss you so very much.

丙辰

bǐngchén

The 53<sup>rd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1916, 1856, 1796, 1736, 1676, 1616, etc.)

丙申

bǐngshēn

The 33<sup>rd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1956, 1896, 1836, 1776, 1716, 1656, etc.)

丙午

bǐngwǔ

The 43<sup>rd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1966, 1906, 1846, 1786, 1726, 1666, etc.)

丙戌

bǐngxū

The 23<sup>rd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1946, 1886, 1826, 1766, 1706, 1646, etc.)

丙寅

bǐngyín

The 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1926, 1866, 1806, 1746, 1686, 1626, etc.)

丙子

bǐngzǐ

The 13<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1936, 1876, 1816, 1756, 1696, 1636, etc.)

並（并）

bìng

And

In traditional Chinese letters, authors use this word to connect two nouns, showing a sharp contrast to regular writing or speech where this word can only connect two verbal phrases.

並頌財安（并颂财安）

bìng sòng cái ān

[I] also wish you would do peacefully and smoothly in your business.

Usually used at the end of a letter.

並頌春禧（并颂春禧）

bìng sòng chūnxǐ

[I] also wish you a blessed and pleasant spring.

Usually used at the end of a letter.

並頌旅琪（并颂旅祺）

bìng sòng lǚqí

[I] also wish you a blessed and safe trip.

Usually used at the end of a letter.

並詢學安（并询学安）

bìng xún xué ān

[I] also wish you do well in school.

撥冗（拨冗）

bō rǒng

To spare your time from the midst of pressing affairs [to come for an event.]

Used for invitation or for a thank you note for the recipient's participation at the invitation of the author.

薄物

bówù  
A small gift

補壁（补壁）  
bǔbì

Cover the wall

The author of the letter uses this word to mention his/her painting/calligraphy as a gift to the recipient in a humble way.

不才  
bùcái  
“No talent”

A humble way of self-addressing

不揣委瑣，冒瀆威嚴（不揣委琐，冒渎威严）

bùchuǎi wěisuǒ, màodú wēiyán

Even though my position is so humble and my opinion would presumptuously offend your dignity, [I still want to express my thoughts to you.]

不憚煩言，有干嚴聽（不惮烦言，有干严听）

búdàn fányán, yǒugān yántīng

Putting aside my fear that my words could be considered redundant, trivial and offensive to you whose attention is highly selective for more significant issues, [I still want to tell you what I think.]

不慧  
búhuì

The not-smart person

A modest self-address

不盡欲言（不尽欲言）

bújìn yùyán

[I] cannot include [in this letter] all what I want to tell.

Usually used in the concluding part of a letter.

不另

búlìng

[I] will not write separate letters [to them.]

Usually used at the end of a letter and placed after the name or names of people related to the recipient.

不佞

búning

The not-smart and quick-thinking person

A modest self-address

不日

búrì

In no time; very soon

不日即可抵達（不日即可抵达）

Búrì jíkě dǐdá

Will arrive in very soon

不勝歡慰（不胜欢慰）

búshèng huānwèi

Cannot feel happier and more comfortable [to hear the news]

不勝盼切（不胜盼切）

búshèng pànqiè

Nothing can express my enough wishes [for your reply/action]

不一

Bùyī

[For other things I] will not inform [you] details one by one.

Used at the end of a letter.

C

裁答

cáidá

Reply with [your] decisive opinion and judgment

Used to request the recipient's reply to the sender when the recipient

蠶月（蚕月）

cán yuè

The “silkworm month” or the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

粲正

càn zhèng

Please kindly correct [my work] even though it might be just a joke in your expert eyes

Used when the sender encloses a poem or an essay with the letter to ask for the feedback from the recipient on how the poems or articles can be revised and improved.

草草不具

cǎocǎo bújù

[I am writing this letter] in a rush and cannot fully express [all what I want to tell you and/or to convey my regards to all friends in your place]

側聞（側聞）

cèwén

Something heard indirectly, rumor

曾否

céngfǒu

Have ever [done something] or not

Used in question

禪座（禪座）

chánzuò

The seat for a Zen master

A respectful way to address the recipient who is either a Buddhist master or a faithful follower of Buddhism. Used after the name of that person.

常相敘首

cháng xiāng xùshǒu

[I wish we could] meet and talk face to face frequently.

暢月（暢月）

chàngyuè

The “unimpeded month” or the 11<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

掣交

chèjiāo

A transaction/deliver is completed

Used in business letters

辰刻

chénkè

7am-9am

辰時（辰时）

chénshí

7am-9am

辰維履祺、式燕、時祉、增羊、允孚所頌。（辰维履祺、式燕、时祉、增羊、允孚所颂。）

Chén wéi lǚqí, shìyàn, shízhǐ, zēngyáng, yǔnfú, suǒsòng

[I] wish you would step on blessed land, enjoy celebrating banquets, increase your wealth, and enlarge your luckiness in this [holiday] season.

Often used for Chinese new year wish.

承賜忠言，心感何極？（承賜忠言，心感何极？）

Chéngcì zhōngyán, xīngǎn héjí?

Receiving [your] kind words of criticism, I cannot find a way to express enough thanks for [your] boundless helps.

承蒙

chéngméng

Having received [from the recipient]

承蒙存問，不勝感謝。（承蒙存问，不胜感谢。）

Chéngméng cúnwèn, búshèng gǎnxiè

Receiving [your] kind words of regards, I cannot express enough thanks.

承蒙關照，不勝感激。（承蒙关照，不胜感谢。）

chéngméng guānzhào, búshèng gǎnjī

Being take care of [by you,] I cannot express enough thanks [to you.]

承蒙關注，特此感謝。（承蒙关注，特此感谢。）

Chéngméng guānzhù, tècǐ gǎnxiè

[I am] writing to express my great thanks for receiving attention [from you.]



承蒙惠贈，衷心感謝。（承蒙惠贈，衷心感谢。）

Chéngméng huìzèng, zhōngxīn gǎnxiè

Please accept [my] hearty thanks for receiving your kind gift.

承蒙見教，獲益甚多。（承蒙见教，获益甚多。）

Chéngméng jiànjiào, huòyì shènduō

[I am] greatly benefited from the instruction you kindly offered to me.

承蒙諄諄忠告，銘感，銘感。（承蒙谆谆忠告，铭感，铭感。）

Chéngméng zhūnzhūn zhōnggào, mínggǎn, mínggǎn

Receiving [your] earnest instruction/warnings, [I] will definitely keep them deep in my mind.

呈稿

chéng gǎo

[I am writing this letter to] submit my work [as you have requested.]

Usually used at the end of a letter when the main body of the letter is a poem or an essay requested by the recipient.

呈上，乞晒正，幸幸

chéngshàng, qǐ shēnzhèng, xìngxìng

Presenting [my] work to you, I beg you could offer corrections while laughing at it. [I would deem it] a great fortune [should you do so.]

承示

chéngshì

As [your letter] indicates

承示誠摯之言，佩甚感甚。（承示诚挚之言，佩甚感甚。）

Chéngshì chéngzhì zhīyán, pèishèn gǎnshèn

Receiving your sincere words, [I] greatly appreciate and feel very grateful.

承囑各事，皆一一照辦，勿念。（承嘱各事，皆一一照办，勿念。）

Chéngzhǔgèshì, jiē yīyī zhàobàn, wùniàn

All what [you] have entrusted me to deal with have been done [by me] one after another accordingly. Please do not worry.

遲復為歉（迟复为歉）

chífù wéi qiàn

I am sorry for responding [your letter] late.

赤日炎炎，萬請珍重。（赤日炎炎，万请珍重。）

Chìrì yányán, wànqǐng zhēnzhòng

The sun is flaming. Please do take care [of yourself in such a hot weather].

敕

chì

To command/order

飭（饬）

chì

To command/order

衝襟（冲襟）

chōng jīn

Have an open mind and don't care about fame and profit

丑刻

chǒukè

1am-3am

丑時（丑时）

chǒushí

1am-3am

春光明媚，想必閤家安康。

Chūnguāng míngmèi, xiǎngbì héjiā ānkāng

Under the bright and beautiful spring sun, [I] believe [your] whole family must be peaceful and healthy.

春寒料峭，善自珍重。

Chūnhán liàoqiào, shànzì zhēnzhòng

Cold waves surge in spring and I wish [you] could take good care of [yourself.]

春日融融，可曾乘興駕遊？（春日融融，可曾乘兴驾游？）

Chūnrì róngróng, kěcéng chéngxīng jiàyou

Have you followed your high spirit to drive out to enjoy in the lovely spring days?

春雨霏霏，思緒綿綿。（春雨霏霏，思緒綿綿。）

Chūnyǔ fēifēi, sīxù miánmián

The long lasting spring drizzle makes [my] thoughts lingering for [friends I miss.]

慈鑒

cíjiàn

Read with mercy

This is placed immediately after the name/title of a respectful recipient, such as a parents (mother more likely), a Buddhist master or a caring senior.

此函閱後焚去。（此函閱後焚去。）

Cǐhán yuèhòu fénqù

After reading, please destroy this letter by burning it.

此賀旅居多福！（此賀旅居多福！）

Cǐ hè lǚjū duōfú

This is to wish you good lucks when traveling.

Used at the end of a letter.

此間近事（此間近事）

cǐjiān jìnshì

What have happened here recently

此間同人（此間同人）

cǐjiān tóngrén

People in the same field here or the same interests

此請福安！（此請福安！）

Cǐqǐng fú ān

This is to wish you great fortune and peace

Used at the end of a letter.

此頌近佳！（此頌近佳！）

Cǐ sòng jìnjiā

This is to wish you all the best in recent days.

Used at the end of a letter.

此問鵬程萬里！（此問鵬程萬里！）

Cǐ wèn péngchéngwànlǐ

This is to wish you all the best throughout your journey as the great eagle flying a thousand miles without hinder.

Used at the end of a letter.

此詢近祉！（此詢近祉！）

Cǐ xún jìn zhǐ

This is to wish you the best of luck in recent days.

Used at the end of a letter.

此祝行安！

Cǐ zhù xíng ān

This is to wish you a safe journey.

Used at the end of a letter.

此物此志也

cǐ wù cǐ zhì yě

This is exactly the same as the situation and reason [that the ancients said].

賜鑒（賜鑒）

cìjiàn

Grant me a read [of my letter]

Used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after the name/title of the recipient.

Often for recipient of the same generation/rank.

次韻（次韻）

cìyùn

Follow the rhyming words of an original poem to compose a new poem as response.

Often for responding to the poem by the recipient.

匆此

cōngcǐ

[I] am writing this letter in a rush

Used at the end of the letter, before wishes.

匆此布復（匆此布復）

Cōngcǐ bùfù

[I] am writing this letter of reply in a rush

Used at the end of the letter, before wishes.

匆匆，不盡縷述（匆匆，不尽缕述）

Cōngcōng, bújìn lǚshù

[I] am writing this letter in a rush and cannot include all the details.

Used at the end of the letter, before wishes.

篡易

cuànyì

[My] bold and immature changes [to your writing]

Used when the sender has just made corrections on the writing of the recipient.

寸緘（寸緘）

cùnjiǎn

A short letter

Used to mention one's own letter.

D

得邀賜瑋之命（得邀賜玮之命）

dé yāo cìwěi zhī mìng

To have a chance to ask for the jade award

“Jade award” is a ceremony for a glorious retirement.

大鑒（大鑒）

dàjiàn

Read in a great manner

Used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after the name/title of the recipient.

Respectful but not age/rank specific.

大痊

dàquán

Fully recovered from illness

大人

dàrén

Your Greatness/Highness

A title used for officials, parents, or someone of the same generation of the sender's parents.

大示

dàshì

[Your] great letter

大示拜讀，心折殊深。（大示拜读，心折殊深。）

Dàshì bàidú, xīnzhé shūshēn

Reading your great letter, I have been deeply convinced by what you said.

大示讀悉（大示读悉）

dàshì dúxī

[I] have thoroughly read your great letter.

大示誦悉（大示诵悉）

dàshì sòngxī

[I] have thoroughly read your great letter.

但有見示，願效犬馬。（但有见示，愿效犬马。）

Dànyǒu jiànshì, yuànxiào quǎnmǎ

As long as [you] send me an instruction [to do something, I] will be willingly following [you] as your servant the same way as a dog or a horse to serve his master.

當此春風送暖之際，料想身心均健。（当此春风送暖之际，料想身心均健。）

Dāngcǐ chūnfēngsòngnuǎn zhījì, liàoxiǎng shēnxīn jūn jiàn

I believe you are of great health both physically and psychologically on the pretty spring season with pleasantly warm breeze.

道察

dàochá

Read [my letter] with [your] profound vision

Used at the beginning of a letter immediately after the name/title of the recipient who is famous for deep and philosophical thoughts and vision

道鑒（道鉴）

dàojiàn

Read [my letter] with [your] profound vision

Used at the beginning of a letter immediately after the name/title of the recipient who is famous for deep and philosophical thoughts and insight.

道座

dàozuò

Taoist seat

Used at the beginning of a letter immediately after the name/title of the recipient who is a Taoist master or famous for deep and philosophical thoughts and vision.

得賞（得赏）

déshǎng

Receiving your precious

Usually used for a reply letter to express appreciation when receiving a gift, especially a signed book, a calligraphy or a painting, from the recipient

得書之喜，曠若復面。（得书之喜，旷若复面。）

Déshū zhī xǐ, kuàng ruò fù miàn

The happiness of receiving your letter is so great that I feel as if we were talking face to face.

得暇，望時賜教言為禱。（得暇，望时赐教言为禱。）

Déxiá, wàng shícì jiàoyán wéidǎo

[I] wish [you] would offer me [your] instructions [to me] often when [you] have spare time.

德配

dépèi

Virtuous spouse

The polite way to address other people's wives.

弟

dì

I as your younger brother

A humble way of self-addressing for male sender of the letter. The sender and recipient are of the same generation and the sender is not necessarily younger than the recipient is.

迭接

diéjiē

Received in succession

Used in a letter of reply when the sender has received more than one letter from the recipient.

丁丑

dīngchǒu

The 14<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1937, 1877, 1817, 1757, 1697, 1637, etc.)

丁亥

dīnghài

The 24<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1947, 1887, 1827, 1767, 1707, 1647, etc.)

丁艱 (丁艰)

dīng jiān

Suffer from parents' death

Often used to mention one's mourning period for one's parents. Traditionally, the period should be 3 years.

丁卯

dīngmǎo

The 4<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1927, 1867, 1807, 1747, 1687, 1627, etc.)

丁巳

dīngsì

The 54<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1917, 1857, 1797, 1737, 1677, 1617, etc.)

丁未

dīngwèi

The 44<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1967, 1907, 1847, 1787, 1727, 1667, 1607, etc.)

丁憂 (丁忧)

dīngyōu

Suffer from parents' death.

丁酉



dīngyǒu

The 34<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1957, 1897, 1837, 1777, 1717, 1657, etc.)

頂禮（顶礼）

dǐnglǐ

Kowtow (of the Buddhist way)

東日（东日）

dōngrì

The 1<sup>st</sup> day of a month

冬日

dōngrì

The 2<sup>nd</sup> day of a month; winter days

度已達覽（度已达览）

dù yǐ dá lǎn

[I] guess [you] have already read my [previous] letter(s).

端月

duānyuè

The first month of traditional Chinese calendar

頓首（顿首）

Dùnshǒu

Kowtow

Often used at the end of a letter immediately after the sender's name and the two characters are often drawn as a special symbol without space in between.

頓狀（顿状）

dùnzhuàng

Complete [my] writing [of this letter] with a kowtow.

E

噩耗傳來，不勝悲悼。（噩耗传来，不胜悲悼。）

Èhào chuánlái, búshèng bēidào

When hearing the grievous news (obituary), [I] cannot find enough words to express [my] sorrowfulness and condolence.

F

法家

fǎjiā

A leading expert whose theory/method is considered fundamental rules of the field for others to follow.

Often used to for a great poet, painter, calligrapher, or artist of similar field.

凡可效勞之處，自當盡力而為。（凡可效劳之处，自当尽力而为。）

Fán kě xiàoláo zhīchù, zìdāng jìnli ér wéi

Whatever [you] need [me] to serve for you, [I] will surely do [my] best.

煩交（烦交）

fánjiāo

Trouble to pass this letter to

Often used on envelop if the letter is not directly mailed to the recipient.

方家

fāngjiā

A person with great knowledge and/or expertise.

方命

fāngmìng

Disobey the request

An self-deprecatory expression to show that one cannot act in accordance with the request

方為正辦（方为正办）

fāng wéi zhèngbàn

Nothing else but this [as I suggest] is the right thing to do.

Used as criticism/complaint

非敝處不情（非敝处不情）

fēi bìchù bùqíng

[We reject your request] is not because [our] humble department forget the friendship [between our department and yours.]

肺腑之語，請恕直言。（肺腑之语，请恕直言。）

Fèifǔ zhīyǔ, qǐng shù zhíyán

The words coming from [my] mouth are from [my] pure and candid heart, so please allow [me] to speak in a straightforward way.

費神之處，不勝感激。（费神之处，不胜感谢。）

Fèishén zhīchù, búshèng gǎnjī

No words is enough to express [my] gratitude for troubling [you] to do things [for me].

費神之處，泥首以謝。（费神之处，泥首以谢。）

Fèishén zhīchù, nǐshǒu yǐ xiè

[I] will kowtow to thank [you] for troubling [you] to do things for [me].

費神之處，容當面謝。（费神之处，容当面谢。）

Fèishén zhīchù, róng dāngmiàn xiè

Please allow me to meet [you] in person in the future to express [my] gratitude for troubling [you] to do things for [me].

分袂

fēnmèi

parting

分手多日，別來無恙？（分手多日，别来无恙？）

Fēnshǒu duōrì, biélái wúyàng

It has been days since [our] parting. Have [you] been in good health as before? (How have you been?)

風雨同舟，願聞明教。（风雨同舟，愿闻明教。）

Fēngyǔ tóngzhōu, yuàn wén míngjiào

Since [we] are on the same boat in the wind and rain (we have experienced many difficulties together), [I] would like to listen to [your] bright instructions.

奉讀惠書，久未作復，甚以為歉。（奉读惠书，久未作复，甚以为歉。）

Fèngdú huìshū, jiǔwèi zuòfù, shèn yǐ wéiqiàn

[I] have read [your] beneficial letter and [I] am so sorry for failing to respond in time.

奉懇之事，乞速復為荷。（奉懇之事，乞速复为荷。）

Fèngkěn zhīshì, qǐ sùfù wéihè

For the matter [I] request [you to do for me], [I] beg [you] could give [me] quick response.

佛頭著糞，殊覺顏汗。（佛头着粪，殊觉颜汗。）

Fótóu zhuó fèn, shūjué yánhàn

My work would be like a stain to your publications the same way as a bird to leave a drop on the head of a Buddha statue and [if it is published], I would feel abashed. Self-abasement for contributing an article

夫人、小女均此請安（夫人、小女均此请安）

Fūrén xiǎonǚ jūncǐ qǐng'ān

Both my wife and my daughter ask me to convey their best regards [to you].

福安

fú'ān

Blessed and peaceful

Wish when writing to parents and elder members of the families.

福履

fúlǚ

Blessed and receiving great income

Wish when writing to parents and elder members of the families.

伏乞諒鑒為幸。（伏乞求谅鉴为幸。）

Fúqǐ liàng jiàn wéixìng

[I] would deem it a great fortune and kowtow if [you] could accept [my] apology and read [my letter].

伏維（伏维）

fúwéi

kneeling on the ground with face down to wish

伏維攝衛（伏维摄卫）

fúwéi shèwèi

In great respect, [I] wish you can take care and keep in good health.

福綏（福绥）

fúsuí

Blessed and peaceful

Wish when writing to parents and elder members of the families.

福田安康

fútián ānkāng

Blessed, peaceful, and healthy

Wish when writing to parents and elder members of the families.

福祉

fúzhǐ

blessings

服政

fúzhèng

Fifty years old

甫

fǔ

Just, not until

斧正

fǔzhèng

To make corrections [on my writing]

附筆致意

fùbǐ zhiyì

[Someone] also asks me to convey regards [to you].

Usually used at the end of a letter.

附呈

fùchéng

Enclosed

附呈微物，聊佐喜儀，勿棄為幸

Fùchéng wēiwù, liáozuǒ xǐyí, wùqì wéixìng

Enclosed with this letter is a tiny thing and [I wish it could] be an addition to the wedding gifts [you received from people]. [I] would feel lucky if [you] do not dislike it.

G

干請（干请）

Gānqǐng

Please help [me do something].

干求

Gānqiú

Please help [me do something].

敢不遵命

Gǎnbù zūnmìng

[I] dare not disobey [your] request/order.

感荷高情，非語言所能鳴謝。（感荷高情，非语言所能鸣谢。）

Gǎnhè gāoqíng, fēi yǔyán suǒnéng míngxiè

[I] cannot find words to express [my] thanks to receive the lofty friendship and passion [from you].

高暑

gāoshǔ

“High Heat” (the sixth month of the traditional Chinese calendar)

臯月

gāoyuè

The 5<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

閣下（阁下）

géxià

Under your lofty building (Your Mightiness)

Usually added after the name/title of the recipient to show respect.

哿日

gěrì

The 20<sup>th</sup> day of a month

各盡綿薄（各尽绵薄）

gèjìn miánbó

Everyone contributes a meagre strength to help

庚辰

gēngchén

The 17<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1940, 1880, 1820, 1760, 1700, 1640, etc.)

庚申

gēngshēn

The 57<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1920, 1860, 1800, 1740, 1680, 1620, etc.)

庚午

gēngwǔ

The 7<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1930, 1870, 1810, 1750, 1690, etc.)

庚戌

gēngxū

The 47<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1910, 1850, 1790, 1730, 1670, 1610, etc.)

庚寅

gēngyín

The 27<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1950, 1890, 1830, 1770, 1710, 1650, etc.)

庚子

gēngzǐ

The 37<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1960, 1900, 1840, 1780, 1720, 1660, 1600, etc.)

梗日

gěngri

The 23<sup>rd</sup> day of a month

恭賀（恭贺）

gōnghè

Congratulate with respect

恭賀新禧（恭贺新禧）

gōnghè xīnxǐ

Congratulate with respect on [your] new year! (Happy New Year!)

恭賀燕喜（恭贺燕喜）

Gōnghè yànxǐ

Congratulate with respect on [your] joyful banquet!

Usually a wedding banquet

恭請闔府康福（恭请闔府康福）

gōngqǐng héfǔ kāngfú

Respectfully wish your whole family to have good health and fortune.

公綏（公绥）

gōngsuí

[I] wish [you] do well in [your] official business.

The greeting at the end of a business letter

姑洗

gūxǐ

The 3<sup>rd</sup> month in the traditional Chinese Calendar

故園念切，夢寐神馳。（故园念切，梦寐神驰。）

Gùyuan niànqiè, mèngmèi shénchí

[I] profoundly yearn for homeland, where [my] dreams lie on and thoughts fly to.

瓜月

guāyuè

The “melon” month or the 7<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

盥諷（盥讽）

guànfěng

Wash/bathe first and then to read [your letter/book] (read with great respect)



光陰（光陰）

guāngyīn

Time

歸來即當走候（归来即当走候）

guīlái jídāng zǒuhòu

[I] will visit [you] as soon as [I] come back.

癸丑

guǐchǒu

The 50<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1913, 1853, 1793, 1733, 1673, 1613, etc.)

癸亥

guǐhài

The 60<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1923, 1863, 1803, 1743, 1683, 1623, etc.)

癸卯

guǐmǎo

The 40<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1963, 1903, 1843, 1783, 1723, 1663, etc.)

癸巳

guǐsì

The 30<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1953, 1893, 1833, 1773, 1713, 1653, etc.)

癸未

guǐwèi

The 20<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1943, 1883, 1823, 1763, 1703, 1643, etc.)

癸酉

guǐyǒu

The 10<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1933, 1873, 1813, 1753, 1693, 1633, etc.)

貴體新痊，諸惟珍重。（贵体新痊，诸唯珍重。）

Guìtǐ xīnquán, zhūwéi zhēnzhòng

[Because you have] just recovered from illness, please take good care of [yourself] in every activity.

桂月

guìyuè

The “sweet-scented-osmanthus” month or the 8<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

過定（过定）

guòdìng

[The bridegroom's family] sends the bride confirming gold/money [to the bride's family]

過隙白駒（过隙白驹）

guòxì bái jū

The time passed the small gap quickly just like a running horse. (Time passed quickly)

H

海天遼遠，音問久疏。（海天辽远，音问久疏。）

Hǎitiān liáoyuǎn, yīnwèn jiǔshū

Separated by vast ocean and sky, it has been a long time since our last communication.

亥刻

hàikè

9pm-11pm

亥時（亥时）

hàishí

9pm-11pm

寒日

hánrì

The 14<sup>th</sup> day of a month

函丈

hánzhàng

Professor, teacher

The word literally means “containing a space of one zhang (roughly 3 meters) and it is said that in the past there should be such a space between the students and the teacher.

皓日

hàorì

The 19<sup>th</sup> day of a month

闔家老小安好如常，請勿念為要。（闔家老小安好如常，請勿念為要。）

Héjiā lǎoxiǎo ānhǎo rúcháng, qǐng wùniàn wéiyào

[My] entire family members, seniors or youngsters, are all in peace and doing well as usual. It is very important for [you] not to worry about [us.]

闔寓無恙，請釋懸念。（闔寓無恙，請釋懸念。）

Héyù wúyàng, qǐng shì xuánniàn

[My] whole family are in good health. [Your] great concerns and worries about [us] should get relieved.

何日來此，願得晤談為幸。（何日來此，願得晤談為幸。）

Hérlì láicǐ, yuàndé wùtán wéixìng

When will [you] be able to come here? [I] will deem it a great fortune to meet and talk to you.

荷月

héyuè

The “lotus” month or the 6<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

曷勝愴惋（曷勝愴惋）

hé shèng chuàngwǎn

How could [I] restrain my sadness and sorrowfulness?

Used mainly in letter of condolence.

曷勝禱企（曷勝禱企）

héshèng dǎoqǐ

How could [I] restrain my prayers and expectations?

厚蒙雅愛，瀝膽直諫。（厚蒙雅爱，沥胆直谏。）

Hòu méng yǎ ài, lìdǎn zhí jiàn

Receiving generously [your] graceful affection, [I think I must] speak out frankly my words of admonishment and remonstrance in order to show my loyalty.

厚情盛意，應接不遑，切謝切謝。（厚情盛意，应接不遑，切谢切谢。）

Hòu qíng shèng yì, yìng jiē bù huáng, qièxiè, qièxiè

[I] have been busy receiving your greetings and gifts one after another and they are exemplars of your friendship and favors. Thank you very much!

忽鳴燕賀，且祝新禧。（忽鸣燕贺，且祝新禧。）

Hū míng yàn hè, qiězhù xīnxǐ

Suddenly [your] wedding banquet schedule is announced and let me congratulate on your marriage.

鵠候回示（鹄候回示）

hú hòu huí shì

[I] stretch my neck like a goose to wait for your reply.

花朝

huāzhāo

“The Blossom Morning” or the 2nd day of the 2nd month in lunar calendar

華翰（华翰）

huáhàn

[Your] beautiful letter

晦日

huìrì

The last day of a month.

誨正（诲正）

huì zhèng

Look forward for [your] instruction and correction.

惠假

huìjiǎ

Generously lend things to [me].

惠鑒（惠鉴）

huì jiàn

[Do me a] favor to read [my letter]

Placed after the name/title of the recipient who is typically of the same generation/rank.

惠示

huì shì

Favorable and/or beneficial instruction

In most cases it only means your letter.

惠書（惠书）

huìshū

[your] letter [that I deem] a favor [to me]

It simply means your letter.

惠書敬悉，甚感盛意。（惠书敬悉，甚感盛意。）

Huìshū jīngxī, shèngǎn shèngyì

Receiving and thoroughly reading [your] letter [that I deem] a favor [to me,] I deeply feel your great kindness.

惠書敬悉，情義拳拳。（惠书敬悉，情义拳拳。）

Huìshū jìngxī, qíngyì quánquán

Receiving and thoroughly reading [your] letter [that I deem] a favor [to me, I can feel] your deep friendship.

慧鑒（慧鉴）

huì jiàn

Read with great wisdom

Placed after the name/title of the recipient who is most likely a religious person or a philosopher.

獲聆教言，殊為欣忭。（获聆听教言，殊为欣忭。）

Huòlíng jiàoyán, shūwéi xīnbàn

I feel greatly pleasant to receive your instructional words.

J

箕帚之使

jīzhǒuzhīshǐ

The broom and dustpan holder

It is a humble way to call one's own wife.

極盼大駕早蒞（极盼大驾早莅）

jí pàn dà jià zǎo lì

[I am] extremely looking forward to seeing your grand carriage come to my place soon.

It simply means I look forward to your coming.

即請夏安（即请夏安）

jí qǐng xià ān

Wish [you] a peaceful and safe summer

Used at the end of a letter

即頌編祺（即颂编祺）

jí sòng biān qí

Wish [you] blessed in editorial work.

Used at the end of a letter

即頌儷祉（即颂俪祉）

jí sòng lì zhǐ

Wish [you] a blessed marriage.

Used at the end of a letter for a new couple.

即頌戎綏（即颂戎绥）

jí sòng róng suí

Wish [you] peaceful and sound in military service.

Used at the end of a letter for a general/military officer

即頌勛祉（即颂勋祉）

jí sòng xūn zhǐ

Wish [you] blessed in government service.

Used at the end of a letter for a government official

即頌著祺（即颂著祺）

jí sòng zhù qí

Wish [you] blessed in writing.  
Used at the end of a letter for an author

即維履端集慶（即维履端集庆）  
jí wéi lǚduān jíqìng  
[I am] writing to wish you on a right track and enjoy all lucks.

即詢雙佳（即询双佳）  
jíxún shuāngjiā  
Wish both of you well  
Used at the end of a letter for a new couple

季春  
jìchūn  
Late spring

季弟  
jìdì  
Younger brother

季冬  
jìdōng  
Late winter

季父  
jìfù  
Father's younger brother

季秋  
jìqiū  
Late fall

季夏  
jìxià  
Late summer

計日（计日）  
jìrì  
In days

寄上薄物若干，尚望笑納為幸。（寄上薄物若干，尚望笑納為幸。）

Jìshàng bówù ruògān, shàng wàng xiàonà wéixìng

[Together with this letter I also] mail [you] some small and cheap things and I would deem it a great luck should you accept them with a sneer.

家伯

jiābó

My uncle

For father's elder brother only. Used when mention him to a third party.

家翁

jiāwēng

My father

Sometimes may also mean my grandfather, or my father in law. Used when mention him to a third party.

嘉平月

jiāpíngyuè

The 12<sup>th</sup> month of the traditional Chinese calendar

佳日

jiārì

The 9<sup>th</sup> day of a month; a nice day

甲辰

jiǎchén

The 41<sup>st</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1964, 1904, 1844, 1784, 1724, 1664, 1604, etc.)

甲申

jiǎshēn

The 21<sup>st</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1944, 1884, 1824, 1764, 1704, 1644, etc.)

甲午

jiǎwǔ

The 31<sup>st</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1954, 1894, 1834, 1774, 1714, 1654, etc.)



甲戌

jiǎxū

The 11<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1934, 1874, 1814, 1754, 1694, 1634, etc.)

甲寅

jiǎyín

The 51<sup>st</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1914, 1854, 1794, 1734, 1674, 1614, etc.)

甲子

jiǎzǐ

The first year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1924, 1864, 1804, 1744, 1684, 1624, etc.)

價洋（价洋）

jià yáng

With a tag price of

Directly followed by the amount of the money

賤軀如常，眷屬安健，聊可告慰。（贱躯如常，眷属安健，聊可告慰。）

Jiànqū rúcháng, juànshǔ ānjiàn, liǎokě gàowèi

I cannot find something else but the following to make you feel less concerned with me: My humble body is [as good] as usual and my family members are all safe and healthy.

緘（緘）

jiān

Letter; to seal a letter

Often used on an envelope after the sender's name to mean "sealed by the sender."

漸入嚴寒，伏維自愛。（渐入严寒，伏维自爱。）

Jiànrù yánhán, fúwéi zì ài

Since the cold winter is coming and with extreme reverence, I wish you would cherish yourself.

賤息（贱息）

jiàn xī

My humble kid(s)

A humble way to mention one's own kids to others.

賤內（贱内）

jiànnèi

My humble wife

A humble way to mention one's own wife to others.

賤體初安，承問極感。（贱体初安，承问极感。）

Jiàntǐ chū ān, chéngwèn jí gǎn

My humble body has just recovered and your kind letter to ask my health conditions made me very grateful to you.

江日

jiāng rì

The 3<sup>rd</sup> day of a month

獎借（奖借）

jiǎng jiè

Praise and recommend

獎飾過分，實不敢當（奖饰过分，实不敢当）

jiǎngshì guòfèn, shí bù gǎndāng

[Your letter] praised me too much and I really don't worth it.

講席（讲席）

jiǎngxí

To [your] mteachingat/chair

Respectful appellation of master, scholars and elders. Used at the beginning of a letter, after the name of the recipient.

交奉

jiāofèng

Hand in with Respect

教言

jiào yán

Instructional words

接奉大札，敬悉種切。（接奉大札，敬悉种切。）

Jiēfèng dàzhā, jìngxī zhǒngqiè

[I] received your letter with respect and got to know all what [you] said.

接閱之餘，殊滋疑異。（接阅之余，殊滋疑异。）

Jiēyuè zhīyú, shūzī yíyì

After receiving and reading [your letter,] [I] am very confused with the disagreement.

屆時（届时）

Jièshí

At that time

Used to refer to the time and event that haven't happened.

今冒昧呈上拙作

jīn màomèi chéngshàng zhuózuò

Today I present you my work humbly.

今茲略閑，率寫數語。（今兹略闲，率写数语。）

Jīnzī luèxián, shuàixiě shùyǔ

Today I have a little free time so could write [you] a few words.

謹布區區，尚希鑒察，費神相助。（谨布区区，尚希鉴察，费神相助。）

Jǐnbù qūqū, shāngxī jiànchá, fèishén xiāngzhù

[I understand that] what [I] have reported above are only trivial things to you.

However, [I] still hope [you] can look over and spend your time and energy to help.

謹呈不腆之儀，聊以誌喜。（谨呈不腆之仪，聊以志喜。）

Jǐnchéng bùtiǎn zhīyí, liáoyǐ zhìxǐ

Enclosed with this letter is a gift. Although it is shamefully meager, I wish it could still serve as something for me to congratulate your marriage.

謹呈台閱，並希指謬。（谨呈台阅，并希指谬。）

Jǐnchéng táiyuè, bìngxī zhǐmiù

Enclosed with this letter is my work for you to read and I wish you could point out my mistakes.

謹復（谨复）

jǐnfù

[Above] is [my] careful reply to your letter.  
Most likely to be used at the end of a letter.

謹賀（謹賀）

jǐnhè

[I am writing above words] to congratulate you.  
Most likely to be used at the end of a letter.

謹蒙誨語，用祛塵惑。（謹蒙海语，用祛尘惑。）

Jǐnméng huǐyǔ, yòngqū chénhuò

With your instructing words offered to me, I can get rid of all my secular troubles and confusions.

謹祈代為轉交，費神感荷。（謹祈代为转交，费神感荷。）

Jǐn qǐ dàiwéi zhuǎnjiāo, fèishén gǎn hè

Hope you can pass this on for me, and I really appreciated the time and efforts that I troubled you to spend.

謹啓者（謹啓者）

jǐnqǐzhě

To whom it may concern

Used at the beginning of a letter when the recipient is not specific but an office or the like.

謹請勛祺（謹請勛祺）

jǐnqǐng xūnqí

Wish you blessed in government.

Used at the end of a letter.

謹上（謹上）

jǐnshàng

[Above] is what I want to hand in for you carefully.

Used at the end of a letter.

謹書以託，不宣。（謹书以托，不宣。）

Jǐn shū yǐ tuō, bù xuān

I am handing in this letter to you for your help and I don't think I need to explain more due to our tacit mutual understanding.

Used at the end of a letter.

謹肅（謹肅）

jǐnsù

[I am handing in this letter] in a cautious and serious manner.

Used at the end of a letter, most likely a governmental correspondence.

謹問遊安（謹問游安）

jǐnwèn yóu ān

I wish you a safe journey.

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is traveling.

謹祝母子平安無恙，望代致拳拳。（謹祝母子平安无恙，望代致拳拳。）

Jǐnzhù mǔzǐ píng'ān wúyàng, wàng dài zhì quánquán

Wish your wife and newborn baby safe and healthy, and please convey my sincere wishes to them.

Used at the end of a letter.

近況若何，念念。

Jìnkàng ruòhé, niànniàn

How is everything going recently? I am very concerned.

近來寒暑不常，懇祈珍重自愛。（近來寒暑不常，懇祈珍重自愛。）

jìnlái hánshǔ bùcháng, kěnxī zhēnzhòng zì ài

The weather kept fluctuating these days and I beg you pay attention to your own health and take good care.

近屢奉箋，至感厚誼深情。（近屢奉箋，至感厚誼深情。）

Jìn lǚ fèng jiān , zhìgǎn hòuyìshēnqíng

I frequent receive your letters recently and they make me feel so very well on our profound friendship.

近稔履祉安燕，闔第吉羊，定符鄙祝。（近稔履祉安燕，闔第吉羊，定符鄙祝。）

Jìnrěn lǚzhǐ ānyàn, hédì jíyáng, dìngfú bǐzhù

It is my sure expectation that you are walking in a blessed track, enjoying peaceful banquets and lucks have filled your household, just exactly as what I have humbly wished.

近日天寒，諒已早自衛攝。（近日天寒，諒已早自衛攝。）

Jīnrì tiānhán, liàng yǐ zǎo zì wèishè

It is cold these days, and I think you have already get prepared and taken care of yourself.

近維履祉綏和如頌為慰。（近维履祉绥和如颂为慰。）

Jìn wéi lǚzhǐ suíhé rúsòng wéiwèi

I feel it very comfortable to expect that you always step on lucks and enjoy peace and harmony just as I have wished.

近維起居佳鬯（近维起居佳鬯）

jìnwéi qǐjū jiāchàng

[I] expect you are enjoying a wonderful daily life with delicious food and wine.

驚承訃告，悲悼不已。（惊承讣告，悲悼不已。）

Jīngchéng fùgào, bēidào bù yǐ

Shocked by receiving the orbitary [from you], I feel unstopably sad and sorrowful.

驚聞令兄作古，家失柱石，悲痛萬分。（惊闻令兄作古，家失柱石，悲痛万分。）

Jīngwén lìngxiōng zuògǔ, jiāshī zhùshí, bēitòng wànfēn

It is so shocking to know your respectful elder brother's death and the loss of the backbone to your family, and I feel extremely sad and sorrowful.

驚悉令尊不幸逝世，不勝哀悼。（惊悉令尊不幸逝世，不胜哀悼。）

jīngxī lìngzūn búxìng shìshì, búshèng āidào

It is so shocking to know the death of your respectful father and my pain and sadness are unsurpassable.

經席（经席）

jīngxí

The mat/chair for the instruction of Confucian Classics

Respectful appellation of a great scholar/professor. Used at the beginning of a letter, after the name of the recipient.

敬候日祉

jìnghòu rìzhǐ

I respectively wish you a lucky day.

敬稟者

jǐngbǐngzhě

I am reporting with respect; To Whom It May Concern

Used at the beginning of a business correspondence whose recipient is not specific.

敬陳者（敬陈者）

Jìngchénzhě

I am making the following statement with respect; To Whom It May Concern

Used at the beginning of a business correspondence whose recipient is not specific.

敬賀（敬贺）

Jìng hè

Congratulate with respect

Used at the end of a letter of congratulation.

敬賀年禧（敬贺年禧）

jìng hè niánxǐ

[I] respectfully wish you a happy new year!

Used at the end of a letter.

敬賀歲祺（敬贺岁祺）

jìng hè suìqí

[I] respectfully wish you a blessed new year!

Used at the end of a letter.

敬候籌綏（敬候筹绥）

jìng hòu chóusuí

[I] respectfully wish you peaceful in business.

Used at the end of a letter.

敬候回諭（敬候回谕）

Jìng hòu huíyù

With respect [I] look forward to your instructional reply.

Used at the end of a letter.

敬候儷安（敬候俪安）

jìng hòu lì ān

[I] respectfully wish you harmonious and happy marriage forever.

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient has just married.

敬候升祺

jìnghòu shēngqí

[I] respectfully wish you have a promotion and better career.

Used at the end of a letter.

敬候暑安

jìnghòu shǔ ān

[I] respectfully wish you a peaceful and sound summer.

Used at the end of a letter.

敬懇者（敬懇者）

jìng kěn zhě

With respect [I] am writing this letter of request; To Whom It May Concern

Used at the beginning of a business letter whose recipient is not specific.

敬祈示知

jìngqǐshìzhī

[I] pray with respect to get your reply with instruction so that I can know what to do.

敬啓（敬啓）

jìngqǐ

[I] wrote the above respectfully

Used at the end of a letter after signature.

敬啓者（敬啓者）

jìngqǐzhě

I am informing [you] respectfully; To whom it may concern.

Used at the beginning of a business correspondence.

敬請冬安（敬請冬安）

jìngqǐng dōng ān

Wish you a peaceful and sound winter.

Used at the end of a letter.

敬請禮安（敬請禮安）



jìngqǐng lǐ ān

[I] respectfully wish you peaceful during the mourning period.  
Used at the end of letter of condolence.

敬請旅安（敬請旅安）

Jìngqǐng lǚ ān

[I] respectfully wish you a good trip.  
Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is traveling.

敬請文安（敬請文安）

Jìngqǐng wén ān

[I] respectfully wish you peaceful and sound in composition.  
Used at the end of a letter.

敬請文祺（敬請文祺）

Jìngqǐng wénqí

[I] respectfully wish you blessed in composition.  
Used at the end of a letter.

敬請撰祺（敬請撰祺）

Jìngqǐng zhuànqí

[I] respectfully wish you blessed in composition.  
Used at the end of a letter.

敬上

jìngshàng

[I] am respectfully handing in this letter.  
Used at the end of a letter, after the signature of the sender.

敬頌春安（敬頌春安）

jìngsòng chūn ān

[I] respectfully wish you a peaceful and sound spring.  
Used at the end of a letter.

敬頌春祺（敬頌春祺）

jìngsòng chūnqí

[I] respectfully wish you a blessed spring.  
Used at the end of a letter.

敬頌冬綏（敬頌冬綏）

jìngsòng dōngsuí

[I] respectfully wish you a peaceful and sound winter.

Used at the end of a letter.

敬頌撰安（敬頌撰安）

jìngsòng zhuàn ān

[I] respectfully wish you peaceful in composition.

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is a professional writer.

敬肅者（敬肅者）

jìngsùzhě

With respect I am informing you of the following in a serious manner; To Whom It May Concern

Used at the beginning of a governmental correspondence whose recipient is not specific.

敬維興居佳饔為慰（敬維興居佳饔為慰）

Jìngwéi xīngjū jiāchàng wéiwèi

[I] feel it very comfortable to expect with respect that you are enjoying a great daily life with delicious food and wine.

敬問戎安（敬問戎安）

jìngwèn róng ān

[I] respectfully wish you peaceful and safe in military actions.

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is a military leader.

敬問學祺（敬問學祺）

jìngwèn xuéqí

[I] respectfully wish you blessed in academic activities.

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is a student/scholar.

徑啓者（徑啓者）

Jìngqǐzhě

It is to inform you of the following directly [without putting some empty greeting words before it]; To Whom It May Concern

Used at the beginning of a business letter whose recipient is not specific.

迴日

jiǒngri

The 24th of a month

久不通函，至以為念。（久不通函，至以为念。）

Jiǔbù tōnghán, zhìyǐ wéiniàn

It has been long since our last correspondence and I am very concerned with you.

久稽回答，幸原諒之。（久稽回答，幸原谅之。）

Jiǔjī huídá, xìng yuán liàng zhī

It would be my luck if you could forgive me for delaying the reply for so long a time.

久疏函候，殊切馳思。（久疏函候，殊切驰思。）

Jiǔshū hánhòu, shūqiè chísi

It has been long since my last greeting sent to you and I miss you so very much that I wish I could see you in person immediately.

久疏通問，渴望殊深。（久疏通问，渴望殊深。）

Jiǔshū tōngwèn, kěwàng shūshēn

It has been long since our last correspondence and I miss you so very much.

久違雅教，繫念殊彌。（久违雅教，系念殊弥。）

Jiǔwéi yǎjiào, xìniàn shūmǐ

It has been long since I got your last graceful instruction and I miss you profoundly.

久違丰采，渴想殊深。（久违丰采，渴想殊深。）

Jiǔwéi fēngcǎi, kěxiǎng shūshēn

It has been long since the last time I saw you and I miss you profoundly.

久未聞消息，唯願一切康適。（久未闻消息，唯愿一切康适。）

Jiǔ wèiwén xiāoxi, wéi yuàn yíqiè kāngshì

It has been long for not hearing from you and the only wish I have now is that you are healthy and sound.

久未裁答

jiǔ wèi cáidá

I haven't received your reply since I sent you the letter for your judgment long ago.

舊雨（旧雨）

jiùyǔ  
Old friend(s)

鞠躬  
jūgōng  
Bowling  
Used at the end of a letter.

鞠啟（鞠启）  
jūqǐ  
Bowling when handing in this letter  
Used at the end of a letter.

菊月  
júyuè  
The “chrysanthemum” month or the 9<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

鈞鑒（钧鉴）  
jūnjiàn  
[I am sending you this letter for your] grand reading  
Used at the beginning of a letter whose recipient is in high position.

鈞座（钧座）  
jūnzuo  
“The grand chair”  
An appellation for the recipient who is in high position, especially in government or army.

K

勘日  
kānrì  
The 28<sup>th</sup> day of a month.

康安  
kāng ān  
Wish you in good health and peace.  
Most likely to greet a female elder.

咳吐

Kètǔ

“The cough and the spit”; the voice of a respectful person

咳唾

Kétuò

“The cough and the spit”; the voice of a respectful person

克符臆祝

kèfú yìzhù

[Your real situation] must be as good as my guess and wish

剋

kè

To convert [money]

刻下

kèxià

At this moment

客腊

kè là

The last month of last year

叩

Kòu

Kowtow

叩稟

Kòu bǐng

Kowtow and send you a letter to report

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is the parents/grandparents of the sender or someone in high position.

叩賀（叩贺）

Kòu hè

Kowtow and send you this letter of congratulation

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is the parents/grandparents of the sender or someone in high position.

叩上

Kòu shàng

Kowtow and send this letter

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is the parents/grandparents of the sender or someone in high position.

叩首

kòushǒu

Kowtow

坤安

kūn ān

[Wish you] in great peace.

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is a female elder.

媿曷敢當（媿曷敢当）

kuì hé gǎn dāng

How could I accept your praising word like this?

L

臘月（腊月）

Là yuè

The "sacrifice" month or the last month of traditional Chinese calendar

蘭月（兰月）

lán yuè

The "orchid" month or the 7<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

攬揆（揽揆）

lǎnkuí

Birthday

離情別懷，今猶耿耿。（离情别怀，今犹耿耿。）

Líqíng biéhuái, jīn yóu gěnggěng

Even now, [after so many years have passed,] the feeling of missing that rose on the day of our parting is still with me.

禮安（礼安）

lǐ ān

Peace during mourning period

Used at the end of a letter of condolence.

立盼速復（立盼速复）

lì pàn sù fù

Please respond as soon as you can

麗月（丽月）

lì yuè

The "beautiful" month or the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

奩次（奩次）

liáncì

“Next to the cosmetic box”

Used at the beginning of a letter to address a female recipient.

良月

liáng yuè

The "good" month or the 10<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

兩奉大示（两奉大示）

Liǎng fèng dà shì

[I] have continuously received two great letters of instruction from you

Here “the great letter of instruction” simply means a letter received.

諒必早登台閱（谅必早登台阅）

liàng bì zǎo dēng tái yuè

[I] guess you read [my previous] letter quite a while ago.

諒荷查收（谅荷查收）

liàng hè chá shōu

[I] guess you have received and checked [my previous letter and the attached documents.]

諒邀大鑒（谅邀大鉴）

liàng yāo dà jiàn

[I] guess that you have read [my previous letter] in a grand manner.

諒邀台電（諒邀台电）

liàng yāo tái diàn

I guess that you have read [my previous letter] with your lightning bright eyes.

諒邀台鑒（諒邀台鉴）

liàng yāo tái jiàn

I guess that you have read [my previous letter].

聊表祝意，幸祈笑納。（聊表祝意，幸祈笑纳。）

liáo biǎo zhù yì, xìng qǐ xiào nà

[The enclosed gift] is to express my congratulations and I would deem it a luck if you could accept it with a laugh.

臨穎神馳（临颖神驰）

lín yǐng shén chí

When writing this letter, my thoughts are with you.

另請代問鄰安，以念舊居之情（另请代问邻安，以念旧居之情）

lìng qǐng dài wèn lín ān, yǐ niàn jiù jū zhī qíng

P.S. Please bring my greeting to neighbors who used to live with us.

Used at the ending part of a letter.

令愛（令爱）

lìng ài

Your daughter

令郎

lìng láng

Your son

令堂

lìng táng

Your mother

Rarely this word can also refer to the father of the recipient.

令堂逝世，深致哀悼，尚望節哀順變。（令堂逝世，深致哀悼，尚望节哀顺变。）



Lìngtáng shìshì, shēn zhì āidào, shàng wàng jié āi shùn biàn  
I am grieved because of your mother's death. Hope you will be better.  
I am sending you this letter to express my condolence for your mother and wish  
you could restrain your sadness by considering the [passing away of the aged] a  
natural change.  
To see death as a natural change is a Taoist idea.

令嚴 (令严)

lìng yán  
Your father

令媛

lìng yuán  
Your daughter

令尊

lìng zūn  
Your father

榴月

liú yuè  
The "pomegranate" month or the 5<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

M

馬日 (马日)

mǎrì  
The 6<sup>th</sup> day of a month

卯刻

mǎokè  
5am-7am

卯時 (卯时)

mǎoshí  
5am-7am

冒昧干請，惟望幸許。

Mào mèi gān qǐng, wéi wàng xìng xǔ

[I know] my request is rude but still wish that I would be lucky enough to get your permission.

梅月

méi yuè

The "plum" month or the 4<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

每懷舊雨，時深馳念。（每怀旧雨，时深驰念。）

Měi huái jiùyǔ, shí shēn chíniàn

I deeply miss old friends and often think of them.

蒙惠書並賜大著，拜服之至。（蒙惠书并赐大著，拜服之至。）

Méng huì shū bìng cì dàzhù, bài fú zhī zhì

I got your respectful letter and book(s) and, when reading them, nothing can express my great admiration.

蒙惠贈厚物，感謝之至。（蒙惠贈厚物，感谢之至。）

Méng huì zèng hòuwù, gǎnxiè zhī zhì

I feel extremely grateful to have received the valuable gift you kindly sent.

孟春

mèng chūn

Early spring

孟冬

mèng dōng

Early winter

孟秋

mèng qiū

Early autumn

孟夏

mèng xià

Early summer

面諛（面谀）

miànyú

Compliment someone face to face

命駕（命駕）

mìng jià

[You] order [your] driver to depart

This phrase is mainly used to ask someone's departure time.

N

奈因事務匆匆，是以未克如願。（奈因事务匆匆，是以未克如愿。）

Nài yīn shìwù cōngcōng, shìyǐ wèikè rúyuàn

Due to an extremely busy schedule, however, [I] couldn't do as wished.

男

nán

Your son

A self-appellation used in the signature part of the letter whose recipient is one's parent(s).

內子

nèizǐ

My wife

能力所及，僅此而已。（能力所及，仅此而已。）

Nénglì suǒjí, jǐn cǐ éryǐ

[I] have done as much as I could.

擬（拟）

Nǐ

Plan [to do something]

年餘不通隻字（年余不通只字）

niányú bùtōng zhīzì

[We] haven't heard from each other for over a year.

廿

niàn

Twenty

弄瓦之慶，遙以致賀。（弄瓦之庆，遥以致贺。）

Nòngwǎ zhīqìng, yáoyǐ zhihè

Please accept my congratulations from afar on the birth of your daughter.

弄璋之喜，符君宿願，謹以為祝。（弄璋之喜，符君宿愿，谨以为祝。）

Nòngzhāng zhī xǐ, fújūn sùyuàn, jǐnyǐ wéizhù

The birth of your son has fulfilled your long time wish and I am writing this letter to congratulate you.

弄璋之喜，可慶可賀。（弄璋之喜，可庆可贺。）

Nòngzhāng zhī xǐ, kěqìng kěhè

The birth of your son is indeed worth great celebrations and congratulations.

O

偶得一佳作，願與君共賞，懇請光臨。（偶得一佳作，愿与君共赏，恳请光临。）

Ǒudé yì jiāzuò, yuàn yǔ jūn gòngshǎng, kěnkǐng guānglín

[I] got a masterpiece by chance and earnestly wish you could come to my place so that we may appreciate it together.

偶染微恙，幸近已痊癒，希勿念為幸。（偶染微恙，幸近已痊愈，希勿念为幸。）

Ǒurǎn wēiyàng, xìng jìnyǐ quányù, xī wùniàn wéixìng

[I] suddenly got sick, [but was] recovered recently. Wish [you] to not worry [about me too much].

P

捧讀惠書，欣慰無量。（捧读惠书，欣慰无量。）

Pěngdú huìshū, xīnwèi wúliàng

[I am] very pleased to read your letter.

披誦（披诵）

pīsòng

Open the book/letter and read it.

僕（仆）

Pú  
[Your] servant  
A humble way of self-addressing

譜弟（谱弟）  
pǔdì  
Younger brother/cousin.

Q

齊日（齐日）  
qírì  
The 8<sup>th</sup> day of a month.

其說甚當（其说甚当）  
qí shuō shèn dàng  
What was said is perfectly appropriate.

乞便交  
qǐbiànjiāo  
Please hand [this] to [someone] at your convenience.

乞覆（复）候教  
qǐfù hòujiào  
I resign myself for your instructional reply.

乞示其詳（乞示其详）  
qǐ shì qíxiáng  
I am looking forward to hearing more details from you.

祈賜回音為禱（祈赐回音为祷）  
qǐcì huíyīn wéidǎo  
Beg as a prayer for [your] reply.

祈釋雅念（祈释雅念）  
qǐ shì yǎniàn  
Please don't worry [about me].

祈望一會，共敘友情。（祈望一会，共叙友情。）

Qǐwàng yíhuì, gòngxù yǒuqíng  
Wish we can meet and catch up some time.

啓者（启者）  
qǐzhě  
To whom it may concern.

氣候多變，希自珍衛。（气候多变，希自珍卫。）  
Qìhòu duōbiàn, xīzì zhēnwèi  
This is a season for capricious climate. Wish you to take extra care of your health.

千里鵝毛，聊表寸心。（千里鹅毛，聊表寸心。）  
Qiānlǐ é máo, liǎobiǎo cùn xīn  
Although the gift is not very expensive, it truly presents my sincere love/friendship to you.

千祈勿延  
qiānqǐ wù yán  
[I] beg [you] for thousand times to not delay.

前承饋贈，傾感不勝。（前承馈赠，倾感不胜。）  
Qiánchéng kuìzèng, qīngǎn búshèng  
Thank you so much [for your] previous gift.

前奉惠書，祇悉一一。（前奉惠书，祇悉一一。）  
Qiánfèng huìshū, zhǐxī yīyī  
[I] am fully aware of every word that [you've] stated in the previous letter.

前鑒（前鉴）  
qiánjiàn  
The previous letter.

前上一函，諒達雅鑒。（前上一函，谅达雅鉴。）  
Qiánshàng yìhán, liàngdá yǎjiàn  
Here is [my] letter [to you]. [I] look forward to having you reading it.

前上一函，諒已入鑒。（前上一函，谅已入鉴。）  
Qiánshàng yìhán, liàngyǐ rùjiàn  
Here is [my] letter [to you]. [I] look forward to having you reading it.

前事有負雅意，尚希恕之。（前事有负雅意，尚希恕之。）

Qiánshì yǒufù yǎyì, shàngxī shùzhī

Please forgive me that things didn't happen as [you've] wished.

前事有逆尊意，不勝慚愧，萬望海涵。（前事有逆尊意，不胜惭愧，万望海涵。）

Qiánshì yǒunì zūnyì, búshèng cánkuì, wànwàng hǎihán

I'm deeply sorry that things didn't take place as [you've] wished. Please forgive [me].

前信所言，實愛莫能助。（前信所言，实爱莫能助。）

Qiánxìn suǒyán, shí àimònéngzhù

[I] really cannot help with what [you've] requested in your previous letter.

巧日

qiǎorì

The 18<sup>th</sup> day of a month.

妾

qiè

“Concubine”

A humble self-address of a lady

竊（窃）

qiè

I [represent with self-humility].

A humble way for self-address

竊謂（窃谓）

qièwèi

I think

親筆（亲笔）

qīnbǐ

This letter is handwritten by myself.

Used in the signature part of the letter.

沁日

qìnri

The 27<sup>th</sup> day of a month.

青察

qīngchá

[Do me a] favor to read [my letter].

Used when the recipient is younger than the sender

青鑒（青鑑）

qīngjiàn

[Do me a] favor to read [my letter].

Used when the recipient is younger than the sender

清和月

qīnghéyuè

The “clear and harmonious” month or the 4<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

頃（頃）

qīng

Just; just now.

頃得惠函並照片種種，感謝之至。（頃得惠函并照片种种，感谢之至。）

Qīngdé huìhán bìng zhàopiàn zhǒngzhǒng, gǎnxiè zhīzhì

[I] have just received your letter along with several photos. I deeply appreciate that.

頃讀惠書，如聞金玉良言。（頃读惠书，如闻金玉良言。）

Qīngdú huìshū, rúwén jīnyùliángyán

Reading your kind letter [I] have just received, I feel as if I were listening in person to your advice that is as valuable as gold and jade.

頃奉惠函，謹悉一切。（頃奉惠函，谨悉一切。）

Qīngfèng huìhán, jǐnxī yíqiè

[I] have just received your kind letter carefully and known everything you mentioned in it.

頃奉手教，敬悉康和。（頃奉手教，敬悉康和。）

Qīngfèng shǒujiào, jìngxī kānghé



[I] have just received your handwritten letter and known with respect that you are in good health and everything goes peacefully.

頃接訃告，不勝傷悼。（頃接訃告，不胜伤悼。）

Qīngjiē fùgào, búshèng shāngdào

Receiving the obituary just now, [I am] extremely saddened.

頃接手教，敬悉一切。（頃接手教，敬悉一切。）

Qīngjiē shǒujiào, jìngxī yíqiè

[I] have just received your handwritten letter and known everything you mentioned in it.

頃接手示（頃接手示）

qīngjiē shǒushì

[I] have just received [your] letter.

頃接手示，如見故人。（頃接手示，如见故人。）

Qīngjiē shǒushì, rújiàn gùrén

[I] have just received [your] letter, [and reading it makes me] feel like meeting you in person.

頃聞吉音，欣逢嘉禮。（頃闻吉音，欣逢嘉礼。）

Qīngwén jíyīn, xīféng jiālǐ

[I] have just received the good news and am very happy to know this is a great time to celebrate.

請速示知（请速示知）

qǐngsù shìzhī

Please inform [me] as soon as possible.

秋風多厲，為國珍攝。（秋风多厉，为国珍摄。）

Qiūfēng duōlì, wèiguó zhēnshè

The autumn wind is strong and heavy, and [I] wish you can take extra care [of yourself] so that you can better serve the country.

秋風蕭蕭，至祈攝衛。（秋风萧萧，至祈摄卫。）

Qiūfēng xiāoxiāo, zhìqǐ shèwèi

The autumn wind is strong and cold, and [I] sincerely wish [you] to take extra care of yourself.

秋高氣爽，希善自為樂。（秋高气爽，希善自为乐。）

Qiūgāo qìshuǎng, xī shàn zì wéilè

The autumn weather is fantastic, and [I] wish you could enjoy it.

秋色宜人，望養志和神。（秋色宜人，望养志和神。）

Qiūsè yírén, wàng yǎngzhì héshén

The autumn season is beautiful, and I wish [you] would not miss the best time of the year for spiritual cultivation and harmonization.

秋雨綿綿，萬請自愛。（秋雨绵绵，万请自爱。）

Qiūyǔ miánmián, wànqǐng zì ài

The autumn rain fell day after day without ceasing, and I wish [you can] surely take extra care of yourself.

趨赴台端，面聆雅教（趋赴台端，面聆雅教）

qūfù tái duān, miàn líng yǎjiào

Walk to your place respectfully and listen to your advice in person.

區區苦衷，尚祈鑒宥。（区区苦衷，尚祈鉴宥。）

Qūqū kǔzhōng, shàngqǐ jiànyòu

[I] sincerely wish you could understand my difficulties with great sympathy.

渠

qú

Him/Her.

取潤（取润）

qǔrùn

Charge for [doing art pieces].

荃察

quánchá

Comprehensively understand

拳拳盛意，感莫能言。

quánquán shèngyì, gǎn mò néngyán

Sincere and deep friendship beyond words.

全癒發體（全愈发体）

Quányù fātī

Fully recovered and become strong again

犬子

quǎn zǐ

The “dog-like” son; my son

A humble way to mention one’s own son.

缺溢

quēyì

Profit and loss.

卻而璧之（却而璧之）

què ér bì zhī

Reject [a gift] and return it intactly to the sender.

R

熱摯之情，溢於言表。（热挚至情，溢于言表。）

rèzhì zhīqíng, yìyú yányiǎo

The passion and warmth are beyond verbal expressions

壬辰

rénchén

The 29<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1952, 1892, 1832, 1772, 1712, 1652, etc.)

壬申

rénshēn

The 9<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1932, 1872, 1812, 1752, 1692, 1632, etc.)

壬午

rénwǔ

The 19<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1942, 1882, 1822, 1762, 1702, 1642, etc.)

壬戌

rénxū

The 59<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1922, 1862, 1802, 1742, 1682, 1622, etc.)

壬寅

rényín

The 39<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1902, 1842, 1782, 1722, 1662, 1602, etc.)

壬子

rénzǐ

The 49<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1912, 1852, 1792, 1732, 1672, 1612, etc.)

仁翁

rénwēng

The “benevolent old man”

A polite way to mention a third person who is older than both the recipient and the sender.

仁兄

rénxiōng

The “benevolent elder brother”

A polite way to address the recipient who is older than or about the same age as the sender. May also be used to mention a third person of the similar age.

仁者

rénzhě

A “benevolent person”

Although it means a person with high virtue in Confucian classics, it simply means “someone” in correspondence.

日來寒威愈烈，伏維福躬恙無。（日来寒威愈烈，伏维福躬恙无。）

Rílái hánwēi yùliè, fúwéi fúgōng yàngwú

The weather is getting colder day by day, and [I] am bowing down to wish your blessed body would be free from illness.

目前

rìqián

A few days ago

日前患病，現已復原。（日前患病，現已復原。）

Rìqián huànbìng, xiànyǐ fùyuán

[I] was sick a few days ago and has recovered now.

日前既荷盛饌，復蒙躬送，感謝無既。（日前既荷盛饌，復蒙躬送，感謝無既然。）

Rìqián jìhè shèngjiàn, fùméng gōngsòng, gǎnxiè wújì

No words can express my thanks to you for holding the farewell banquet for me and sending me off in person.

日前走謁，不晤，至悵。（日前走謁，不晤，至悵。）

Rìqián zǒu yè, búwù, zhīchàng

A few days ago, [I] visited your place only to know you were not there, and [I] felt very melancholy.

日昨

rìzuó

Yesterday

容日後再行設法，請諒。（容日后再行設法，請諒。）

Róng rìhòu zàixíng shèfǎ, qǐngliàng

Please allow me to figure out new solutions in the future, and forgive me for not being able to fulfill your request at once.

如承俯允，無任感荷。（如承俯允，無任感荷。）

Rúchéng fǔyǔn, wúrèn gǎnhè

Should you grant me the permission, nothing would be enough to express my appreciation for you.

如此厚贈，實深惶悚。（如此厚贈，實深惶悚。）

Rúcǐ hòuzèng, shíshēn huángsǒng

Receiving such a great gift, [I] felt deeply nervous and frightened [because I don't think I am worth.]

如何之處，敬候卓裁。（如何之处，敬候卓裁。）

Rúhé zhīchù, jìng hòu zhuócai

I am waiting for your remarkable suggestion for what should be done.

如見（如見）

rújiàn

Just like we meet each other face to face.

如蒙速復，不勝感激。（如蒙速复，不胜感激。）

Rúméng sùfù, búshèng gǎnjī

If I can receive your reply shortly, I would be so appreciated.

如握

rúwò

[Reading this letter] is like shaking each others' hands.

Typically used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after addressing the recipient.

如晤

rúwù

[Reading this letter] is like meeting each other.

Typically used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after addressing the recipient.

如小弟

rú xiǎodì

Your younger-brother-like

Used at the end of the letter as part of the sender's signature.

如有所得，祈隨時賜示為盼。（如有所得，祈随时赐示为盼。）

Rú yǒu suǒdé, qǐ suíshí cìshì wéipàn

I look forward to receiving and reading it whenever you have composed a poem or prose.

入目

rùmù

Please read

Used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after the name of the recipient.

Typically, the sender is the parent of the recipient.

入秋頓涼，幸自攝衛。（入秋顿凉，幸自摄卫。）

Rùqiū dùnliáng, xìngzì shèwèi

The weather turns cold suddenly when autumn comes. It would be [my] fortune if you could take good care of yourself.

若蒙賜以修正，不勝感激。（若蒙賜以修正，不勝感激。）

Ruòméng cìyǐ xiūzhèng, búshèng gǎnjī

If [I] might have your correction, I would be extremely grateful to you.

若蒙光臨寒舍，當不勝榮幸之至。（若蒙光臨寒舍，當不勝榮幸之至。）

Ruòméng guānglín hánshè, dāng búshèng róngxìng zhīzhì

If you would like to come to my humble house, I would deem it the greatest honor and luck.

S

卅

sà

30

卅日

sàrì

The 30<sup>th</sup> day

上陳種切（上陈种切）

shàngchénzhǒngqiè

All the things I have talked above.

申

Shēn

To state

Used at the end of the letter after signature and date.

申刻

Shēnkè

3pm-5pm

申時（申时）

shēnshí

3pm-5pm

師席（师席）

Shīxí

To the master's teaching mat/chair

Used at the beginning of a letter, after the name of the recipient who is a professor or the like. This is a humble way to address the recipient.

侍右

shìyòu

To the right of your servant

Used at the beginning of a letter, after the name of the recipient. This is a humble way to address the recipient as if the sender does not qualify to address the recipient directly.

侍者

shìzhě

To your servant

Used at the beginning of a letter, after the name of the recipient. This is a humble way to address the recipient as if the sender does not qualify to address the recipient directly.

世伯

Shìbó

Uncle

Used to address a good family friend who is older than one's father.

手翰

shǒuhàn

Handwritten letter

Only for letters received, not for letters to send.

手教

shǒujiào

Handwritten instruction; letter

Only for letters received, not for letters to send.

手上

shǒushàng

[I am] handwriting this letter and handing it in



Used at the end of a letter after signature.

舒臆（舒臆）

shūfú

Money

A polite and scholastic way to mention money.

順叩崇祺（順叩崇祺）

shùnkòu chóngqí

Wish you greatest blessing.

Used at the end of a letter.

順頌籌安（順頌籌安）

shùnsòng chóu ān

Wish your business going well and smoothly.

Used at the end of a letter whose recipient is a businessman.

巳刻

sikè

9am-11am

巳時（巳时）

sikè

9am-11am

肅候起居康祉（肅候起居康祉）

sùhòu qǐjū kāngzhǐ

Sincerely wish you enjoy a healthy and blessed living.

Used at the end of a letter.

俗兄

Súxiōng

“Your earthling elder brother”; I/me

Sender’s self address when the recipient is a religious person and younger than the sender.

夙仰通才

sùyǎngtōngcái

[I have been] admiring your all-around talents so long

T

他日少瘥，當必有以報命也。（他日少瘥，当必有以报命也。）

Tārì shǎocuó, dāng bì yǒuyǐ bàomìng yě

Once [my] sickness gets diminished a little, I should be able to fulfill your request.

台

Tái

You, your

台啓（台启）

táiqǐ

Please open the letter.

Used at the beginning of the letter after the name of the recipient.

潭第麻嘉

tándì xiūjiā

What an auspicious house!

壇席（坛席）

tánxí

To the mat of the master's platform

Used at the beginning of a letter after the name of the recipient who is a professor/teacher.

潭祺

tán qí

Blessings of peace and tranquility to an esteemed family

Used for letter ending wish part.

倘承不吝賜教，幸甚幸甚。（倘承不吝赐教，幸甚幸甚。）

Tǎngchéng búlìncìjiào, xìngshèn xìngshèn

I would deem it a great luck in case you could enlighten me with your instructions.

倘荷玉成，曷勝感謝。（倘荷玉成，曷胜感谢。）

Tǎnghè yùchéng, héshèng gǎnxiè

Should you offer assistance to ensure the accomplishment, [I] would be deeply grateful.

倘蒙見教，沒齒不忘。（倘蒙見教，沒齒不忘。）

Tǎngméng jiànjiào, mòchǐ búwàng

If [I] were to receive [your] mentorship, [I] would never forget to the end of my days.

倘蒙照佛，銘感無已。（倘蒙照佛，銘感無已。）

Tǎngméng zhàofú, míngǎn wúyǐ

If [I] were to be indebted to you for your care, then I would be endlessly grateful.

倘有所聞，尚祈見告，俾資改進，不勝盼禱！（倘有所聞，尚祈見告，俾資改進，不勝盼禱！）

Tǎngyǒu suǒwén, shàng qǐ jiàngào, bǐzī gǎijìn, búshèng pàndǎo

If you hear of anything, please inform me about it in order to improve. [I] pray and look forward to it!

倘有餘晷，請到敝寓一敘。（倘有餘晷，請到敝寓一敘。）

Tǎngyǒu yúguī, qǐngdào biyù yíxù

In case [you] have spare time, please come to my humble home to talk.

叨榮（叨榮）

tāoróng

Receive honor

叨在契末，斗膽直陳（叨在契末，斗胆直陳）

tāozài qì mò, dòudǎn zhíchén

Being [your] best old friend, [I feel I am] responsible to venture to speak out [my opinions/criticism] in a straightforward way.

叨在至好，故盡情言之。（叨在至好，故盡情言之。）

Tāozài zhìhǎo, gù jìnqíng yánzhī

Since [we are] the best friends, [I] made [the above] statements fully and frankly.

桃月

táoyuè

The “peach month” or the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of a month

特此吊唁，尚望節哀。（特此吊唁，尚望節哀。）

Tècǐ diàoyàn, shàng wàng jié āi

[I am] writing this special letter to express my condolence and I wish [you] could restrain [your] grief.

特此慰唁，尚請保重。（特此慰唁，尚请保重。）

Tècǐ wèiyàn, shàngqǐng bǎozhòng

[I am] writing this special letter to express my condolence and I wish [you] could take care of [yourself]

特具紅柬，馳賀新禧。（特具红柬，驰贺新禧。）

Tèjù hóngjiǎn, chíhè xīnxǐ

Hereby furnishing this red letter and spreading congratulations for a happy New Year.

特瀝寸函布達，祈勿他言推諉。（特沥寸函布达，祈勿他言推诿。）

Tèlì cùnhányù dá, qǐ wù tāyán tuīwěi

[I am] sincerely sending you the short letter to tell you my request and wish you would not shift your responsibility with some excuses.

篠日

tiǎorì

The 17<sup>th</sup> day of a month

庭訓（庭训）

tíngxùn

Instructions from father

庭闈（庭闈）

tíngwéi

Parents' residence

托付之事，不便應命，祈獲諒解。（托付之事，不便应命，祈获谅解。）

Tuōfù zhīshì, búbiàn yìngmìng, qǐhuò liàngjiě

Please understand that I cannot help with the thing you have entrusted me to do.

托付之事，時刻不敢忘懷。（托付之事，时刻不敢忘怀。）

Tuōfù zhīshì, shíkè bùgǎn wànguáihái

I will never forget the thing you entrusted me to do.

托付之事，未能盡如人意，尚希見諒。（托付之事，未能尽如人意，尚希见谅。）

Tuōfù zhīshì, wèinéng jìnrúrényì, shàngxī jiànliàng

For the thing that you have entrusted me to do, I cannot fulfil it in a perfect way.  
Please understand and forgive me.

脫帽

tuōmào

Hat off

Used at the end of a letter to show respect to the recipient.

W

挖回抵冲

wāhuí dǐchōng

In the payment sent to you, [I] have already deduct the part you own.

頑體粗和，堪以告慰（顽体粗和，堪以告慰）

Wántǐ cūhé, kānyǐ gào wèi

I'm roughly in a good health and [you] don't need to worry about me.

萬望從速賜復為要（万望从速赐复为要）

wànwàng cóngsù cìfù wéiyào

I beg you grant me an instant reply and this is the most important matter for you.

望紓慈念（望纾慈念）

wàng shū cí niàn

[I] wish this would make your kind concerns relieved.

微末之言，幸無見闕，不勝大願。（微末之言，幸无见阙，不胜大愿。）

Wēimò zhīyán, xìngwú jiànkuò, búshèng dàyuàn

It would be a great luck for me to fulfill a long time wish, should you not put aside the words from such an insignificant person as me.

未惶

wèihuáng

Did not have time

未刻  
wèikè  
1pm-3pm

未時（未时）  
wèishí  
1pm-3pm

午刻  
wǔkè  
11am-1pm

午時（午时）  
wǔkè  
11am-1pm

務宜體我寸心（务宜体我寸心）  
wù yí tǐ wǒ cùn xīn  
Please give consideration to my feelings

無片刻暇逸（无片刻暇逸）  
wú piàn kè xiá yì  
Do not have a moment of leisure

蕪無寸進（芜无寸进）  
wú wú cùn jìn  
With my studies got dusty and neglected, I couldn't even make any progress.

渥蒙  
wòméng  
Received with considerable kindness

猥荷  
wěi hè  
Received honors [I] actually am not worth

X

奚啻霄壤之別

xī chì xiāorǎng zhī bié

The difference is way more than the distance between the sky and the earth!

膝前

xīqián

To the front of your knees

Used for the sender to address one's parent(s)

膝下

xīxià

Below your knees

Used for the sender to address one's parent(s)

喜賀福壽雙全（喜贺福寿双全）

xǐhè fúshòu shuāngquán

Wish you longevity and luck!

喜接誨教，真解蒙矣。（喜接海教，真解蒙矣。）

Xǐjiē huìjiào, zhēn jiěméng yǐ

Glad to receive your teaching and it really cleared up my doubts!

喜接來函

xǐjiē láihán

Glad to receive your letter!

喜聞足下燕爾新婚，特申祝賀。（喜闻足下燕尔新婚，特申祝贺。）

Xǐwén zúxià yàn ěr xīnhūn, tèshēn zhùhè

Glad to hear that you're newly wedded! Here I send my best wishes.

系何意見（系何意见）

xìhé yìjiàn

What's your opinion?

暇時有幸過談（暇时有幸过谈）

xiáshí yǒuxìng guòtán

If I'm lucky enough, come and have a chat when you are free.

先生

xiānsheng

Mr.

A common address to male but sometimes may also used to address a female professor/teacher

賢弟（贤弟）

xiándì

Sagacious brother

A term of respect towards a someone who is younger than oneself

銑日（铣日）

xiǎnrì

The 16th day of a month

相見以誠，請恕不謙。（相见以诚，请恕不谦。）

xiāngjiàn yǐchéng, qǐngshù bùqiān

Forgive me for not being humble enough since sincerity is the first principle for friendship.

相攸

xiàng yōu

To choose son-in-law

詳情容後復（详情容后复）

xiángqíng róng hòufù

Please allow me to inform you of the details in the future.

詳述種切（详述种切）

xiáng shù zhǒng qiē

Describe in details

小號（小号）

xiǎohào

My humble store/company

寫就（写就）

xiějiù

Finish writing



辛丑

xīnchǒu

The 38<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1961, 1901, 1841, 1781, 1721, 1661, 1601, etc.)

辛亥

xīnhài

The 48<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1911, 1851, 1791, 1731, 1671, 1611, etc.)

辛卯

xīnmǎo

The 28<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1951, 1891, 1831, 1771, 1711, 1651, etc.)

辛巳

xīnsì

The 18<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1941, 1881, 1821, 1761, 1701, 1641, etc.)

辛未

xīnwèi

The eighth year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1931, 1871, 1811, 1751, 1691, 1631, etc.)

辛酉

xīnyǒu

The 58<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1921, 1861, 1801, 1741, 1681, 1621, etc.)

心禱口祝，皆賀高壽。（心禱口祝，皆賀高壽。）

xīndǎo kǒuzhù, jiēhè gāoshòu

All my prayer and blessings are for your longevity.

欣逢榮壽大慶（欣逢榮壽大慶）

xīnféng róngshòu dàqìng

Glad to find out the time for me to write this letter coincide the celebration of your birthday!

欣聞貴體康復，至為慰藉。（欣闻贵体康复，至为慰藉。）

Xīnwén guìtǐ kāngfù, zhìwéi wèijiè

[I am] extremely glad and relieved to hear that you have recovered.

欣聞足下花燭筵開，奉呈薄禮。（欣闻足下花烛筵开，奉呈薄礼。）

Xīnwén zúxià huāzhú yánkāi, fèngchéng bóli

[I am] glad to hear you're getting married, and a humble gift is enclosed herewith.

欣喜無極（欣喜无极）

xīnxǐ wújí

Too thrill to contain myself

新婚誌喜，遙祝伉儷諧和。（新婚志喜，遥祝伉俪谐和。）

Xīnhūnzhìxǐ, yáozhù kànglì xiéhé

Congratulations on your wedding and wish you a harmonious marriage from afar!

新翁之喜

xīn wēng zhī xǐ

Groom's joy from getting married

行祺

xíng qí

Bon voyage!

Used as a letter ending wish.

幸寓中均平善，勿念可也。

Xìng yùzhōng jūn píngshàn, wùniàn kěyě

Fortunately everything is well at [my] household and you don't need to worry.

幸月

xìngyuè

The "lucky month" or the 11<sup>th</sup> month of the traditional Chinese calendar

杏月

xìngyuè

The "apricot blossom" month or the second month of the traditional Chinese calendar

朽人

xiǔrén

Perishing person

A humbly referring to oneself who is a senior.

戌刻

xūkè

7pm-9pm

戌時（戌时）

xūshí

7pm-9pm

續貂（续貂）

xù diāo

To make awkward additions to an excellent writing

A humble way for one to show modesty when being asked to make addition to a writing.

玄鑒（玄鉴）

xuánjiàn

Read [my letter] with profound and philosophical vision

Used at the beginning part of a letter after the name of the recipient who is a philosopher or religious person.

玄月

xuányuè

The “mysterious month of the 9th month of traditional Chinese calendar

旋

xuán

Then; very quickly

勛鑒（勋鉴）

xūnjiàn

Read with your great merits in [governmental achievements]

Used at the beginning of a letter after the name of the recipient who is a state man.

## Y

雅祺

yǎqí

Graceful and blessed

Used as letter ending wish for a recipient who is a scholar or artist.

嚴風極冷，請厚自珍愛。（严风极冷，请厚自珍爱。）

yánfēng jílēng, qǐng hòu zì zhēn'ài

The winter wind is extremely cold so please take great care of [yourself.]

延請（延请）

yánqǐng

To invite

炎暑日蒸，千萬珍愛。（炎暑日蒸，千万珍爱。）

Yánshǔ rìzhēng, qiānwàn zhēn ài

The sun is burning like flames. Please take great care of [yourself.]

艷日（艳日）

yànrì

The 29<sup>th</sup> day of a month

陽春三月，燕語雕梁，想必心曠神怡！（阳春三月，燕语雕梁，想必心旷神怡！）

Yángchūn sānyuè, yànyǔ diāoliáng, xiǎngbì xīnkuàngshényí

In the warm spring, swallows chirp on the artistically carved beam and I believe you must enjoy the cheerful time.

養日（养日）

yǎngrì

The 26<sup>th</sup> day of a month

遙維籌謀如意，諸凡從心（遥维筹谋如意，诸凡从心）

yáowéi chóumóu rúyì, zhūfán cóngxīn

From a remote place [I] wish [you] fulfil your business plan as expected and everything goes as [you] desire.

遙祝壽比南山，福如東海。（遙祝寿比南山，福如东海。）

Yáozhù shòubǐ nánshān, fú rú dōnghǎi

From a remote place, [I] wish you have a longevity as long lasting as the South Hill and enjoy lucks as vast as East Ocean.

曳白

yè bái

Can't come up with a word after a careful thought

曳甲

yè jiǎ

Be completely defeated

業於（业于）

yèyú

Already on/in

揖

yī

Bow with both hands folded in front

揖別鴻儀，瞬經數月（揖别鸿仪，瞬经数月）

yī bié hóngyí, shùn jīng shùyuè

Since I bowed and said goodbye to you, the great official, several months, in a blink of eye, have passed.

一別累月，思何可支？

yībié lěiyuè, sī hé kězhī

Several months have passed since our parting and the pain of missing you has become unbearable.

一經（一经）

yījīng

Once

一俟

yísì

As soon as

一俟開業，即當歸還。（一俟开业，即当归还。）

Yísì kāiyè, jídāng guīhuán

[I] will return it to [you] as soon as my store/company opens.

乙丑

yǐchǒu

The second year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1925, 1865, 1805, 1745, 1685, etc.)

乙亥

yǐhài

The 12<sup>th</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1935, 1875, 1815, 1755, 1695, 1635, etc.)

乙卯

yǐmǎo

The 52<sup>nd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1915, 1855, 1795, 1735, 1675, 1615, etc.)

乙巳

yǐsì

The 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1965, 1905, 1845, 1785, 1725, 1665, 1605, etc.)

乙未

yǐwèi

The 32<sup>nd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1955, 1895, 1835, 1775, 1715, 1655, etc.)

乙酉

yǐyǒu

The 22<sup>nd</sup> year of the traditional 60 year cycle (1945, 1885, 1825, 1765, 1705, 1645, etc.)

懿鑒（懿鉴）

yìjiàn

For you, the virtuous, to read

Used immediately after the name/title of the recipient who is a senior lady

亦洋

yìyáng

Eagle [silver] dollar

A special term only used by Anhui businessmen and yi is possibly the transliteration of eagle. Eagle dollar is actually from Mexico but widely used in Chinese market.

翌日

yìrì

The next day

翌早

yìzǎo

The next morning

因事繁忘卻，歉甚愧甚。（因事繁忘却，歉甚愧甚。）

yīn shìfán wàngquè, qiànshèn kuishèn

Due to terribly busy schedule, I forgot what you had entrusted me to do. I feel very embarrassed and please accept my apology.

因為瑣務，未即奉答為歉。（因为琐务，未即奉答为歉。）

Yīnwèi suǒwù, wèijí fèngdá wéiqiàn

I feel very sorry for not being able to reply immediately due to my trivias.

姻小弟

yīnxiǎodì

Your younger brother in law

陰月（陰月）

yīnyuè

The Month of Yin or the 10<sup>th</sup> month of traditional Chinese calendar

吟席

yínxí

To the mat of your composing and chanting poems

Used immediately after the name of the recipient who is a poet.

寅刻

yínkè  
3am-5am

寅時（寅时）  
yínshí  
3am-5am

飲水思源，感德靡窮（饮水思源，感德靡穷）  
yǐnshuǐsīyuán, gǎndé mǐqióng  
As a drinker should always keep the well digger in mind, [I] cannot express enough thanks for the favor [you gave me.]

郢政  
Yǐng zhèng  
Comment or amend

用特奉告  
yòngtè fènggào  
[I am writing this letter for no other purposes but] only to report to [you this]

用特奉聞（用特奉闻）  
yòngtè fèngwén  
[I am writing this letter for no other purposes but] only to inform [you of this]

有何要求，請儘早示知，切勿客氣。（有何要求，请尽早示知，切勿客气。）  
yǒuhé yāoqiú, qǐng jǐnzǎo shìzhī, qièwù kèqì  
If [you] have any request, please do not hesitate with consideration of politeness but let [me] know as soon as possible.

有叩崇階，尚乞進加訓迪（有叩崇階，尚乞进加训迪）  
yǒukòu chóngjiē, shàngqǐ jìnjiā xùndí  
[I sent him] to climb your lofty stairways and knock [your door] and [I] beg [you] offer [him] instructions and trainings.  
Used in the situation that the sender has sent the recipient a younger person to receive training.

有蒙見托，敢不盡心盡力？（有蒙见托，敢不尽心尽力？）  
yǒuméng jiàntuō, gǎn bú jìnxīn jìnlì  
How could I do not do my utmost to fulfill what [you] have entrusted me to do?



有日

yǒurì

The 25<sup>th</sup> day of a month

宥日

yòurì

The 26<sup>th</sup> day of a month

有誤要公（有誤要公）

yǒuwù yàogōng

[What you have done] is severely detrimental to the most important business goal

有暇希即函復為盼。（有暇希即函復為盼。）

Yǒuxiá xī jí hánfù wéipàn

[I] wish [you] could reply when you have spare time.

酉刻

yǒukè

5pm-7pm

酉時（酉時）

yǒushí

5pm-7pm

愚

yú

The fool

A humble way to address oneself

愚兄

yúxiōng

Me as a foolish elder brother

A humble way to address oneself (male only)

余

Yú

I, me

餘不盡言，唯乞速復為盼。（余不尽言，唯乞速复为盼。）

Yúbújìnyán, wéi qǐ sùfù wéipàn

This letter cannot fully express my words and the only thing I wish is to get your prompt reply.

Used at the end of a letter

魚日（鱼日）

yú rì

The 6<sup>th</sup> day of a month

虞日

yú rì

The 7<sup>th</sup> day of a month

與尊處接洽（与尊处接洽）

yǔ zūnchù jiēqià

Get in touch with your department/institute

玉成

Yùchéng

[Your] precious help to secure the success [of something]

玉翰

Yùhàn

[Your] graceful and precious letter

玉展

yùzhǎn

Open [my letter] gracefully

Usually used on envelop after the name of recipient.

諭（谕）

yù

Inform, tell

Typically from a senior/superior to a subordinate

寓目

yùmù  
Read, look

元日  
yuánrì  
The 13th day of a month

遠道聞訃，萬分哀痛。（远道闻讣，万分哀痛。）  
Yuǎndào wénfù, wànfēn āitòng  
Hearing the obituary from afar, I have been feeling sad and painful.

Z

在下  
Zàixià  
“The inferior”  
A humble self-addressing

再拜  
zàibài  
Bow twice  
Used at the end of a letter

再啟（再启）  
zài qǐ  
Write again  
Used after the re-signature in the P.S. part.

暫不他往（暂不他往）  
zànbù tāwǎng  
For time being [I] will not travel to other places.

占詩一首，用代賀詞（占诗一首，用代贺词）  
zhàn shī yì shǒu yòng dài hècí  
Compose a poem as my greeting [to you]

照收無訛（照收无讹）  
zhàoshōuwú é

Received without any error

照收無誤（照收无误）

zhàoshōuwúwù

Received without any error

真日

zhēnrì

The 11th day of a month

政躬康勝（政躬康胜）

zhènggōng kāngshèng

[Your] politically engaged body is in great health

政躬康泰

zhènggōng kāngtài

[Your] politically engaged body is in great health

正月

zhēngyuè

The first month of traditional Chinese calendar

知念奉聞（知念奉闻）

zhīniànfèngwén

I know you are worried about it so [I write this letter] to inform you.

支日

zhīrì

The 4th day of a month

知照

zhīzhào

To inform

Usually mean to inform a third person

知尊恙復發，甚念甚念。（知尊恙复发，甚念甚念。）

Zhī zūnyàng fùfā, shènniàn shènniàn

Knowing that you had a relapse, I am very worried about you.

職是之故（职是之故）

zhíshì zhīgù

Just because of this

執柯（执柯）

zhíkē

To be a matchmaker

指日

zhǐrì

Very soon

祇頌起居曼苾（祇颂起居曼苾）

zhǐsòng qǐjū mànfú

[I] respectfully wish you nice and lucky in everyday life

Used at the end of a letter

智鑒（智鉴）

zhìjiàn

Read [my letter] with great wisdom

Used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after the name/title of the recipient.

Usually for a Buddhist or a philosopher.

擲下(掷下)

zhìxià

“Throw down”

A humble way to say please send me [a letter or a document].

踵府

zhǒng fǔ

Walk to your house [to visit you]

重病新癒，望多休息

Zhòngbìng xīnyù, wàngduō xiūxi

Since [you] have just recovered from severe sickness, please take a good rest.

仲春

Zhòngchūn

Mid-Spring

仲冬

zhòngdōng  
Mid-winter

仲秋

zhòngqiū  
Mid-autumn

仲夏

zhòngxià  
Mid-summer

朱提

zhūtí  
Silver (ancient currency), money in general

諸荷優通，再表謝忱。（诸荷优通，再表谢忱。）

Zhū hè yōu tōng , zài biǎo xiè chén

Receiving so many favors and helps in lubricating relations for me, I truly appreciate it.

囑代筆問候（嘱代笔问候）

zhǔ dài bǐ wèn hòu

[A third person] ask me to convey his/her best regards [to you]

佇候明教

zhù hòu míng jiào

[I am] standing up and waiting for your witty instruction.

著席

zhù xí

To the composing mat [of you]

Used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after the name/title of the recipient known as a writer.

專此布臆（专此布臆）

zhuāncǐ bù yì

[I am] sending you this special letter to express what are from my heart.

Used at the end of a letter

專函奉瀆，祇頌勛安！（专函奉渎，祇颂勋安！）

Zhuānhán fèngdú, zhǐsòng xūn ān

[I am] sending [you] this special letter in respect although [I am afraid it might still be] rude, and respectfully wish you peace and safe when playing leadership role in government/management.

Used at the end of a letter

專函致唁，並慰哀衷。（专函致唁，并慰哀衷。）

Zhuānhán zhìyàn, bìngwèi āizhōng

[I am] sending [you] this special letter of condolence in order to comfort your heart-breaking sadness.

Used at the end of a letter of condolence.

專啟者（专启者）

zhuān qǐ zhě

It is to inform you

An opening used in a letter to address a specific issue

撰席

Zhuànxí

To the composing mat [of you]

Used at the beginning of a letter, immediately after the name/title of the recipient who is a famous writer

妝安

zhuāng ān

Peace in dressing up

Letter ending wish for a female

壯月

Zhuàngyuè

The “strong month” or the 8th month of traditional Chinese calendar

拙荆

zhuó jīng

“My stupid Thorns”; my wife  
Used in a humble way to mention one’s own wife.

拙作  
zhuó zuò  
“My stupid composition”; my work  
A humble way to mention one’s own writing.

拙作幼稚，懇請大加斧正。（拙作幼稚，恳请大加斧正。）  
Zhuózuò yòuzhì, kěnpǐng dàjiā fǔzhèng  
Since my poor work is in such an immature state, please do not hesitate to make significant corrections.

茲  
Zī  
“This” or “This is to”

茲際炎暑，好自為之。（茲际炎暑，好自为之。）  
Zījì yánshǔ, hǎozìwéizhī  
Since it is very hot summer now, please take good care of [yourself.]

茲啟者  
Zīqǐzhě  
This is to inform [you of the following]  
Used at the beginning of a letter, usually a business correspondence

茲肅者（茲肅者）  
Zīsùzhě  
This is to sincerely inform [you of the following]  
Used at the beginning of a letter, usually a business correspondence

茲有懇者（茲有恳者）  
Zīyǒu kěn zhě  
This is to sincerely request [you] to do something for [me]  
Used at the beginning of a letter, usually a business correspondence

茲專瀆者（茲专渎者）  
Zīzhuāndúzhě



It is to send this special letter [to you although I am afraid it might be] rude.  
Used at the beginning of a letter

自春迨夏  
zì chūn dài xià  
from spring to the summer

自知世壽不永（自知世寿不永）  
Zìzhī shìshòu bù yǒng  
Understand one's own life in this world is numbered.

字  
Zì  
Handwrite [this letter] by myself  
Used at the end of a letter after the sender's name, usually in the case when the recipient is at least one generation younger than the sender

子刻  
zǐkè  
23pm-1am

子時（子时）  
zǐshí  
23pm-1am

足錢（足钱）  
Zúqián  
A Full amount of ..... copper coins  
Used when transferring money to the recipient.

足元  
Zúyuán  
A full amount of ..... yuan (silver dollar)  
Used when transferring money to the recipient.

足下  
zú xià  
“The place beneath your feet”; His grace

Used at the beginning of a letter, after the name of the recipient, as part of addressing for a high respectful person.

尊鑒（尊鑒）

zūn jiàn

Read with your respectful eyes

Used at the beginning of a letter, after the name of the recipient, as part of the appellation.

尊前

zūnqián

To the front [you,] the esteemed

Used at the beginning of a letter when addressing a senior recipient, placed immediately after the name/title.

尊恙大愈否？望珍攝自重。

Zūnyàng dà yù fǒu, wàng zhēnshè zìzhòng

Have you fully recovered? Please cherish your health and take great care of yourself.

尊恙已有起色，甚以為慰。（尊恙已有起色，甚以为慰。）

Zūnyàng yǐ yǒu qǐsè, shènyǐ wéiwèi

I am greatly pleased to know that you are recovering.

尊恙愈否？念念。

Zūnyàng yùfǒu? Niànniàn

Have you recovered from the sickness? I am really concerned.

尊意如何，請即示知。（尊意如何，请即示知。）

Zūnyì rúhé, qǐng jí shìzhī

Please let me know [your] respectful opinion at [your] earliest convenience

尊右

Zūnyòu

To the right side of you, the esteemed

Used at the beginning of a letter when addressing a senior recipient, placed immediately after the name/title.

昨得手書，反復讀之（昨得手书，反复读之）

zuódé shǒushū, fǎnfù dúzhī

Yesterday I received your handwritten letter and I read it for several times.

昨奉來旨

Zuó fèng lái zhǐ

Yesterday [I] received your letter.

左右

Zuǒyòu

To the left or right side [of you]

Used at the beginning of a letter when addressing a senior recipient, placed immediately after the name/title.