

# C-Drama Glossary: Drama Genre, Chinese Slang & Other Terminology

Compiled, proofread and edited by langyabangs on twitter. Big thanks to [u/shkencorebreaks](#), [u/240229](#), [u/Best-Form-4649](#), [u/Atharaphelun](#), [u/dengyideng](#) and [u/DenisWB](#) for their contribution & correction.

Source: [Baidu Encyclopedia](#), [Immortal Mountain](#), [Drama Potatoe](#), [The World of Chinese](#), [Daily C-Pop](#), [CPOP HOME](#), [Wikipedia](#), [cyn lynn](#), [Sip of Tea](#), [guoman](#), [iNews](#), [ICW](#), [Octo Plus Media](#), [DramaPanda](#), [TutorABC](#).



Use **Ctrl + F** if you're searching for a specific word as the order of the words is randomized.

## MAJOR STREAMING PLATFORM



**TENCENT VIDEO** (腾讯视频 téngxùn shìpín) - also commonly symbolized with  representing the penguin or goose which is their mascot and known as WETV outside of China, is a Chinese video streaming website owned by Tencent. Since its launch in 2020, it has rapidly amassed an impressive user base of 800 million within three years, with a daily user count of 120 million. This makes it one of the largest online video platforms in China and the world's fourth-largest video platform, trailing only behind Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+. Both the internet and mobile versions of the platform hold the top position among competing Chinese streaming platforms.



**iQIYI** (爱奇艺; pronounced eye-CHEE-ye) - also commonly symbolized with  representing 奇异果 (qi yi guo) meaning kiwi, iQIYI is a Chinese subscription video-on-demand over-the-top (VOD OTT) streaming service owned by Baidu, headquartered in Beijing. iQIYI specializes in producing and distributing films and television series. With 174 million monthly unique visitors, iQiyi holds the position as the second-largest among Chinese streaming platforms. Could also be referred to as 271 due to similar Chinese pronunciation or  kiwi = 猕猴桃, 桃 = peach.



**YOUKU** (优酷; youku lit. 'excellent & cool') - also commonly symbolized with 优 because 裤 (ku) is a homonym for pants, is a video hosting service based in Beijing that operates as a subsidiary of Alibaba Group Holding Limited with 144 million unique visitors in 2022.



**MGTV** (芒果TV; mángguǒTV) - also commonly symbolized with 🥭 as 芒果 (mángguǒ) literally translates to mango. It is also colloquially referred to as 水果台 (shuǐguǒ tái) meaning fruits channel. Established in 2006, MGTV is an internet video platform for Hunan Radio and Television and a Chinese online video media platform that provides users with diverse content, including variety shows, movies, TV series, animation, sports, news, games, micro-movies, etc.



**BILIBILI** (哔哩哔哩) - b站 or b station or 字母台 meaning alphabet channel is a Shanghai-based video-sharing website that allows users to submit, view, and add overlaid commentary on videos. Since the mid-2010s, Bilibili has expanded beyond its original niche market, which focused on animation, comics, and games (ACG). It has transformed into one of the major Chinese over-the-top streaming platforms, offering videos on demand (VOD), including documentaries, variety shows, and other original programming. Bilibili is also known for its scrolling danmu ("bullet curtain," 弹幕) commenting system.

## MAJOR BROADCAST NETWORK

**CCTV** (中国中央电视台; zhōngguó zhōngyāng diànshìtái) - China Central Television is the national television broadcaster of China, first established in 1958 as a propaganda outlet. Its 50 channels broadcast a variety of programming to more than one billion viewers in six languages. Channels like CCTV-1 and CCTV-8 primarily broadcast dramas, providing a TV ratings buffer due to its nationwide coverage that ensures accessibility throughout the country regardless of your location.

**Hunan TV, Zhejiang TV, Jiangsu TV, Dongfang/Dragon TV** in Shanghai, and **Beijing TV** are the five major satellite stations with the largest viewer bases.

While accessibility varies based on location, most areas will have access to at least a couple of these channels.

See more [here](#).

## DRAMA GENRES

**Note:** Genres are inherently subjective e.g. Douban and Baidu each have their own sets of genre names (heck, even sometimes you see the genre in MDL and DramaWiki listed differently), and people may even create genre names on the fly. And as [u/shkencorebreaks](#) pointed out, genres in China are divided quite differently. For instance, what the international audience commonly calls a 'historical' drama is known here as a 古装剧 (gǔzhuāngjù), literally translated as an 'ancient costume drama,' where the only historical elements in these dramas are the clothing and sets. Hence, the following list comprises genre names commonly recognized in the international sphere, alongside some genres I've encountered on Douban and Baidu and it may not describe **all** genres that are already commonly known among people outside of c-drama terminology (such as romance, sci-fi, etc.).

**WUXIA** (武俠) – literally means “Martial Heroes”. Fictional stories about regular humans who can achieve supernatural fighting abilities through Chinese martial arts training and internal energy cultivation. Themes of chivalry, tragedy, revenge & romance are common.

**XIANXIA** (仙俠) – literally means “Immortal Heroes”. Fictional stories featuring magic, demons, ghosts, immortals, and a great deal of Chinese folklore/mythology. Protagonists (usually) attempt to cultivate to Immortality, seeking eternal life and the pinnacle of strength. Heavily inspired by Daoism.

*Then, is Wuxia “low fantasy,” while Xianxia is “high fantasy”?* A **note** from [u/Atharaphelun](#): it depends on the scope of the story. e.g. *The Untamed*, while it is very much a *xianxia* story with the whole cultivation system and cultivation sects setting, it is more of a low fantasy story given that the stakes are generally lower – simply a war between cultivation sects and various cultivators, not a “fate of the world” type of situation. A more typical high fantasy *xianxia* would be something like *Ever Night* or the upcoming *A Record of a Mortal's Journey to Immortality* which do involve high fantasy themes involving the fate of the world/universe, but still have the trappings of *xianxia* – cultivation system, cultivation sects, protagonist goes through the cultivation journey, etc. In the case of the latter, it does start out as low fantasy, but eventually reaches high fantasy as the protagonist goes into the much higher cultivation levels (this is how a typical *xianxia* is structured, given that it matches the protagonist's cultivation level – the higher the

cultivation level, the higher the stakes and the more powerful the enemies are).

**XUANHUAN** (玄幻) – literally means “Mysterious Fantasy”. A broad genre of fictional stories which remixes Chinese folklore/mythology with foreign elements & settings. Xuanhuan and Xianxia novels may sometimes seem similar on the surface. Look for the presence of Daoist elements (the Dao, Yin and Yang, Immortals, etc.) to easily distinguish the two – if they aren’t present, then it’s probably a Xuanhuan novel.

**TRANSMIGRATION** (穿越 chuānyuè) – literally translates to “crossing through” or “transversing,” it often involves a mix of romance, fantasy, and historical themes where the protagonist usually travels through time and space and then finding themselves in a different era or world. The term “transmigration” is often used to describe this plot device where a character’s consciousness or soul moves across dimensions.

**IDOL DRAMA** (偶像剧 – ǒuxiàng jù) – also known as trendy drama in Japan; although its connotation is not very clear, a more commonly used description today is that idol dramas are a genre featuring idol stars (or in this case, younger actors) as protagonists, targeting younger audiences as the main viewers. What sets idol dramas apart from earlier soap operas or other costume dramas on television is that this genre primarily emphasizes not the tension of the script or the acting skills of the actors, but the appearance of the actors. Moreover, the protagonists in this genre are rarely middle-aged or elderly (albeit not impossible). For **idol costume dramas**, they would usually call it 古偶 (gǔ ǒu) while **modern idol dramas** are called **xiàn ǒu** (现偶). This is to set it apart from 正剧 (zhèng jù) which is serious/mainstream drama.

**PROPER/SERIOUS DRAMAS** (正剧 zhèng jù) – self-explanatory by its literal translation.

**HISTORICAL** – what international audience typically refers to as a ‘historical’ drama is known in China as 古装剧 (gǔzhuāng jù), literally translating to an “ancient costume drama,” where more often than not, the only “historical” aspect of these dramas lies in the clothing and set designs. That’s why the 古 (gǔ) in 古偶 (gǔ ǒu) abbreviates 古装, meaning ‘historical costume.’ Not all shows of this type are entirely commercialized, and there are numerous ‘costume dramas’ that differ from ‘idol dramas.’ A **legitimate historical drama** would be called 历史题材电视剧 (**lìshǐ tícái diànshìjù**), which is actual historical dramas that have a basis in actual history and involve historically attested figures and stories drawn from, or

otherwise in some sense directly influenced by the canonical historical record. (Note that the international audience may not be super familiar with 'true' historical dramas because ever since early 2019 it's been next to impossible to get them past censors. Most of the really 'good' ones then are older classics just like *Serenade of Peaceful Joy* which is a pretty for-real historical drama that you might have seen. Xianxia dramas, by definition, are *definitely* not 'historicals,' in this sense). My personal take on this is that I just refer to most costume dramas as **guzhuang**.

**FEMALE-CENTRIC** (女性题材 nǚxìng tícái) - female-centric dramas are more concentrated on the diverse aspects of women's lived experiences even though the majority of c-drama are targeted at women since many more unfolds in the life of a female lead beyond romance, and these dramas are the go-to for exploring those other narratives. The genre encompasses dramas such as *Ode to Joy*, *All is Well*, *Delicious Romance*, *The First Half of My Life*, *Remembrance of Things Past*, *My Best Friend's Story*, and more.

**MINGUO** (民国) - or more commonly known within the international c-drama community as Republican Era dramas; 民国剧 (mínguó jù), are typically dramas with a period set from 1912 to 1949 that **usually** focus on the political, social, and cultural upheavals that occurred in China during that time. They often explore themes such as revolution, modernization, warlordism, and societal changes, featuring characters who struggle against the backdrop of political turmoil or navigate the complexities of the era.

**SLICE OF LIFE** (生活 shēng huó) - also literally means "life," it's a genre that depicts the ordinary and mundane aspects of characters' lives, exploring the day-to-day experiences, relationships, and challenges they face. The narratives often lack exaggerated or dramatic plotlines and instead, opt for a more realistic and relatable portrayal of human experiences. Slice of Life dramas aim to capture the essence of ordinary life, allowing viewers to connect with the characters on a personal level.

**SPY DRAMA** (谍战剧 diézhàn jù) - centered around themes of espionage and underground secret activities. Usually, it contains elements such as undercover operations (卧底 wòdǐ), special agents (特务 tèwù), intelligence exchange (情报交换 qíngbào jiāohuàn), suspense (悬疑 xuánsù), romance (爱情 àiqíng), violence (暴力 bàoli), and interrogation (刑讯 xíngxùn).

**SHENMO** (神魔) - Gods and demons fiction or *Shenmo* fiction (神魔小说 shénmó xiǎoshuō) is a sub-genre of Chinese fantasy fiction that revolves around the deities, immortals, demons, and monsters of Chinese mythology. The term *shenmo*

*xiaoshuo*, coined in the early 20th century by the writer and literary historian Lu Xun, literally means "gods and demons novel". Classical works of *shenmo* fiction include the novels *Journey to the West* and *Investiture of the Gods*.

**YOUTH** (青春 *qīngchūn*) - something akin to a coming-of-age genre, they are dramas that typically revolve around the lives, experiences, and challenges faced by young individuals, often in their teenage or early adult years. Themes commonly explored include friendship, romance, personal growth, and the pursuit of dreams as it aims to capture the essence of youth and portray the characters' journeys through various coming-of-age experiences.

**DANGAIJU / DANMEI-ADAPTATION DRAMA** (耽改剧/耽改 *dāngǎijù/Dāngǎi*) - dramas adapted from male-male romance fiction; *danmei* (耽美) itself is a term borrowed from Japanese, describing male-male romance.

**BAIHE** (百合 *bǎihé*) - lit. means lily; are works centered around lesbianism. *Baihe* works explicitly portray 'romantic love between women' and emphasize it as a focal point. Based on the clarity in depicting romantic relationships between women, works that primarily showcase intense emotional entanglements or ambiguous sentiments surpassing ordinary friendship among women are classified. These works usually do not explicitly state romantic involvement but tend to develop in that direction and are labeled as '百合-leaning' works.

**NIANDAIXI** (年代戏) - which literally means "period drama," are dramas set from the late Qing Dynasty (second half of the 19th century) to the end of the 20th century, as opposed to historical dramas and modern dramas.

**OLDER WOMEN/YOUNGER MAN** (年下/姐弟恋 *nián xià* or *jiědì liàn*) - self-explanatory, a genre depicting romantic relationships where the woman is older than the man she is dating or in a relationship with.

**NOVEL-ADAPTATION DRAMA** (书改剧 *shū gǎi jù*) - self-explanatory

**MALE CHANNEL** (男频, *nán pín*) - novels published on male-oriented websites such as Qidian. Stories are usually told from a male perspective.

**FEMALE CHANNEL** (女频, *nǚ pín*) - novels published on female-oriented websites such as Jinjiang. Stories are usually told from a female perspective.

## CHINESE SLANG, C-BIZ TERMINOLOGY & CHINESE FANDOM CULTURE

**LIULIANG STAR** (流量明星 *liuliang mingxing*) - usually referred to as **TRAFFIC STARS** (流量 lit. translates to flow/traffic) are a celebrity that is characterized by huge and

dedicated fanbases and online traffic data. Because Weibo and other social media platforms became more and more dominated by fanbases + entertainment, the huge numbers of Liuliang celebs pulled in, in regards to online traffic like social media engagement, sales (for endorsed products, music, etc.), polls, and a large number of other things, became more and more significant.

**DINGLIU** (顶流) - Top Liuliang. It has its origins in terms like \*liuliang mingxing (\*流量明星: traffic star) and liuliang yiren (流量艺人: traffic artist). This term emerged as a popular internet buzzword in 2017 and gained widespread popularity in online fan communities. It serves as a title for exceptionally famous individuals, events, or content.

**TEAM** (团队 tuánduì) - a team that manages and supports a celebrity's activities. A team usually includes a manager, a personal assistant, a stylist, a makeup artist, a bodyguard, a driver, etc.

**STUDIO** (工作室 Gōngzuòshì) - an independent company with all team members dedicated to a specific celebrity. It can be established by the celebrity's management company or the celebrity him/herself. Celebrities with their own studios usually have more freedom and power in the decision-making process related to their careers.

**MELON** (瓜 guā) - juicy gossip. Also **chi gua** 吃瓜 or literal meaning: eating melon. Bloggers usually use 🍉 to indicate that they are writing rumors or news that is not official. You might wonder: why a salacious piece of scandal could be compared to a juicy fruit in Chinese? The term 吃瓜 (onlooker, rubbernecking) refers to people who gawp and gossip about matters that don't affect them and seem to have originated in 2016. The terms "eat melon seeds in the front row (前排吃瓜子 qiánpái chī guāzǐ)," or "sell melon seeds in the front row (前排兜售瓜子 qiánpái dōushòu guāzǐ)" appeared in online forums around that time.

**MELON MASTER** (瓜主 guāzhǔ) - refers to individuals on the internet who expose sensational information about celebrities, providing juicy gossip for many to consume.

**MELON EATER** (吃瓜群众 chīguā qúnzhòng) - people who camped around gossip threads to "sit in the front row and eat melon seeds." The metaphorical use of melon seeds suggests that these individuals are like spectators snacking on melon seeds while watching drama unfold. They are passive observers who enjoy the gossip but do not actively contribute to the discussion.

**YXH** (营销号 yíngxiāo hào) or **MARKETING ACCOUNT** - a certain kind of self-media/blog that mainly writes and shares content to get attention or make

money. They spread information online and are important in shaping public opinions. Some pretend to be official media but don't follow the rules like real news outlets. Instead, they focus on making money, often by getting a lot of people to view their content. Unfortunately, this can lead to spreading false information and causing harm to the healthy environment of online opinions so it's important to **note that many contents from yxh are untrue and unreliable**. Also previously discussed in this sub and probably better explained by [u/synergysb here](#).

**PIE/FLATBREAD** (饼 bǐng) - a piece of information or promise that instills belief and expectation about the future, often referring to yxh's rumors about celebrities' upcoming projects or endorsements.

**DRAW PIE/FLATBREAD** (画饼 huà bǐng) - the act of creating absurd and unrealistic information or promises that are eventually proven untrue or unfulfilled, typically associated with yxh's fake rumors about celebrities' upcoming projects or endorsements.

🍈 (瓜 guā) - an interesting term that denotes ridiculous rumors. Occasionally, these rumors may be true, but more often than not, they are not, and their popularity is often attributed to their absurdity. This term is frequently used on Douban forums, where many Weibo yxh source their gua from.

**CP** (配对 peiduì) - an abbreviation from COUPLING borrowed from the original Japanese term カップリング (kappuringu), used to refer to ship or romantic relationships between two individuals (e.g. "They're watching Untamed for the Lan Wangji/Wei Wuxian CP.") Their **shipper** are called **CPF** (CP粉).

**CP HYPE** (炒CP/营业, chǎo CP/yíngyè) - promoting CP through certain ambiguous moves, often considered a commercial marketing behavior. **FORCED CP HYPE** (被迫营业 bèi pò yíngyè).

**DEAD CP** (过世CP/离婚CP, guòshì CP/líhūn CP) - CP that finally breaks. A humorous example is the relationship between Zhang Jingyi and Chen Xingxu, they were seen acting intimately while filming "Fall in Love," and it was rumored that they were actually in a relationship. However, the two seemed to break up due to unpleasant reasons. A year later, during the drama's airing, they gave each other cold looks at promotional events and could barely talk to each other.

**SUGAR/CANDY** 🍬 (糖 táng) - a sweet CP interaction. [Self-explanatory] or couple's hints and moments. SEE ALSO: **kswl** (嗑死我了 ke sì wǒ le) which means A fangirling expression which can be interpreted as **"they're too sweet, I'm dead."**




**BLOOD SUGAR** (血糖 xuè táng) - a CP sugar made up of an unfavorable condition of one party in a CP. e.g. when there is one person seriously injured but ignored because of the CP interaction; there is a big gap between the popularity of the two parties, so the less popular will benefit from the more popular, etc. Since these are considered blood-sucking, "ke blood sugar" is ke-ing sugar while sucking blood.

**IDOL** (偶像 ǒuxiàng) - 'idol' in the sense of like a statue or other representation of a god that people back in the day might have busied themselves with worshipping. Like as in putting a 'false idol' before the true [whatever.] 偶像 can also be used colloquially, in not very serious contexts, to say that so-and-so is your 'hero.' The current usage of 偶像 to refer to younger popular "celebrities," as opposed to more serious/professional/whatever "actors," comes from a very early Japanese borrowing/re-imagining of the English word 'idol' (アイドル) to cover that class of young, pretty, and famous people that English used to call something like 'heartthrobs.'

**SAJIAO** (撒娇 sājiāo) - the act of deliberately behaving coquettishly or acting spoiled, often taking advantage of being favored; "to act like a spoiled child."

**RIVER CRAB** (河蟹 héxiè) - a homophone for "harmony" (和谐 héxié) in the term "harmonious society" (和谐社会 héxié shèhuì), which alludes to internet censorship in China. Chinese netizens use "river crab" to discuss the deliberate removal of negative news and the restriction of freedom of speech.

**YYDS** (永远的神 yǒngyuǎn de shén) - Eternal God, describes an outstanding person or thing. Pretty much equivalent to GOAT (Greatest Of All Time).

**xx花/xx**  - actresses from XX year onwards, usually grouped in sets of five years; hua (花) means flower in English, hence the flower emoji. (e.g. "Liu Yifei is my favorite 85花.")

**HUA DAN** (花旦) - originally rooted in Chinese opera, this term describes a vivacious and unmarried young woman. In contemporary usage, it refers to Chinese film actresses. Hua Dans typically attracts significant attention from both fans and the general public. Apart from having appealing looks, they are expected to possess acting skills, commercial value, and qualifications that contribute to the success of their works.

**DA HUA** (大花) - literally translating to **BIG FLOWER**, it refers to the first generation of Hua Dan. They are actresses who have accumulated years of experience, demonstrate strong acting skills, received numerous mainstream awards, produced notable works recognized by the general public and have had a significant impact on the industry.

**XIAO HUA** (小花) 🌸 - literally translating to **LITTLE FLOWER**, it refers to almost all young actresses, regardless of their popularity, reputation, and acting skills. The most popular ones are generally called Liuliang Xiao Hua (流量小花).

**ZHONG HUA** (中花) - literally translating to **MIDDLE FLOWER**, it refers to actresses who have not yet attained the level of Da Hua but surpass Xiao Hua in terms of notable works, awards, and industry recognitions.

**QING YI** (青衣): Originally rooted in Chinese opera, Qing Yi refers to a virtuous, dignified, and elegant married woman. In the context of Chinese film, it now denotes actresses with a distinction from Hua Dans. Unlike Hua Dans, Qing Yis may not necessarily command large fandoms or the ability to create significant buzz, but they earn recognition from industry insiders. Their body of work consists of high-quality productions that leave a lasting impact on the general public.

**EMPEROR** (皇 huang) - refers to an individual who is highly favored by the company, enjoying a continuous influx of resources and possessing advantages over others within the same group or program.

**TOW PLANE** (拖飞机 tuō fēijī) - the sole popular member in a group who carries the entire group, including other members.

**DOUBLE-COOKED MEAT** (回锅肉 huíguōròu) - survival shows trainees who initially debuted but failed to gain popularity, subsequently returning to trainee status.

**FOOT-WASHING MAID** (洗脚婢 xǐjiǎo bì) - the least popular members of a group who have minimal resources and recognition.

**LITTLE FRESH MEAT** (小鲜肉 xiǎo xiānròu) - young, handsome, and popular male celebrities, often used to describe a new generation of attractive and trendy actors.

**xx生/xx** 🗓️ (xx shēng) - actors from XX year onwards, usually grouped in sets of five years.

**xx后/xx花生/xx** 🥜 (xx hòu/xx huāshēng) - actors from XX year onwards, usually grouped in sets of five years.

**OUT OF CIRCLE** (出圈 chū quān) - to break out (to the mainstream). This generally refers to a rise in the popularity of a particular idol or celebrity. They go beyond the attention of just their fanbase, entering the public eye and becoming a genuine "public figure." Later, this concept was extended beyond individuals and can also be applied to events and objects, signifying that they gain recognition beyond their initial circle.

**PASSERSBY** (路人 lu ren) - non-fans; also refers to pedestrians, passersby, or, in gaming terminology, players who are not directly involved in a particular situation. It metaphorically describes people who are unrelated or indifferent to a situation as if they were just ordinary passersby.

**WATER ARMY** (水军 shui jun) - online paid posters and social media bots commenting or posting predefined content on online platforms. In the entertainment industry, water armies are used to promote, defame, or boost data on particular works or celebrities.

**WATER-INJECTED** - an article, a celebrity's social media account, a TV show, a movie, etc. that is flooded with fake data, typically generated by the water army.

**WHITEWASH** (洗白 xǐ bái) - engaging in intentional deception and employing various tactics to divert attention and make the public forget about a celebrity's problematic past. For example, a celebrity with a controversial past may attempt to whitewash their image by actively participating in charity work or government programs. Over time, the positive activities and energy they showcase can overshadow and cause people to overlook their past scandals.

**HOUSE COLLAPSED** (房子塌了 fangzi tale) - a term said when there is a celebrity involved in love scandal that originated from an interview where a woman said, "When I saw a house collapsed over there, I just went over to watch but I found out that it was my own house collapsing." In C-fandom, when someone said that her "house collapsed," she meant she thought she was about to read about love scandals of other people's idols with excitement, but it turned out to be her own idol. But it doesn't only mean that your idol is caught in a love scandal. Any moral scandal or crime (such as drug abuse, prostitution, tax evasion) happens to them can be described as a house collapse.

**CAR FLIPPED** (翻车 fanchē) - unexpected and unsatisfactory things happening, e.g: an excellent gamer losing the game, your online girlfriend turning out to be a scammer, a celebrity saying something stupid/ opposite to what she used to say on TV, etc.

**BLACK** (黑 hēi) - slandering and creating or spreading negative information to defame someone or some projects, usually done by anti-fans.

**BLACK MATERIALS** (黑料 hei liao) - information or historical records (which can be either true or not) that will have a negative impact on a celebrity or a project.

**BLACK RED** (黑红 hei hong) - creating controversies and negative narratives about oneself with the primary goal of garnering attention. After gaining fame, they may

attempt to "whitewash" their public image but in the event that these efforts to whitewash are unsuccessful, it's commonly referred to as a "car-flipped" incident.

**HEAT** (热度 *redu*) - popularity, but it's more of short-term enthusiasm than long-term recognition. See also: **RUB HEAT** (蹭热 *cengre*) which means riding the wave of someone else's popularity.

**RED** (红 *hóng*) - a person, celebrity, film, song, or any work in general that is hot, famous, or popular. **FIRE** (火 *huǒ*) has the same meaning.

**DOMESTIC ENT. INDUSTRY** (内娱 *nèiyú*/内🐟) - the fish emoji in 内🐟 might be a play on words as the pronunciation of 鱼 (*yú*) = fish is similar to the pronunciation of 娱 (*yú*) = entertainment.

**FLOP** (糊 *hu*) - in the context of actors or dramas refers to a flop or failure. It is used to describe a lack of success either for individual actors or for entire dramas. In some cases, it might be used affectionately or humorously to acknowledge a less successful performance or production.

**DAIPAI** (代拍) - literally translated to "proxy photography" or "photo-taking service," they are essentially similar to paparazzi who follow and take photos of celebrities for commercial gain but aside from just selling the photos to publications or entertainment outlets, their services can also be engaged by fans which is why the internet slang literally means to be a substitute 代 (*dai*) in taking photos of others 拍 (*pai*).

**FAN CIRCLE** (粉圈 *fěnguān*) - fandom.

**FRIEND CIRCLE** (朋友圈 *péngyǒu quān*) - when a C-citizen mentions his/her friend circle, he/she is most likely talking about his/her Weixin (Wechat)'s feed.

**OFFICIAL FANCLUB / HYH** (后援会 *hòu yuán huì*) - a leading organization representing a fandom, usually established by a group of fans gathering together and recruiting new people to support and promote a celebrity. They have certain decision-making and economic power in the fandom. Official Fanclubs are more professional nowadays as they establish contacts with celebrity teams to manage the fandoms' operation following the teams' directions.

**FANSITE MASTERS** (站子/站姐 *zhanzi or zhanjie*) - dedicated fans who follow their idols to take stunning photos and share them online. They're also the organizers of many fan support projects. Fansite masters and stalker fans both have the celebrities' itineraries through various sources, but fansite masters only follow public work schedules that allow fans or the general public to attend, including public airport schedules.

**SOLO FANS** (唯粉 weifen) - pretty much self-explanatory, individuals who are fans or supporters of only one particular celebrity and dedicated to and exclusively support a specific person rather than being fans of a broader group or genre.

**STALKER FANS** (私生 sisheng) - akin to *sasaeng*, they are fans who engage in obsessive and intrusive behavior, often crossing boundaries and invading the privacy of celebrities. These fans might engage in actions like following the celebrity, invading their personal space, or even engaging in activities that can be harmful or disruptive. The term is often used in a negative context to describe fans whose actions go beyond the normal boundaries of fan behavior.

**TOP FAN** (大老 dà lǎo) - "big spender," they are fans who contribute significantly in terms of financial support, such as purchasing a large number of merchandise, attending paid events, or making substantial donations.

**ANTI FAN** (黑粉 hēi fěn) - "black powder," 黑 (hēi) means black, and 粉 (fěn) is short for 粉丝 (fěnsī), which means fan that's why it literally translates to "black fan" and is the equivalent of an anti-fan or someone who opposes and criticizes a celebrity.

**PAPARAZZI** (狗仔 gǒu zǎi) - photographers who secretly follow celebrities to take photos or sneak shots in hopes of discovering hot gossip and breaking news.

**YIN-YANG CONTRACT** (阴阳合同 yīn yáng hé tóng) - when involved parties have two or more contracts with different contents for the same matter, regularly one for the internal and the other for the external. The external one is not an expression of the true intentions of both parties but for the purpose of evading national taxes. The internal contract describes the true intention of both parties, which can be written or oral. The yin and yang contract is a violation of regulations.

**YIN-YANG SCRIPT** (阴阳剧本 yīn yáng jù běn) - when different versions of a film script are provided to different actors for specific purposes. For instance, to make two famous actors work together, the film crew provides different scripts so that each actor thinks they are the sole protagonist. After actors finish filming, the post-production will decide who is the real protagonist, typically based on the investors behind the film production.

**C位** (c wèi) - the center position in a group of people, the most important and visible to the audience. It is usually held by the person with the greatest qualification and the highest status. The center position is a visible form of the power a celebrity holds and an important proof of a celebrity's status in the entertainment industry.

**FAN WEI** (番位) - "billing order," the order of actors' names on film posters or other promotional materials. The **first name is yi fan** (一番). Fan wei implies an actor's status and value in the industry and guarantees an actor's responsibilities for and benefits from the film or work itself. Fan wei can also be used in music, shows, etc., and is not limited to film nowadays.

**SCRATCH FEET** (抠脚 kōu jiǎo) - the unemployment status of celebrities. As they have no schedule, they are staying at home and doing nothing but scratching their feet.

**HANG SOMEONE UP AND BEAT THEM** (吊打 diào dǎ) - If saying A hangs B up and beats B, it means A's data, appearance, talent, etc., outperforming that of B.

**CHEESY/CLICHE/TROPE-Y** (狗血 gǒu xuè) - literally translates to "dog blood," but for further context: dramas describable as 狗血 are usually both lazy and trying too hard. They want to be taken seriously and to elicit an emotional response, but instead of doing anything that would actually be deserving of viewer engagement, they just hit you with (often over-the-top) versions of the same weak sauce, lame-ass hackneyed garbage that you've already seen a million times before. 狗血 kinda veers into the neighborhoods of 'melodramatic,' 'hammy,' and 'overdone' simultaneously. There can be a lot of overlap with 'sappy,' but that's not necessarily always the case. Note from another user: 狗血 can mean "trope-y" more than campy (as camp implies that you're ironically enjoying something that is in poor taste/cheap and bad/trashy).

**2,080,000** (208万, 208W or 208, er líng bā shí wàn) - actors and actresses, used derogatorily. During actress Zheng Shuang's legal dispute, it was revealed that she received 160 million yuan for a movie shot in 77 days, equivalent to a daily salary of 2,080,000 yuan (approximately 300k USD). The public was shocked by the high incomes, considered incompatible with the actors' skills and contributions.

**JIULOUYU** (九漏鱼 jiǔ lòu yú, short for 九年义务教育漏网之鱼. 九年义务教育 means nine years of compulsory education regulated by the Chinese Government, 漏网之鱼 means a fish that escaped the net) - celebrities who show a lack of education.

**JIAKAIKA** (加戏咖 jiā xì kā) - "drama guy;" actors or actresses who have a strong influence and ask writers and directors for more significant roles in the drama, often seen as unprofessional and disrespectful. However, because the behavior is difficult to determine by the public, it is often used as an excuse to criticize actors they do not like.

**ZIYUANKA** (资源咖 zīyuán kā) - "resources guy;" actors or actresses with a strong background who get important roles beyond their abilities and fame.

**DAIBAO KA** (待爆咖 dài bào kā) - "to explode guy," actors or actresses waiting to become super popular. Originally used to describe stars with great potential, it is often used satirically.

**ORDINARY MAN** (普男 pǔ nán) and **ORDINARY WOMAN** (普女, pǔ nǚ) - actors and actresses without outstanding looks or acting skills. They are often used to describe unqualified actors or actresses disliked by the public.

**LU TOU** (路透) - often mistranslated as *REUTERS*, it actually means **LEAKED FOOTAGE**. The term is derived from "lu" (路), meaning street, and "tou" (透), meaning spoiler (and no, it is by no means related to the news agency company)

## OTHER TERMINOLOGY

**HEAT INDEX** - The Heat Index measures the engagement and popularity of a drama and can only be compared within networks, not across networks (you can't compare iQiyi heat index to Youku, or Youku to Tencent and vice versa), as each platform has its own internal Heat Index to indicating how a drama is performing. It takes into account the video views, searches, and engagement for a drama (but no one actually knows except the company itself how it works, but it is deemed as a proper gauge to see how popular a drama is). Note that Q2/3 dramas tend to be more popular because of the summer months.

1. **TENCENT** - The significance of Tencent Heat Index, as interpreted by user [Dreams](#) in MyDramaList, is based on specific thresholds: a drama is deemed somewhat popular when the index reaches 20k while achieving 28k denotes strong recognition and popularity. A drama surpassing the 30k mark is considered super popular and successful, positioning it as a top drama on the platform. Importantly, a score of 30k is not a ceiling, and dramas can attain even higher scores, reflecting their exceptional popularity and success.
2. **IQIYI** - The significance of iQiyi Heat Index, as interpreted by user [Dreams](#) in MyDramaList, is based on specific thresholds: a drama attains a degree of popularity when the index reaches 5,5k (or 6k for dramas with same-day episode releases). A drama achieving a score of 9k+ is recognized as well-known and highly popular while a drama surpassing the 10k mark can be categorized as super popular and successful, signifying its status as a top-tier offering on the platform. Importantly, the 10k score is not a ceiling,

and dramas have the potential to achieve even higher scores, underscoring their exceptional popularity and success.

3. **YOUKU** - The significance of Youku Heat Index, as interpreted by user [Dreams](#) in MyDramaList, is based on specific thresholds: a drama attains some popularity when the index reaches 6k. A drama that reaches 10k once is considered well-known and highly popular while for a drama to be deemed super popular and successful, it must reach 10k at least 10 times, signifying its status as a top-tier offering on the platform. Importantly, 10k serves as the upper limit, and the score cannot exceed this threshold. For dramas that have reached 10k, their ongoing popularity is assessed based on their ability to consistently maintain this score.

**Note:** The comparison between dramas from the same company is also not significant as the score's meaning varies depending on factors such as the actors involved, the popularity of the intellectual property (IP), and the drama's budget. In the case of a high-budget drama featuring popular actors and a well-known IP, reaching a score of 8k can be considered average while a low-budget production with less-known actors and a less popular IP, achieving a score of 8k could indicate that the drama is a success.

**TV RATING** - A rating of 1% or higher is already considered good in average ratings, given the generally low ratings across the board (hence why you might see fans celebrating if their faves managed to break through the 1%+ rating). Dramas airing on CCTV-1 and CCTV-8 enjoy built-in ratings boost due to their status as national channels, providing broader accessibility across the country. These channels tend to attract an older audience. There are three primary TV ratings systems: the NRTA's CVB ratings, released weekly for the previous week since December 2019 and considered the official reference; CSM ratings, widely used before the introduction of CVB, faced issues with transparency and accuracy controversies, leading to the adoption of CVB; and Kuyun ratings, a third-party system that measures ratings in real-time. Kuyun has gained popularity in recent years, particularly amid concerns about the accuracy of CSM ratings. While Kuyun is widely used as a reference, it's important to note that it is not officially recognized. Nevertheless, an increasing number of dramas acknowledge and consider this rating system.

**VLINKAGE** - a domestic professional entertainment data and marketing strategy consulting company, founded in 2012 in Shanghai, dedicated to assisting various stakeholders in the cultural and media industry. This includes film and television



content production companies, talent agencies, video marketing companies, video playback platforms, and advertising client dynamics. The company provides real-time insights into the latest performance of video new media, offering decision support and reducing investment risks for related enterprises in production, operation, and marketing processes.

1. **Vbank: Video, Entertainment Data System** - 24/7 monitoring of dynamic data in new media.
2. **Vbank: Video Marketing Resource System** - Real-time multidimensional quantitative evaluation of upcoming TV dramas in the market, providing reference for advertising placements.
3. **Xunyee: Entertainment Interactive Platform** - Latest entertainment news, fan interaction, and event support.

**NRTA** (国家广播电视总局 guójiā guǎngbō diànshì zǒngjú) - The National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA) operates as a ministry-level executive agency overseen by the Central Propaganda Department of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Its primary responsibility lies in the management and oversight of state-owned enterprises involved in the television and radio sectors, and it exercises direct control over national-level state-owned entities, including China Central Television (CCTV), China National Radio (CNR), and China Radio International (CRI). Additionally, it oversees various movie and television studios, along with other non-commercial organizations.

**DOUBAN** (豆瓣) - an online database and social networking service that enables registered users to document information and generate content related to films, books, music, and recent events, and activities in Chinese cities. As of 2013, it boasts approximately 200 million registered users, with some Chinese authors and critics creating official personal pages on the platform. Often likened to review sites like IMDb, Rotten Tomatoes, and Goodreads, Douban has evolved from its origins as a community primarily for well-educated, well-read, and cultured younger users (in their 20s and 30s). Certain genres may face challenges in garnering high ratings, irrespective of fan or anti-fan sentiments. For instance, comedy films often receive lower scores as the regular user base on Douban tends to perceive them as "low," while dramas and art films tend to score better on Douban. This is in contrast to platforms like Maoyan and Taopiaopiao, where the focus is more on the subjective question of whether users enjoyed a particular work or not—just like the distinction between Rotten Tomatoes and Cinemascore. It can be said that achieving a rating of 6.5 or higher on Douban is considered a noteworthy accomplishment for a comedy film. Dramas on Douban aren't solely judged based

on personal preferences, and even immensely popular ones may not receive high ratings (in the 6s or 7s). Douban users' preferences, reflected in the top 10 dramas of 2020 and consistent with previous years, indicate that genres like romances and historical dramas might not be highly regarded unless exceptional or deemed iconic (e.g., Chinese Paladin, Meet Yourself). A rating of 6 or 7 doesn't imply a drama is bad but suggests it's decent with some noticeable issues.

**BRAND ENDORSEMENT** - In the English language, there is no distinction between brand spokesperson and brand ambassador, but the preference is to translate 代言人 (dàiguānrén) as 'spokesperson' and 大使 (dàshǐ) as 'ambassador.' In this sense, ranking-wise, **spokesperson > ambassador**, and in instances where certain brands do not appoint a '代言人' spokesperson, 'ambassador' assumes the highest position.

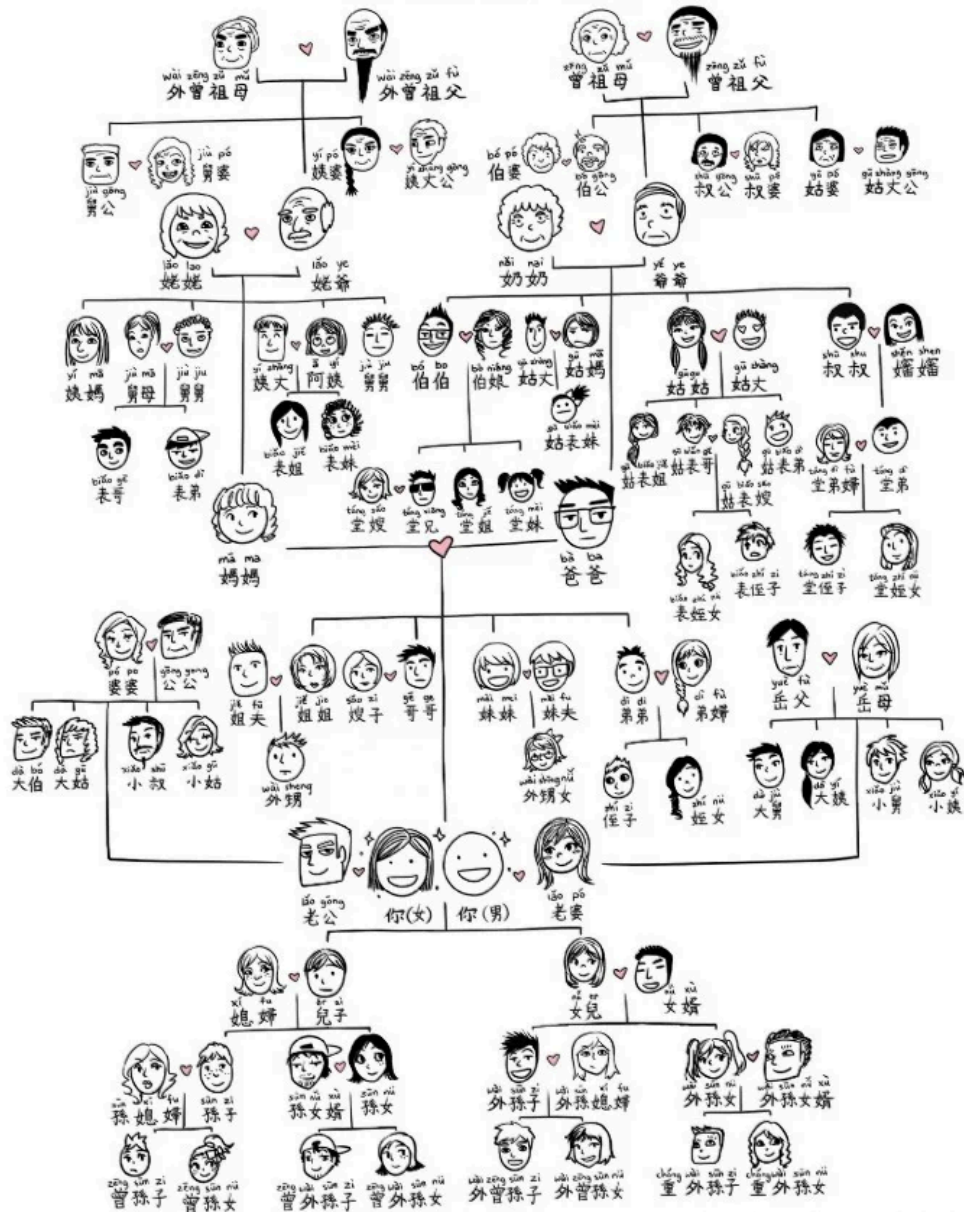
**DRAMA TIERS** - Streaming platforms assign class designations to dramas for their internal business and investor purposes. However, fans have recently become more interested in these designations, linking them to their favorite actors' resources and status. It's important to know that there's no official list for these classes, and platforms don't publicly announce them. Instead, the information is shared with marketing and drama accounts, which then report it on Weibo. For **Tencent** and **Youku**, **S+** is the **top class** for headliner dramas, getting more budget and promotion. After S+ are S, A (with Youku having A+ between S and A), and B. Tencent has the most S+ designations, and Youku has started making more S+/S dramas recently. **iQIYI**'s class designations are less clear now, but it's believed they **have S as the highest**, followed by A and B. Note that a drama's class designation doesn't always reflect its success or quality. These designations are decided for business reasons before filming starts. Often, the public isn't aware of the class, as audiences care more about the drama's quality when it airs.

## **CHINESE LANGUAGE, CULTURE, ETC.**

### **FAMILY MEMBER TERMS, ETC.**

# THE COMPLICATED CHINESE FAMILY TREE

(Mandarin version - Pinyin)



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- Your Mom - 妈妈 (māma)
- Your Dad - 爸爸 (bàba)
- Your Wife - 妻子 (Qīzi) or 老婆 (lǎopó)
- Your Husband - 丈夫 (Zhàngfū) or 老公 (lǎogōng)
- Your older brother - 哥哥 (Gēgē)

Your older sister – 姐姐 (Jiějiě)

Your younger brother – 弟弟 (Dìdì)

Your younger sister – 妹妹 (Mèimei)

Your son – 儿子 (Érzi)

Your daughter – 女儿 (Nǚ'ér)

Grandmother on Dad's side – 奶奶 (Nǎinai)

Grandmother on Mom's side – 外婆 (wàipó)

Grandfather on Dad's side – 爷爷 (Yéyé)

Grandfather on Mom's side – 外公 (wàigōng)

Dad's older brother – 伯伯 (Bóbo)

Dad's younger brother – 叔叔 (Shūshu)

Dad's older sister's husband – 姑夫 (Gūfū)

Dad's younger sister's husband – 姑夫 (Gūfū)

Mom's older or younger brother – 舅舅 (Jiùjiu)

"Aunt" In Chinese

Dad's older sister – 姑妈 (Gūmā)

Dad's younger sister – 姑姑 (Gūgū)

Dad's older brother's wife – 伯母 (Bómǔ)

Dad's younger brother's wife – 婶婶 (Shěshěn)

Mom's older sister – 姨妈 (Yímā)

Mom's younger sister – 阿姨 (Āyí)

Mom's brother's wife – 舅母 (Jiùmu)

Dad's sibling's son (if older than you) – 堂兄 (Táng xiōng)

Dad's sibling's son (if younger than you) – 堂弟 (Táng dì)

Dad's sibling's daughter (if older than you) – 堂姐 (Táng jiě)

Dad's sibling's daughter (if younger than you) – 堂妹 (Táng mèi)

Mom's sibling's son (if older than you) – 表哥 (Biǎo gē)

Mom's sibling's son (if younger than you) – 表弟 (Biǎo dì)

Mom's sibling's daughter (if older than you) – 表姐 (Biǎo jiě)

Mom's sibling's daughter (if younger than you) – 表妹 (Biǎo mèi)

Brother's son – 姪子 (zhízǐ)

Sister's son – 外甥 (wàishēng)

Brother's daughter – 姪女 (zhínǚ)

Sister's daughter – 外甥女 (wàishengnǚ)

Husband's father – 公公 (gōnggong)

Wife's father – 岳父 (yuèfù)

"Mother-In-Law" In Chinese

Husband's mother – 婆婆 (pópo)

Wife's mother – 岳母 (yuèmǔ)

Your older sister's husband – 姐夫 (Jiěfū)

Your younger sister's husband – 妹夫 (Mèifū)

Your older brother's wife – 嫂子 (Sǎo zi)

Your younger brother's wife – 弟妇 (Dìfù)

**Disclaimer:** I am not a native Chinese speaker and I am still in the process of learning Mandarin so I welcome any corrections either through the comment on the [thread](#) or private message on reddit, as I have only cross-referenced the information using online resources only.

**Last updated on December 6, 2023**