

## Comprehensive Guide to Nouns Ending With 的 de

I don't think you'll find a list like this anywhere on the web, or in textbooks or grammar books. Indeed, I've read pretty much every major Chinese grammar textbook and do not remember seeing these nouns covered in any shape or form.

So what is this post about? It's a compilation of a very special type of noun in Mandarin – the noun which ends with 的 de. These nouns are special because 的 usually marks the end of one word and the beginning of another, but occasionally – very occasionally – it can also mark an entirely separate word. These should be considered discrete words since their meaning cannot simply be derived by the sum of their parts.

I think this list will be useful for Chinese learners, since these words are completely unintuitive. Interestingly, many refer to occupations, and some of these occupations are becoming less common in modern-day China. Others refer to people you may see around the street, while others are idiomatic or curse words.

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### Basic Words

男的 nán de – guy

女的 nǚ de – girl

吃的 chī de – things to eat

喝的 hē de – things to drink

玩的 wán de – places to have fun; fun things to do

公的 gōng de – male (animal)

母的 mǔ de – female (animal)

亲爱的 qīn' ài de – darling; honey; dear

相好的 xiānghǎo de – boyfriend/girlfriend; partner

荤的 hūn de – meat dish

素的 sù de – vegetarian dish

### People On The Street

过路的 guòlù de – passerby

骂街的 màjiē de – person shouting abuse on the street

遛弯儿的 liùwānr de – person going for a walk (Beijing dialect)

遛狗的 liùgǒu de – person walking their dog

打头的 dǎtóu de – person standing at the front of a line

要饭的 yàofàn de / 讨饭的 tǎofàn de – beggar

### Occupations

做买卖的 zuòmǎimài de – businessperson

管账的 guǎnzhàng de – accountant

当兵的 dāngbīng de – soldier

种地的 zhòngdì de / 种田的 zhòngtián de – farmer

收破烂的 shōupòlàn de – garbage collector

杀猪的 shāzhū de – butcher

算命的 suàn mìng de / 算卦的 suàn卦 de – fortuneteller

看门的 kānménde – gatekeeper; door attendant  
办事的 bànshìde – office worker  
打铁的 dǎtiěde – blacksmith  
剃头的 tìtóude – barber  
要账的 yàozhàngde / 要钱的 yàoqiándde – debt collector  
卖艺的 màiyìde – street artist  
拉车的 lāchēde – rickshaw driver  
说书的 shuōshūde – storyteller  
送水的 sòngshuǐde / 挑水的 tiāoshuǐde – someone who delivers drinking water to one's home  
倒水的 dàoshuǐde – someone who pours water  
管事的 guǎnshìde – someone with high-level responsibility in the government (i.e. an official) or in a company  
掌柜的 zhǎngguǐde – shopkeeper (old-fashioned)  
女掌柜的 nǚzhǎngguǐde – female shopkeeper (old-fashioned)  
跑堂的 pǎotángde – waiter (old-fashioned), same as 小二 xiǎoèr

### Quirky Words

带把儿的 dàibārde – literally “with a handle” – a baby boy  
当家的 dāngjiādede – literally “[one who] manages home” – the one who manages the household  
少当家的 shàodāngjiāde – the son (少 shào) of the person who manages the household  
掌勺的 zhǎngsháode – literally “holding a spoon” – the one who does the cooking at home  
吃软饭的 chīruǎnfànde – literally “[one who] eats soft rice” – someone who lives off a woman  
垫背的 diàn bèide – literally refers to belongings put under a body after death – metaphorically refers to someone who is made to share the fault or guilt of others; a scapegoat