

胸有成竹

北宋时有一位著名的画家叫文同。他画的竹子远近闻名，每天都有不少人到他家里来买画。

文同画竹子为什么画得好呢？原来，文同在他家的房前屋后种上了各种各样的竹子，无论春夏秋冬，阴晴风雨，他都经常去竹林观察竹子的生长情况，琢磨竹枝的长短粗细，叶子的形状、颜色，然后回到书房，把看到的竹子画在纸上。日积月累，竹子在不同季节、不同天气的样子都深深印在他的心中。他只要拿起笔，在画纸前一站，平时看到的竹子就在眼前。所以每次画竹，他都画得又好又快。

当人们夸他的画时，他说：“我只是把心中琢磨很久的竹子画了出来。”后来人们都说：文同画竹，胸中有成竹。

后来，人们用“胸有成竹”这个成语，比喻做事之前已做好了准备，对事情的成功十分有把握。



There is bamboo in my mind already



Wen Tong was a famous painter in the Northern Song Dynasty. His paintings of bamboo were known far and wide. Everyday, quite a few people came to his house to buy paintings.

Why was Wen Tong skilful at painting bamboo? It turns out that Wen Tong planted various kinds of bamboo around his house. In spring, summer, autumn and winter, be it sunny, gloomy, windy or rainy, he would always go to the bamboo forest to observe the bamboo's growth. As time went on, he could remember how bamboo looked in different seasons and weather. Once he took up the brush and stood in front of the blank paper, the normally-seen bamboo seemed to appear in front of him and he could paint fast and well. When people praised him for his paintings, Wen Tong said: "I just paint the bamboo that I have thought about for a long time."

Later, people said that when Wen Tong painted bamboo, the bamboo was already in his mind.

xiōng yǒu chéng zhú

Therefore, the idiom of “胸有成竹”, (the bamboo was already in mind) means to have a well-thought-out plan beforehand and to be sure of its success.



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|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| xiōng 胸 | yǒu 有 | chéng 成 | | zhú 竹 | | |
| Heart/chest | has | completed | | Bamboo | | |
| There is bamboo on my mind already | | | | | | |
| běi sòng 北 宋 | shí 时 | yǒu 有 | yī wèi 一 位 | zhù míng 著 名 | de 的 | huà jiā 画 家 |
| Northern Song Dynasty | Time/when | has | One | famous | Of | painter |
| Wen Tong was a famous painter in the Northern Song Dynasty | | | | | | |
| jiào 叫 | wén tong 文 同 | 。 | tā 他 | huà 画 | zhú zi 竹 子 | yuǎn jìn wén 远 近 闻 míng 名 |
| named | Wen Tong | . | His | Painting | Bamboo | known far and wide (fixed expression) |
| His paintings of bamboo were known far and wide. | | | | | | |
| měi tiān 每 天 | yǒu 有 | bù shǎo 不 少 | rén 人 | dào 到 | tā 他 | jiā 家 |
| Everyday | Has | quite a few | People | Come | His | home |
| Everyday, quite a few people came to his house to buy paintings. | | | | | | |
| lái 来 | mǎi 买 | huà 画 。 | | | | |
| To/come | Buy | painting | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| wén tong 文 同 | huà 画 | zhú zi 竹 子 | wèi shén me 为 什 么 | huà dé 画 得 hǎo 好 ？ | yuán lái 原 来 | wén tong 文 同 |
| Wen Tong | Paint | bamboo | Why | skilful at painting | It turns out that | Wen Tong |
| Why was Wen Tong skilful at painting bamboo? | | | | | | |
| zài 在 | tā jiā 他 家 | de 的 | fáng 房 | qián 前 | wū 屋 | hòu 后 |
| At | his home | of | House | Front | House | back |
| It turns out that Wen Tong planted various kinds of bamboo around his house. | | | | | | |

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|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| zhòng 种 shàng le 上了 | gè zhǒng 各 种 gè yàng 各 样 | de 的 | zhú zi 竹 子。 | wú lùn 无 论 | chūn 春 | xià 夏 |
| planted | all kinds | Of | Bamboo. | No matter | Spring | Sumer |
| In spring, summer, autumn and winter, be it sunny, gloomy, windy or rainy, | | | | | | |
| qiū 秋 | dōng 冬 , | yīn 阴 | qíng 晴 | fēng 风 | yǔ 雨 , | tā 他 |
| Autumn | Winter | gloomy | Sunny | Windy | Rainy | he |
| | | | | | | |
| zǒng shì 总 是 | qù 去 | zhú lín 竹 林 | guān chá 观 察 | zhú zi 竹 子 | de 的 | shēng 生 zhǎng 长 |
| always | go to | bamboo forest | Observe | bamboo | Of | growth |
| he would always go to the bamboo forest to observe the growth of the bamboo, | | | | | | |
| qíng kuàng 情 况 , | zuó mo 琢 磨 | zhú 竹 | zhī 枝 | de 的 | cháng 长 | duǎn 短 |
| Situation | Think about | bamboo | Branch | Of | Length | short |
| to remember the length and size of the branches and the shape and colour of leaves. | | | | | | |
| cū 粗 | xì 细 , | yè zi 叶 子 | de 的 | xíng zhuàng 形 状 | yán sè 颜 色。 | rán hòu 然 后 |
| Thick | Thin | leaves | Of | shape | colour. | Then |
| He then came to his study and painted the bamboo he had in mind. | | | | | | |
| huí dào 回 到 | shū fáng 书 房 | bǎ 把 | kàn dào de 看 到 的 | zhú zi 竹 子 | huà 画 | |
| come back | Study | make | Seen | bamboo | Paint | |
| | | | | | | |
| zài 在 | zhǐ shàng 纸 上 | rì jī yuè lěi 日 积 月 累 | zhú zi 竹 子 | zài 在 | bù tóng 不 同 | jì jié 季 节 |
| on | Paper | As time went on(fixed expression) | Bamboo | At | Different | seasons |
| As time went on, he could remember how bamboo looked in different seasons and weathers. | | | | | | |



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|---|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| bù tóng 不 同 | tiān qì 天 气 | de 的 | yàng zǐ 样 子 | dōu 都 | shēn shēn 深 深 | yìn 印 |
| Different | weather | Of | Appearance | All | Deeply | printed |
| | | | | | | |
| zài 在 | tā de 他 的 | xīn zhōng 心 中 。 | tā 他 | zhǐ yào 只 要 | ná qǐ 拿 起 | bǐ 笔， |
| In | His | heart. | He | Once | took up | Painting brush |
| Once he took up the brush and stood in front of the blank paper, | | | | | | |
| zài 在 | huà zhǐ 画 纸 | qián 前 | yī zhàn 一 站 | píng shí 平 时 | kàn dào 看 到 de 的 | zhú zi 竹 子 |
| At | painting paper | In front of | stand, | Normally | Seen | bamboo |
| the bamboo seemed to appear in front of him and he could paint fast and well. | | | | | | |
| jiù 就 | zài yǎn qián 在 眼 前 | suǒ yǐ 所 以 | měi cì 每 次 | huà 画 | zhú 竹 | tā 他 |
| Would/will | appear in front of him, | hence | Every time | Paint | Bamboo | he |
| | | | | | | |
| dōu 都 | huà 画 | dé 得 | yòu 又 | hǎo 好 | yòu 又 | kuài 快 。 |
| Always | Paint | adv. | And | Well | And | fast. |
| | | | | | | |
| dāng 当 | rén men 人 们 | kuā 夸 | tā de 他 的 | huà 画 | shí 时， | tā 他 |
| When | People | praised | His | Painting | Time | he |
| When people praised him for his paintings, Wen Tong said | | | | | | |
| shuō 说 | wǒ “我 | zhǐ shì 只 是 | bǎ 把 | xīn zhōng 心 中 | zuó mó 琢 磨 | hěn jiǔ 很 久 |
| Said | “I | Just | Make | in mind | think about | long time |
| “I just paint the bamboo that I have thought about in my mind for a long time.” | | | | | | |
| de 的 | zhú zi 竹 子 | huà 画 | chū lái 出 来 。” | | | |
| Of | Bamboo | paint | Out | | | |



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|---|-----------------|-------------------|--|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| hòu lái 后 来 | rén men 人 们 | dōu shuō 都 说 : | wén tong 文 同 | huà 画 | zhú 竹 , | xiōng 胸 |
| Later | People | all say | Wen Tong | Paint | Bamboo | Chest/ heart |
| Later people said that when Wen Tong painted bamboo, the bamboo was already in his mind. | | | | | | |
| zhōng 中 | yǒu 有 | chéng 成 | zhú 竹 | 。 | | |
| In | Has | Completed | Bamboo | . | | |
| hòu lái 后 来 , | rén men 人 们 | yòng 用 | xiōng yǒu chéng “ 胸 有 成 zhú 竹 ” | zhè ge 这 个 | chéng yǔ 成 语 | bǐ yù 比 喻 |
| Later | People | Use | “there is bamboo in my mind already” | This | Idiom | metaphor |
| zuò shì 做 事 | zhī qián 之 前 | yǐ 已 | zuò hǎo le 做 好 了 | zhǔn bèi 准 备 , | duì 对 | |
| do things | Beforehand | Already | Done | Preparation | For | |
| shì qing 事 情 | de 的 | chéng gōng 成 功 | shí fēn 十 分 | yǒu 有 | bǎ wò 把 握。 | |
| Things | Of | Success | Very | Have | Assurance | |
| xiōng yǒu chéng zhú | | | | | | |
| Therefore, the idiom of “ 胸 有 成 竹 ” means to have a well-thought-out plan beforehand and to be sure of success. | | | | | | |

Key words and Expressions

xiōng yǒu chéng zhú

“ 胸 有 成 竹 ” : have a well-thought-out plan beforehand and to be sure of final success

rì jī yuè lěi

日 积 月 累 : As time went on(fixed expression)

yuǎn jìn wén míng

远 近 闻 名 : known far and wide (fixed expression)

zhù míng huà jiā zhú zi

著 名 : famous 画 家 : painter 竹 子 : bamboo