

Tonal Requirements in Regulated Chinese Verse: A Corpus Study
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The main requirement in regulated Chinese verse is that tones must alternate in certain ways. There is no such requirement for other verse styles, such as Old Style verse (which precedes regulated verse) and folk verse (both classic and modern).

According to standard descriptions, there are four possible lines with regard to tonal alternations. Those for 7-syllable lines are given in (1), where A and B are the two categories for Chinese tones, and O is any tone.

(1)	Strict version	Relaxed version
	AABBAAB	OAOBOAB
	BBAABBA	OBOAOBA
	AABBBAA	OAOBOAA
	BBAAABB	OBOAOBB

In the strict version, the requirement applies to all syllables. In the relaxed version, positions 1, 3, and 5 are exempt from the tonal requirements. The four lines must also alternate in a given sequence for each poem

To what extent regulated poems satisfy the tonal requirement remains an open question. The only quantitative study is Ripley (1979), which examined 464 poems of 5-syllable lines. He found that only two out of the 464 poems fully meet the strict requirements, and only 120 poems (26%) meet the relaxed requirements.

In this study I examine the tonal requirements in 114 regulated poems of 7-syllable lines (672 lines in all). The corpus includes all regulated poems of 7-syllable lines in the *Anthology of 300 Tang Poems*. I report the results on the line level, the couplet level, and the poem level, for both the strict requirements and the relaxed requirements. The results will also be compared with those obtained from 5-syllable lines (Ripley 1979).