

## Re: Chinese-style measure words in English?

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**From:** Paul J Kriha ([paul.nospam.kriha\\_at\\_paradise.net.nz](mailto:paul.nospam.kriha_at_paradise.net.nz))

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Lee Sau Dan <[danlee@informatik.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:danlee@informatik.uni-freiburg.de)> wrote in message  
news:87vfak8rke.fsf@informatik.uni-freiburg.de...

>>>> "Stewart" == Stewart Gordon <[smjg\\_1998@yahoo.com](mailto:smjg_1998@yahoo.com)> writes:

Stewart> But that's before you consider other plural nouns like  
Stewart> "police" and "staff". Of course, those like "trousers"  
Stewart> are different again –

I'm curious. When would "one trouser" or "one scissor" be useful?

<reply>

Trousers used to be two separate pieces of garment.

You put on one trouser and then you put on the other one.

Most of the people had two legs, so they bought them  
in pairs. :-)

Paul JK

PS. Have a look at Otzi, how he was dressed up.

<end of reply>

How come English make it this way? It looks so ridiculous that you  
MUST say "a pair of trousers" and "a pair of scissors", which are so  
clumsy. (Is it why people like to say "pant" now? I guess "pant" is  
related to French "pantalon"?)

Stewart> maybe this is one instance in which "pair" really is a  
Stewart> measure word?

Why could it be otherwise?

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Lee Sau Dan

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