

Particles

Ref Hsk3 Grammar

+ — an ongoing state

(zhe) after a verb freezes the action into a **lingering state** — the door *is* (standing) open, you *are* holding it. Think of as a clip that keeps the verb “switched on.” A second, very common use is **Verb 1 + + Verb 2**: V1 sets the posture or manner, and V2 is the real action done in that state.

Structure: Verb + · Verb 1 + + Verb 2

{zh: |nǐ men|you all / |zuò|sit / |zhe / , |wǒ|I / |mǎ shàng|right
away / |huí lái|come back / 。 }

Stay seated — I'll be right back.

{zh: |tā|she / |xǐ huan|likes to / |zhàn|stand / |zhe / |chī fàn|eat
/ 。 }

She likes to eat standing up.

{zh: |tā|he / |xiào|smiling / |zhe / |shuō|said / |duì bu qǐ|sorry /
。 }

Smiling, he said sorry.

Remember: = the verb **held on, lingering** (= “the door stays open”); for an action actively *in progress*, use (). In V1 V2, V1 is the **backdrop**, V2 the **real action** — = “eat *while* standing.”

Watch out

- is a state, not a play-by-play — pair it with / only when you really mean “is currently ...”.

..... — a change of state

Sentence-final can announce a **new situation** — something has *become* the case that wasn't before. This “change” (often called ₂) is a different beast from the that marks a *completed action*; here it means “**now**.”

Structure: Subject + Adjective + · Subject + Verb +

{zh: |wǒ|I / |è|hungry / |le / 。 }

I'm hungry (now).

{zh: |xià yǔ|raining / |le / 。 }

It's raining (it wasn't before).

{zh: |bǎo bao|the baby / |huì|can / |shuō huà|talk / |le / 。 }

The baby can talk now.

Remember: this = “**now, a new state**” (= “hungry *now*”), **not** “did and finished.” Whenever you’d add “now” in English, this is the you want: (“he’s a manager now”).

Watch out

- Same character, two jobs: change-of-state () vs completed-action (). Context and position tell them apart.

..... ? — “and you? / what about ...?”

at the end lobs a question **back** without you having to repeat it — “and ...? what about ...?” A neat extra: a bare noun + (with no prior question) asks “**where is ...?**”

Structure: Topic + ?

{zh: |wǒ|I / |hěn|very / |hǎo|well / , |nǐ|you / |ne / ? }

I'm well — and you?

{zh: |wǒ|my / |de / |shǒu jī|phone / |ne / ? }

Where's my phone?

Remember: = “...and X?” — it bounces the last question back (? “and you?”). With nothing asked before, noun + means “**where is X?**” (? “where's the money?”).

Watch out

- It rides on context — without a prior question or a “where is” sense, a bare has nothing to bounce off.

/ / — the three structural “de”

Three different characters, all pronounced **de**, each with exactly one job. Keeping them straight is the single most common slip in written Chinese — so sort them by **what comes next**.

Structure: + Noun · Verb + + Complement · Adjective + + Verb

{zh: |nǐ|you / |zuò|did / |de / |hěn|very / |hǎo|well / , |yīn
wèi|because / |nǐ|you / |rèn zhēn|carefully / |de / |tīng kè|listened /
。 }

You did well, because you listened attentively in class.

{zh: |mā ma|Mom / |de / |xīn|new / |shǒu jī|phone / |pǎo|runs /
|de / |tè bié|especially / |kuài|fast / 。 }

Mom's new phone runs especially fast.

Remember: sort them by what **follows**: → a **noun** (); → a **verb**,
building an adverb (); → sits **after** a verb, rating the result ().

Tip: has “earth” (it *grounds* the verb); leans on the verb to tell you *how well*.

Watch out

- A true adverb (, ,) needs **no** — only an *adjective* used adverbially does
(, but just , never).