

Adjectives

Ref Hsk4 Grammar

+ — “the whole, entire”

in front of a noun scoops up “the whole, entire” thing in one sweep. It bonds to a small set of “whole-able” nouns — (body), (family), (country), (world), (school), (year) — and calls for a in the predicate. The one rule to burn in: **takes no** .

Structure: + Noun + + Predicate

{zh: |wǒ men|our / |quán jiā|whole family / |dōu|all / |qù guo|have been to / |Běi jīng|Beijing / 。 }

Our whole family has been to Beijing.

{zh: |zhè ge|this / |dì fang|place / |quán nián|all year / |dōu / |hěn|very / |rè|hot / 。 }

This place is hot all year round.

Remember: = the whole thing in one sweep — and never (✓, ×). It almost always sends a downstream to echo the “all.”

Watch out

- It attaches only to “whole” nouns (, , , ...).
- Advanced flip: = “none go at all”; = “not all go” — where sits changes everything.

+ — “... to death, extremely”

after an adjective cranks it to the limit — “... to death, extremely.” It’s the exact match of English “*scared to death*,” “*bored to death*”: vivid, casual, and slanted toward **unpleasant** feelings. The subject is optional.

Structure: (Subject +) Adjective +

{zh: |wǒ|I’m / |è|hungry / |sǐ le|to death / ! }

I’m starving!

{zh: |jīn tiān|today / |lè|tired / |sǐ le|to death / ! }

I’m exhausted today!

{zh: |zhè jiàn|this / |yī fu|outfit / |chǒu|ugly / |sǐ le|to death / 。 }

This outfit is hideous.

Remember: = English “...to death” (= “dead tired”). It’s the drama-queen cousin of — louder, more informal, mostly for misery (, , ,) — and it attaches **bare**, no .

Watch out

- Reach for it when the feeling is bad and you want to exaggerate; for neutral praise, or fit better.