

Comparing similar prepositions

Ref Hsk4 Grammar

vs — “about” vs “towards / regarding”

Both point at a person or thing, but from different angles. introduces the **topic / subject matter** (“about, on the subject of”). introduces the **target of an attitude or action** (“towards, with regard to”) — usually with a view or conclusion attached.

{zh: |guān yú|about / |zhè ge|this / |wèn tí|question / , |dà jiā|everyone / |yǒu|has / |shén me|what / |kàn fǎ|views / ? }

On this question, what are everyone’s thoughts?

{zh: |duì yú|with / |wǒ men|our / |de / |gōng zuò|work / , |lǎo bǎn|the boss / |hěn|very / |mǎn yì|satisfied / 。 }

The boss is very satisfied with our work.

Remember: = the **TOPIC** (“about X”); = the **TARGET** of a feeling/action (“towards X”). If a view or reaction is attached (satisfied with, strict about), it’s ; if you’re just naming the subject, it’s .

Watch out

- Where only a topic is meant, the two overlap (/ ...) — the split bites when an attitude is involved.

vs — “distance from” vs “starting from”

measures the **gap** between two points — “away from” (for distance). marks a **starting point** in space or time — “from” (where motion or time *begins*).

{zh: |cóng|from / |míng tiān|tomorrow / |kāi shǐ|on / , |wǒ|I / |bù|won’t / |chōu yān|smoke / |le / 。 }

Starting from tomorrow, I’m quitting smoking.

{zh: |wǒ jiā|my home / |lǐ|from / |gōng sī|the office / |hěn|very / |jìn|close / 。 }

My home is very close to the office.

Remember: = the **GAP** (“how far apart,” pairs with /); = the **START** (“where it begins”). (“close to”) vs (“starting tomorrow”). Distance → ; origin point → .

Watch out

- needs two endpoints and a distance word (.../); needs a route or a start time (...).