

Particles

Ref Hsk5 Grammar

+ + — advanced placement

The completion can sit right after the **verb** *or* after the **object** — and which you pick depends on the object’s length. With a short object, either works; with a **long** object, put right after the verb so the listener isn’t left hanging. can also chain “after doing A, then B” in a future sequence.

Structure: Subject + Verb + + Object · Subject + Verb + Object +

{zh: |wǒ|I / |jīn tiān|today / |jiàn|saw / |le / |yí ge|an / |lǎo péng you|old friend / 。 }

I saw an old friend today.

{zh: |nǐ|you / |dào|get / |le / |jiā|home / |gěi / |wǒ|me / |dǎ diàn huà|call / 。 }

Call me once you’ve got home.

Remember: short object → either side; LONG object → right after the verb (— don’t make the listener wait for the). And VO... chains two future actions: (“come find you after class”).

Watch out

- With a long, modified object, after the object reads awkwardly — keep it on the verb.

+ + — advanced with complements

When a complement follows the verb, usually goes **after the complement** (,). Wedging it **between** the verb and complement () is more written, and limited mostly to direction complements.

Structure: Subject + Verb + Complement + · (rarer) Subject + Verb + + Complement

{zh: |piào|the tickets / |mài|sold / |guāng|out / |le / 。 }

The tickets are sold out.

{zh: |tā|he / |zhàn|stood / |le / |qǐ lái|up / 。 }

He stood up.

Remember: default: AFTER the complement (,). *between* verb and complement is the exception — mostly direction complements (,), and more written.

Watch out

- is wrong — the sits after the whole verb-complement: .

+ — topic-marking

The particle after a **topic** lets you name it, then comment — “as for ..., well, ...” The comment is often something you treat as **self-evident** — a gentle “well, obviously...”.

Structure: Topic + , Comment

{zh: |dì yī cì|the first time / |ma / , |yǐ hòu|later / |jiù / |huì|get the hang of it / |le / 。 }

It’s your first time — you’ll soon get the hang of it.

{zh: |míng pái|a brand name / |ma / , |yí dìng|surely / |bù|not / |pián yi|cheap / 。 }

Well, it’s a brand name — it’s bound to be pricey.

Remember: = “well, obviously...” — it flags a topic and frames the comment as common sense (— “it’s a brand name, *what do you expect*”). A “isn’t it clear?” softener.

Watch out

- The reading is “obvious / reasonable” — don’t confuse it with the question .

..... — softening a question

makes a question gentler and more **musings or reflective** — almost “(I wonder) ...?” It works after (weighing options), after a question word, or on a V–V question.

Structure: Question +

{zh: |tā|he / |qù|went / |nǎr|where / |le / |ne / ? }

Where’s he gone, I wonder?

{zh: |zhè|this / |shì|is / |shéi|whose / |de / |bǐ|pen / |ne / ? }

Whose pen is this, I wonder?

Remember: this = a **soft, musing “(I wonder)...”** — it takes the edge off a question word / / V–V query, often almost self-directed. Softer than a blunt .

Watch out

- It doesn’t form yes/no questions (that’s) — it rides on an existing question.