

Prepositions

Ref Hsk5 Grammar

() — “ever since” (a starting point)

(or just) marks a **starting point in past time** — “ever since.” is the more formal of the two, and the clause often closes with or .

Structure: + Starting Point ,

{zh: |zì cóng|ever since / |lái dào|coming to / |Hú nán|Hunan / ,
|wǒ|I / |yuè lái yuè|more and more / |néng|can / |chī là|take spice /
|le / 。 }

Ever since I came to Hunan, I can take more and more spice.

{zh: |zì cóng|ever since / |tā|he / |zǒu|left / |le / |yǐ hòu / ,
|gōng sī|the company / |hǎo|better / |duō / |le / 。 }

Ever since he left, the company’s much better.

Remember: () = the **START POINT** (“ever since...”); = the **PERIOD running from it.** (“since he left”) sets the point; ... stresses the span up to now. is the formal one.

Watch out

- The clause often closes with / — ... , marking the start clearly.

+ Person + Predicate — “for (someone)”

(wèi) marks a **beneficiary** — “for, on behalf of.” Keep it apart from (“in order to”), which marks a *purpose*.

Structure: + Party + Verb / Adjective

{zh: |wǒ men|we / |dōu|all / |wèi|for / |nǐ|you / |gāo xìng|are happy / 。 }

We’re all happy for you.

{zh: |shéi|who / |wèi|for / |wǒ|me / |kǎo lǜ|has thought / |guo / ? }

Who’s ever thought of me?

Remember: + person = “for / on behalf of” (a beneficiary); + goal = “in order to” (a purpose). Person who benefits → ; aim you’re

chasing → .

Watch out

- (“for you”) vs (“for money / in order to get money”) — person vs goal.

+ Person + — “as far as ... is concerned”

... frames a **point of view** — “for ..., as far as ... is concerned.” It’s the formal twin of

Structure: + Person / Group + ,

{zh: |zhè yàng|this kind of / |de / |gōng zuò|job / |duì|for / |wǒ|me /
|ér yán / |hěn|very / |zhòng yào|important / 。 }

This kind of job is very important to me.

{zh: |duì|for / |tā|her / |ér yán / , |zì yóu|freedom / |gèng|more /
|zhòng yào|important / 。 }

For her, freedom matters even more.

Remember: ... = the **formal** ... (“from X’s point of view”). Save for writing; say in conversation.

Watch out

- It’s ... , a fixed frame — the closes it, like does.

() ... — “including”

() ... wraps items **into** a set — “including, ... counted in.” The closes the bracket.

Structure: () + Items + , · , () + Items +

{zh: |bāo kuò|including / |tā|his / |de / |mǔ yǔ|native language /
|zài nèi / , |tā|he / |huì|speaks / |shuō / |sì zhǒng|four / |yǔ yán|languages / 。 }

Including his native language, he speaks four languages.

{zh: |shuǐ diàn fèi|utilities / |zài nèi|included / , |wǒ|my / |měi yuè|monthly / |fáng zū|rent / |sān qiān wǔ|3,500 / 。 }

Including utilities, my rent is 3,500 a month.

Remember: closes the “counted in” bracket — () X = “with X included.” Negate it with ... (“not counting...”). The is the lid on the box.

Watch out

- The is what completes it — ..., not a bare

— “on the basis of, by”

introduces **what one relies on or goes by** — “on the basis of, by virtue of, just because of.”

Structure: + Basis

{zh: |píng|with / |zhè zhāng|this / |piào|ticket / |kě yǐ|you can / |jìn qù|go in / 。 }

With this ticket you can go in.

{zh: |píng|on what / |shén me|grounds / |wǒ|I / |yào|have to / |tīng|listen to / |nǐ|you / |de / ? }

On what grounds do I have to listen to you?

Remember: = “going by / relying on” — (“by ticket”), (“on merit”). And the everyday challenge ? = “says who? / on what grounds?”.

Watch out

- is confrontational — it pushes back, not a neutral “why”.

— “as for, as to”

swings to a new topic — “as for, when it comes to, as to.”

Structure: + Topic , Comment

{zh: |zhì yú|as for / |jià gé|the price / , |wǒ men|we / |yǐ hòu|later / |zài|again / |tán|discuss / 。 }

As for the price, we’ll discuss it later.

{zh: |wǒ|I / |tóng yì|agree / , |zhì yú|as for / |zěn me|how / |zuò|to do it / , |tīng|it’s up to / |nǐ|you / |de / 。 }

I agree; as for how to do it, it’s up to you.

Remember: = a clean topic-switch (“as for X...”) — it parks the last point and turns to a fresh one. Like English “as for...”, it sits at the head of the new topic.

Watch out

- It introduces a *new* topic, not a contrast — don’t use it where you mean “but”.

... — passive with

A before the doer plus a before the verb makes a colloquial **passive** — “(it) got ...ed (by someone).” The second stands in for .

Structure: Receiver + + Doer + + Verb Phrase

{zh: |wǒ|my / |de / |dàn gāo|cake / |gěi|by / |dì dì|little brother / |gěi / |chī|eaten / |le / 。 }

My cake got eaten by my little brother.

{zh: |bēi zi|the cup / |gěi|by / |tā|him / |gěi / |dǎ pò|broken / |le / 。 }

The cup got broken by him.

Remember: the second ≈ — (doer) (verb) is a chatty passive: (“the cake got eaten by little brother”). Casual speech only.

Watch out

- It’s colloquial — in writing use ().

... (/) — “as far as ... goes”

... / narrows the discussion **to one aspect** — “as far as ... goes, in terms of”

Structure: + Aspect + / ,

{zh: |jiù|in terms of / |zhì liàng|quality / |lái shuō / , |zhè ge|this one / |gèng / |hǎo|better / 。 }

In terms of quality, this one’s better.

{zh: |jiù|as / |mù qián|things stand now / |ér yán / |méi yǒu|there’s no / |wèn tí|problem / 。 }

As things stand now, there’s no problem.

Remember: **X** / = “**in terms of X**” — it zooms the lens onto a single aspect for the comment that follows (..., ...). This isn’t “then” — it’s “regarding”.

Watch out

- Don’t confuse this with the time/quantity — here it’s a topic-narrowing “as regards”.

— “**while, taking the chance**”

 grabs a **favourable moment or condition** — “while, taking advantage of (the chance).”

Structure: + Situation / Opportunity

{zh: |chèn|while / |tiān qì|the weather / |hǎo|good / , |wǒ men|we / |qù|go / |yě cān|for a picnic / |ba / 。 }

While the weather’s good, let’s go for a picnic.

{zh: |chèn|while / |nián qīng|you’re young / |duō|more / |chū qù|go out / |zǒu zou|and see things / |ba / 。 }

While you’re young, get out and see things.

Remember: = “**seize the moment / while it lasts**” — grab the chance before it’s gone. Set phrases nail the feel: (“eat while it’s hot”), (“while there’s still time”), .

Watch out

- It needs a *favourable* window — for a plain “when,” use