

Comparing similar time words

Ref Hsk5 Grammar

vs — “usually, ordinarily”

Both mean “usually / ordinarily” and are interchangeable as **adverbs**. The split: can *also* be an **adjective** meaning “ordinary, common” (); can’t.

{zh: |tā|he / |píng shí|normally / |hěn shǎo|rarely / |hē jiǔ|drinks / 。 }

He rarely drinks normally.

{zh: |zhè|this / |shì|is / |hěn|very / |píng cháng|ordinary / |de / |shì|thing / 。 }

This is a perfectly ordinary thing.

Remember: as adverbs, twins (“usually”); only **doubles as an ADJECTIVE** (“ordinary”:). stays an adverb — it can’t describe a noun.

Watch out

- For “an ordinary X,” only works (), never .

vs — “after, afterwards”

Both mean “after.” can stand **alone** meaning “in the future / from now on,” and follows a time or event. is a touch more **formal** / **written** and usually needs a preceding reference point. After a bare verb-event both work.

{zh: |bì yè|graduating / |yǐ hòu|after / , |wǒ|I / |xiǎng|want / |qù|to go / |guó wài|abroad / 。 }

After graduating, I want to go abroad.

{zh: |yǐ hòu|in future / |xiǎo xīn|careful / |diǎn / 。 }

Be more careful in future.

Remember: can stand **ALONE** = “from now on / in future” (); leans **formal and needs a reference point in front of it**. After a verb-event (/) both work; only floats free.

Watch out

- You can’t replace the standalone (“in future”) with — sounds incomplete.