

Prepositional Phrase

Ref Hsk5 Grammar

以上 / 以下 / 以内 / 以外 — upper and lower limits

These “nouns of locality” set **limits** on a number, level, or rank. 以上 = “and above,” 以下 = “and below,” 以内 = “within,” 以外 = “beyond.” They come **after** the amount. In standard usage 以上 / 以下 / 以内 are **inclusive** of the boundary number 含本数 (十岁以下 = ten and under, 10 included); only 以外 (and 不满 / 超过) excludes it.

Structure: Amount / Level + 以上 / 以下 / 以内 / 以外

{zh: 十八岁 |shí bā suì|eighteen / 以上 |yǐ shàng|and over / 才 |cái|only then / 能 |néng|may / 进 |jìn|enter / 。 }

Only those eighteen and over may enter.

{zh: 请 |qǐng|please / 在 |zài|within / 三天 |sān tiān|three days / 以内 |yǐ nèi / 回复 |huí fù|reply / 。 }

Please reply within three days.

Remember: the limit word comes AFTER the amount (十岁以下, not 以下十岁), and 以上 / 以下 / 以内 **include** the boundary number (十岁以下 = *ten and under*); only 以外 excludes it. Picture a number line: 以上 points up, 以下 down, 以内 stays inside, 以外 goes past.

Watch out

- 以内 = within a range; 以外 = beyond / except — don't mix the inside/outside pair.