

語法

Progressive Aspect:

In English we say things like "What are you doing now?" and "I am eating lunch." This ASPECT is actually independent from the tense of the sentence. This is obvious when you consider we also say "What were you doing yesterday?" or "What will you be doing tomorrow?" Chinese does not use tense, but still has a progressive aspect.

This progressive aspect, used to mark an ongoing action, is expressed by using one of the following options all having the same meaning:

在 + Predicate + 呢
在 + Predicate
Predicate + 呢

他在做什麼呢？

我在看報呢。	她在看電視呢。
學生在複習課文呢。	老師在整理桌子呢。
我朋友在喝茶呢。	哥哥在洗澡呢。
他們都在唱歌呢。	代表團在參觀工廠呢。

When using the progressive aspect to indicate two simultaneous activities: *When you called, I was just in the shower*, we use the progressive construct with 的時候. The addition of 正在 in the progressive aspect phrase emphasizes the immediacy of the actions: right in the middle of doing something.

Subject 1 + Action 1 + 的時候 + Subject 2 + 正在 + Action 2 + 呢

你給我打電話的時候，我正在洗澡呢。
爸爸開車去接你的時候，我正在看電視呢。
妹妹從學院回來的時候，媽媽正在做晚飯呢。
我的外國朋友在書店買報紙的時候，我正在對面的電影院前邊等我的女朋友呢。

Verb Complement:

The verb complement indicates the manner, or degree to which an action is carried out: *walk slowly, eat quickly*, and the like. English speakers add an adverb after the verb, while in Chinese the complement of degree is expressed by adding 得 and an adjectival predicate, usually an adverb and adjective.

Verb + 得 + Adverb + Adjective

走得很慢	吃得很快
回答得很對	說得很流利
回答得真對	唱得很好聽
來得太晚	寫得很漂亮

When a transitive verb is followed by an object the verb is repeated with the complement structure replacing the object after the second occurrence. The structure is a bit more complicated, but the language is useful.

Verb + Object + Verb + 得 + Adverb + Adjective

她學習漢語學習得很不錯。
學生回答老師的問題都回答得很對。
你寫漢字寫得真漂亮。
他整理房間整理得很乾淨。

Auxiliary Verbs:

Auxiliary, or optative verbs indicate the ability, possibility, intention, or wish of carrying out an action. As in English, auxiliary verbs in Chinese precede the main verb. Think: **can walk**, **will go**, **may enter**, **should study**.

will likely VERB	會	不會
know how to VERB	會	不會
able to VERB	能/可以	不能
ought to VERB	要/應該	不用
want to VERB	想/要	不想
allowed to VERB	可以	不可以
should not VERB		不要/不應該

(不) + Auxiliary Verb + Verb + (Object)

我們今天晚上會吃媽媽做的中國飯。
 學生現在都會寫三百六十七個漢字。
 你能不能翻譯這本魯迅的小說？
 我們大家都應該復習課文。
 這個星期五你想跟我一起看電影嗎？
 他們明天要去農村看朋友。
 學生不可以在教室裡玩手機。
 醫生說我們不應該吸煙。

The Perfective Aspect

The perfective aspect is used to express a completed action. In English we use “have + VERB-ed” to grammatically form this aspect. The perfective is used in past, present and future tenses.

- Past: We had already eaten (when they arrived).
- Present: We have already eaten.
- Future: We will have eaten (by 8PM this evening).

Chinese does not have tenses, but does have the perfective aspect. In Chinese perfective aspect in its simplest form is marked by adding 了 after the verb. If there is an object the 了 particle is inserted between the verb and object. However, the object must contain either a quantification, or qualification--reference a specific object. We will talk about that later.

The previous English statements would be rendered in Chinese as, “我們吃了飯。” Past, present and future ideas would be indicated by adding time words to the sentence.

SUBJECT + VERB + 了 + OBJECT

Past: 我們昨天吃了早飯

Yesterday we had eaten breakfast. (You don't normally eat breakfast.)

Present: 我們吃了早飯。

We have eaten breakfast. (Now what?)

Future: 我們明天早上八點吃了早飯以後請給我打電話。

At eight this morning after we have eaten breakfast please give me a call.

The negative of the VERB + 了 structure is 沒(有) + VERB + (OBJECT). There is no qualifier for the object in a negative statement, or in a question.

Basic Structure

The following table lists the grammar patterns in perfective statements and questions:

Positive	SUBJECT + VERB + 了 + (*OBJECT)	has happened
	*OBJECT, + VERB + 了	has happened
Negative	SUBJECT + 沒(有) + VERB + (OBJECT)	not happened
	*OBJECT, + 沒(有) + VERB	not happened
	SUBJECT + 還沒(有) + VERB	not happened yet
	SUBJECT + 還沒(有) + VERB + OBEJCT + 呢	not happened yet
	*OBJECT, + 還沒(有) + VERB + 呢	not happened yet
Interrogative	SUBJECT + VERB + 了 + (OBJECT) + 嗎?	
	*OBJECT, + VERB + 了 + 嗎?	
	SUBJECT + VERB + 了 + (OBJECT) + 沒有?	
	*OBJECT, + VERB + 了 + 沒有?	
	SUBJECT + VERB + 沒 + VERB + (OBJECT) ?	
	*OBJECT, + VERB + 沒 + VERB ?	

*Objects in these perfective statements must be a nominal (noun) phrase containing a proper noun (中國) or any noun preceded by a numeral-measure (兩張票), demonstrative-measure (那張票), an attribute (京劇票, 他們的票), or a relative clause (老師買的票).

When Not to Use

A completed action is often a past action, but if the perfective is not stressed the VERB + 了 pattern should not be used. There are certain specific situations where the perfective is not appropriate.

Habitual Action: 他以前常常吸煙。
He often smoked in the past.

Continuous State: 他去年在北京大學研究中國文學。
He was studying Chinese literature last year at Beijing University.

Status Description: 他以前是中國大使。

是, 姓, 有, etc. He used to be the Chinese ambassador.

Descriptive Statement: 他年輕的時候覺得這本書很有意思。
When he was young he thought this book was very interesting.

Degree Complement: 他在海邊的時候游泳游得真快。
When he was at the seaside he swam really fast.

Reported Speech: 他昨天說他要在食堂等我。
說, 問, 告訴, etc. Yesterday he said he would wait for me in the cafeteria.

Imminent Aspect:

We learned that 了 can be used to express a new situation or a change of state. If this change is going to take place relatively soon, we express this imminence with 要. The degree of imminence can be enhanced by adding 就. The urgency can be mitigated by using 快.

我們快下課了。
電影快要開始了。
飛機八點一刻要起飛了。
他們明年就去中國學習了。
我們明天就要走了。

soon	快 (要) + [VERB + OBJECT] + 了	Cannot use with time.
sooner	要 + [VERB + OBJECT] + 了	Can use with time.
soonest	就 (要) + [VERB + OBJECT] + 了	

The negative of the new situation 了 statement uses 沒有 or 還沒有. Imminent aspect questions usually take the 嗎 form.

足球賽快開始了嗎?
沒有。裁判還沒有來呢。

我們就要下課了嗎?
還沒有。請再等十分鐘。

他的女朋友就要來了。
沒有。她還在復習課文呢。

生詞

- 第23課: 正在, 電視, 接, 電話, 沒有, 復習, 課文, 新聞, 友好, 代表團, 代表, 參觀, 工廠, 工人, 訪問, 照片, 打電話, 明天, 城, 外邊, 玩兒, 出發, 開車, 接人
- 第24課: 點心, 農村, 農民, 火車, 鍛鍊, 回答, 些, 難, 生詞, 詞, 念, 練習, 認真, 懂
- 第25課: 得, 晚, 停, 前邊, 河, 游泳, 準備, 釣, 魚, 湯, 位, 快, 哪裡, 慢, 教練, 不錯, 麵包, 火腿, 一點兒, 奶酪, 再, 礦泉水
- 第26課: 研究, 文學, 早, 談, 會, 當, 翻譯, 能, 加深, 人民, 了解, 有名, 作家, 或者, 就, 應該, 倆, 可以, 理想, 可是, 容易, 有志者事竟成, 成語
- 第27課: 開始, 大使館, 大使, 招待會, 酒, 嘗, 茅台酒, 為, 健康, 乾杯, 友誼, 葡萄酒, 葡萄, 菜, 筷子, 試, 文化, 參贊, 夫人, 又, 大家, 到, 樓
- 第28課: 足球, 球, 賽, 昨天, 辦, 簽證, 午飯, 隊, 贏, 輸, 比, 裁判, 公平, 踢, 氣人, 行李, 箱子, 頂, 帽子, 雙, 冰鞋, 鞋, 冬天, 滑冰, 早飯
- 第29課: 飛機, 要, 起飛, 機場, 分別, 願意, 離開, 見面, 見, 所以, 進步, 努力, 照相, 站, 緊, 上, 注意, 身體, 放心, 忘, 難過, 明年, 夏天, 秋天, 一路平安
- 第30課: 笑, 心, 送, 女兒, 去年, 國家, 東西, 哭, 離, 遠, 熱情, 過, 自己