

Find details in a short notice

HSK 1

Original teaching practice. Read one pattern, cover its model and try the questions before checking the separate answer section. Examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA) retain the course-reference provenance.

Distinguish people, quantities, places, and times in short messages.

Before you start: Recall people names, small numbers, 在 locations, 有 existence and clock times. Match quantities to their nouns; do not assume that nearby facts belong to the same person or object.

■ Build the meaning

Read or listen first for the type of information: who, how many, where, or when. Spotting a familiar word is not enough; check that it answers the question.

桌子上有两个杯子 locates two cups on a table. 上 follows the place noun; 有 introduces what exists there.

Place + 有 + number + measure word + thing



■ Work through a decision

Read 桌子上有两个杯子和三本书。王力下午四点去学校 – two cups and three books are on the table; Wang Li goes to school at four in the afternoon. Asked 有几本书, choose 三本书, the three books. 两个 belongs to cups; 四点 is a clock time. The same message can contain several numbers serving different roles.

Compare: 林安的书在学校 locates Lin An's book at school; 林安在学校 locates Lin An herself. Where the book is tells you nothing about where its owner is. Likewise, 桌子上有书 identifies a setting for books but need not name their owner.

■ Useful words in context

- 桌子 zhuōzi – table. 桌子上有书。
- 上 shàng – on / above. 桌子上。
- 杯子 bēizi – cup. 两个杯子。
- 书 shū – book. 三本书。

- 本 běn – measure word for books. 两本书。

■ Listen before reading the script

Ask a partner to read the listening script from the answer section while you keep it covered. Then attempt the listening question. If you work alone without audio, use the script for reading practice; it is not a listening test.

■ Read a different account

桌子上有两个杯子和三本书。林安的书在学校。王力下午三点去学校。

Try the reading question before checking the English meaning in the answer section.

■ Speak with a partner

Describe a fictional table with two cups and one book. Ask a partner how many cups they heard.

Check the distinction: If you read the transcript before answering, record that as supported reading, not unseen listening.

Learn step by step · Practise and review.

Practice without the models

Choose a pattern, cover its teaching examples, and attempt its questions. Use the labels to find feedback in the separate key.

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0901.1 Listening. How many cups are in the recording?

- A. Two
- B. Three
- C. None

0901.2 Reading. Which quantity belongs to books in the reading?

- A. Two
- B. Four
- C. Three

0901.3 Complete “three books”: 三 书。

0901.4 Match each word with its meaning in this unit.

- 1. 桌子
- 1. 上
- 1. 杯子
- 1. 书
- 1. 本

- A. measure word for books
- B. on / above
- C. table
- D. book
- E. cup

0901.5 Write a new table description with different quantities. Ask one detail question about it.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

0901.6 桌子上有三个杯子。桌子上 means on the table, 三个 means three and 杯子 means cups. Which question can this message answer directly?

- A. Who bought the cups?
- B. How many cups are on the table?
- C. When does school begin?

0901.7 桌子上有四个杯子和两本书。桌子上 means on the table, 四个杯子 four cups and 两本书 two books. First attach each number to its noun. How many books are there?

- A. Six
- B. Two
- C. Four

0901.8 Read: 椅子上有一包茶, 桌子上没有茶。王力的书在学校。椅子 means chair and 包 counts packets here. Which claim is supported?

- A. Tea is on the chair; Wang Li is at school.
- B. Tea is on the chair; Wang Li's book is at school.
- C. Tea is on the table; Wang Li's book is at school.

0901.9 Use Mandarin for the new sentences or dialogue. You may explain your reasoning in English. Write a new short message with two object quantities, two locations and a person's travel time. Ask one quantity question and one location question that can be answered from the message. Then state one fact about ownership or a person's location that the message leaves unknown. Read the message aloud or exchange questions with a partner.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

A fresh situation

R1. Interpret and repair. A notice reads 星期二下午两点, 教室见. A pupil plans to go on Wednesday morning. Which two details conflict?

R2. Use it yourself. Write a notice for a Thursday meeting at three in the afternoon in the library.

Write your responses before opening the key. Compare meaning as well as form; a different valid answer need not copy the model.

Answers and explanations

Check after your attempt. For open tasks, compare the message and the stated criteria, then revise one detail.

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0901.1 B. Three

三个杯子 gives three cups; the reading described a different scene.

0901.2 C. Three

三本书 is three books; 两个杯子 refers to cups.

0901.3 本

本 is the measure word for books in this phrase.

0901.4 1-C: 桌子 = table; 2-B: 上 = on / above; 3-E: 杯子 = cup; 4-D: 书 = book; 5-A: 本 = measure word for books

Use the example sentences to check each word's meaning in context.

0901.5 One possible response: 桌子上有三个杯子和两本书。几个杯子?

Check meaning and form:

- State the place.
- Use 个 with cups and 本 with books.
- Ask a quantity question.

Compare the meaning and structure with the checklist. Your own response may differ from the model.

0901.6 B. How many cups are on the table?

The message supplies the number and location of cups. It supplies no purchaser, owner or school time. Recognising a number is useful only when it is attached to the requested object.

0901.7 B. Two

两本书 gives two books. Four counts cups; six adds different object types and does not answer the book question. Use the requested noun as well as the number.

0901.8 B. Tea is on the chair; Wang Li's book is at school.

椅子上有一包茶 locates a packet of tea on the chair, while 桌子上没有茶 excludes it from the table. 王力的书 locates Wang Li's book, not Wang Li himself, at school. Distinguish the object from its owner.

0901.9 One possible response: Possible message: 桌子上有三本书。椅子上有两个杯子。林安下午五点去学校。Questions: 桌子上有几本书? 杯子在哪里? Replies: 三本。在椅子上。The message does not say who owns the cups or where Lin An is before her trip. Other coherent quantities and locations are valid.

How to revise: If a number or place came from the wrong clause, mark the noun and its detail together before trying again. Check negative statements before claiming an

object is present. Use new objects or numbers after correcting the mismatch.

Check meaning and form:

- Keep each quantity attached to its object.
- Keep the two locations and travel time distinct.
- Make both questions answerable from the exact message.
- Identify an unknown fact without inferring a person's location from an object's location.
- Write or speak the requested sentences, questions or dialogue in Mandarin; optional English reasoning does not replace them.

If a number or place came from the wrong clause, mark the noun and its detail together before trying again. Check negative statements before claiming an object is present. Use new objects or numbers after correcting the mismatch.

■ Listening script and meaning

桌子上有三个杯子，没有书。

There are three cups on the table and no books.

■ Reading meaning

There are two cups and three books on the table. Lin An's book is at school. Wang Li goes to school at three in the afternoon.

■ Speaking model

A: 桌子上有两个杯子和一本书。B: 几个杯子? A: 两个。

Compare the intended message first. Ask a listener to comment on intelligibility and pronunciation; matching the written model does not establish speaking accuracy.

■ Fresh-situation answers

R1. 星期二 is Tuesday, not Wednesday; 下午两点 is two in the afternoon, not morning. 教室 identifies the classroom meeting place.

R2. One possible response. 星期四下午三点, 图书馆见。The new notice supplies a day, a time and a place. Check every detail against your intended arrangement.

Recall later. Later, exchange two notices and ask each other for one precise detail.