HSK 1 · Meals and Traditional Foods

Beginner food and drink; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Lunch, with grammar

吃 eats, 喝 drinks, 想 would like — and two markers, 在 and 了, tell you when the action happens.

- One meal, three tenses of intention.
- 了 is not a past-tense suffix.

吃 and 喝

Verb	Takes	Example
吃	Food	吃米饭 (chī mǐfàn) — eat rice
喝	Drinks	喝水 (hē shuǐ) — drink water
喜欢	What you like	我喜欢吃饺子 — I like eating dumplings

想: the wish

1. **The pattern 想** + verb: **我想喝茶** (wǒ xiǎng hē chá) — I'd like to drink tea.
2. **The 什么 question 你想吃什么** ? (Nǐ xiǎng chī shénme?) — What do you want to eat?
3. **What it asks** Which item — not yes-or-no.
4. **Try it** Say one thing you'd like to eat right now.

Decision

想 plus a verb states the wish.

在 and 了: now and done

在 / 正在 — happening now

我在吃饭。(Wǒ zài chīfàn.) — I'm eating (right now).

了 — done or changed

我吃了。(Wǒ chī le.) — I've eaten.

Watch out: 了 is not a past tense

- 了 marks completed action or change — not every English past tense.
- Attend to completion and change in the full context.

Quick check

Your turn

Which verb goes with 水?

A. 吃
B. 喝

Check yourself

Your turn

Is 了 simply a past-tense ending?

A. yes, always

B. no – it marks completion or change