

HSK 3 Grammar 5: Particles, Nouns & Numbers

HSK 3 particles and numbers, taught from the reviewed topic handout; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Halves, huges numbers, and vague some

半 mirrors English word order; 万 groups digits in fours; a falling-tone question word means some.

半: half a, and a half

- 1 **Half a unit** 半小时 (bàn xiǎoshí) — half an hour: 半 first.
- 2 **X and a half** 三个半小时 (sānge bàn xiǎoshí) — three and a half hours: 半 after the measure word.
- 3 **Why it feels natural** 半 lands exactly where the fraction lands in English.
- 4 **The 天/年 rule** They are themselves measure words: 半天 ✓, never 半个天.

Decision

Say the English and 半 lands in the same spot.

Not even one

One ... not even ...

他一句话都没说。(Tā yí jù huà dōu méi shuō.) — He didn't say a single word.

这个人我一次也没见过。 — I've never met this person, not even once.

万 and 亿: group in fours

English	Chinese	Literal
10,000	一万 (yíwàn)	one wan
1,000,000	一百万 (yìbǎiwàn)	a hundred wan
1,000,000,000	十亿 (shíyì)	ten yi

Telling the time

Time	Chinese	Note
2:09	两点零九分 (liǎng diǎn líng jiǔ fēn)	A single-digit minute takes 零 “oh”
2:30	两点半 (liǎng diǎn bàn)	半 = half past
2:15	两点一刻 (liǎng diǎn yí kè)	刻 = a quarter
7:55	差五分八点 (chà wǔ fēn bā diǎn)	差 “short of” comes first

The question word as “some”

Not a question at all

这个人在哪儿见过。— I've met this person somewhere.

我们应该做点儿什么。— We should do something.

Watch out: 半天 takes no 个

- 天 and 年 are themselves measure words: 半天 ✓, 半年 ✓, never 半个天.
- 一两 is the common small approximation: 一两天 — a day or two.

Check yourself

Your turn

Which pair is right? (1) 三个半小时 means what? (2) 差五分八点 is what time?

- A. Three hours; 8:05
- B. Three and a half hours; 7:55
- C. Half past three; 7:55
- D. Three and a half hours; 8:05