HSK 4 Grammar 14: Verb Phrases

HSK 4 verb-phrase patterns from joins to separable words, taught from the reviewed topic handout; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Eleven patterns, three big traps

> Join actions with 并, advise with 少 / 多, assign with 由, blame with 害得 — and mind the two nevers and the separable words.

- The traps are order, pairing and the taken object slot.
- Each pattern earns its keep in real sentences.

并 and 并且: the action joins

Verbs, never nouns

我同意并支持你的决定。(Wǒ tóngyì bìng zhīchí nǐ de juédìng.) — I agree with and support your decision.

我通知了所有人，并且还准备了材料。(Wǒ tōngzhī le suǒyǒu rén, bìngqiě hái zhǔnbèi le cáiliào.) — I told everyone, and moreover prepared the materials.

少 / 多 + verb: advice order

1. **The English instinct** "Drink less water" — amount after the verb.
2. **The Chinese order** The amount-word leads: **少喝水** (shǎo hē shuǐ), **多吃饭** (duō chī fàn).
3. **Worked advice** **请少放点盐**。(Qǐng shǎo fàng diǎn yán.) — Use a bit less salt, please.
4. **The gentle scolding** **爷爷，你要多出去走走**。(Yéye, nǐ yào duō chūqù zǒuzou.) — Grandpa, go out for walks more.

Decision

Never **喝少水** — the amount-word goes before the verb, every time.

由 and 害得: assigning and blaming

由 — the formal assigner

这件事由我负责。(Zhè jiàn shì yóu wǒ fùzé.) — I'm responsible for this matter.

It assigns the doer, in formal and business contexts.

害得 — the blamer

下午喝了两杯咖啡，害得我晚上睡不着。— Two coffees, which kept me from sleeping.

Always a note of complaint; the cause comes first.

The two nevers

Pattern	Meaning	Example
从来不	Never as a rule or habit	她从来不喝酒。(Tā cónglái bù hējiǔ.) — She never drinks.
从来没 … 过	Never in lifetime experience	她从来没见过她妈妈。— She has never met her mother.

Use the evidence

In speech both shorten: 从不 / 从没. And the 过 is not optional in the experience version.

值得, and until with 到

1. **Worth doing** 这个想法值得考虑。(Zhège xiǎngfǎ zhídé kǎolǜ.) — This idea is worth considering.
2. **Worth money is different** 值得 takes a verb; for price use 值 — 这个值一百块 (zhège zhí yìbǎi kuài).
3. **Until, no object** 我们在酒吧一直聊到半夜。(Wǒmen zài jiǔbā yìzhí liáo dào bànyè.) — We chatted until midnight.
4. **Until, with an object** 她写作业写到十二点半。— She did homework until 12:30 — the verb repeats for the 到 half.

Decision

With an object, say the verb twice: once for the object, once for 到 + time.

离合词: the taken object slot

Verbs that are secretly two words

我们见过面。(Wǒmen jiàn guo miàn.) — We've met before — the 过 goes between 见 and 面.

他帮了我一个忙。(Tā bāng le wǒ yíge máng.) — He did me a favour — the beneficiary goes between 帮 and 忙.

V 着 V 着就 …: the creeping surprise

Before you knew it

走着走着，就到家了。(Zǒu zhe zǒu zhe, jiù dào jiā le.) — Walking along, before we knew it we were home.

她说着说着，就哭了。(Tā shuō zhe shuō zhe, jiù kū le.) — As she talked, she suddenly started crying.

Quick check

Your turn

Which is “drink less water”?

A. 喝少水
B. 少喝水

Check yourself

Your turn

Which is correct?

A. 她写作业写到十二点。
B. 她写到作业十二点。
C. 她写作业写十二点到。