

Auxiliary words

HSK 6

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.

Sentence + 来着 (recalling the recent past)

■ What was his name again?

- You met someone at a party last week and can't recall his name.
- 他叫什么名字来着? – “What was his name again?”

■ Question + 来着 = what was it again?

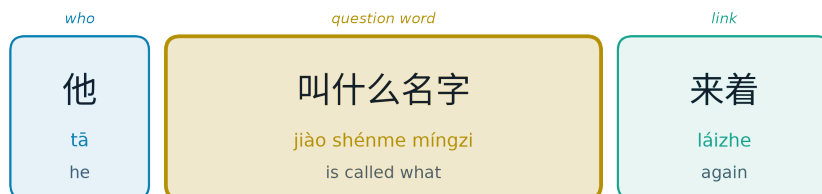
- 来着 at the end of a sentence asks someone to remind you of something you knew: 你刚才说什么来着?
- It refers to the recent past and is very colloquial.

你刚才说什么来着?

nǐ gāng cái shuō shén me lái zhe

Word guide: 你 – you; 刚才 – just now; 说 – said; 什么 – what; 来着 – (again).

...来着: what was it again?



■ Statements too

- 我昨天还看见他来着。 – “I saw him only yesterday, I'm sure.”
- In statements it recalls a recent event as a reminder or confirmation.

我昨天还看见他来着。

wǒ zuó tiān hái kàn jiàn tā lái zhe

Word guide: 我 – I; 昨天 – yesterday; 还 – even; 看见 – saw; 他 – him; 来着 – (I recall).

■ Recent past, spoken only

- 来着 is for things in the recent past; it cannot describe the future.
- Do not use it in writing or with 了 in the same clause: 他说什么来着, not 他说了什么来着.

■ Versus a plain question

- 他叫什么名字? asks for new information.
- 他叫什么名字来着? admits you knew it and have forgotten.

他叫什么名字?

tā jiào shén me míng zi

Word guide: 他 – he; 叫 – is called; 什么 – what; 名字 – name.

■ Recap

- **Question + 来着** = what was it again? (asking to be reminded).
- Colloquial recollection of an earlier situation. Whether 了 also appears depends on the complete sentence; do not use a blanket ban.

Practise this pattern step by step.

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.

■ Sentence + 来着 (recalling the recent past)

0201.1 Complete: “What did you say just now?” 你刚才说什么?

0201.2 What does 他叫什么名字来着? suggest?

- A. The speaker is being formal.
- B. The speaker never knew the name.
- C. The speaker knew it but has forgotten.
- D. The speaker is asking about the future.

0201.3 Build: “I saw him only yesterday.”

Arrange all chunks: 还看见他 / 来着。 / 我昨天

0201.4 来着 suits formal writing.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0201.5 You met someone at a party last week and can't recall his name. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

A fresh situation

R1. Interpret and repair. Someone asks 你刚才说什么来着? A learner assumes 来着 means an event is happening now. Clarify.

R2. Use it yourself. Ask a friend to remind you where an object was put, without pretending you already remember.

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.

■ Sentence + 来着 (recalling the recent past)

0201.1 来着

来着 = what was it again?

0201.2 C. The speaker knew it but has forgotten.

来着 at the end of a question shows that the speaker once knew the answer but has forgotten it: 他叫什么名字来着? “What was his name again?”

0201.3 我昨天还看见他来着。

Statement + 来着 recalls the recent past.

0201.4 False.

False. 来着 is colloquial and belongs in conversation. In formal writing you would simply ask 他叫什么名字? or restate the information.

0201.5 One possible response: 他叫什么名字来着?

Check meaning and form:

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 来着 is for things in the recent past; it cannot describe the future.
- Do not use it in writing or with 了 in the same clause: 他说什么来着, not 他说了什么来着.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

This is supported productive practice. Compare meaning and structure; your answer need not copy the model. A partner or teacher must hear the spoken response to comment on pronunciation.

■ Fresh-situation answers

R1. The question asks the listener to recall what they just said. 来着 marks recollection in this colloquial use; it is not the progressive marker 在.

R2. One possible response. 你刚才把钥匙放哪儿来着? The question seeks a previously mentioned or recent detail. A clear reply should name the place rather than repeat the recollection particle.

Recall later. Tomorrow, ask for a different recent detail with 来着 and answer it directly.