Auxiliary Words

HSK 4 Grammar

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.

Noun, Noun + 什么的 (...and so on)

A shopping list

- Your roommate asks what to buy for the weekend barbecue.
- **买点儿肉、蔬菜、饮料什么的。** – "Buy some meat, vegetables, drinks, that kind of thing."

Noun, Noun + 什么的

- **A、B (、C) + 什么的** = "... and so on, ... and things like that", in casual speech.
- It closes an open list; one or more examples come before it.

我喜欢看书、听音乐什么的。
wǒ xǐ huan kàn shū tīng yīn yuè shén me de
Word guide: 我 – I; 喜欢 – like; 看书 – reading; 听 – listening to; 音乐 – music; 什么的 – and so on.

Activities too

- Verb phrases work: **周末我常常打球、爬山什么的。** – "At weekends I often play ball, go hiking, things like that."
- The list is only examples; the speaker is not giving every item.

周末我常常打球、爬山什么的。
zhōu mò wǒ cháng cháng dǎ qiú pá shān shén me de
Word guide: 周末 – at weekends; 我 – I; 常常 – often; 打球 – play ball; 爬山 – go hiking; 什么的 – and so on.

Spoken, and not a question

- 什么的 here is not “what”; it ends a list, so no question mark.
- In writing use 等 instead: 北京、上海等城市.

什么的 versus 等

- 什么的 is casual and goes at the end of a phrase.
- 等 is formal and can come before a noun that sums up the list: 苹果、香蕉等水果 – “apples, bananas and other fruit”.

苹果、香蕉等水果。
píng guǒ xiāng jiāo děng shuǐ guǒ
Word guide: 苹果 – apples; 香蕉 – bananas; 等 – and other; 水果 – fruit.

Recap

- **A、B + 什么的** = A, B and so on (casual, open list).
- Writing uses 等 (等 + summary noun).

Practise this pattern step by step.

... 等 / 等等 (etc.)

In a news report

- You read about which Chinese cities have the most visitors.
- **北京、上海、西安等城市都很受欢迎。** – “Cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Xi’an are all very popular.”

A、B + 等 (+ summary noun)

- **等** = “etc., and so on” in writing. It follows the list and can be followed by a noun that sums it up.
- 等等 is a stronger “and so on and so forth”, usually at the very end.

我买了苹果、香蕉等水果。
wǒ mǎi le píng guǒ xiāng jiāo děng shuǐ guǒ
Word guide: 我 – I; 买 – bought; 苹果 – apples; 香蕉 – bananas; 等 – and other; 水果 – fruit.

Open list or closed list

- Open: **中国有很多传统节日，比如春节、中秋节等等。** – "China has many traditional festivals, such as the Spring Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival and so on."
- Closed, with a number: **北京、上海、广州等三个城市** – "the three cities Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou". The number shows the list is complete.

北京、上海、广州等三个城市。
Běi jīng Shàng hǎi Guǎng zhōu děng sān gè chéng shì
Word guide: 北京 – Beijing; 上海 – Shanghai; 广州 – Guangzhou; 等 – (these); 三个 – three; 城市 – cities.

Written style

- 等 is formal; in chat, 什么的 sounds more natural.
- With a number after 等, the list is complete: 等三个城市 means exactly those three.

等 the verb

- 等 also means "wait": 等一下 – "wait a moment". In a list it means "etc.".
- Position tells you which: after a list of nouns it is "etc.".

请等一下。
qǐng děng yí xià
Word guide: 请 – please; 等 – wait; 一下 – a moment.

Recap

- **A、B + 等 (+ noun)** = A, B and so on (written); 等等 = and so on and so forth.
- 等 + number = a complete list; casual speech uses 什么的.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Practice without the models

Noun, Noun + 什么的 (...and so on)

0401.1 Complete casually: "I like reading, music and so on." 我喜欢看书、听音乐……。

0401.2 Which suits a written report?

- A. 他去过什么的北京、上海。
- B. 他去过北京、上海什么的城市。
- C. 他去过北京、上海什么的。
- D. 他去过北京、上海等城市。

0401.3 Build: "At weekends I often play ball, go hiking, things like that."

Arrange all chunks: 打球、/ 爬山 / 什么的。/ 周末我常常

0401.4 A sentence ending in 什么的 needs a question mark.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0401.5 Your roommate asks what to buy for the weekend barbecue. 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.

■ ... 等 / 等等 (etc.)

0402.1 Complete (written): "apples, bananas and other fruit" 苹果、香蕉 …… 水果

0402.2 What does 北京、上海、广州等三个城市 tell you?

- A. There are more than three cities.
- B. The list is incomplete.
- C. The speaker is waiting for three cities.
- D. There are exactly these three cities.

0402.3 Build: "Cities such as Beijing and Shanghai are very popular."

Arrange all chunks: 受欢迎。/ 北京、上海 / 等城市 / 都很

0402.4 等 is more formal than 什么的.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0402.5 You read about which Chinese cities have the most visitors. 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.

Answers and explanations

■ Noun, Noun + 什么的 (...and so on)

0401.1 什么的

什么的 ends an open list.

0401.2 D. 他去过北京、上海等城市。

Writing uses 等 + summary noun.

0401.3 周末我常常打球、爬山什么的。

List + 什么的.

0401.4 False.

Here 什么的 means "and so on"; it is a statement.

0401.5 One possible response: 买点儿肉、蔬菜、饮料什么的。

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.
- 什么的 here is not "what"; it ends a list, so no question mark.
- In writing use 等 instead: 北京、上海等城市.
- 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.

■ ... 等 / 等等 (etc.)

0402.1 等

List + 等 + summary noun.

0402.2 D. There are exactly these three cities.

A number after 等 closes the list.

0402.3 北京、上海等城市都很受欢迎。

List + 等 + noun + comment.

0402.4 True.

等 suits writing; 什么的 suits chat.

0402.5 One possible response: 北京、上海、西安等城市都很受欢迎。

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.
- 等 is formal; in chat, 什么的 sounds more natural.

- With a number after 等, the list is complete: 等三个城市 means exactly those three.
- 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.