
米饭

My Family's Dog: Rice

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我们家有一只小狗，它的名字叫米饭，今年3岁了。我和妈妈是2018年8月6日星期一下午，在一个商店的前面看见米饭的。那天天气很热，它看起来很想喝水，我没有水，所以给它吃了苹果。它吃了一个苹果，想再吃一个苹果，所以它跟我们一起回家了。

米饭喜欢看电视、吃水果，也很爱吃米饭。我不在家的時候，它喜欢睡觉。我在家工作的时候，它喜欢坐在桌子上看我的电脑。上个星期天我和米饭去商店买东西，它认识了一只漂亮的小猫。现在它们常常在一起玩。

米饭是我们的朋友，我们都喜欢它。

生词 Vocabulary

Proper Nouns

米饭 mǐfàn Rice (a dog's name)

Nouns

前面 qiánmian in front of
商店 shāngdiàn store; shop
那天 nàtiān on that day
桌子 zhuōzi table; desk

Pronouns

它 quèrèn it (used for objects and non-human animals regardless of gender)

Verbs

看起来 kàn qilai to look like
回家 huíjiā to go home
认识 rènshi to know someone; to recognize

Adverbs

再 zài again

语法点 Grammar Points

1. 在 zài

prep. at, in or on (a place or time)

在 (zài) is preposition that's used in Chinese to explain where or when an action took place. The word order in sentences featuring 在 (zài) is very different from that found in sentences with similar meanings in English.

When used to indicate where something happened, is happening or will happen, use of 在 (zài) follows this pattern:

Subject + 在 (zài) + Place + Verb + Object

我在大学学习中文。

Wǒ zài dàxué xuéxí Zhōngwén.

I study Chinese in college.

In this sentence, the subject is 我 (wǒ; I), which corresponds to the person doing the action of studying. 在 (zài; in) is the preposition, 大学 (dàxué; college) is the place where the action of studying is taking place, and 中文 (Zhōngwén; Chinese) is the object that explains what is being studied.

Note that in the Chinese sentence, the preposition 在 (zài) and the place it refers to (大学 dàxué) come directly after the subject (我 wǒ). This word order is very different from English word order, in which the preposition (in) and place (college) come at the very end of the sentence.

Let's look at another example:

我和妈妈在一个商店的前面看见米饭的。

Wǒ hé māma zài yī gè shāngdiàn de qiánmiàn kàn jiàn Mǐfàn de.

My mom and I caught sight of Rice in front of a shop.

In this sentence, the subject is 我和妈妈 (wǒ hé māma; my mom and I). Next comes the preposition 在 (zài; in), the place, 一个商店的前面 (yī gè shāngdiàn de qiánmiàn; in front of a store), the verb, 看见 (kàn jiàn; caught sight of) and the object, 米饭 (Mǐfàn; Rice).

Note that while the preposition and the place come before the verb and object in the Chinese version of the sentence, they come at the very end in the English version.

Beginning students whose native language is English often make mistakes with word order when trying to use 在 (zài) in a sentence. Therefore, it pays to be extra careful when using this word to ensure that you develop the habit of using it correctly right from the start.

2. 很 hěn

adv. really; very

In Chinese, 很 (hěn) is an adverb that's used in front of verbs or adjectives to increase their intensity. It is frequently used in a way that's similar to the adverbs "really" and "very" in English.

Let's look at an example:

它很爱吃水果。

Tā hěn ài chī shuǐguǒ.

He (or it) really loves to eat fruit.

In this sentence, 很 (hěn) appears in the exact same place as its equivalent, “really,” in the English version.

Note that it's also possible to translate the Chinese version of this sentence using the English word “very.” In this case, two different English word orders are possible: “He very much loves to eat fruit” or “He loves eating fruit very much.” While it's possible to put the adverb “very much” at the end of the English sentence, no such word order is possible in Chinese.

Let's consider one more example:

它很想喝水。

Tā hěn xiǎng hē shuǐ.

He (the dog) really wants to drink some water.

Here, 很 (hěn) appears before the verb 想 (xiǎng; to want), just like the adverb “really” comes before “want” in the English version.

3. ...的时候 de shíhou

part of speech depends on context. when

In Chinese, ...的时候 (de shíhou) is used to talk about things that happened at or during a particular time or period of time.

When used in a sentence, ...的时候 (de shíhou) follows this pattern:

Subject + Verb or Adjective + ...的时候 (de shíhou)

我小的时候很喜欢吃糖果。

Wǒ xiǎo de shíhòu hěn xǐhuān chī tángguǒ.

When I was little, I really liked to eat candy.

In this sentence, ...的时候 (de shíhou) is being used to talk about something that was the case during a certain period of time in the past, in this case, the during the author's childhood. The subject 我 (wǒ; I) comes first, followed by the adjective 小 (xiǎo; little), followed by ...的时候 (de shíhou).

我在家工作的时候，它喜欢坐在桌子上看我的电脑。

Wǒ zàijiā gōngzuò de shíhòu, tā xǐhuān zuò zài zhuōzi shàng kàn wǒ de diànnǎo.

When I'm at home, he likes to sit on the table and look at my computer.

Here, ...的时候 (de shíhou) refers to a certain recurring period of time, namely whenever the author is at home.

测试 Quiz

1. 小狗的名字是什么?
 - a. 苹果
 - b. 水果
 - c. 吃饭
 - d. 米饭

2. 我和妈妈是什么时候认识米饭的?
 - a. 6月
 - b. 8月
 - c. 2018月
 - d. 3月

3. 我和妈妈是在哪里认识米饭?
 - a. 在商店后面
 - b. 在商店上面
 - c. 在商店前面
 - d. 在商店面前

4. 我在家工作时，米饭喜欢做什么?
 - a. 看我的电脑
 - b. 看电视
 - c. 睡觉
 - d. 吃苹果

5. 米饭喜欢吃什么?
 - a. 水
 - b. 小猫
 - c. 米饭
 - d. 饭店

Answer key on final page of PDF.

Mǐfàn

Wǒmen jiā yǒu yī zhī xiǎogǒu, tā de míngzi jiào Mǐfàn, jīnnián 3 suì le. Wǒ hé māma shì 2018 nián 8 yuè 6 rì xīngqī yī xiàwǔ, zài yī gè shāngdiàn de qiánmiàn kàn jiàn Mǐfàn de. Nàtiān tiānqi hěn rè, tā kànqǐlái hěn xiǎng hē shuǐ, wǒ méiyǒu shuǐ, suǒyǐ gěi tā chī le píngguǒ. Tā chī le yī gè píngguǒ, xiǎng zài chī yī gè píngguǒ, suǒyǐ tā gēn wǒmen yīqǐ huíjiā le.

Mǐfàn xǐhuān kàn diànshì, chī shuǐguǒ, yě hěn ài chī mǐfàn. Wǒ bù zài jiā de shíhou, tā xǐhuān shuìjiào. Wǒ zài jiā gōngzuò de shíhou, tā xǐhuān zuò zài zhuōzi shàng kàn wǒ de diànnǎo. Shàng gè xīngqī tiān wǒ hé Mǐfàn qù shāngdiàn mǎi dōngxi, tā rènshi le yī zhī piāoliang de xiǎomāo. Xiànzài tāmen chángchang zài yīqǐ wán.

Mǐfàn shì wǒmen de péngyǒu, wǒmen dōu xǐhuān tā.

Rice

My family has a three-year-old dog named Rice. In the afternoon on Monday, August 6, 2018, my mom and I caught sight of Rice in front of a shop. The weather was quite hot that day and he looked like he really wanted to drink some water. I didn't have any water, so I gave him an apple to eat. After eating the apple, he wanted to eat another, so he came home with us.

Rice likes to watch TV and eat fruit, and he also really loves to eat rice. When I'm not at home, he likes to sleep. When I'm at home, he likes to sit on the table and look at my computer. On Sunday last week, Rice and I went to the store to do some shopping and he met a beautiful little cat. Now, they often play together.

Rice is our friend and we all like him.

Quiz Answer Key:

1. d 2. b 3. c 4. a 5. c

