
Chapter 1. Personal Welfare

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Objectives for the Personal Welfare Module

When you have finished this module, you will be able to:

1. Describe the weather in all four seasons for your present locale, a Chinese city, and your hometown.
2. Describe the location, geographical setting, population, and air quality of the three areas in No. 1.
3. Give the names of five or more items of clothing.
4. Get your hair cut or styled.
5. Describe several items you ordinarily carry with you when traveling.
6. Give the names of and describe the different rooms in a house.
7. Give simple directions to a babysitter.
8. Ask and answer questions about the common cold and its symptoms. Offer advice on what to do for a simple ailment. Understand the use of kǎishuǐ, “boiled water.”
9. Describe what takes place during a visit to the doctor. Know how to give normal body temperature in Celsius and in Fahrenheit. Tell “where it hurts” (using a list of the parts of the body, if necessary.)
10. Describe accidents where injuries occur, and tell someone to call an ambulance.
11. Report the loss of a passport to the appropriate officials. Find out where to go to report the loss and be able to determine whether adequate translation facilities will be available.
12. Use the words for “danger” and “caution” in grammatical, situationally appropriate sentences. Describe how someone entered a restricted area and how and for what reasons he was escorted out.

Unit 1: Weather and Terrain

Reference List

References Notes

References Notes on Part 1

Jīntiān tiānqì hěn hǎo: Notice that the time word jīntiān “today” is placed before the subject, not directly before the verb here. Most time words of more than one syllable may come either before or after the subject, but in either case before the verb. Examples:

Qùnián wǒ hái bú huì xiě zì.

Last year I still couldn't write characters.

Wǒ xiànzài huì xiě yìdiǎn le.

Now I can write a little.

qìhòu: “climate” Also pronounced qìhòu (with hou in the neutral tone).

Dōngtiān hěn lěng.: “it’s cold in winter” The adverb hěn is not translated here. Often hěn adds little or nothing to the intensity of the adjectival verb, and doesn’t need to be translated by “very.” Later, you may notice that sometimes we translate the hěn literally and sometimes we choose to omit it from the translation. It is not a matter of right and wrong; it is more a matter of feeling, and may be, we admit, a somewhat arbitrary decision.

chángcháng: “often, frequently, usually” An alternate form of this word is cháng.

Tā chángcháng qù Xiānggǎng.

She often goes to Hong Kong.

Tā cháng kàn bàozhǐ.

He often reads the newspaper.

The phrase “very often” is NOT formed by using hěn with cháng; instead, Just use cháng or chángcháng. If you must stress that something happens very often, use a phrase like “every few days.”

xià xuě: “to snow” or more literally “(there) falls snow.” The subject xuě “snow” normally follows the verb xià “to descend.” This reversal of subject and verb is the rule, not the exception, in weather expressions.¹

Òu, xià xuě le.

Oh, it’s snowing.

Xià xuě ma? Bu xià.

Is it snowing? No.

Yǒu méiyǒu xià xuě? Méiyǒu.

Is it snowing? No.

Xià xuě le méiyǒu? Méiyǒu.

Is it snowing? No.

Jīntiān xià xuě bu xià xuě?

Is it going to snow today?

Xiànzài bù xià xuě le.

It’s not snowing anymore.

tiān: “heaven, sky, day.”

¹English is no more logical when it comes to weather expressions: it uses the meaningless “it,” as in “it snows.”

Āiya, wǒde tiān na!

Oh my heavens!

Tiān zhīdao!

Heaven only knows!

qíng: “to be clear, to clear up” In the sentence *Tiān qíng le*, the marker *le* tells us that a change has taken place. The meaning is not simply that the sky is clear, but that the sky is clear NOW, or rather, the sky has cleared up.

Unit 2: Clothing

Unit 3: Hair Care

Unit 4: In the Home

Unit 5: Minor Physical Complaints

Unit 6: Accidents and Difficulties

Appendixes

Parts of the body

Medical Conditions and Illnesses

Furniture and Household Items

Parts of the House

Module Vocabulary List