

### 9.10 Stand a little closer

Not all verb combinations are of the same type. One fairly productive pattern combines an action verb with a SV formed in the comparative with yìdiǎnr:

Shuō kuài yìdiǎnr.	Speak a bit faster.
Zhàn jìn yìdiǎnr.	Stand a little closer.
Xiě dà yìdiǎnr.	Write it a bit bigger.
Zǒu màn yìdiǎnr.	Walk a bit more slowly.

#### Usage

- Qǐng bǎ chuānghu dǎkāi.      Open the window, please.  
*Chuānghu kāizhe ne.*      *The window's open.*  
 Nà, bǎ tā kāi dà yìdiǎnr.      Then, open it a bit wider.
- Zǒu kuài yìdiǎnr, hǎo bu hǎo, Walk faster, okay, the train leaves  
 huǒchē wǔ diǎn zhōng kāi.      at 5.  
*Fàngxīn ba, láideji!*      *Don't worry – we'll make it.*

3. Kāi màn yìdiǎnr, hǎo bu hǎo, ānquán dì-yī. Drive more slowly, okay, safety first!

Kuài yìdiǎnr and màn yìdiǎnr may also stand alone in an hortatory function, urging speed or advising care:

Kuài yìdiǎnr, xiàyǔ le. Hurry, it's raining.

Màn yìdiǎnr, lù hěn huá. Slow down, the road's slippery.

### 9.10.1 Getting home

A group of foreigners on a dusty trail near Xuěsōngcūn, a village inhabited by Naxi people, about 25 kms north of Lijiang in northwest Yunnan. A pickup truck appears; they signal to it and inquire:

Jiǎ: Qù chéng lǐ yào jǐ kuài? How much to go into town?

Yī: Qù nǎlǐ? Lìjiāng ma? Where are you going? Lijiang?

Jiǎ: Shì, Lìjiāng. Yes, Lijiang.

Yī: Èrshí kuài. 20 yuan.

Jiǎ: Sān ge rén yìqǐ èrshí kuài ma? 20 for the 3 of us all together?

Yī: Shì. Yes.

Jiǎ: Wǒmen zuò hòumiàn ma? Do we sit in the back?

Yī: Yí ge rén zài qiánmiàn yě kěyǐ. One in the front is okay too.

Jiǎ: Hǎo, wò zuò qiánmiàn. Okay, I'll sit in the front.

Yī: Fúzhù; zuòwěn. Hold on; sit tight!

Jiǎ: Shīfu, kāi màn yìdiǎnr, hǎo bu hǎo; Driver, drive slowly, okay?  
ānquán dì-yī! Safety first!

Yī: Fàngxīn ba! Don't worry!

.....

Jia. Hǎo, sījī, wǒmen zài zhèr xiàchē, Okay, driver, we'll get off here, okay?  
hǎo bu hǎo.

Yǐ: Hǎo, zài dànmén duìmiàn, xíng ma? Okay, opposite the gate, right?

Jia. Hǎo, suíbiàn, nǎlǐ fāngbiàn, nǎlǐ xià. Fine, anywhere, wherever it's convenient.  
Zhè shì èrshíwǔ kuài -- duō gěi nǐ Here's 25 -- [we]'re giving you an extra  
wǔ kuài ba. 5, okay?

Yǐ: Hǎo, màn zǒu! Okay, take it easy!

### Notes

- a) The Naxi homeland is in Northwestern Yunnan, in and around Lijiang. The Nàxīzú (also know as the Moso), speak a Tibeto-Burman language, only very distantly related to Chinese, with its own pictographic script. In China, the Naxi are known for their traditional music.
- b) fūzhù: fū ‘to support with the hand’ plus the verb complement zhù ‘stay’; hold on. Zuòwěn ‘sit’ plus the rarer complement wěn ‘be stable’, ie ‘sit securely’.
- c) ānquán ‘safety’; cf. ānjìng ‘peaceful’. Ānquán dì-yī is a slogan that is often seen at construction sites in China.
- d) fàngxīn ‘put-heart’, ie ‘be at ease’.
- e) sījī ‘driver’; also a term of address for drivers, eg sījī xiānsheng ‘Mr. driver’.
- f) suíbiàn: ‘as you like (follow-inclination)’.
- g) fāngbiàn ‘convenient’. The construction here is parallel to: Xiǎng chī shénme jiù chī shénme ‘Eat whatever you want’. In each case, there are two question words, the second one referencing the first.



Lǐ Lìjiāng bù yuǎn de yí ge lùtiān (‘open air’) shìchǎng (‘market’).

**Exercise 7.**

Provide paraphrases:

1. Hurry up, it's almost time for class.
2. Stand a bit closer, otherwise you won't be able to see.
3. I like it sweet – could you add some sugar please.
4. Would you mind (máfan nǐ 'trouble you to') speaking a bit louder (dàshēng); I can't hear.
5. Write it bigger, please, so I can count (shù) the strokes (bǐhuà).

**9.11 Destination and goal: VERB + dào, zài or gěi**

There is a distinction to be made between combinations that consist, on the one hand, of a main verb and a complement verb (zuòwán, zhǔnbèihǎo) or compound complement (náchūqu, zhànqīlai) and, on the other hand, combinations that consist of a main verb and a complement *phrase* (bān dào xiāngxià qu, wàng zài jiā lǐ). The former elaborates the verbal event in terms of its completion, success or direction, but in other respects, the product remains a verb and can end a sentence or be modified by le: Yíjīng kànwán le. It can also be made potential: zuòbuwán; nádechūlai. Since the combination remains a unitary verb, it is written without a space.

The addition of dào, zài or gěi (all often untoned) to a verb is quite a different matter. It requires a goal to be expressed: a location in the case of the first two (kāi dào ménkǒu; fàng zài wàitou), a person in the case of the third (sòng gěi péngyou). The resulting combinations (kāi dào, fàng zài, sòng gěi, etc.) do not act like unitary verbs. They cannot stand alone; they cannot be further modified by *verb-le* (though *sentence-le* may appear at the foot of the sentence); and they do not permit the insertion of de or bu to form the potential. For this reason, they are written with a space between.

Another feature of the three verbs, dào, zài and gěi, is that they not only follow main verbs to introduce various 'goals', but each can also appear, as it turns out, before their associated verbs as coverbs. The options are as follows:

*Before the verb, as CVs:*

Míngtiān nǐ dǎsuàn <u>dào</u> nǎlǐ qu?	Where do you plan on going tomorrow?
Wǒ <u>gěi</u> nǐ qù zhǎo tā.	I'll go find her for you.
Wǒ fùqīn <u>zài</u> Huádōng Yīyuàn dāng yīsheng.	My father works at Huadong Hospital as a doctor.

*After the verb, as part of phrase complements:*

Tāmen <u>bān dào</u> Pǔdōng qu le.	They've moved to Pudong.
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Bǎ xuēzi fàng zài wàitou, hǎo ma? Put [your] boots outside, okay?

Nǐ de diànnǎo mài gěi shéi le? Who'd you sell your computer to?

It is worthwhile reviewing the criteria which condition these options. Each verb is discussed separately below:

a) Dào.

With destinations expressed, dào may precede the general verbs of motion, lái and qù: dào Běijīng lai; bú dào Shànghǎi qu. However, láidào, and occasionally qùdào, without destinations, may also occur with the meanings 'arrive; get to [here]' and 'arrive; get to [there]':

Tāmen shì zuótiān wǎnshàng láiidào Běijīng de. They arrived [here] in Beijing last night.

Yěxǔ míngtiān xiàwǔ qùdào Shànghǎi. [They're] probably arriving in Shanghai [there] tomorrow afternoon.

With verbs of motion other than lái or qù (bān move; zǒu walk; pǎo run; huí return; ná carry; káng lug; jì 'mail', kāi drive, etc.), dào follows the main verb and introduces the place towards which the motion is directed:

- Wǒmen zuótiān hěn wǎn cái huí dào sùshè <lai>. Jīnbuqù, mén dōu suǒshàng le, ménwèi hái děi ràng wǒmen jìnlái. Yesterday we didn't get back to the dorm till late. [We] couldn't get in, the doors were all locked, [so] the entrance guard had to let us in.
- Qǐng bāng wǒ bǎ zhèi jǐ ge xiāngzi káng dào chēzi lǐ qu. Can you help me lug these trunks into the car?
- Zhèi fēng xìn yào jì dào Xīnjiāpō. I want to send this letter to Singapore.  
*Hángkōng ma?* *Airmail?*  
 Shì. Yes.  
*Yào guàhào ma?* *You want to register it?*  
 Bù. No.  
*Liù kuài wǔ.* ¥6.50.  
 Chāo yìdiǎnr zhòng ma? Is it a little overweight?  
 Shì. Yes.  
 Hǎo, jiù zhèi yàng ba. That's it then.  
 Màn zǒu. Take it easy.



Bǎ xìn fāngzai xìntǒng lǐ! (Shànghǎi 2006)

4. Cóng zhèr zǒu dào Yán'ān Lù  
yěxǔ děi yí ge bàn xiǎoshí.  
Xiāndāng yuǎn!  
Kě bu kěyǐ zuò gōnggòng qìchē?  
Kěyǐ zuò 113 lù chē; zài  
huǒchēzhàn shàng.
- It would probably take an hour and a half to walk from here to Yan'an Road. It's rather far!  
Can one go by bus?  
You can take the number 113 bus; board at the train station.

Notes

ménwèi	N	entrance guard
xiāngzi	N	trunk; case
káng	V	to lift a relatively heavy weight; to lug
hángkōng	N	short for <u>hángkōng yóujiàn</u> 'airmail'
113 lù	N	road; route; 113 <u>hào</u> in Taiwan
guàhào	V	send by registered mail
chāozhòng	VO	to exceed a weight limit; be overweight [for mail, suitcases].

The pattern also applies to more metaphorical destinations, of the sort found with verbs such as xué 'study', děng 'wait', or kàn 'read':

5. Nǐmen xué dào dì-jǐ kè?  
Dì-bā kè gāng xuéwán, xiànzài  
zài xué dì-jiǔ kè.
- Which lesson are you on now?  
We just finished lesson 8, now we're on lesson 9.
6. Wǒ děng tā děng dào qī diǎn duō  
zhōng, dànshì tā méi lái.  
Tā kěnéng gǎocuò shíjiān le.
- I waited for her until after 7, but she didn't show up.  
She might have got the time wrong.

As noted in Unit 8, dào can also function as the second element in a verb combo, rather like wán. In such cases, there is no destination, and like other verb combos, the verbs are written as a unit, without a space:

Shuōdào, zuòdào.                      Saying is doing.

Mǎibudào.                              It can't be bought [here].

b) Zài

With zài, there are actually three options. The location can be indicated by zài before the verb (functioning as a CV):

Tāmen zǎochén zài gōngyuán      They do an hour's taiji in the park in  
dǎ yí ge zhōngtōu de tàijiquán.      the morning.  
*Zǎochén, kōngqì bǐjiǎo hǎo!*      *In the morning, the air's better!*

2008 nián de Àoyùnhuì zài      The 2008 Games are being held in Beijing!  
Běijīng jǔxíng!                      *You can get a job there as a translator.*  
*Nǐ kěyǐ zài nàr zhǎo gōngzuò,*  
*dāng fānyì.*

However, in cases where the location can be interpreted as a place where something or someone ends up, then the *zai-phrase* usually follows the verb:

1. Zuò zài zhèr ba.                      Sit here.  
*Méi guānxi, zhàn-zhe hǎo.*      *It's okay, I'm fine standing.*
2. Xià yì bān chē zǎoshàng 7:30 cái      The next bus isn't until 7:30 in the  
zǒu, wǒmen shuì zài chēzhàn, hǎo      morning; why don't we sleep in the  
bu hǎo?                                  bus station?  
  
*Shuì zài chēzhàn, zài Zhōngguó      In China, you can't sleep in the station;*  
*bù xíng, yèlǐ bǎ mén suǒshàng. Zhèr      at night they lock the doors. There ought to*  
*fùjìn yīnggāi yǒu ge zhāodàisuǒ      to be a guest house round here where we*  
*wǒmen kěyǐ zhù.                              could stay.*
3. Xínglǐ fāng zài xínglǐjià shàng, hǎo      Put your luggage in the luggage rack, okay?  
bu hǎo?  
  
*Hǎo, xiǎoxīn ba, bù néng yā.              Fine; be careful, it's fragile. ('not press')*

Finally, with a number of verbs, the location can be placed before (in 'coverb' position) or after (as a locative complement), with only slight nuance of difference. The

best known examples are shēng ‘be born’, zhǎng ‘be raised’ and zhù ‘live’:

Wǒ shēng zài Bèilǚtè, zhǎng zài Kāiluó, kěshi xiànzài zhù zài Luómǎ.

Wǒ shì zài Bèilǚtè shēng de, zài Kāiluó zhǎngdà de, xiànzài zài Luómǎ zhù.

But the option is also available to other verbs. Xiě ‘write’ illustrates the general distinction of destination ‘where it ends up’ versus location ‘where it takes place’:

<i>dest'n</i>	Bǎ míngzi xiě zài biǎo shàng de dì-yī háng.	Write your name on the first line of the form.
<i>loc'n</i>	Zài túshūguǎn xiěxìn shūfu yìdiǎnr, yǒu kōngtiáo.	It's more comfortable writing letters in the library; it's airconditioned.

### c) Gěi.

*i. As a full verb*

Gěi is one of a relatively small number of transactional verbs in Chinese, such as jiāo ‘teach’, tuō ‘entrust’, and sòng ‘present’, that allow two objects to be expressed – the recipient and the item ‘transacted’:

*V-person-thing*

gěi tāmen ge jìniànpǐn	give them a souvenir
jiāo tā Zhōngwén	teach him Chinese
tuō nǐ yíjiàn shì	entrust you [with] something
sòng tā yí ge lǐwù	present her with a gift

### Examples

- Wǒ zài jiāo háizimen Zhōngwén. I'm teaching the children Chinese.  
*O, nǐ yòng shénme jiàocái?* Oh, what teaching materials are you using?  
 Yòng wǒ zìjǐ xiě de dōngxì. I'm using ones that I wrote myself.  
*O, zìjǐ xiě de, zhēn liǎobuqǐ!* Gosh, ones you wrote yourself – amazing!
- Tuō nǐ yí jiàn shì. [I'd like to] ask you a favor.  
*E, méi guānxi, shuō ba!* Hey, no problem, ask!
- Tā míngtiān yào zǒu. Wǒmen She's leaving tomorrow. We should  
 yīnggāi sòng tā yí ge jìniànpǐn. present her with a souvenir.  
*Qǐng tā chūqu chī yí dùn fàn,* How about inviting her out for a meal?  
*hǎo bu hǎo? Mǎi dōngxì gěi rén tài* It's so difficult buying things for people.  
*bù róngyì!*



## ii. Following a verb: V-gei

Transactional verbs other than gěi itself require the mediation of gěi before the person. For example, while English says ‘sell him a car’, Chinese has to say ‘sell-give him a car’. Some of these verbs are listed here:

mài gěi	jiè gěi	jì gěi	huán gěi	jiāo gěi	sòng <gěi>	ná gěi	dài gěi
sell to	lend to	send to	return to	hand over to	deliver to	take to	bring to

bǎ chē mài gěi tā	sell him a car
bǎ xìn jì gěi tā	mail her a letter
bǎ shū huán gěi tā	give the book back to him
bǎ shū jiè gěi tā	lend books to her
bǎ gōngkè jiāo gěi lǎoshī	hand the homework in to the teacher
sòng gěi tā yí jiàn chènshān	give him a shirt
bǎ shǒujī ná gěi tā	bring the cellphone to her

## Usage

4. Wǒ yǐqián jiè gěi tā yìbǎi kuài qián, tā hái méi huán gěi wǒ ne. I lent him \$100 earlier; he hasn't returned it to me yet.
- Wǒ kěyǐ tíxǐng tā, tā kěnéng wàng le. I'll remind him – he might have forgotten.
5. Nǐmen xiān bǎ zuòyè jiāo gěi wǒ. First hand in your homework [to me].
- Lǎoshī, wǒ méi dài lai, míngtiān zài jiāo, xíng bu xíng? Sir, I didn't bring it, can I hand it in tomorrow?
- Hǎo, míngtiān jiāo gěi wǒ. Okay, give it to me tomorrow.

## iii. Before the verb (as a coverb): gěi...V

Used before the verb, as a ‘coverb’, gěi introduces the person who benefits from the action:

gěi nǐ jièshào jièshào tā	introduce her for [the benefit of] you
gěi nǐ mǎi cài	buy some food for [the benefit of] you
gěi nǐ dǎ ge diànhuà	make a phone-call for [the benefit of] you
gěi nǐ xiěxìn	write a letter for [the benefit of] you

## iv. After a verb with its object: VO gěi tā

Gěi sometimes appears as a second verb after the main verb + object to introduce the recipient

V	O	V O	
dǎ ge	diànhuà	gěi nǐ	make a phone call to you
xiě	xìn	gěi nǐ	write a letter to you
mǎi ge	túzhāng	gěi tā	buy a seal to give to him

Function iv (VO gěi tā) is more or less synonymous with function iii (gěi...V):

*as coverb*

*as the 2<sup>nd</sup> verb in a series*

gěi nǐ dǎ ge diànhuà	~	dǎ ge diànhuà gěi nǐ
gěi nǐ xiěxìn	~	xiěxìn gěi nǐ

**Exercise 8.**

*Provide Chinese paraphrases:*

1. Can you help me take these books up to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor?
  2. Who's the letter to? / It's to my parents.
  3. Phone me before you leave, okay?
  4. I waited until 10 pm before leaving.
  5. Put your boots outside please.
  6. I shop for her and she cooks for me.
  7. Let's give him a stone seal.
  8. I lent him my Mongolian hat, and he still hasn't returned it!
  9. Write your name on the back of the envelope (xìnfēng).
  10. Let's buy him a padded jacket (mián'ǎo).
  11. Who'd you sell your car to?
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