WillyChina

RESOURCE · NO.19

MANDARIN CHINESE · HSK 3.0 · STUDY PLANNER

# HSK 3.0 Timeline Planner

Plan your route to any level of the new HSK: how long each level takes, the 2027 exam dates and registration deadlines, and a plan you fill in yourself.

| 6 | 11 | 1 |
|---|---|---|
| LEVELS | 2027 HSK DATES | YOUR PLAN |
| Words and timelines | With deadlines | Fill it in |

**A WillyChina study planner.**

Times are our estimates; CTI publishes none.

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# The six levels, and how long each takes

| Level | Words in total | New words | Time at this level | From zero | Study hours |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Level 1** | 300 | 300 | 4–5 months | ~4–5 months | 70–100 |
| **Level 2** | 500 | 200 | 2–3 months | ~6–8 months | 110–150 |
| **Level 3** | 1,000 | 500 | 4–5 months | ~10–13 months | 180–250 |
| **Level 4** | 2,000 | 1,000 | 7–10 months | ~17–23 months | 300–450 |
| **Level 5** | 3,600 | 1,600 | 9–12 months | ~2–3 years | 450–700 |
| **Level 6** | 5,400 | 1,800 | 12–18 months | ~3–4.5 years | 650–1,000 |

Times and hours assume 25–30 minutes of study a day plus a weekly live lesson, about four hours a week. They are WillyChina estimates: Chinese Testing International (CTI), which runs the HSK, publishes no official study times for the new levels. Word counts are from the official HSK syllabus, published by the Center for Language Education and Cooperation (November 2025).

## Change the pace, change the calendar

**15 minutes a day**
plus a weekly lesson: about one and a half times the times above

**25–30 minutes a day**
plus a weekly lesson: the times above

**1 hour a day**
plus a weekly lesson: about half the times above

## What the exam asks at each level

- Levels 1 and 2: pinyin is printed over the Chinese on the paper (CTI sample papers).
- From Level 2: a writing section.
- From Level 3: no pinyin printed over the Chinese on the paper. In CTI's trial exams, Levels 3 to 6 were booked together with a speaking test.

# HSK 3.0 test dates and registration deadlines

| Test date | Paper test: register by | Computer test: register by |
|---|---|---|
| **Sunday 13 December 2026** | 16 November 2026 (Sydney HSK Centre; Canberra 13 November) | — |
| **Saturday 9 January 2027** | 13 December 2026 | 30 December 2026 |
| **Sunday 14 March 2027** | 15 February 2027 | 4 March 2027 |
| **Saturday 10 April 2027** | 14 March 2027 | 31 March 2027 |
| **Sunday 16 May 2027** | 19 April 2027 | 6 May 2027 |
| **Saturday 26 June 2027** | 30 May 2027 | 16 June 2027 |
| **Sunday 18 July 2027** | 21 June 2027 | 8 July 2027 |
| **Saturday 21 August 2027** | 25 July 2027 | 11 August 2027 |
| **Sunday 12 September 2027** | 16 August 2027 | 2 September 2027 |
| **Saturday 16 October 2027** | 19 September 2027 | 6 October 2027 |
| **Sunday 7 November 2027** | 11 October 2027 | 28 October 2027 |
| **Saturday 11 December 2027** | 14 November 2027 | 1 December 2027 |

13 December 2026 is the first HSK 3.0 sitting; the deadline shown is the Sydney HSK Centre's, with Canberra's in brackets. The 2027 dates and deadlines are from CTI's 2027 calendar for HSK levels 1 to 6 and the HSK speaking test. Each test centre chooses which dates it runs and may close registration earlier, so check your centre's listing on chinesetest.cn before you plan around a date.

# My HSK plan

The level I want _____

Where I am now _____

Study time each day _____

I start on _____

Months I need (from page 2) _____

I'll be ready by _____

My target sitting _____

Registration closes _____

My test centre _____

## Milestones

- [ ] A quarter of the word list
- [ ] Half of the word list
- [ ] Three quarters of the word list
- [ ] The whole word list
- [ ] Registered for the exam
- [ ] A full practice test, timed
- [ ] The final month: rehearse, no new words
- [ ] Exam day

## My week

| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |

# Make the hours count

### Speak every week, with correction.

Vocabulary sticks when you use it under pressure. In our teaching, learners who speak weekly with correction outpace flashcard-only study.

### Read something tiny every day.

From Level 3 the paper no longer prints pinyin over the Chinese, so reading speed becomes study time. Start reading characters from month one.

### Shrink the unit until it's unmissable.

Twenty honest minutes a day beats a two-hour Sunday that quietly becomes zero.

### Move to output when recognition outruns recall.

If you know far more words than you can use, put half your study time into speaking and writing.

### Rehearse in the final month.

Switch from learning to practice papers, review your mistakes, and add no new words in the last week.



FROM THE WILLYCHINA RESOURCE LIBRARY

# Want a teacher to plan it with you?

One-to-one HSK preparation, online and live, planned back from your exam date. Every student starts with a free 30-minute intro call to set a realistic level and target date.

**See HSK preparation lessons**

## MORE HSK RESOURCES FROM WILLYCHINA

**01**
**Free HSK 1 Mock Test**
willychina.com/resources/hsk-1-mock-test

**02**
**Free Level Test**
willychina.com/mandarin-level-test

**03**
**HSK 3.0 Band 1 Word List**
willychina.com/resources/hsk-3-0-band-1-word-list

Word counts: official HSK syllabus (CLEC, November 2025) · dates: CTI 2027 calendar · times: WillyChina estimates