**Placement of time words in a sentence**

Time words, the WHEN part of a sentence, have a special place in Chinese. They usually come at the beginning of a sentence, right after the subject. Occasionally you'll see them before the subject, but the place you *won't* be seeing them is at the *end* of the sentence (where they frequently appear in English).

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| Placement of Time Words |
| **Subject** | **Time when** | **Verb phrase** |  |
| 我 | 今天 | 工作 | 。 |
| 你们 | 每天 | 洗澡 | 。 |
| 他 | 星期二 | 来 | 。 |

**Placement of place words in a sentence**

When you want to tell WHERE something happened in Chinese (at school, at work, in Vegas, on the bus, etc.), you're most often going to use a phrase beginning with 在. This phrase needs to come after the time word (see above) and *before the verb*. Pay attention to this last part: *before the verb*. In English, this information naturally comes *after* the verb, so it's going to be difficult at first to get used to saying WHERE something happened *before* saying the verb.

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| Placement of place words |
| **Subject** | **Time when** | **Place word** | **Verb phrase** |  |
| 我 |  | 在 上海 | 工作 | 。 |
| 你们 | 星期六 | 在 家 | 看 电影 | 。 |
| 她 | 1980年 | 在 美国 | 出生 | 。 |

### Mnemonic Trick

One way to remember the word order in Chinese is the order in which things have to happen. For example, time has to pass before you can be at a place, so that goes first. You have to be at a place before you can do anything there, so the location comes before the verb.