

만

only, just

Cuts everything else out of the picture. One form for every noun, and it sits in the same slot as 도 — the two are exact opposites.

■ How it attaches

Situation	Form	Example
Any noun	만 — no change	저만 / 물만
Replaces 이/가	or keeps it	저만 / 저만이 (formal)
Replaces 을/를	or keeps it	물만 / 물만을 (written)
After 예, 에서, 한 테	stacks on	집에서만
With numbers	just, merely	하나만 주세요
Never with 은/는, 도	one or the other	저만 — not 저는만, not 저도만

■ Notes

만 restricts. 물만 주세요 asks for water and nothing else. Unlike 도, it needs no earlier context — you can open a conversation with it.

It usually pushes out 이/가 and 을/를, but unlike 도 it can also keep them: 물만을 마셨어요 is grammatical, more emphatic, and mostly confined to writing. In speech, drop them.

Two things share the shape but are not this particle. -기만 하다 means "do nothing but," and 한 시간 만에 means "after an interval of an hour." Neither means "only" in the sense here.

■ Examples

- 1 **저는 물만 마셔요.**
I drink only water.
- 2 **한 사람만 왔어요.**
Only one person came.
- 3 **주말에만 운동해요.**
I only exercise at the weekend.
- 4 **동생은 게임만 해요.**
My younger sibling does nothing but play games.
- 5 **이것만 주세요.**
Just this one, please.
- 6 **십 분만 기다려 주세요.**
Please wait just ten minutes.

■ Compared with

도

Same slot, opposite job. 도 folds the noun in with everything else; 만 cuts everything else away. Swapping one for the other reverses the meaning without touching the rest of the sentence.

저도 갈게요. (I'll go too) / 저만 갈게요. (only I will go)

밖에

밖에 also means "only," but it demands a negative verb and carries a note of regret — the amount is less than hoped. 만 is neutral.

물만 있어요. (there is water, and that is what we have) / 물밖에 없어요. (there is nothing but water — not enough)

-기만 하다

Attached to a verb stem rather than a noun, this means the subject does one thing and nothing more, often with a hint of complaint.

동생은 먹기만 해요. (my brother does nothing but eat) / 밥만 먹어요. (I eat only rice)

■ Watch out

✗ 저는만 갈게요.

○ 저만 갈게요.

만 cannot combine with 은/는 or 도. Pick one. It does stack after 예, 에서, and 한테.

✗ 물만 없어요.

○ 물밖에 없어요.

If you mean "there is nothing but water," use 밖에 with a negative. 물만 없어요 says the opposite: water is the one thing missing.

✗ 한 시간만에 끝났어요.

○ 한 시간 만에 끝났어요.

This 만 is a different word meaning "after an interval of," and it is written with a space. The particle 만 attaches directly with no space.