Xiamen Airlines orders 50 Boeing 737-8 jets

LEVEL B1



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I. WARM-UP

1. What airlines do you know from your region?
2. Why might an airline choose one aircraft model over another?
3. Have you ever flown on a brand-new plane? How was it?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

subsidiary
a company controlled by a larger company

discount
a lower price than the usual price

delivery
the act of bringing goods that have been bought

approval
official permission to do something

commitment
a promise to do something important

summit
a high-level meeting between leaders

fleet
all the planes, ships, or vehicles a company owns

hub
a main centre for transport activity

III. READING

China Southern Airlines says its subsidiary Xiamen Airlines has placed an order for 50 Boeing 737-8 aircraft. The list price is about $7.4bn, but the filing says Boeing offered a significant discount, which is common for large orders.

Boeing has not won a major order from China in almost a decade, so this deal is notable. The planes are scheduled for delivery in batches from 2031 to 2034. The agreement still needs approval from Xiamen Airlines' shareholders and from Chinese government authorities.

The order follows a wider commitment for 200 jets announced during a summit in Beijing in May, although the filing does not say whether this purchase is part of that.

China Southern says the order will support Xiamen Airlines' move to the new Xiamen Xiang'an international airport, help build an aviation hub in Fujian province and optimise its fleet. In April, China Southern and Xiamen also agreed to buy 137 Airbus A320neo family aircraft.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **Al Jazeera***: "China Southern Airlines unit to buy 50 Boeing...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which company is buying the 50 Boeing 737-8 planes?
2. What is the list price, and what lowers the cost?
3. When are the aircraft planned for delivery?
4. What approvals are still required before the deal goes ahead?
5. How will the order help Xiamen Airlines, according to China Southern?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Why might an airline split deliveries over several years?
2. What factors can influence an airline's choice of aircraft model?
3. How can a new airport change travel in a region?
4. Are big discounts on bulk orders fair to smaller buyers?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Present perfect vs past simple

Present perfect: have/has + past participle for time up to now (since/for, so far, over the last...). Past simple: verb-ed/did for a finished past time (in May, in 2023).

*"Boeing **has not won** a major order from China in almost a decade."*

*"The filing says Boeing **offered** a significant discount."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete the sentences: use present perfect or past simple.

1. In April, the airlines (agree) ___ to buy 137 Airbus A320neos. _____
2. So far, the agreement (not/receive) ___ all required approvals. _____
3. In May, a wider commitment for 200 jets (be) ___ announced. _____
4. So far, the filing (not/say) ___ if this purchase is part of that. _____
5. Over the last decade, this kind of deal (be) ___ rare. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.



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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10–12 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach or check: subsidiary, discount, delivery, approval, commitment, summit, fleet, hub. Use the reading to give simple examples.
- Run the reading once for gist (who, what, numbers), then again for details (dates, conditions). This topic touches business strategy; if views differ, keep the focus on operations and costs, not politics.
- Differentiation: stronger students summarise each paragraph in one sentence; others underline dates, numbers and conditions before answering questions.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Elicit ideas like cash flow and training, then ask for pros and cons of long schedules.
2. Prompt fuel use, price, range, and maintenance; ask for an example route to justify a choice.
3. Put students in pairs to name two local changes (new routes, jobs), then share with the class.
4. Take a quick show of hands, then swap sides: each group argues the opposite view for 1 minute.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, draft a 70-word press note from Xiamen Airlines announcing the order, including delivery dates and required approvals.

Role-play: Simulate a fleet meeting: one team argues for Boeing 737-8, another for Airbus A320neo, to support the Fujian hub plan; each gives a 3-minute pitch using facts from the text.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Present perfect vs past simple

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which company is buying the 50 Boeing 737-8 planes?
   Xiamen Airlines, a subsidiary of China Southern Airlines.
2. What is the list price, and what lowers the cost?
   About $7.4bn, and a significant discount lowers the cost.
3. When are the aircraft planned for delivery?
   Between 2031 and 2034, in batches.
4. What approvals are still required before the deal goes ahead?
   Approval from shareholders and Chinese government authorities.
5. How will the order help Xiamen Airlines, according to China Southern?
   It will support the move to Xiang'an airport, build a hub and optimise the fleet.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Present perfect: have/has + past participle for time up to now (since/for, so far, over the last...). Past simple: verb-ed/did for a finished past time (in May, in 2023).

> *"Boeing **has not won** a major order from China in almost a decade."*
>
> *"The filing says Boeing **offered** a significant discount."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete the sentences: use present perfect or past simple.

1. In April, the airlines ___ to buy 137 Airbus A320neos. **agreed**
2. So far, the agreement ___ all required approvals. **has not received / has not received / hasn't received**
3. In May, a wider commitment for 200 jets ___ announced. **was**
4. So far, the filing ___ if this purchase is part of that. **has not said / hasn't said**
5. Over the last decade, this kind of deal ___ rare. **has been**