

HSK 4 Grammar 21: Conditional statements

HSK 4 只要/只有/除非, taught from the reviewed topic handout; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Enough versus the only way

只要 says one thing is enough; 只有 / 除非 name the one thing that must happen — and the partner word carries the difference.

只要 ... 就 ...: the loose-lock door

One key-turn is enough

只要你努力学习，就会有进步。(Zhǐyào nǐ nǔlì xuéxí, jiù huì yǒu jìnbù.) — As long as you study hard, you'll make progress.

只要一下雨，她心情就不好。(Zhǐyào yíxià yǔ, tā xīnqíng jiù bù hǎo.) — Whenever it rains, she's in a bad mood.

只有 ... 才 ...: the one-key door

Pattern	Meaning	Partner	Feel
只要 ... 就 ...	“As long as” — A is enough	就	The door is easy
只有 ... 才 ...	“Only if” — A is the only way	才	The door is strict

Try it: the promise and the dare

- 1 **The promise** 只要你说，我就帮你。(Zhǐyào nǐ shuō, wǒ jiù bāng nǐ.) — As long as you ask, I'll help.
- 2 **Feel the rhythm** The 只要 ... 就 pair carries the promise; say it aloud.
- 3 **The playful condition** 除非下大雨，否则我们明天都去爬山。(Chúfēi xià dà yǔ, fǒuzé wǒmen míngtiān dōu qù páshān.) — Unless it pours, we're all hiking tomorrow.
- 4 **Check the pairing** 只要 takes 就; 除非 here pairs with 否则 — and with 才 it takes the good outcome.

Decision

One promise, one dare — both condition patterns in your own voice.

除非: the one exception, two directions

除非 ... 才 ... — toward the good
outcome

除非老板给我加薪，我才会留下来。
(Chúfēi lǎobǎn gěi wǒ jiāxīn, wǒ cái huì
liú xiàlái.) — Only if the boss gives me
a raise will I stay.

除非 ... 否则 ... — away from the bad
one

我不去，除非你也去，否则我自己在家
待着。 — I won't go unless you come;
otherwise I'll stay home.

Check yourself

Your turn

Which pair is right? (1) 只要 takes which partner? (2) 除非 ... 否则 ... points to which kind of outcome?

- A. 才; the good outcome
- B. 就; the bad outcome
- C. 就; the good outcome
- D. 才; the bad outcome