

Adverbs with Adjectives

Ref Hsk3 Grammar

这么 / 那么 + 形容词—”so …, this / that …”

Put **这么** or **那么** in front of an adjective to dial its degree up —English ”so, this much, that much.” The split mirrors English **this** vs **that**: **这么** points to something **near or happening right now** (”*this* cold”); **那么** points to something **further off or already mentioned** (”*that* clever”).

Structure: Subject + 这么 / 那么 + Adjective

{zh: 今天 |jīn tiān|today / 怎么 |zěn me|how come / 这么 |zhè me|so / 冷 |lěng|cold / ? }
}

Why is it so cold today?

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 那么 |nà me|so / 聪明 |cōng míng|clever / , 一定 |yí dìng|surely / 能 |néng|can / 猜到 |cāi dào|guess it / 。 }

You're so clever —you'll definitely guess it.

Remember: 这 = **here** / **now**, 那 = **there** / **then**; the 么 turns ”this/that” into ”*this much / that much*.” Same split as English this/that.

Watch out

- Both translate as ”so,” but keep the near/far feel: 这么 for what’s in front of you, 那么 for what’s removed.
- Very common after 怎么 for a surprised ”how come it’s so …?”: 怎么这么贵.

A + 跟 / 和 + B + 一样—”the same as, as …as”

To say two things are **alike**, link them with **跟** (or **和**) and **一样**—literally ”one same (shape).” Add an adjective on the end and you get ”equally …, as …as.”

Structure: Noun 1 + 跟 / 和 + Noun 2 + 一样 (+ Adjective)

{zh: 你家 |nǐ jiā|your home / 跟 |gēn|as / 我家 |wǒ jiā|my home / 一样 |yí yàng|the same / 大 |dà|big / 。 }

Your place is just as big as mine.

{zh: 北京 |Běi jīng|Beijing / 的 |de / 天气 |tiān qì|weather / 和 |hé|and / 上海 |Shàng hǎi|Shanghai / 不 |bù|not / 一样 |yí yàng|the same / 。 }

Beijing's weather isn't the same as Shanghai's.

Remember: 一样 = ”one-same” —cut from the same cloth. The adjective rides **after** 一样 (一样大 = ”equally big”), and 不 to negate goes **before** it (不一样).

Watch out

- Word order traps English speakers: it's ...一样大, never 大一样.
- 跟 and 和 are interchangeable here; 跟 is more spoken, 和 a touch more neutral.

又…又…—”both …and …”

The frame 又…又… stacks two qualities that hold **at the same time** —”both …and ….” The one rule: the two adjectives must share the **same feeling** —both positive, or both negative. Mixing a plus and a minus jars the Chinese ear.

Structure: Subject + 又 + Adjective 1 + 又 + Adjective 2

{zh: 这个 |zhè ge|this / 房子 |fáng zi|house / 又 |yòu|both / 大 |dà|big / 又 |yòu|and / 亮 |liàng|bright / 。 }

This house is both big and bright.

{zh: 这里 |zhè lǐ|here / 的 |de / 咖啡 |kā fēi|coffee / 又 |yòu|both / 贵 |guì|expensive / 又 |yòu|and / 难喝 |nán hē|bad-tasting / 。 }

The coffee here is both pricey and nasty.

Remember: both 又’s must **point the same way** —又便宜又好 (both plus), 又贵又难喝 (both minus), but not 又贵又好 (mixed).

Watch out

- For two simultaneous *actions* rather than qualities, use 一边…一边…instead.

比较 + 形容词—”fairly, rather, relatively”

比较 literally means ”to compare,” and as an adverb it means ”fairly, rather, comparatively.” It’s a **gentle hedge** —softer and less absolute than 很 or 非常—and it quietly implies ”more so than the rest,” even when nothing else is named.

Structure: Subject + 比较 + Adjective (also 比较 + feeling-verb)

{zh: 这个 |zhè ge|this / 问题 |wèn tí|question / 比较 |bǐ jiào|fairly / 简单 |jiǎn dān|simple / 。 }

This question is fairly simple.

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 比较 |bǐ jiào|rather / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|prefer / 坐 |zuò|taking / 地铁 |dì tiě|the subway / 。 }

I rather prefer taking the subway.

Remember: 比较 has ”compare” (比) baked in —it always whispers ”relatively, compared to the alternatives.” Use it to sound measured, not gushing.

Watch out

- Works with feeling-verbs too: 比较喜欢, 比较讨厌.

多 + 形容词—”how …!” (exclamation)

In an exclamation, 多 (or 多么) before an adjective means ”how …!, so …!” —a quick, emotional burst of admiration or complaint. It usually closes with 啊.

Structure: Subject + 多 + Adjective + 啊!

{zh: 你 |nǐ|your / 女儿 |nǚ ér|daughter / 多 |duō|how / 聪明 |cōng ming|clever / 啊 |a / ! }

How clever your daughter is!

{zh: 一个人 |yí ge rén|on your own / 多 |duō|how / 好 |hǎo|nice / ! }

How nice it is to have the place to yourself!

Remember: the same 多 that asks about degree —你多大? (”how old?”) —also exclaims it: 多大啊! (”how big!”). The 啊 and the ”!” are the tell.

Watch out

- It’s an exclamation —pair it with 啊 and a ”!”.

形容词 + 的 + 名词—describing a noun

To stick an adjective in front of a noun, glue them together with 的—Chinese’s all-purpose ”of / ’s” link. English just lines the words up (”a beautiful girl”); Chinese threads 的 between them.

Structure: Adjective + 的 + Noun

{zh: 漂亮 |piào liang|beautiful / 的 |de / 女孩儿 |nǚ hái er|girl}

a beautiful girl

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 要 |yào|want / 冷 |lěng|cold / 的 |de / 还是 |hái shì|or / 热 |rè|hot / 的 |de / ? }

Do you want a cold one or a hot one?

Remember: 的 clips an adjective onto a noun. A **two-syllable** adjective almost always needs it (漂亮的女孩); a tight one-syllable pairing can drop it (好朋友, ”good friend”).

Watch out

- Adj + 的 can stand alone for ”the …one(s)”: 我要甜的 (”I’ll have the sweet one”).