

Complex Sentence Patterns

HSK 3 Grammar

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

除了 ... 都 / 还 (except / besides)

■ An exception differs from an addition

- All classmates arrived except one, and a multilingual student speaks English as well as Chinese.
- 除了他，大家都来了。除了中文，她还会英文。 – 都 helps mark the exception; 还 helps mark the additional skill.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 除了 ... 都 / 还 (except / besides). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

除了他，大家都来了。

chú le tā dà jiā dōu lái le

Word guide: 除了 – except; 他 – him; 大家 – everyone; 都 – all; 来 – come.

■ Read examples in context

除了中文，他还会英文。

chú le Zhōng wén tā hái huì Yīng wén

Word guide: 除了 – besides; 中文 – Chinese; 他 – he; 还 – also; 会 – can; 英文 – English.

- In the opening example, 除了他，大家都来了。除了中文，她还会英文。: 都 helps mark the exception; 还 helps mark the additional skill.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- Read the whole predicate and context instead of treating a single partner word as an infallible switch.
- The first sentence excludes him from the arrival claim; the second includes both skills.

■ Use the distinction

- 都 helps mark the exception; 还 helps mark the additional skill.
- Read the whole predicate and context instead of treating a single partner word as an infallible switch. The first sentence excludes him from the arrival claim; the second includes both skills.

■ Try it with help closed

All classmates arrived except one, and a multilingual student speaks English as well as Chinese. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 除了他，大家都来了。除了中文，她还会英文。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Read the whole predicate and context instead of treating a single partner word as an infallible switch.
- The first sentence excludes him from the arrival claim; the second includes both skills.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

如果 ... 的话 (if ...)

■ An invitation depends on free time

- A friend invites you to come if you are available.
- 如果有时间的话，就来吧。 – 的话 closes the stated condition before the invitation.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 如果 ... 的话 (if ...). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

如果有时间的话，就来吧。

rú guǒ yǒu shí jiān de huà jiù lái ba

Word guide: 如果 – if; 有 – have; 时间 – time; 的话 – (if); 就 – then; 来 – come.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 如果有时间的话，就来吧。: 的话 closes the stated condition before the invitation.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 如果有时间，就来吧 is also natural.
- 的话 is optional in this frame; it does not guarantee a polite tone regardless of the rest of the sentence.

■ Use the distinction

- 的话 closes the stated condition before the invitation.
- 如果有时间，就来吧 is also natural. 的话 is optional in this frame; it does not guarantee a polite tone regardless of the rest of the sentence.

■ Try it with help closed

A friend invites you to come if you are available. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 如果有时间的话，就来吧。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 如果有时间，就来吧 is also natural.
- 的话 is optional in this frame; it does not guarantee a polite tone regardless of the rest of the sentence.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

如果 ... , 就 ... (if ..., then ...)

■ A backup plan depends on rain

- The group plans not to go outside if it rains.
- 如果下雨，我们就不去。 – Rain is the condition; not going is the planned consequence.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 如果 ... , 就 ... (if ..., then ...). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

如果下雨，就不去。

rú guǒ xià yǔ jiù bù qù

Word guide: 如果 – if; 下雨 – rain; 就 – then; 不 – not; 去 – go.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 如果下雨, 我们就不去。: Rain is the condition; not going is the planned consequence.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 如果下雨, 我们不去 is also possible.
- 就 often makes the condition-result link explicit, but is not compulsory in every 如果 sentence. No rain has been asserted yet.

■ Use the distinction

- Rain is the condition; not going is the planned consequence.
- 如果下雨, 我们不去 is also possible. 就 often makes the condition-result link explicit, but is not compulsory in every 如果 sentence. No rain has been asserted yet.

■ Try it with help closed

The group plans not to go outside if it rains. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 如果下雨, 我们就不去。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
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Practise this pattern step by step.

不但 ... , 而且 ... (not only ... but also)

■ Two points can concern different people

- You describe a household in which both siblings can speak Chinese.
- 不但哥哥会中文, 而且妹妹也会。 – The second clause adds the sister's ability to the brother's.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **不但 ... , 而且 ... (not only ... but also)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

这个菜不但便宜，而且好吃。

zhè ge cài bú dàn pián yì ér qiě hǎo chī

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 菜 – dish; 不但 – not only; 便宜 – cheap; 而且 – but also; 好吃 – tasty.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **不但哥哥会中文，而且妹妹也会。** : The second clause adds the sister's ability to the brother's.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- Place 不但 before the first subject when the subjects differ.
- With a shared subject, 他不但会中文，而且会英文 is natural. The frame need not always describe only one subject.

■ Use the distinction

- The second clause adds the sister's ability to the brother's.
- Place 不但 before the first subject when the subjects differ. With a shared subject, 他不但会中文，而且会英文 is natural. The frame need not always describe only one subject.

■ Try it with help closed

You describe a household in which both siblings can speak Chinese. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 不但哥哥会中文，而且妹妹也会。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Place 不但 before the first subject when the subjects differ.
- With a shared subject, 他不但会中文，而且会英文 is natural. The frame need not always describe only one subject.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.