

HSK 3 Grammar

Chinese grammar · bilingual edition

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1 Adjectives

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.

1.1 ■ Adjective + 极了 (extremely)

1.1.1 A trip receives an enthusiastic review

- A friend asks whether you enjoyed the holiday.
- **这次旅行棒极了!** – The speaker gives a very strong positive evaluation.

1.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Adjective + 极了 (extremely)**. 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.

这个主意好极了。

zhè ge zhǔ yì hǎo jí le

Word guide: 这个 – this; 主意 – idea; 好 – good; 极了 – extremely.

1.1.3 Read examples in context

那个男孩讨厌极了!

nà ge nán hái tǎo yàn jí le

Word guide: 那个 – that; 男孩 – boy; 讨厌 – annoying; 极了 – extremely.

- In the opening example, **这次旅行棒极了!**: The speaker gives a very strong positive evaluation.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

1.1.4 Know the boundary

- 极了 follows an appropriate descriptive word and includes 了 as part of this frame.
- It can describe unpleasant feelings too, but not every adjective has a natural 极了 combination.

1.1.5 Use the distinction

- The speaker gives a very strong positive evaluation.
- 极了 follows an appropriate descriptive word and includes 了 as part of this frame. It can describe unpleasant feelings too, but not every adjective has a natural 极了 combination.

1.1.6 Try it with help closed

A friend asks whether you enjoyed the holiday. 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: 这次旅行棒极了!

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 极了 follows an appropriate descriptive word and includes 了 as part of this frame.
- It can describe unpleasant feelings too, but not every adjective has a natural 极了 combination.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.2 ■ Doubling adjectives (AA / AABB)

1.2.1 A room is ready for a guest

- You describe a room that has been thoroughly tidied.
- **房间干干净净的。** – The repeated adjective gives a vivid description of the clean room.

1.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Doubling adjectives (AA / AABB)**. 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.

宝宝的眼睛大大的。

bǎo bao de yǎn jīng dà dà de

Word guide: 宝宝 – the baby; 眼睛 – eyes; 大大的 – big and round.

1.2.3 Read examples in context

我想舒舒服服地躺在沙发上。

wǒ xiǎng shū shū fú fú de tǎng zài shā fā shàng

Word guide: 我 – I; 想 – want to; 舒舒服服 – comfortably; 躺 – lie; 在 – on; 沙发上 – the sofa.

- In the opening example, **房间干干净净的。**: The repeated adjective gives a vivid description of the clean room.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

1.2.4 Know the boundary

- 干净 can become 干干净净, but this is a lexical pattern, not a rule for every two-character adjective.
- 雪白 can use 雪白雪白 rather than AABB. Learn attested forms.

1.2.5 Use the distinction

- The repeated adjective gives a vivid description of the clean room.
- 干净 can become 干干净净, but this is a lexical pattern, not a rule for every two-character adjective. 雪白 can use 雪白雪白 rather than AABB. Learn attested forms.

1.2.6 Try it with help closed

You describe a room that has been thoroughly tidied. 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: 房间干干净净的。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 干净 can become 干干净净, but this is a lexical pattern, not a rule for every two-character adjective.
- 雪白 can use 雪白雪白 rather than AABB. Learn attested forms.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.3 ■ Adjective + 地 + Verb (making an adverb)

1.3.1 A teacher reads with care

- A teacher examines an essay carefully rather than rushing through it.
- 老师认真地看了我的作文。** – 认真地 describes how the teacher read the essay.

1.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Adjective + 地 + Verb (making an adverb)**. 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.

他高兴地笑了。

tā gāo xìng de xiào le

Word guide: 他 – he; 高兴 – happy; 笑 – smiled.

1.3.3 Read examples in context

老师认真地看了我的作文。

lǎo shī rèn zhēn de kàn le wǒ de zuò wén

Word guide: 老师 – the teacher; 认真 – careful; 看 – read; 我的 – my; 作文 – essay.

- In the opening example, **老师认真地看了我的作文。**: 认真地 describes how the teacher read the essay.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

1.3.4 Know the boundary

- The manner phrase comes before 看.
- Compare 认真的老师, where 的 describes the teacher, and 老师看得很认真, where 得 introduces an assessment of the reading.

1.3.5 Use the distinction

- 认真地 describes how the teacher read the essay.
- The manner phrase comes before 看. Compare 认真的老师, where 的 describes the teacher, and 老师看得很认真, where 得 introduces an assessment of the reading.

1.3.6 Try it with help closed

A teacher examines an essay carefully rather than rushing through it. 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: 老师认真地看了我的作文。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The manner phrase comes before 看.
- Compare 认真的老师, where 的 describes the teacher, and 老师看得很认真, where 得 introduces an assessment of the reading.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2 Adverbs

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.

2.1 ■ 又 + Verb + 了 (again, in the past)

2.1.1 A familiar problem happens again

- A classmate arrives late today after being late previously.
- 你又迟到了。 – 又 marks today’s lateness as a recurrence.

2.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 又 + Verb + 了 (again, in the past). 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.

你又迟到了。
nǐ yòu chí dào le

Word guide: 你 – you; 又 – again; 迟到 – late.

2.1.3 Read examples in context

又下雨了！
yòu xià yǔ le

Word guide: 又 – again; 下雨 – rain.

- In the opening example, 你又迟到了。: 又 marks today’s lateness as a recurrence.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.1.4 Know the boundary

- This finished-event example uses 了, but 又 is not confined to past events.
- 明天又是星期一了 anticipates a known recurrence; 我又不知道 uses another meaning. Choose from the whole sentence.

2.1.5 Use the distinction

- 又 marks today’s lateness as a recurrence.
- This finished-event example uses 了, but 又 is not confined to past events. 明天又是星期一了 anticipates a known recurrence; 我又不知道 uses another meaning. Choose from the whole sentence.

2.1.6 Try it with help closed

A classmate arrives late today after being late previously. 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: 你又迟到了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This finished-event example uses 了, but 又 is not confined to past events.
- 明天又是星期一了 anticipates a known recurrence; 我又不知道 uses another meaning. Choose from the whole sentence.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.2 ■ 一直 (all along, continuously)

2.2.1 Waiting lasts through a time span

- You wait throughout the morning for news.
- 我一直在等你的消息。 – 一直 describes the continuing wait across that span.

2.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 一直 (all along, continuously). 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.

我一直很喜欢你。

wǒ yì zhí hěn xǐ huan nǐ

Word guide: 我 – I; 一直 – all along; 很 – very; 喜欢 – like; 你 – you.

2.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 我一直在等你的消息。: 一直 describes the continuing wait across that span.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.2.4 Know the boundary

- 一直 also describes enduring habits or a spatial direction, such as 一直往前走.
- It need not mean continuous physical activity every second: 我一直喜欢音乐 describes a lasting preference.

2.2.5 Use the distinction

- 一直 describes the continuing wait across that span.
- 一直 also describes enduring habits or a spatial direction, such as 一直往前走. It need not mean continuous physical activity every second: 我一直喜欢音乐 describes a lasting preference.

2.2.6 Try it with help closed

You wait throughout the morning for news. 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: 我一直在等你的消息。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 一直 also describes enduring habits or a spatial direction, such as 一直往前走.
- It need not mean continuous physical activity every second: 我一直喜欢音乐 describes a lasting preference.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.3 ■ 总是 (always – a habit)

2.3.1 A classmate is usually late

- A classmate arrives late often enough for you to describe it as a habit.
- **他总是迟到。** – 总是 generalises a recurring pattern of lateness.

2.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **总是 (always – a habit)**. 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.

他总是迟到。

tā zǒng shì chí dào

Word guide: 他 – he; 总是 – always; 迟到 – late.

2.3.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **他总是迟到。**: 总是 generalises a recurring pattern of lateness.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.3.4 Know the boundary

- 总是 can sound critical here; it is not automatically neutral.
- Adjectives often take 很, but 他总是忙 is possible. A recurring habit is a speaker's generalisation, not a measured guarantee of no exception.

2.3.5 Use the distinction

- 总是 generalises a recurring pattern of lateness.
- 总是 can sound critical here; it is not automatically neutral. Adjectives often take 很, but 他总是忙 is possible. A recurring habit is a speaker's generalisation, not a measured guarantee of no exception.

2.3.6 Try it with help closed

A classmate arrives late often enough for you to describe it as a habit. 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: 他总是迟到。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 总是 can sound critical here; it is not automatically neutral.
- Adjectives often take 很, but 他总是忙 is possible. A recurring habit is a speaker's generalisation, not a measured guarantee of no exception.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.4 ■ 终于 (finally, at last)

2.4.1 A long wait finally ends

- After waiting for a friend, you see the friend arrive.
- **你终于到了!** – 终于 presents arrival as the endpoint of a wait.

2.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **终于 (finally, at last)**. 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.

你终于到了!

nǐ zhōng yú dào le

Word guide: 你 – you; 终于 – finally; 到 – arrived.

2.4.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **你终于到了!** : 终于 presents arrival as the endpoint of a wait.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.4.4 Know the boundary

- Finally need not be a happy result: 他终于还是失败了 can mark an eventual failure.
- 了 often occurs with completed events, but 终于明白了 and 终于能够独立工作 show different predicate shapes.

2.4.5 Use the distinction

- 终于 presents arrival as the endpoint of a wait.
- Finally need not be a happy result: 他终于还是失败了 can mark an eventual failure. 了 often occurs with completed events, but 终于明白了 and 终于能够独立工作 show different predicate shapes.

2.4.6 Try it with help closed

After waiting for a friend, you see the friend arrive. 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: 你终于到了!

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Finally need not be a happy result: 他终于还是失败了 can mark an eventual failure.
- 了 often occurs with completed events, but 终于明白了 and 终于能够独立工作 show different predicate shapes.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.5 ■ 几乎 (nearly, almost)

2.5.1 Check an almost-full group

- Most of a class have phones, but a few do not.
- **几乎每个人都有手机。** – 几乎 makes the claim almost universal rather than fully universal.

2.5.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **几乎 (nearly, almost)**. 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.

几乎每个人都有手机。

jī hū měi ge rén dōu yǒu shǒu jī

Word guide: 几乎 – almost; 每个人 – everyone; 都 – all; 有 – has; 手机 – a phone.

2.5.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **几乎每个人都有手机。** : 几乎 makes the claim almost universal rather than fully universal.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.5.4 Know the boundary

- 几乎 can also precede an event without 都 or a negative, as in 我几乎忘了.
- Keep the scope clear: 几乎都知道 is almost all know, while 几乎不知道 is hardly know.

2.5.5 Use the distinction

- 几乎 makes the claim almost universal rather than fully universal.
- 几乎 can also precede an event without 都 or a negative, as in 我几乎忘了. Keep the scope clear: 几乎都知道 is almost all know, while 几乎不知道 is hardly know.

2.5.6 Try it with help closed

Most of a class have phones, but a few do not. 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: 几乎每个人都有手机。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 几乎 can also precede an event without 都 or a negative, as in 我几乎忘了.
- Keep the scope clear: 几乎都知道 is almost all know, while 几乎不知道 is hardly know.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.6 ■ 只 (only)

2.6.1 State the limit of a family's size

- You have one older brother and no other older brothers.
- **我只有一个哥哥。** – 只 limits the number of older brothers to one.

2.6.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **只 (only)**. 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.

我只有一个哥哥。

wǒ zhǐ yǒu yí ge gē ge

Word guide: 我 – I; 只 – only; 有 – have; 一个 – one; 哥哥 – older brother.

2.6.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我只有一个哥哥。**: 只 limits the number of older brothers to one.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.6.4 Know the boundary

- In this frame 只 precedes 有, but its scope is supplied by the predicate and context.
- 只有他知道 means only he knows; do not turn the common position into a claim that 只 always limits the verb's action alone.

2.6.5 Use the distinction

- 只 limits the number of older brothers to one.
- In this frame 只 precedes 有, but its scope is supplied by the predicate and context. 只有他知道 means only he knows; do not turn the common position into a claim that 只 always limits the verb's action alone.

2.6.6 Try it with help closed

You have one older brother and no other older brothers. 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: 我只有一个哥哥。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- In this frame 只 precedes 有, but its scope is supplied by the predicate and context.
- 只有他知道 means only he knows; do not turn the common position into a claim that 只 always limits the verb's action alone.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.7 ■ Duration + 没 + Verb + 了 (how long you haven't ...)

2.7.1 Friends meet after a long gap

- Two friends have not met for ten years and are now greeting each other.
- **我们已经十年没见了。** – 十年 measures the period with no meeting.

2.7.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Duration + 没 + Verb + 了 (how long you haven't ...)**. 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.

我们已经十年没见了。

wǒ men yǐ jīng shí nián méi jiàn le

Word guide: 我们 – we; 已经 – already; 十年 – ten years; 没 – haven't; 见 – met.

2.7.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我们已经十年没见了。**: 十年 measures the period with no meeting.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.7.4 Know the boundary

- Compare 我们见面谈了两个小时, where the duration follows the completed talking.
- Final 了 marks the current relevance of the gap; this greeting does not promise that the gap will continue after the reunion.

2.7.5 Use the distinction

- 十年 measures the period with no meeting.
- Compare 我们见面谈了两个小时, where the duration follows the completed talking. Final 了 marks the current relevance of the gap; this greeting does not promise that the gap will continue after the reunion.

2.7.6 Try it with help closed

Two friends have not met for ten years and are now greeting each other. 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: 我们已经十年没见了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Compare 我们见面谈了两个小时, where the duration follows the completed talking.
- Final 了 marks the current relevance of the gap; this greeting does not promise that the gap will continue after the reunion.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.8 ■ Time + 才 (not until – lateness)

2.8.1 Arrival feels late against a schedule

- You expected to be home by eight, but arrived at eleven.
- **我十一点才到家。** – 才 evaluates the eleven-o'clock arrival as late in this context.

2.8.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Time + 才 (not until – lateness)**. 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.

我昨天十一点才到家。

wǒ zuó tiān shí yī diǎn cái dào jiā

Word guide: 我 – I; 昨天 – yesterday; 十一点 – eleven o'clock; 才 – not until; 到家 – got home.

2.8.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我十一点才到家。**: 才 evaluates the eleven-o'clock arrival as late in this context.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.8.4 Know the boundary

- The expectation is essential; eleven is not intrinsically late for every schedule.
- Time+ 才 often omits 了 in basic examples, but do not extend that tendency to a ban on all constructions with 才 and 了.

2.8.5 Use the distinction

- 才 evaluates the eleven-o'clock arrival as late in this context.
- The expectation is essential; eleven is not intrinsically late for every schedule. Time+ 才 often omits 了 in basic examples, but do not extend that tendency to a ban on all constructions with 才 and 了.

2.8.6 Try it with help closed

You expected to be home by eight, but arrived at eleven. 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: 我十一点才到家。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The expectation is essential; eleven is not intrinsically late for every schedule.
- Time+ 才 often omits 了 in basic examples, but do not extend that tendency to a ban on all constructions with 才 and 了.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.9 ■ 先 ... , 再 ... (first ..., then ...)

2.9.1 A meal has an order of actions

- Before eating, someone tells you to wash your hands.
- **先洗手, 再吃饭。** – The instruction puts washing before eating.

2.9.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **先 ... , 再 ... (first ..., 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.

先洗手, 再吃。

xiān xǐ shǒu zài chī

Word guide: 先 – first; 洗手 – wash hands; , 再 – then; 吃 – eat.

2.9.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **先洗手，再吃饭。**：The instruction puts washing before eating.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.9.4 Know the boundary

- 再 links the second step; it does not require a second meal.
- The sentence specifies order but not the exact delay between actions. 然后 can link later steps too.

2.9.5 Use the distinction

- The instruction puts washing before eating.
- 再 links the second step; it does not require a second meal. The sentence specifies order but not the exact delay between actions. 然后 can link later steps too.

2.9.6 Try it with help closed

Before eating, someone tells you to wash your hands. 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: 先洗手，再吃饭。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 再 links the second step; it does not require a second meal.
- The sentence specifies order but not the exact delay between actions. 然后 can link later steps too.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.10 ■ 一边 ... 一边 ... (doing two things at once)

2.10.1 Two activities overlap

- You listen to music while preparing a meal.
- **我一边做饭，一边听音乐。** – The two activities overlap in time.

2.10.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **一边 ... 一边 ... (doing two things at once)**. 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.

我常常一边洗澡，一边唱歌。

wǒ cháng cháng yì biān xǐ zǎo yì biān chàng gē

Word guide: 我 – I; 常常 – often; 一边 – while; 洗澡 – showering; 唱歌 – sing.

2.10.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我一边做饭，一边听音乐。**：The two activities overlap in time.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.10.4 Know the boundary

- This does not mean every small movement occurs at exactly the same instant.
- 一边笑一边哭 can describe overlapping reactions without claiming deliberate control over both; do not impose intention as a universal condition.

2.10.5 Use the distinction

- The two activities overlap in time.
- This does not mean every small movement occurs at exactly the same instant. 一边笑一边哭 can describe overlapping reactions without claiming deliberate control over both; do not impose intention as a universal condition.

2.10.6 Try it with help closed

You listen to music while preparing a meal. 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: 我一边做饭，一边听音乐。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This does not mean every small movement occurs at exactly the same instant.
- 一边笑一边哭 can describe overlapping reactions without claiming deliberate control over both; do not impose intention as a universal condition.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.11 ■ 老是 (always – a complaint)

2.11.1 A complaint names a recurring interruption

- A friend keeps interrupting you during conversations.
- **你怎么老是打断我？** – 老是 presents the repeated interruption with frustration.

2.11.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **老是 (always – a complaint)**. 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.

你怎么老是迟到?

nǐ zěnn me lǎo shì chí dào

Word guide: 你 – you; 怎么 – why; 老是 – always; 迟到 – late.

2.11.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **你怎么老是打断我?** : 老是 presents the repeated interruption with frustration.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.11.4 Know the boundary

- 老是 often occurs in complaints but is not forbidden with positive predicates: 他老是帮我 can express appreciation in context.
- 总是 can also be used critically.

2.11.5 Use the distinction

- 老是 presents the repeated interruption with frustration.
- 老是 often occurs in complaints but is not forbidden with positive predicates: 他老是帮我 can express appreciation in context. 总是 can also be used critically.

2.11.6 Try it with help closed

A friend keeps interrupting you during conversations. 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: 你怎么老是打断我?

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 老是 often occurs in complaints but is not forbidden with positive predicates: 他老是帮我 can express appreciation in context.
- 总是 can also be used critically.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2.12 ■ 才 + Number (only – a small amount)

2.12.1 A fare seems surprisingly small

- You expected a ticket to cost more than twenty yuan.
- **这张票才二十块。** – 才 presents the price as only twenty yuan against that expectation.

2.12.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **才 + Number (only – a small amount)**. 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.

你才二十岁?

nǐ cái èr shí suì

Word guide: 你 – you; 才 – only; 二十岁 – twenty.

2.12.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这张票才二十块。** : 才 presents the price as only twenty yuan against that expectation.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

2.12.4 Know the boundary

- The price is a small amount from the speaker's viewpoint.
- 二十块才够 instead means only twenty yuan is sufficient; word position and predicate change the scope.

2.12.5 Use the distinction

- 才 presents the price as only twenty yuan against that expectation.
- The price is a small amount from the speaker's viewpoint. 二十块才够 instead means only twenty yuan is sufficient; word position and predicate change the scope.

2.12.6 Try it with help closed

You expected a ticket to cost more than twenty yuan. 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: 这张票才二十块。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The price is a small amount from the speaker's viewpoint.
- 二十块才够 instead means only twenty yuan is sufficient; word position and predicate change the scope.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3 Adverbs with Adjectives

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.

3.1 ■ 这么 / 那么 + Adjective (so ...)

3.1.1 A coat's price surprises a buyer

- You look at a coat's price and find it much higher than expected.
- 这件衣服怎么这么贵？** – The buyer reacts to the surprisingly high price.

3.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **这么 / 那么 + Adjective (so ...)**. 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.

今天怎么这么冷？

jīn tiān zěn me zhè me lěng

Word guide: 今天 – today; 怎么 – how come; 这么 – so; 冷 – cold.

3.1.3 Read examples in context

你那么聪明，一定能猜到。

nǐ nà me cōng míng yí dìng néng cāi dào

Word guide: 你 – you; 那么 – so; 聪明 – clever; , 一定 – surely; 能 – can; 猜到 – guess it.

- In the opening example, **这件衣服怎么这么贵？** : The buyer reacts to the surprisingly high price.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

3.1.4 Know the boundary

- 这么 often points to a degree currently in focus.
- 那么 can refer to a degree already mentioned; the distinction is not a literal distance measurement for every use.

3.1.5 Use the distinction

- The buyer reacts to the surprisingly high price.
- 这么 often points to a degree currently in focus. 那么 can refer to a degree already mentioned; the distinction is not a literal distance measurement for every use.

3.1.6 Try it with help closed

You look at a coat's price and find it much higher than expected. 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: 这件衣服怎么这么贵？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 这么 often points to a degree currently in focus.
- 那么 can refer to a degree already mentioned; the distinction is not a literal distance measurement for every use.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.2 ■ A 跟 / 和 B 一样 (the same as)

3.2.1 Compare the size of two homes

- Two homes have the same size, but their colours and locations differ.
- 你家跟我家一样大。** – The comparison asserts equality of size.

3.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **A 跟 / 和 B 一样 (the same as)**. 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.

你家跟我家一样大。

nǐ jiā gēn wǒ jiā yí yàng dà

Word guide: 你家 – your home; 跟 – as; 我家 – my home; 一样 – the same; 大 – big.

3.2.3 Read examples in context

北京的天气和上海不一样。

Běi jīng de tiān qì hé Shàng hǎi bù yí yàng

Word guide: 北京 – Beijing; 天气 – weather; 和 – and; 上海 – Shanghai; 不 – not; 一样 – the same.

- In the opening example, **你家跟我家一样大。** : The comparison asserts equality of size.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

3.2.4 Know the boundary

- 一样大 names the compared property.
- It does not claim that the homes are identical in every feature. 跟 and 和 both work in this comparison.

3.2.5 Use the distinction

- The comparison asserts equality of size.
- 一样大 names the compared property. It does not claim that the homes are identical in every feature. 跟 and 和 both work in this comparison.

3.2.6 Try it with help closed

Two homes have the same size, but their colours and locations differ. 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: 你家跟我家一样大。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 一样大 names the compared property.
- It does not claim that the homes are identical in every feature. 跟 and 和 both work in this comparison.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.3 ■ 又 ... 又 ... (both ... and ...)

3.3.1 A product has a benefit and a drawback

- A phone is expensive, but useful and attractive.
- **这部手机又贵又好用。** – The speaker combines two qualities of the same phone.

3.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **又 ... 又 ... (both ... and ...)**. 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.

这个房子又大又亮。

zhè ge fáng zi yòu dà yòu liàng

Word guide: 这个 – this; 房子 – house; 又 – both; 大 – big; 又 – and; 亮 – bright.

3.3.3 Read examples in context

这里的咖啡又贵又难喝。

zhè lǐ de kā fēi yòu guì yòu nán hē

Word guide: 这里 – here; 咖啡 – coffee; 又 – both; 贵 – expensive; 又 – and; 难喝 – bad-tasting.

- In the opening example, **这部手机又贵又好用。**: The speaker combines two qualities of the same phone.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

3.3.4 Know the boundary

- 又 ... 又 ... often groups similarly valued qualities, but mixed evaluations such as 又贵又好用 are possible.
- It can also link actions, as in 又唱又跳; use 一边 ... 一边 ... when ongoing simultaneity is the focus.

3.3.5 Use the distinction

- The speaker combines two qualities of the same phone.
- 又 ... 又 ... often groups similarly valued qualities, but mixed evaluations such as 又贵又好用 are possible. It can also link actions, as in 又唱又跳; use 一边 ... 一边 ... when ongoing simultaneity is the focus.

3.3.6 Try it with help closed

A phone is expensive, but useful and attractive. 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: 这部手机又贵又好用。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 又 ... 又 ... often groups similarly valued qualities, but mixed evaluations such as 又贵又好用 are possible.
- It can also link actions, as in 又唱又跳; use 一边 ... 一边 ... when ongoing simultaneity is the focus.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.4 ■ Subject + 比较 + Adjective (fairly, rather)

3.4.1 Choose a relatively easy question

- Compared with the other questions, this one seems fairly easy.
- **这个问题比较简单。** – 比较 gives a relative or qualified evaluation of simplicity.

3.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Subject + 比较 + Adjective (fairly, rather)**. 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.

这个问题比较简单。

zhè ge wèn tí bǐ jiào jiǎn dān

Word guide: 这个 – this; 问题 – question; 比较 – fairly; 简单 – simple.

3.4.3 Read examples in context

我比较喜欢坐地铁。

wǒ bǐ jiào xǐ huan zuò dì tiě

Word guide: 我 – I; 比较 – rather; 喜欢 – prefer; 坐 – taking; 地铁 – the subway.

- In the opening example, 这个问题比较简单。: 比较 gives a relative or qualified evaluation of simplicity.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

3.4.4 Know the boundary

- 比较 can imply a comparison without naming its standard.
- 很 with an adjective can simply make a natural predicate, not always a strong very; do not build a fixed intensity ranking from the English translations.

3.4.5 Use the distinction

- 比较 gives a relative or qualified evaluation of simplicity.
- 比较 can imply a comparison without naming its standard. 很 with an adjective can simply make a natural predicate, not always a strong very; do not build a fixed intensity ranking from the English translations.

3.4.6 Try it with help closed

Compared with the other questions, this one seems fairly easy. 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: 这个问题比较简单。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 比较 can imply a comparison without naming its standard.
- 很 with an adjective can simply make a natural predicate, not always a strong very; do not build a fixed intensity ranking from the English translations.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.5 ■ 多 + Adjective + 啊! (how ...!)

3.5.1 Admire a friend's skill

- A child solves a difficult puzzle quickly and you praise the achievement.
- 你女儿多聪明啊! – 多聪明啊 expresses admiration rather than asking for a measurement.

3.5.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **多 + Adjective + 啊! (how ...!)**. 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.

你女儿多聪明啊!

nǐ nǚ ér duō cōng míng a

Word guide: 你 – your; 女儿 – daughter; 多 – how; 聪明 – clever.

3.5.3 Read examples in context

一个人多好!

yí ge rén duō hǎo

Word guide: 一个人 – on your own; 多 – how; 好 – nice.

- In the opening example, 你女儿多聪明啊!: 多聪明啊 expresses admiration rather than asking for a measurement.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

3.5.4 Know the boundary

- 啊 is common in this exclamation, not compulsory in every exclamatory use of 多.
- 多好! is possible. Compare 你多大? , which genuinely asks about age.

3.5.5 Use the distinction

- 多聪明啊 expresses admiration rather than asking for a measurement.
- 啊 is common in this exclamation, not compulsory in every exclamatory use of 多. 多好! is possible. Compare 你多大? , which genuinely asks about age.

3.5.6 Try it with help closed

A child solves a difficult puzzle quickly and you praise the achievement. 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: 你女儿多聪明啊!

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 啊 is common in this exclamation, not compulsory in every exclamatory use of 多.
- 多好! is possible. Compare 你多大? , which genuinely asks about age.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.6 ■ Adjective + 的 + Noun (describing a noun)

3.6.1 Ask for the cold drink

- Two drinks are available, one cold and one hot.
- 我要冷的。 – 冷的 selects the cold one from the understood drinks.

3.6.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Adjective + 的 + Noun (describing a noun)**. 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.

漂亮的女孩儿

piào liang de nǚ hái’r

Word guide: 漂亮 – beautiful; 女孩儿 – girl.

3.6.3 Read examples in context

你要冷的还是热的?

nǚ yào lěng de hái shì rè de

Word guide: 你 – you; 要 – want; 冷 – cold; 还是 – or; 热 – hot.

- In the opening example, 我要冷的。: 冷的 selects the cold one from the understood drinks.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

3.6.4 Know the boundary

- The understood noun can be omitted after 的.
- Descriptive modifiers often use 的, but established compounds such as 重要问题 or 新鲜水果 show that syllable count alone does not impose an absolute rule.

3.6.5 Use the distinction

- 冷的 selects the cold one from the understood drinks.
- The understood noun can be omitted after 的. Descriptive modifiers often use 的, but established compounds such as 重要问题 or 新鲜水果 show that syllable count alone does not impose an absolute rule.

3.6.6 Try it with help closed

Two drinks are available, one cold and one hot. 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: 我要冷的。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The understood noun can be omitted after 的.
- Descriptive modifiers often use 的, but established compounds such as 重要问题 or 新鲜水果 show that syllable count alone does not impose an absolute rule.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

4 Conjunctions

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.

4.1 ■ A 或者 B (or – in statements)

4.1.1 A statement offers two acceptable drinks

- You say either tea or coffee is acceptable.
- **茶或者咖啡都行。** – 或者 presents alternatives in a statement.

4.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **A 或者 B (or – in statements)**. 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.

我喝茶或者咖啡。

wǒ hē chá huò zhě kā fēi

Word guide: 我 – I; 喝 – drink; 茶 – tea; 或者 – or; 咖啡 – coffee.

4.1.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **茶或者咖啡都行。**: 或者 presents alternatives in a statement.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

4.1.4 Know the boundary

- For a direct alternative question use 还是: 你喝茶还是咖啡? .
- A yes-or-no question can contain 或者, as in 茶或者咖啡都可以吗? ; questions are not all the same type.

4.1.5 Use the distinction

- 或者 presents alternatives in a statement.
- For a direct alternative question use 还是: 你喝茶还是咖啡?. A yes-or-no question can contain 或者, as in 茶或者咖啡都可以吗? ; questions are not all the same type.

4.1.6 Try it with help closed

You say either tea or coffee is acceptable. 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: 茶或者咖啡都行。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- For a direct alternative question use 还是: 你喝茶还是咖啡? .
- A yes-or-no question can contain 或者, as in 茶或者咖啡都可以吗? ; questions are not all the same type.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

4.2 ■ 那么 ... (then / in that case)

4.2.1 A reply follows a new piece of information

- A friend says everything is ready, so you suggest leaving.
- **那么我们走吧。** – 那么 introduces a response based on what was just said.

4.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **那么 ... (then / in that case)**. 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.

那么我们走吧。

nà me wǒ men zǒu ba

Word guide: 那么 – then; 我们 – we; 走 – go.

4.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **那么我们走吧。**: 那么 introduces a response based on what was just said.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

4.2.4 Know the boundary

- This use means in that case, not degree as in 那么高.
- It does not itself indicate an exact future time; 那我们走吧 is a common shorter reply.

4.2.5 Use the distinction

- 那么 introduces a response based on what was just said.
- This use means in that case, not degree as in 那么高. It does not itself indicate an exact future time; 那我们走吧 is a common shorter reply.

4.2.6 Try it with help closed

A friend says everything is ready, so you suggest leaving. 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: 那么我们走吧。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This use means in that case, not degree as in 那么高.
- It does not itself indicate an exact future time; 那我们走吧 is a common shorter reply.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

4.3 ■ 跟 + Person + Verb (with someone)

4.3.1 A conversation has a partner

- You talk with a friend rather than talk only about the friend.
- 我跟朋友聊天。 – 跟朋友 identifies the conversation partner.

4.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 跟 + Person + Verb (with someone). 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.

我跟朋友聊天。

wǒ gēn péng you liáo tiān

Word guide: 我 – I; 跟 – with; 朋友 – friends; 聊天 – chat.

4.3.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 我跟朋友聊天。: 跟朋友 identifies the conversation partner.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

4.3.4 Know the boundary

- 关于朋友的话题 means a topic about friends.
- 跟 in this use can often be replaced by 和; another 跟 in 跟着他走 means follow him, a different construction.

4.3.5 Use the distinction

- 跟朋友 identifies the conversation partner.
- 关于朋友的话题 means a topic about friends. 跟 in this use can often be replaced by 和; another 跟 in 跟着他走 means follow him, a different construction.

4.3.6 Try it with help closed

You talk with a friend rather than talk only about the friend. 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: 我跟朋友聊天。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 关于朋友的话题 means a topic about friends.
- 跟 in this use can often be replaced by 和; another 跟 in 跟着他走 means follow him, a different construction.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

4.4 ■ A 还是 B? (or – in questions)

4.4.1 A direct choice question asks for an option

- You ask a guest which of two drinks they prefer.
- 你喝茶还是咖啡? – 还是 connects the alternatives the guest should choose between.

4.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is A 还是 B? (or – in questions). 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.

你喝茶还是咖啡?

nǐ hē chá hái shì kā fēi

Word guide: 你 – you; 喝 – drink; 茶 – tea; 还是 – or; 咖啡 – coffee.

4.4.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 你喝茶还是咖啡? : 还是 connects the alternatives the guest should choose between.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

4.4.4 Know the boundary

- This is an alternative question, so no final 吗 is needed in the basic frame.
- 还是 also means still or had better in other uses; punctuation alone cannot determine every meaning.

4.4.5 Use the distinction

- 还是 connects the alternatives the guest should choose between.
- This is an alternative question, so no final 吗 is needed in the basic frame. 还是 also means still or had better in other uses; punctuation alone cannot determine every meaning.

4.4.6 Try it with help closed

You ask a guest which of two drinks they prefer. 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: 你喝茶还是咖啡?

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This is an alternative question, so no final 吗 is needed in the basic frame.
- 还是 also means still or had better in other uses; punctuation alone cannot determine every meaning.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5 Nouns

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.

5.1 ■ Time / Verb + 以前 (before ...)

5.1.1 A deadline comes before a named time

- You ask a friend to return before three o'clock.
- 三点以前回来。 – The return should happen before the stated three-o'clock boundary.

5.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Time / Verb + 以前 (before ...)**. 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.

三点以前回来。

sān diǎn yǐ qián huí lái

Word guide: 三点 – three o'clock; 以前 – before; 回来 – come back.

5.1.3 Read examples in context

睡觉以前刷牙。

shuì jiào yǐ qián shuā yá

Word guide: 睡觉 – sleep; 以前 – before; 刷牙 – brush teeth.

- In the opening example, 三点以前回来。: The return should happen before the stated three-o'clock boundary.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

5.1.4 Know the boundary

- 以前 follows its reference time or action.
- 睡觉以前刷牙 places brushing before sleeping, not after it; separate a deadline from a duration.

5.1.5 Use the distinction

- The return should happen before the stated three-o'clock boundary.
- 以前 follows its reference time or action. 睡觉以前刷牙 places brushing before sleeping, not after it; separate a deadline from a duration.

5.1.6 Try it with help closed

You ask a friend to return before three o'clock. 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: 三点以前回来。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 以前 follows its reference time or action.
- 睡觉以前刷牙 places brushing before sleeping, not after it; separate a deadline from a duration.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.2 ■ 以前, ... (in the past, ...)

5.2.1 An earlier home differs from a current one

- You explain that you used to live in Beijing but now live elsewhere.
- 以前我住在北京。 – 以前 introduces an earlier period of residence.

5.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 以前, ... (in the past, ...). 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.

以前, 我住在北京。

yǐ qián wǒ zhù zài Běi jīng

Word guide: 以前 – in the past; 我 – I; 住 – live; 在 – in; 北京 – Beijing.

5.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 以前我住在北京。: 以前 introduces an earlier period of residence.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

5.2.4 Know the boundary

- The current contrast comes from context.
- The sentence alone need not tell us the exact dates or all later homes. Compare 三点以前, where 以前 follows a specific reference point.

5.2.5 Use the distinction

- 以前 introduces an earlier period of residence.
- The current contrast comes from context. The sentence alone need not tell us the exact dates or all later homes. Compare 三点以前, where 以前 follows a specific reference point.

5.2.6 Try it with help closed

You explain that you used to live in Beijing but now live elsewhere. 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: 以前我住在北京。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The current contrast comes from context.
- The sentence alone need not tell us the exact dates or all later homes. Compare 三点以前, where 以前 follows a specific reference point.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.3 ■ 刚才 (a moment ago)

5.3.1 A friend asks you to repeat the earlier news

- You did not hear a friend's last sentence clearly.
- 你刚才说什么? – 刚才 asks about speech in the recent past.

5.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 刚才 (a moment ago). 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.

刚才他来了。

gāng cái tā lái le

Word guide: 刚才 – a moment ago; 他 – he; 来 – come.

5.3.3 Read examples in context

你刚才说什么?

nǐ gāng cái shuō shén me

Word guide: 你 – you; 刚才 – a moment ago; 说 – say; 什么 – what.

- In the opening example, 你刚才说什么?: 刚才 asks about speech in the recent past.

- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

5.3.4 Know the boundary

- 刚才 is a time expression: 刚才他在这儿 and 他刚才在这儿 both work.
- It can describe a state or a negated action, as in 刚才没听见; 了 is not compulsory.

5.3.5 Use the distinction

- 刚才 asks about speech in the recent past.
- 刚才 is a time expression: 刚才他在这儿 and 他刚才在这儿 both work. It can describe a state or a negated action, as in 刚才没听见; 了 is not compulsory.

5.3.6 Try it with help closed

You did not hear a friend's last sentence clearly. 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: 你刚才说什么?

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 刚才 is a time expression: 刚才他在这儿 and 他刚才在这儿 both work.
- It can describe a state or a negated action, as in 刚才没听见; 了 is not compulsory.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.4 ■ Time / Verb + 时 (when ...)

5.4.1 Attach an event to a time

- You reached a friend's home when the friend was out.
- **我来时，他不在。** – 时 ties the absence to the time of your arrival.

5.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Time / Verb + 时 (when ...)**. 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.

我来时，他不在。

wǒ lái shí tā bù zài

Word guide: 我 – I; 来 – come; 时 – when; 他 – he; 不 – not; 在 – be in.

5.4.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我来时，他不在。**: 时 ties the absence to the time of your arrival.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

5.4.4 Know the boundary

- 时 is a shorter, often more formal version of 的时候.
- It can also occur in a future instruction, as in 你来时告诉我; it does not itself supply past tense.

5.4.5 Use the distinction

- 时 ties the absence to the time of your arrival.
- 时 is a shorter, often more formal version of 的时候. It can also occur in a future instruction, as in 你来时告诉我; it does not itself supply past tense.

5.4.6 Try it with help closed

You reached a friend's home when the friend was out. 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: 我来时，他不在。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 时 is a shorter, often more formal version of 的时候.
- It can also occur in a future instruction, as in 你来时告诉我; it does not itself supply past tense.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.5 ■ 以后 (after / in the future)

5.5.1 Class ends before the trip home

- You plan to go home after class.
- **下课以后回家。** – Class ending is the reference point before going home.

5.5.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **以后 (after / in the future)**. 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.

以后，我想当老师。

yǐ hòu wǒ xiǎng dāng lǎo shī

Word guide: 以后 – in the future; 我 – I; 想 – want; 当 – be; 老师 – teacher.

5.5.3 Read examples in context

下课以后回家。

xià kè yǐ hòu huí jiā

Word guide: 下课 – finish class; 以后 – after; 回家 – go home.

- In the opening example, 下课以后回家。: Class ending is the reference point before going home.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

5.5.4 Know the boundary

- 以后 may relate two past events too: 毕业以后，我去了上海。
- Alone, 以后 often means in the future; after a reference event it means after that event.

5.5.5 Use the distinction

- Class ending is the reference point before going home.
- 以后 may relate two past events too: 毕业以后，我去了上海。 Alone, 以后 often means in the future; after a reference event it means after that event.

5.5.6 Try it with help closed

You plan to go home after class. 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: 下课以后回家。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 以后 may relate two past events too: 毕业以后，我去了上海。
- Alone, 以后 often means in the future; after a reference event it means after that event.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.6 ■ ... , 后来 ... (afterwards / later – past)

5.6.1 A past story has a later turn

- You tell someone that you visited Beijing and later visited Shanghai.
- 先去了北京，后来去了上海。 – 后来 links the later part of the past story to the earlier visit.

5.6.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is ... , 后来 ... (afterwards / later – past). 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.

我先去了北京，后来去了上海。

wǒ xiān qù le Běi jīng hòu lái qù le Shàng hǎi

Word guide: 我 – I; 先 – first; 去 – go; 北京 – Beijing; 后来 – later; 去 – go; 上海 – Shanghai.

5.6.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 先去了北京，后来去了上海。: 后来 links the later part of the past story to the earlier visit.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

5.6.4 Know the boundary

- For a future plan prefer 然后 or 以后.
- Later does not require immediate succession; 后来 can cover a gap whose length the sentence leaves unspecified.

5.6.5 Use the distinction

- 后来 links the later part of the past story to the earlier visit.
- For a future plan prefer 然后 or 以后. Later does not require immediate succession; 后来 can cover a gap whose length the sentence leaves unspecified.

5.6.6 Try it with help closed

You tell someone that you visited Beijing and later visited Shanghai. 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: 先去了北京，后来去了上海。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- For a future plan prefer 然后 or 以后.
- Later does not require immediate succession; 后来 can cover a gap whose length the sentence leaves unspecified.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

6 Numbers

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.

6.1 ■ Approximating with sequential numbers

6.1.1 An estimate differs from a sum

- You did not count the visitors exactly but saw roughly five or six.
- 来了五六个人。** – 五六 estimates about five or six people.

6.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Approximating with sequential numbers**. 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.

来了五六个人。

lái le wǔ liù ge rén

Word guide: 来 – come; 五六 – five or six; 个 – (measure word); 人 – people.

6.1.3 Read examples in context

这儿有十几本书。

zhèr yǒu shí jǐ běn shū

Word guide: 这儿 – here; 有 – have; 十几 – ten-something; 本 – (measure word); 书 – book.

- In the opening example, **来了五六个人。**: 五六 estimates about five or six people.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

6.1.4 Know the boundary

- Adjacent-number estimates are not addition: 五六 is not eleven.
- The common estimate 两三个 uses 两. Learn established forms instead of concatenating any pair of numerals.

6.1.5 Use the distinction

- 五六 estimates about five or six people.
- Adjacent-number estimates are not addition: 五六 is not eleven. The common estimate 两三个 uses 两. Learn established forms instead of concatenating any pair of numerals.

6.1.6 Try it with help closed

You did not count the visitors exactly but saw roughly five or six. 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: 来了五六个人。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Adjacent-number estimates are not addition: 五六 is not eleven.
- The common estimate 两三个 uses 两. Learn established forms instead of concatenating any pair of numerals.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

6.2 ■ Big numbers: 万 / 亿

6.2.1 Convert a large population by groups of four digits

- A city has ten million residents in this invented example.
- 这个城市有一千万人。** – 一千万 equals 1,000 groups of 10,000, or 10,000,000.

6.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Big numbers: 万 / 亿**. 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.

这个城市有一千万人。

zhè ge chéng shì yǒu yì qiān wàn rén

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 城市 – city; 有 – have; 一千万 – ten million; 人 – people.

6.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这个城市有一千万人。**: 一千万 equals 1,000 groups of 10,000, or 10,000,000.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

6.2.4 Know the boundary

- 万 is 10,000 and 亿 is 100,000,000.
- 一百万 is 1,000,000; read the multiplier and unit together instead of importing English three-digit grouping.

6.2.5 Use the distinction

- 一千万 equals 1,000 groups of 10,000, or 10,000,000.
- 万 is 10,000 and 亿 is 100,000,000. 一百万 is 1,000,000; read the multiplier and unit together instead of importing English three-digit grouping.

6.2.6 Try it with help closed

A city has ten million residents in this invented example. 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: 这个城市有一千万人。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 万 is 10,000 and 亿 is 100,000,000.
- 一百万 is 1,000,000; read the multiplier and unit together instead of importing English three-digit grouping.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

6.3 ■ Times to the minute (点 ... 分)

6.3.1 A meeting starts halfway through the hour

- A meeting begins at 2:30 rather than lasting for half an hour.
- **会议两点半开始。** – 两点半 names the clock time 2:30.

6.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Times to the minute (点 ... 分)**. 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.

现在三点十五分。

xiàn zài sān diǎn shí wǔ fēn

Word guide: 现在 – now; 三点 – three o'clock; 十五分 – fifteen minutes.

6.3.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **会议两点半开始。**: 两点半 names the clock time 2:30.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

6.3.4 Know the boundary

- 半 after 点 means half past the hour.
- 半个小时 is a duration of thirty minutes; 三点十五分 is 3:15. Do not confuse a clock time with elapsed time.

6.3.5 Use the distinction

- 两点半 names the clock time 2:30.
- 半 after 点 means half past the hour. 半个小时 is a duration of thirty minutes; 三点十五分 is 3:15. Do not confuse a clock time with elapsed time.

6.3.6 Try it with help closed

A meeting begins at 2:30 rather than lasting for half an hour. 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: 会议两点半开始。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 半 after 点 means half past the hour.
- 半个小时 is a duration of thirty minutes; 三点十五分 is 3:15. Do not confuse a clock time with elapsed time.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

6.4 ■ Telling the hour (Number + 点)

6.4.1 Read the hour in a natural spoken form

- You tell a friend that class finishes at three o'clock.
- **三点下课。** – 三点 gives the clock hour, not the duration of class.

6.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Telling the hour (Number + 点)**. 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.

我三点下课。

wǒ sān diǎn xià kè

Word guide: 我 – I; 三点 – three o'clock; 下课 – finish class.

6.4.3 Read examples in context

现在两点。

xiàn zài liǎng diǎn

Word guide: 现在 – now; 两点 – two o'clock.

- In the opening example, 三点下课。: 三点 gives the clock hour, not the duration of class.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

6.4.4 Know the boundary

- Use 两点 as the usual spoken form for two o'clock and 三点钟 as a full form for three.
- Numbers read as digits in codes are a different task from ordinary clock speech.

6.4.5 Use the distinction

- 三点 gives the clock hour, not the duration of class.
- Use 两点 as the usual spoken form for two o'clock and 三点钟 as a full form for three. Numbers read as digits in codes are a different task from ordinary clock speech.

6.4.6 Try it with help closed

You tell a friend that class finishes at three o'clock. 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: 三点下课。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Use 两点 as the usual spoken form for two o'clock and 三点钟 as a full form for three.
- Numbers read as digits in codes are a different task from ordinary clock speech.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7 Particles

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.

7.1 ■ Verb + 着 (ongoing state)

7.1.1 A door remains in a state

- You describe a door that is standing open, without saying who opened it.
- 门开着。 – 着 presents the continuing open state.

7.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Verb + 着 (ongoing state)**. 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.

门开着。

mén kāi zhe

Word guide: 门 – door; 开 – open; 着 – (state).

7.1.3 Read examples in context

他坐着看书。

tā zuò zhe kàn shū

Word guide: 他 – he; 坐 – sit; 着 – (state); 看书 – read.

- In the opening example, 门开着。: 着 presents the continuing open state.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

7.1.4 Know the boundary

- Compare 他正在开门, which focuses on the opening action.
- 着 is not restricted to still positions: 他笑着说 describes speaking while smiling. Its neutral-tone reading zhe differs from 睡着的 zháo.

7.1.5 Use the distinction

- 着 presents the continuing open state.
- Compare 他正在开门, which focuses on the opening action. 着 is not restricted to still positions: 他笑着说 describes speaking while smiling. Its neutral-tone reading zhe differs from 睡着的 zháo.

7.1.6 Try it with help closed

You describe a door that is standing open, without saying who opened it. 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: 门开着。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Compare 他正在开门, which focuses on the opening action.
- 着 is not restricted to still positions: 他笑着说 describes speaking while smiling. Its neutral-tone reading zhe differs from 睡着的 zháo.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.2 ■ Sentence-final 了 (change of state)

7.2.1 Hunger becomes a new situation

- You were not hungry before, but now want food.
- 我饿了。 – Final 了 marks hunger as a new relevant state.

7.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Sentence-final 了 (change of state)**. 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.

下雨了。

xià yǔ le

Word guide: 下雨 – rain.

7.2.3 Read examples in context

我饿了。

wǒ è le

Word guide: 我 – I; 饿 – hungry.

- In the opening example, 我饿了。: Final 了 marks hunger as a new relevant state.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

7.2.4 Know the boundary

- This 了 does not mean finished being hungry.
- Verb-了 marks perfective aspect in other uses; do not translate every 了 as a past-tense or completed-action ending.

7.2.5 Use the distinction

- Final 了 marks hunger as a new relevant state.
- This 了 does not mean finished being hungry. Verb-了 marks perfective aspect in other uses; do not translate every 了 as a past-tense or completed-action ending.

7.2.6 Try it with help closed

You were not hungry before, but now want food. 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: 我饿了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This 了 does not mean finished being hungry.
- Verb-了 marks perfective aspect in other uses; do not translate every 了 as a past-tense or completed-action ending.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.3 ■ Questions with 呢 (and you? / where?)

7.3.1 A short follow-up relies on context

- A friend says where they live and then asks about you.
- 我住在上海，你呢? – 你呢 asks where you live, borrowing the topic from the preceding clause.

7.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Questions with 呢 (and you? / where?)**. 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.

我很好，你呢?

wǒ hěn hǎo nǐ ne

Word guide: 我 – I; 很好 – fine; 你 – you.

7.3.3 Read examples in context

我的钥匙呢?

wǒ de yào shi ne

Word guide: 我 – my; 钥匙 – keys.

- In the opening example, 我住在上海，你呢?: 你呢 asks where you live, borrowing the topic from the preceding clause.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

7.3.4 Know the boundary

- The same 你呢 can ask about your health after 我很好.
- 我的钥匙呢 can ask where the keys are. The noun and 呢 do not determine the full question without context.

7.3.5 Use the distinction

- 你呢 asks where you live, borrowing the topic from the preceding clause.
- The same 你呢 can ask about your health after 我很好. 我的钥匙呢 can ask where the keys are. The noun and 呢 do not determine the full question without context.

7.3.6 Try it with help closed

A friend says where they live and then asks about you. 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: 我住在上海，你呢？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The same 你呢 can ask about your health after 我很好.
- 我的钥匙呢 can ask where the keys are. The noun and 呢 do not determine the full question without context.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.4 ■ 的 / 得 / 地 (the three “de”)

7.4.1 One pronunciation fills three different roles

- You describe a careful student's careful reading.
- **认真的学生认真地读书，读得很清楚。** – 的 modifies 学生; 地 marks the manner of 读; 得 introduces the quality of reading.

7.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **的 / 得 / 地 (the three “de”)**. 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.

我的书。

wǒ de shū

Word guide: 我 – my; 的 – ('s); 书 – book.

7.4.3 Read examples in context

他跑得很快。

tā pǎo de hěn kuài

Word guide: 他 – he; 跑 – run; 得 – (degree); 很 – very; 快 – fast.

- In the opening example, **认真的学生认真地读书，读得很清楚。**: 的 modifies 学生; 地 marks the manner of 读; 得 introduces the quality of reading.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

7.4.4 Know the boundary

- Find the grammatical role rather than relying only on the next character.
- 我说的是实话 contains 的 before 是, because 的 closes a noun-like phrase; the simple before-noun rule is a beginner guide.

7.4.5 Use the distinction

- 的 modifies 学生; 地 marks the manner of 读; 得 introduces the quality of reading.
- Find the grammatical role rather than relying only on the next character. 我说的是实话 contains 的 before 是, because 的 closes a noun-like phrase; the simple before-noun rule is a beginner guide.

7.4.6 Try it with help closed

You describe a careful student's careful reading. 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: 认真的学生认真地读书，读得很清楚。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Find the grammatical role rather than relying only on the next character.
- 我说的是实话 contains 的 before 是, because 的 closes a noun-like phrase; the simple before-noun rule is a beginner guide.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

8 Prepositions

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.

8.1 ■ 关于 + Topic (about / regarding)

8.1.1 A topic phrase can describe a book

- You identify a book whose subject is Chinese history.
- 这是一本关于中国历史的书。** – 关于中国历史 describes what the book is about.

8.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **关于 + Topic (about / regarding)**. 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.

关于这件事，我不知道。

guān yú zhè jiàn shì wǒ bù zhī dào

Word guide: 关于 – about; 这 – this; 件 – (measure word); 事 – matter; 我 – I; 不 – not; 知道 – know.

8.1.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这是一本关于中国历史的书。**: 关于中国历史 describes what the book is about.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

8.1.4 Know the boundary

- 关于 can introduce a sentence topic or appear inside a noun modifier with 的.
- It is not restricted to sentence-initial position. Identify the noun or clause whose topic it supplies.

8.1.5 Use the distinction

- 关于中国历史 describes what the book is about.
- 关于 can introduce a sentence topic or appear inside a noun modifier with 的. It is not restricted to sentence-initial position. Identify the noun or clause whose topic it supplies.

8.1.6 Try it with help closed

You identify a book whose subject is Chinese history. 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: 这是一本关于中国历史的书。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 关于 can introduce a sentence topic or appear inside a noun modifier with 的.
- It is not restricted to sentence-initial position. Identify the noun or clause whose topic it supplies.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

8.2 ■ 直到 ... , ... 才 ... (all the way until)

8.2.1 A late understanding begins at a boundary

- An explanation becomes clear to you only now.
- 直到现在，我才明白。** – 直到 gives the boundary and 才 emphasises that understanding did not occur earlier.

8.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **直到 ... , ... 才 ... (all the way until)**. 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.

直到现在，我才明白。

zhí dào xiàn zài wǒ cái míng bai

Word guide: 直到 – until; 现在 – now; 我 – I; 才 – only then; 明白 – understand.

8.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **直到现在，我才明白。**: 直到 gives the boundary and 才 emphasises that understanding did not occur earlier.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

8.2.4 Know the boundary

- 直到 can also mark a continuing action's endpoint without 才: 我们一直等到十点.
- Avoid adding 才 mechanically when there is no delayed onset to emphasise.

8.2.5 Use the distinction

- 直到 gives the boundary and 才 emphasises that understanding did not occur earlier.
- 直到 can also mark a continuing action’s endpoint without 才: 我们一直等到十点. Avoid adding 才 mechanically when there is no delayed onset to emphasise.

8.2.6 Try it with help closed

An explanation becomes clear to you only now. 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: 直到现在，我才明白。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 直到 can also mark a continuing action’s endpoint without 才: 我们一直等到十点.
- Avoid adding 才 mechanically when there is no delayed onset to emphasise.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

8.3 ■ 向 + Direction / Person + Verb (towards)

8.3.1 An apology has a recipient

- You apologise to a friend rather than travel toward the friend.
- **我向他道歉。** – 向他 identifies the person to whom the apology is directed.

8.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **向 + Direction / Person + Verb (towards)**. 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.

向左转。

xiàng zuǒ zhuǎn

Word guide: 向 – towards; 左 – left; 转 – turn.

8.3.3 Read examples in context

我们向他学习。

wǒ men xiàng tā xué xí

Word guide: 我们 – we; 向 – towards; 他 – him; 学习 – learn.

- In the opening example, **我向他道歉。**: 向他 identifies the person to whom the apology is directed.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

8.3.4 Know the boundary

- 向 works with physical directions and abstract targets.
- 向他学习 names a model to learn from; it does not mean physically walking toward him.

8.3.5 Use the distinction

- 向他 identifies the person to whom the apology is directed.
- 向 works with physical directions and abstract targets. 向他学习 names a model to learn from; it does not mean physically walking toward him.

8.3.6 Try it with help closed

You apologise to a friend rather than travel toward the friend. 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: 我向他道歉。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 向 works with physical directions and abstract targets.
- 向他学习 names a model to learn from; it does not mean physically walking toward him.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

9 Verbs

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.

9.1 ■ 看起来 (looks / seems)

9.1.1 An attractive dish has not been tasted

- You judge a dish from its appearance before trying it.
- 这个菜看起来很好吃。** – The speaker offers an impression from appearance.

9.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **看起来 (looks / seems)**. 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.

他看起来很累。

tā kàn qǐ lái hěn lèi

Word guide: 他 – he; 看起来 – looks; 很 – very; 累 – tired.

9.1.3 Read examples in context

这个菜看起来很好吃。

zhè ge cài kàn qǐ lái hěn hǎo chī

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 菜 – dish; 看起来 – looks; 很 – very; 好吃 – delicious.

- In the opening example, **这个菜看起来很好吃。**: The speaker offers an impression from appearance.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

9.1.4 Know the boundary

- 看起来 does not prove taste or underlying quality.
- It also does not prove that the person has never tasted the dish; the sentence only chooses appearance as the basis of this comment.

9.1.5 Use the distinction

- The speaker offers an impression from appearance.
- 看起来 does not prove taste or underlying quality. It also does not prove that the person has never tasted the dish; the sentence only chooses appearance as the basis of this comment.

9.1.6 Try it with help closed

You judge a dish from its appearance before trying it. 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: 这个菜看起来很好吃。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 看起来 does not prove taste or underlying quality.
- It also does not prove that the person has never tasted the dish; the sentence only chooses appearance as the basis of this comment.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

9.2 ■ 没 (有) comparisons (not as ... as)

9.2.1 A shorter person does not reach a height

- One friend is 170 cm tall and another is 180 cm tall.
- 我没有他高。** – The speaker's height falls below the other person's height.

9.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **没 (有) comparisons (not as ... as)**. 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.

我没有他高。

wǒ méi yǒu tā gāo

Word guide: 我 – I; 没有 – not as; 他 – him; 高 – tall.

9.2.3 Read examples in context

今天没有昨天冷。

jīn tiān méi yǒu zuó tiān lěng

Word guide: 今天 – today; 没有 – not as; 昨天 – yesterday; 冷 – cold.

- In the opening example, **我没有他高。**: The speaker's height falls below the other person's height.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

9.2.4 Know the boundary

- 不比他高 means not taller, which permits equality; 没有他高 expresses a lower level.

- Both are grammatical, with different meanings. Do not call 不比 an invalid negative of 比.

9.2.5 Use the distinction

- The speaker's height falls below the other person's height.
- 不比他高 means not taller, which permits equality; 没有他高 expresses a lower level. Both are grammatical, with different meanings. Do not call 不比 an invalid negative of 比.

9.2.6 Try it with help closed

One friend is 170 cm tall and another is 180 cm tall. 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: 我没有他高。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 不比他高 means not taller, which permits equality; 没有他高 expresses a lower level.
- Both are grammatical, with different meanings. Do not call 不比 an invalid negative of 比.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

9.3 ■ 让 / 叫 / 请 / 使 (make / let / ask someone do)

9.3.1 One person asks another to act

- A teacher politely asks a visitor to come inside.
- 老师请他进来。** – The visitor is the person expected to enter.

9.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **让 / 叫 / 请 / 使 (make / let / ask someone do)**. 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.

妈妈让我学钢琴。

mā ma ràng wǒ xué gāng qín

Word guide: 妈妈 – mom; 让 – let; 我 – me; 学 – learn; 钢琴 – piano.

9.3.3 Read examples in context

请他进来。

qǐng tā jìn lái

Word guide: 请 – please; 他 – him; 进来 – come in.

- In the opening example, **老师请他进来。**: The visitor is the person expected to enter.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

9.3.4 Know the boundary

- The person after 请 is also the understood subject of 进来.
- 让 can allow or cause, while 使 can have a non-human cause, as in 这件事使我高兴; these verbs are not interchangeable in every context.

9.3.5 Use the distinction

- The visitor is the person expected to enter.
- The person after 请 is also the understood subject of 进来. 让 can allow or cause, while 使 can have a non-human cause, as in 这件事使我高兴; these verbs are not interchangeable in every context.

9.3.6 Try it with help closed

A teacher politely asks a visitor to come inside. 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: 老师请他进来。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The person after 请 is also the understood subject of 进来.
- 让 can allow or cause, while 使 can have a non-human cause, as in 这件事使我高兴; these verbs are not interchangeable in every context.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

9.4 ■ 经过 (after going through)

9.4.1 A discussion leads to a decision

- A group decides on a plan after discussing alternatives.
- 经过讨论, 我们决定采用这个方案。** – 经过 presents the discussion as the process preceding the decision.

9.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **经过 (after going through)**. 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.

经过三年的努力，他成功了。

jīng guò sān nián de nǚ lì tā chéng gōng le

Word guide: 经过 – after; 三 – three; 年 – year; 努力 – effort; 他 – he; 成功 – succeed.

9.4.3 Read examples in context

经过讨论，我们决定了。

jīng guò tāo lùn wǒ men jué dìng le

Word guide: 经过 – after; 讨论 – discussion; 我们 – we; 决定 – decide.

- In the opening example, **经过讨论，我们决定采用这个方案。**：经过 presents the discussion as the process preceding the decision.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

9.4.4 Know the boundary

- The process can be brief; it need not be years of effort.
- 经过 also means pass through, as in 经过车站. Check whether a process or a physical route is being described.

9.4.5 Use the distinction

- 经过 presents the discussion as the process preceding the decision.
- The process can be brief; it need not be years of effort. 经过 also means pass through, as in 经过车站. Check whether a process or a physical route is being described.

9.4.6 Try it with help closed

A group decides on a plan after discussing alternatives. 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: 经过讨论，我们决定采用这个方案。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The process can be brief; it need not be years of effort.
- 经过 also means pass through, as in 经过车站. Check whether a process or a physical route is being described.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

10 Auxiliary verbs

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.

10.1 ■ 应该 / 该 (should, ought to)

10.1.1 Advice differs from a prediction

- A tired friend asks what to do, and you suggest rest.
- **你应该多休息。** – 应该 expresses advice or an obligation in this conversation.

10.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **应该 / 该 (should, ought to)**. 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.

你应该多休息。

nǐ yīng gāi duō xiū xi

Word guide: 你 – you; 应该 – should; 多 – more; 休息 – rest.

10.1.3 Read examples in context

该走了!

gāi zǒu le

Word guide: 该 – should; 走 – go.

- In the opening example, **你应该多休息。**：应该 expresses advice or an obligation in this conversation.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

10.1.4 Know the boundary

- 应该 can also express expectation: 他应该已经到了 means he should have arrived by now.
- Negate advice with 不应该 or 不该; meaning depends on whether the speaker recommends or predicts.

10.1.5 Use the distinction

- 应该 expresses advice or an obligation in this conversation.
- 应该 can also express expectation: 他应该已经到了 means he should have arrived by now. Negate advice with 不应该 or 不该; meaning depends on whether the speaker recommends or predicts.

10.1.6 Try it with help closed

A tired friend asks what to do, and you suggest rest. 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: 你应该多休息。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 应该 can also express expectation: 他应该已经到了 means he should have arrived by now.
- Negate advice with 不应该 or 不该; meaning depends on whether the speaker recommends or predicts.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

11 Verb phrases

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.

11.1 ■ 难 + Verb (unpleasant to ...)

11.1.1 Bad taste differs from physical difficulty

- A drink tastes unpleasant although swallowing it is easy.
- **这个药很难喝。** – 难喝 evaluates the unpleasant taste.

11.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **难 + Verb (unpleasant to ...)**. 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.

这个药很难吃。

zhè ge yào hěn nán chī

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 药 – medicine; 很 – very; 难吃 – bad-tasting.

11.1.3 Read examples in context

这首歌很好听。

zhè shǒu gē hěn hǎo tīng

Word guide: 这 – this; 首 – (measure word); 歌 – song; 很 – very; 好听 – nice to hear.

- In the opening example, **这个药很难喝。**: 难喝 evaluates the unpleasant taste.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

11.1.4 Know the boundary

- 难喝 is an established word, not a promise that every 难 + verb means unpleasant.
- 难学 means difficult to learn; distinguish conventional evaluations such as 难听 from task difficulty.

11.1.5 Use the distinction

- 难喝 evaluates the unpleasant taste.
- 难喝 is an established word, not a promise that every 难 + verb means unpleasant. 难学 means difficult to learn; distinguish conventional evaluations such as 难听 from task difficulty.

11.1.6 Try it with help closed

A drink tastes unpleasant although swallowing it is easy. 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: 这个药很难喝。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 难喝 is an established word, not a promise that every 难 +verb means unpleasant.
- 难学 means difficult to learn; distinguish conventional evaluations such as 难听 from task difficulty.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

11.2 ■ Verb + 了 + Duration (did for a length of time)

11.2.1 A duration differs from a clock time

- You describe the length of yesterday's sleep.
- **我睡了八个小时。** – 八个小时 measures how long the sleeping lasted.

11.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Verb + 了 + Duration (did for a length of time)**. 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.

我学了三年中文。

wǒ xué le sān nián Zhōng wén

Word guide: 我 – I; 学 – study; 三 – three; 年 – year; 中文 – Chinese.

11.2.3 Read examples in context

他睡了八个小时。

tā shuì le bā ge xiǎo shí

Word guide: 他 – he; 睡 – sleep; 八 – eight; 个 – (measure word); 小时 – hour.

- In the opening example, **我睡了八个小时。**: 八个小时 measures how long the sleeping lasted.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

11.2.4 Know the boundary

- 八点 names a clock time instead.

- A completed duration alone does not determine whether a longer habit continues: 我学了三年中文 reports three years without automatically proving that study has ended forever.

11.2.5 Use the distinction

- 八个小时 measures how long the sleeping lasted.
- 八点 names a clock time instead. A completed duration alone does not determine whether a longer habit continues: 我学了三年中文 reports three years without automatically proving that study has ended forever.

11.2.6 Try it with help closed

You describe the length of yesterday's sleep. 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: 我睡了八个小时。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 八点 names a clock time instead.
- A completed duration alone does not determine whether a longer habit continues: 我学了三年中文 reports three years without automatically proving that study has ended forever.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

11.3 ■ Verb + 了 + Duration + 了 (have been ...-ing)

11.3.1 A duration is relevant up to now

- You have studied Chinese for three years and are still studying.
- **我学了三年中文了。** – The final 了 makes the elapsed three-year period relevant now; continued study is natural here.

11.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Verb + 了 + Duration + 了 (have been ...-ing)**. 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.

我学了三年中文了。

wǒ xué le sān nián Zhōng wén le

Word guide: 我 – I; 学 – study; 三 – three; 年 – year; 中文 – Chinese.

11.3.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我学了三年中文了。**: The final 了 makes the elapsed three-year period relevant now; continued study is natural here.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

11.3.4 Know the boundary

- The context supplies continuation.
- Compare 我等了一个小时了, 现在终于等到了: the wait can end at the reference point. Two 了 do not guarantee that an action continues indefinitely afterward.

11.3.5 Use the distinction

- The final 了 makes the elapsed three-year period relevant now; continued study is natural here.
- The context supplies continuation. Compare 我等了一个小时了, 现在终于等到了: the wait can end at the reference point. Two 了 do not guarantee that an action continues indefinitely afterward.

11.3.6 Try it with help closed

You have studied Chinese for three years and are still studying. 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: 我学了三年中文了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The context supplies continuation.
- Compare 我等了一个小时了, 现在终于等到了: the wait can end at the reference point. Two 了 do not guarantee that an action continues indefinitely afterward.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

11.4 ■ 没办法 + Verb (no way to / can't)

11.4.1 A refusal names a practical constraint

- You would like to help but cannot leave work today.
- **今天我没办法帮你。** – The speaker presents helping today as unavailable under the circumstances.

11.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **没办法 + Verb (no way to / can't)**. 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.

我没办法帮你。

wǒ méi bàn fǎ bāng nǐ

Word guide: 我 – I; 没办法 – no way; 帮 – help; 你 – you.

11.4.3 Read examples in context

没办法, 只能等。

méi bàn fǎ zhǐ néng děng

Word guide: 没办法 – nothing to be done; 只能 – can only; 等 – wait.

- In the opening example, **今天我没办法帮你。**: The speaker presents helping today as unavailable under the circumstances.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

11.4.4 Know the boundary

- 没办法 does not necessarily describe permanent inability.
- 没办法, 我只好等 may accept a current constraint; explain the obstacle where the listener needs it.

11.4.5 Use the distinction

- The speaker presents helping today as unavailable under the circumstances.
- 没办法 does not necessarily describe permanent inability. 没办法, 我只好等 may accept a current constraint; explain the obstacle where the listener needs it.

11.4.6 Try it with help closed

You would like to help but cannot leave work today. 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: 今天我没办法帮你。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 没办法 does not necessarily describe permanent inability.
- 没办法, 我只好等 may accept a current constraint; explain the obstacle where the listener needs it.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

11.5 ■ Verb reduplication (do a bit / give it a try)

11.5.1 A short trial is offered politely

- You ask a friend to look briefly at a draft.
- **你看看这个吧。** – Reduplication presents looking as a brief, lighter action.

11.5.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Verb reduplication (do a bit / give it a try)**. 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.

你看看这个。

nǐ kàn kan zhè ge

Word guide: 你 – you; 看看 – have a look; 这 – this; 个 – (measure word).

11.5.3 Read examples in context

我们休息休息吧。

wǒ men xiū xi xiū xi ba

Word guide: 我们 – we; 休息 – rest; 休息 – rest.

- In the opening example, **你看看这个吧。**: Reduplication presents looking as a brief, lighter action.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

11.5.4 Know the boundary

- Use 看看 or 看一看 for this single-syllable verb, and 休息休息 for 休息.
- Not every verb naturally reduplicates; completed trials can use 看了看 rather than adding 了 anywhere.

11.5.5 Use the distinction

- Reduplication presents looking as a brief, lighter action.
- Use 看看 or 看一看 for this single-syllable verb, and 休息休息 for 休息. Not every verb naturally reduplicates; completed trials can use 看了看 rather than adding 了 anywhere.

11.5.6 Try it with help closed

You ask a friend to look briefly at a draft. 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: 你看看这个吧。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Use 看看 or 看一看 for this single-syllable verb, and 休息休息 for 休息.
- Not every verb naturally reduplicates; completed trials can use 看了看 rather than adding 了 anywhere.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

11.6 ■ 很 + Verb (feeling verbs with 很)

11.6.1 A feeling can take a degree word

- You express how much you like a new subject.
- **我很喜欢中文。** – 很 modifies the degree of liking, not the number of lessons taken.

11.6.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **很 + Verb (feeling verbs with 很)**. 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.

我很喜欢你。

wǒ hěn xǐ huan nǐ

Word guide: 我 – I; 很 – really; 喜欢 – like; 你 – you.

11.6.3 Read examples in context

我很想家。

wǒ hěn xiǎng jiā

Word guide: 我 – I; 很 – really; 想 – miss; 家 – home.

- In the opening example, **我很喜欢中文。**: 很 modifies the degree of liking, not the number of lessons taken.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

11.6.4 Know the boundary

- Some mental or evaluative verbs take degree words, including 了解 as well as 喜欢.
- A plain physical action such as 吃 does not take 很 in the same degree pattern.

11.6.5 Use the distinction

- 很 modifies the degree of liking, not the number of lessons taken.
- Some mental or evaluative verbs take degree words, including 了解 as well as 喜欢. A plain physical action such as 吃 does not take 很 in the same degree pattern.

11.6.6 Try it with help closed

You express how much you like a new subject. 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: 我很喜欢中文。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Some mental or evaluative verbs take degree words, including 了解 as well as 喜欢.
- A plain physical action such as 吃 does not take 很 in the same degree pattern.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12 Complements

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.

12.1 ■ Direction complement 来 / 去 (toward / away)

12.1.1 Choose direction from a viewpoint

- You stand inside a room and invite a visitor at the door to enter.
- **请进来。** – 来 directs the movement toward the viewpoint inside the room.

12.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Direction complement 来 / 去 (toward / away)**. 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.

请进来!

qǐng jìn lái

Word guide: 请 – please; 进来 – come in.

12.1.3 Read examples in context

把书拿来。

bǎ shū ná lái

Word guide: 把 – (把); 书 – book; 拿来 – bring here.

- In the opening example, **请进来。**: 来 directs the movement toward the viewpoint inside the room.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

12.1.4 Know the boundary

- Choose the speaker's or established narrative viewpoint.
- 进去 is natural from outside when describing movement into a different space; it is not intrinsically wrong for entering a room.

12.1.5 Use the distinction

- 来 directs the movement toward the viewpoint inside the room.
- Choose the speaker's or established narrative viewpoint. 进去 is natural from outside when describing movement into a different space; it is not intrinsically wrong for entering a room.

12.1.6 Try it with help closed

You stand inside a room and invite a visitor at the door to enter. 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: 请进来。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Choose the speaker's or established narrative viewpoint.
- 进去 is natural from outside when describing movement into a different space; it is not intrinsically wrong for entering a room.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.2 ■ Potential complement 得 / 不 (can / can't do it)

12.2.1 Understanding is a possible result

- The recording is clear, but its language is too difficult for you.
- 我听不懂。 – Listening does not achieve understanding.

12.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Potential complement 得 / 不 (can / can't do it)**. 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.

我听得懂。

wǒ tīng de dòng

Word guide: 我 – I; 听 – listen; 得 – (can); 懂 – understand.

12.2.3 Read examples in context

太远了, 我看不见。

tài yuǎn le wǒ kàn bú jiàn

Word guide: 太 – too; 远 – far; 我 – I; 看不见 – can't see.

- In the opening example, 我听不懂。: Listening does not achieve understanding.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

12.2.4 Know the boundary

- 听不懂 is about the achievable result, not a ban on listening.
- 能 also expresses ability as well as permission, so do not gloss 能 as permission only.

12.2.5 Use the distinction

- Listening does not achieve understanding.
- 听不懂 is about the achievable result, not a ban on listening. 能 also expresses ability as well as permission, so do not gloss 能 as permission only.

12.2.6 Try it with help closed

The recording is clear, but its language is too difficult for you. 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: 我听不懂。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 听不懂 is about the achievable result, not a ban on listening.
- 能 also expresses ability as well as permission, so do not gloss 能 as permission only.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.3 ■ Verb + 下去 (keep ...-ing)

12.3.1 An unfinished explanation should continue

- A speaker pauses before finishing a story, and you ask for the rest.
- 请说下去。 – 下去 asks the already started speaking to continue.

12.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Verb + 下去 (keep ...-ing)**. 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.

请说下去。

qǐng shuō xià qù

Word guide: 请 – please; 说 – speak; 下去 – carry on.

12.3.3 Read examples in context

一定要坚持下去!

yí dìng yào jiān chí xià qù

Word guide: 一定 – definitely; 要 – must; 坚持 – persist; 下去 – keep on.

- In the opening example, 请说下去。: 下去 asks the already started speaking to continue.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

12.3.4 Know the boundary

- 说下去 is a continuation use; 走下去 can describe physical movement downwards in another context.
- The complement's meaning depends on the verb and scene.

12.3.5 Use the distinction

- 下去 asks the already started speaking to continue.
- 说下去 is a continuation use; 走下去 can describe physical movement downwards in another context. The complement's meaning depends on the verb and scene.

12.3.6 Try it with help closed

A speaker pauses before finishing a story, and you ask for the rest. 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: 请说下去。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 说下去 is a continuation use; 走下去 can describe physical movement downwards in another context.
- The complement's meaning depends on the verb and scene.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.4 ■ Result complements 好 / 完 / 错 (how it turned out)

12.4.1 Finishing does not prove correctness

- A student finishes all the homework but writes one answer incorrectly.
- 作业做完了, 可是有一道题写错了。 – 完 marks completion, while 错 marks an incorrect result.

12.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Result complements 好 / 完 / 错 (how it turned out)**. 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.

作业做完了。

zuò yè zuò wán le

Word guide: 作业 – homework; 做 – do; 完 – finish.

12.4.3 Read examples in context

我写错了。

wǒ xiě cuò le

Word guide: 我 – I; 写 – write; 错 – wrongly.

- In the opening example, 作业做完了, 可是有一道题写错了。: 完 marks completion, while 错 marks an incorrect result.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

12.4.4 Know the boundary

- 做完 does not imply 做对.
- 做好 may mean properly completed or ready, depending on the activity. Select the result that answers the intended question.

12.4.5 Use the distinction

- 完 marks completion, while 错 marks an incorrect result.
- 做完 does not imply 做对. 做好 may mean properly completed or ready, depending on the activity. Select the result that answers the intended question.

12.4.6 Try it with help closed

A student finishes all the homework but writes one answer incorrectly. 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: 作业做完了, 可是有一道题写错了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 做完 does not imply 做对.
- 做好 may mean properly completed or ready, depending on the activity. Select the result that answers the intended question.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

13 Conditional Statements

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.

13.1 ■ 只要 ... , 就 ... (as long as)

13.1.1 A sufficient condition permits entry

- A venue says a valid ticket is enough to enter.
- **只要有票，就能进去。** – The rule presents having a ticket as sufficient for entry.

13.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **只要 ... , 就 ... (as long as)**. 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.

只要努力，就能成功。

zhǐ yào nǔ lì jiù néng chéng gōng

Word guide: 只要 – as long as; 努力 – work hard; 就 – then; 能 – can; 成功 – succeed.

13.1.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **只要有票，就能进去。**: The rule presents having a ticket as sufficient for entry.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

13.1.4 Know the boundary

- The statement claims sufficiency within the stated rule; it does not assert that nobody can enter by any other authorised method.
- Contrast 只有有票，才能进去, which makes a ticket necessary.

13.1.5 Use the distinction

- The rule presents having a ticket as sufficient for entry.
- The statement claims sufficiency within the stated rule; it does not assert that nobody can enter by any other authorised method. Contrast 只有有票，才能进去, which makes a ticket necessary.

13.1.6 Try it with help closed

A venue says a valid ticket is enough to enter. 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: 只要有票，就能进去。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The statement claims sufficiency within the stated rule; it does not assert that nobody can enter by any other authorised method.
- Contrast 只有有票，才能进去, which makes a ticket necessary.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

13.2 ■ ... , 才 ... (only then / only after)

13.2.1 A required action comes before access

- You must finish registration before using an account.
- **完成注册，才能使用账号。** – Registration is presented as a required condition before use.

13.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **... , 才 ... (only then / only after)**. 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.

你努力，才能成功。

nǐ nǔ lì cái néng chéng gōng

Word guide: 你 – you; 努力 – work hard; 才 – only then; 能 – can; 成功 – succeed.

13.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **完成注册，才能使用账号。**: Registration is presented as a required condition before use.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

13.2.4 Know the boundary

- The requirement does not promise that registration alone solves every obstacle.
- An account could still need approval; distinguish necessary conditions from sufficient ones.

13.2.5 Use the distinction

- Registration is presented as a required condition before use.
- The requirement does not promise that registration alone solves every obstacle. An account could still need approval; distinguish necessary conditions from sufficient ones.

13.2.6 Try it with help closed

You must finish registration before using an account. 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: 完成注册，才能使用账号。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The requirement does not promise that registration alone solves every obstacle.
- An account could still need approval; distinguish necessary conditions from sufficient ones.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

13.3 ■ 只有 ... , 才 ... (only if)

13.3.1 A necessary condition is not a complete recipe

- A venue permits entry only to people with tickets.
- 只要有票，才能进去。 – Having a ticket is presented as necessary for entry.

13.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 只有 ... , 才 ... (only 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.

只有努力，才能成功。

zhǐ yǒu nǚ lì cái néng chéng gōng

Word guide: 只有 – only if; 努力 – work hard; 才 – only then; 能 – can; 成功 – succeed.

13.3.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 只要有票，才能进去。: Having a ticket is presented as necessary for entry.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

13.3.4 Know the boundary

- The rule need not say that a ticket alone is sufficient; identity checks may also be required.
- 只要有票，就能进去 instead presents a ticket as enough under that stated rule.

13.3.5 Use the distinction

- Having a ticket is presented as necessary for entry.
- The rule need not say that a ticket alone is sufficient; identity checks may also be required. 只要有票，就能进去 instead presents a ticket as enough under that stated rule.

13.3.6 Try it with help closed

A venue permits entry only to people with tickets. 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: 只有有票，才能进去。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The rule need not say that a ticket alone is sufficient; identity checks may also be required.
- 只要有票，就能进去 instead presents a ticket as enough under that stated rule.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14 Noun Phrases

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.

14.1 ■ 有的 (some / some..., others...)

14.1.1 A group contains different preferences

- Several classmates prefer tea while other classmates prefer coffee.
- 有的同学喜欢茶, 有的喜欢咖啡。** – 有的 divides the understood group into subsets.

14.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **有的 (some / some..., others...)**. 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.

有的人喜欢茶。

yǒu de rén xǐ huan chá

Word guide: 有的 – some; 人 – people; 喜欢 – like; 茶 – tea.

14.1.3 Read examples in context

有的贵, 有的便宜。

yǒu de guì yǒu de pián yi

Word guide: 有的 – some; 贵 – expensive; 有的 – some; 便宜 – cheap.

- In the opening example, **有的同学喜欢茶, 有的喜欢咖啡。**: 有的 divides the understood group into subsets.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

14.1.4 Know the boundary

- It does not give their sizes, and more than two groups are possible: 有的看书, 有的聊天, 有的听音乐.
- Do not infer that each group is half the class.

14.1.5 Use the distinction

- 有的 divides the understood group into subsets.
- It does not give their sizes, and more than two groups are possible: 有的看书, 有的聊天, 有的听音乐. Do not infer that each group is half the class.

14.1.6 Try it with help closed

Several classmates prefer tea while other classmates prefer coffee. 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: 有的同学喜欢茶, 有的喜欢咖啡。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- It does not give their sizes, and more than two groups are possible: 有的看书, 有的聊天, 有的听音乐.
- Do not infer that each group is half the class.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

15 Numbers and Measure Words

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.

15.1 ■ 半 (half / and a half)

15.1.1 A duration adds half an hour

- You studied for ninety minutes.
- **我学习了一个半小时。** – 一个半小时 measures one and a half hours.

15.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **半 (half / and a half)**. 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.

半个苹果。

bàn ge píng guǒ

Word guide: 半 – half; 个 – (measure word); 苹果 – apple.

15.1.3 Read examples in context

一个半小时。

yī ge bàn xiǎo shí

Word guide: 一 – one; 个 – (measure word); 半 – and a half; 小时 – hour.

- In the opening example, **我学习了一个半小时。**: 一个半小时 measures one and a half hours.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

15.1.4 Know the boundary

- 半个小时 is half an hour.
- Compare 两点半, a clock time, with 两个半小时, a duration. Keep the measure word position: 一个半小时, not 一半个小时.

15.1.5 Use the distinction

- 一个半小时 measures one and a half hours.
- 半个小时 is half an hour. Compare 两点半, a clock time, with 两个半小时, a duration. Keep the measure word position: 一个半小时, not 一半个小时.

15.1.6 Try it with help closed

You studied for ninety minutes. 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: 我学习了一个半小时。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 半个小时 is half an hour.
- Compare 两点半, a clock time, with 两个半小时, a duration. Keep the measure word position: 一个半小时, not 一半个小时.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

16 Sentence Patterns

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.

16.1 ■ 一 ... 也 / 都 ... 不 / 没 (not even one)

16.1.1 A complete zero differs from a small number

- You opened the room and found no one inside.
- 一个人也没有。** – The 一 ... 也没有 frame emphasises zero people.

16.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 一 ... 也 / 都 ... 不 / 没 (not even one). 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.

一个人也没有。

yī ge rén yě méi yǒu

Word guide: 一 – one; 个 – (measure word); 人 – person; 也 – even; 没有 – there isn't.

16.1.3 Read examples in context

我一点也不累。

wǒ yì diǎn yě bù lèi

Word guide: 我 – I; 一点 – a bit; 也 – even; 不 – not; 累 – tired.

- In the opening example, **一个人也没有。**: The 一 ... 也没有 frame emphasises zero people.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

16.1.4 Know the boundary

- Compare 只有一个人, which is one person rather than zero.
- In 一点也不累, the frame negates any degree of tiredness; keep the negative word in the construction.

16.1.5 Use the distinction

- The 一 ... 也没有 frame emphasises zero people.
- Compare 只有一个人, which is one person rather than zero. In 一点也不累, the frame negates any degree of tiredness; keep the negative word in the construction.

16.1.6 Try it with help closed

You opened the room and found no one inside. 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: 一个人也没有。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Compare 只有一个人, which is one person rather than zero.
- In 一点也不累, the frame negates any degree of tiredness; keep the negative word in the construction.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

16.2 ■ 越 ... 越 ... (the more ..., the more ...)

16.2.1 One changing quantity is linked to another

- A larger group needs more chairs.
- 人越多, 需要的椅子越多。** – The number of chairs needed rises with the number of people.

16.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 越 ... 越 ... (the more ..., the more ...). 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.

我越想越生气。

wǒ yuè xiǎng yuè shēng qì

Word guide: 我 – I; 越 – the more; 想 – think; 越 – the more; 生气 – angry.

16.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **人越多, 需要的椅子越多。**: The number of chairs needed rises with the number of people.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

16.2.4 Know the boundary

- 越 ... 越 ... expresses a linked change, not necessarily a scientific causal proof.
- 越便宜越好 links lower price with greater preference, so both numerical quantities need not rise.

16.2.5 Use the distinction

- The number of chairs needed rises with the number of people.
- 越 ... 越 ... expresses a linked change, not necessarily a scientific causal proof. 越便宜越好 links lower price with greater preference, so both numerical quantities need not rise.

16.2.6 Try it with help closed

A larger group needs more chairs. 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: 人越多, 需要的椅子越多。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 越 ... 越 ... expresses a linked change, not necessarily a scientific causal proof.
- 越便宜越好 links lower price with greater preference, so both numerical quantities need not rise.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

16.3 ■ 把 sentences (do something to the object)

16.3.1 A book is moved to a known place

- You put a particular book on the table.
- 我把书放在桌子上。 – 把 introduces the affected book before the action and its location.

16.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **把 sentences (do something to the object)**. 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.

我把书放在桌子上。

wǒ bǎ shū fàng zài zhuō zi shàng

Word guide: 我 – I; 把 – (把); 书 – book; 放 – put; 在 – on; 桌子 – table; 上 – on top.

16.3.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 我把书放在桌子上。: 把 introduces the affected book before the action and its location.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

16.3.4 Know the boundary

- An ordinary 把 construction needs an appropriately elaborated verb phrase, not merely 把书放.
- Put negation or an auxiliary before 把: 我没把书拿走. The book should be identifiable in context.

16.3.5 Use the distinction

- 把 introduces the affected book before the action and its location.
- An ordinary 把 construction needs an appropriately elaborated verb phrase, not merely 把书放. Put negation or an auxiliary before 把: 我没把书拿走. The book should be identifiable in context.

16.3.6 Try it with help closed

You put a particular book on the table. 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: 我把书放在桌子上。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- An ordinary 把 construction needs an appropriately elaborated verb phrase, not merely 把书放.
- Put negation or an auxiliary before 把: 我没把书拿走. The book should be identifiable in context.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

16.4 ■ 被 sentences (the passive)

16.4.1 A passive names the affected item

- Someone took the book away, and you describe what happened to the book.
- 书被他拿走了。 – The book receives the action, while 他 names the doer.

16.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **被 sentences (the passive)**. 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.

书被他拿走了。

shū bèi tā ná zǒu le

Word guide: 书 – book; 被 – by; 他 – him; 拿走 – take away.

16.4.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 书被他拿走了。: The book receives the action, while 他 names the doer.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

16.4.4 Know the boundary

- 书被拿走了 omits the doer when unnecessary or unknown.
- 被 is not limited to bad outcomes: 他被选为队长 is a positive example. Use a complete verb phrase for the intended event.

16.4.5 Use the distinction

- The book receives the action, while 他 names the doer.
- 书被拿走了 omits the doer when unnecessary or unknown. 被 is not limited to bad outcomes: 他被选为队长 is a positive example. Use a complete verb phrase for the intended event.

16.4.6 Try it with help closed

Someone took the book away, and you describe what happened to the book. 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: 书被他拿走了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 书被拿走了 omits the doer when unnecessary or unknown.
- 被 is not limited to bad outcomes: 他被选为队长 is a positive example. Use a complete verb phrase for the intended event.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

17 Basic/Simple Sentence Patterns

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.

17.1 ■ Place + Verb + 着 + Noun (existential)

17.1.1 Describe a room from its location

- A painting hangs on the wall, and you tell someone what is there.
- 墙上挂着一幅画。 – The place comes first and introduces the painting found there.

17.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Place + Verb + 着 + Noun (existential)**. 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.

墙上挂着一幅画。

qiáng shàng guà zhe yì fú huà

Word guide: 墙 – wall; 上 – on; 挂 – hang; 着 – (state); 一 – a; 幅 – (measure word); 画 – painting.

17.1.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 墙上挂着一幅画。: The place comes first and introduces the painting found there.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

17.1.4 Know the boundary

- This is an existential description.
- 一幅画挂在墙上 is also grammatical and starts with the known painting instead. Do not reject the second order merely because this lesson teaches place-first presentation.

17.1.5 Use the distinction

- The place comes first and introduces the painting found there.
- This is an existential description. 一幅画挂在墙上 is also grammatical and starts with the known painting instead. Do not reject the second order merely because this lesson teaches place-first presentation.

17.1.6 Try it with help closed

A painting hangs on the wall, and you tell someone what is there. 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: 墙上挂着一幅画。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This is an existential description.
- 一幅画挂在墙上 is also grammatical and starts with the known painting instead. Do not reject the second order merely because this lesson teaches place-first presentation.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

17.2 ■ 想 + QW + 就 + QW (whatever you like)

17.2.1 A choice can be carried into an action

- A friend lets you pick any available dish.
- **你想吃什么就吃什么。** – The repeated 什么 makes the action follow your choice of food.

17.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **想 + QW + 就 + QW (whatever you like)**. 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.

你想吃什么就吃什么。

nǐ xiǎng chī shén me jiù chī shén me

Word guide: 你 – you; 想 – want; 吃 – eat; 什么 – what; 就 – then; 吃 – eat; 什么 – what.

17.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **你想吃什么就吃什么。**: The repeated 什么 makes the action follow your choice of food.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

17.2.4 Know the boundary

- Match the repeated question word: 想去哪儿就去哪儿.
- Freedom remains subject to the real situation; the grammar does not create food that is unavailable or remove rules mentioned elsewhere.

17.2.5 Use the distinction

- The repeated 什么 makes the action follow your choice of food.
- Match the repeated question word: 想去哪儿就去哪儿. Freedom remains subject to the real situation; the grammar does not create food that is unavailable or remove rules mentioned elsewhere.

17.2.6 Try it with help closed

A friend lets you pick any available dish. 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: 你想吃什么就吃什么。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Match the repeated question word: 想去哪儿就去哪儿.
- Freedom remains subject to the real situation; the grammar does not create food that is unavailable or remove rules mentioned elsewhere.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

17.3 ■ Question Word + 都 (every / all)

17.3.1 Negation changes a whole-set claim

- Everyone in the relevant group knows the answer.
- **谁都知道。** – 谁都 covers every person in the understood group.

17.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Question Word + 都 (every / all)**. 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.

谁都知道。

shéi dōu zhī dào

Word guide: 谁 – who; 都 – all; 知道 – know.

17.3.3 Read examples in context

我什么都不想吃。

wǒ shén me dōu bù xiǎng chī

Word guide: 我 – I; 什么 – anything; 都 – all; 不 – not; 想 – want; 吃 – eat.

- In the opening example, **谁都知道。**: 谁都 covers every person in the understood group.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

17.3.4 Know the boundary

- 谁都不知道 negates knowing for everyone and means nobody knows.
- 不是什么都知道 means not knowing everything; the negative's position changes the scope.

17.3.5 Use the distinction

- 谁都 covers every person in the understood group.
- 谁都不知道 negates knowing for everyone and means nobody knows. 不是什么都知道 means not knowing everything; the negative's position changes the scope.

17.3.6 Try it with help closed

Everyone in the relevant group knows the answer. 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: 谁都知道。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 谁都不知道 negates knowing for everyone and means nobody knows.
- 不是什么都知道 means not knowing everything; the negative's position changes the scope.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

17.4 ■ 越来越 (more and more)

17.4.1 Follow a change through the season

- The weather becomes progressively colder as winter approaches.
- 天气越来越冷了。 – 越来越 describes increasing cold over time.

17.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **越来越 (more and more)**. 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.

天气越来越冷了。

tiān qì yuè lái yuè lěng le

Word guide: 天气 – weather; 越来越 – more and more; 冷 – cold.

17.4.3 Read examples in context

我越来越喜欢中文了。

wǒ yuè lái yuè xǐ huan Zhōng wén le

Word guide: 我 – I; 越来越 – more and more; 喜欢 – like; 中文 – Chinese.

- In the opening example, 天气越来越冷了。: 越来越 describes increasing cold over time.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

17.4.4 Know the boundary

- The same form can describe a decrease in a measured quantity: 价格越来越低 means prices are getting lower.
- It marks change in the following property, not an increase in every numerical value.

17.4.5 Use the distinction

- 越来越 describes increasing cold over time.
- The same form can describe a decrease in a measured quantity: 价格越来越低 means prices are getting lower. It marks change in the following property, not an increase in every numerical value.

17.4.6 Try it with help closed

The weather becomes progressively colder as winter approaches. 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: 天气越来越冷了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The same form can describe a decrease in a measured quantity: 价格越来越低 means prices are getting lower.
- It marks change in the following property, not an increase in every numerical value.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

17.5 ■ Question words as “some- / any-”

17.5.1 An indefinite choice is deliberately unnamed

- You feel hungry but have not chosen a specific food.
- 我想吃点什么。 – 什么 leaves the food unspecified: something to eat.

17.5.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Question words as “some- / any-”**. 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.

我想吃点什么。

wǒ xiǎng chī diǎn shén me

Word guide: 我 – I; 想 – want; 吃 – eat; 点 – a bit; 什么 – something.

17.5.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我想吃点什么。**: 什么 leaves the food unspecified: something to eat.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

17.5.4 Know the boundary

- Context and sentence form decide whether a question word asks a question or is indefinite.
- 我不知道他要吃什么 is an embedded question, not automatically a statement that he wants any food.

17.5.5 Use the distinction

- 什么 leaves the food unspecified: something to eat.
- Context and sentence form decide whether a question word asks a question or is indefinite. 我不知道他要吃什么 is an embedded question, not automatically a statement that he wants any food.

17.5.6 Try it with help closed

You feel hungry but have not chosen a specific food. 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: 我想吃点什么。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Context and sentence form decide whether a question word asks a question or is indefinite.
- 我不知道他要吃什么 is an embedded question, not automatically a statement that he wants any food.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

17.6 ■ 为了 (in order to / for the sake of)

17.6.1 A purpose need not have been achieved

- A person runs regularly to improve health.
- **为了健康，他每天跑步。** – 为了 names health as the purpose of running.

17.6.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **为了 (in order to / for the sake of)**. 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.

为了健康，他每天跑步。

wèi le jiàn kāng tā měi tiān pǎo bù

Word guide: 为了 – in order to; 健康 – health; 他 – he; 每天 – every day; 跑步 – run.

17.6.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **为了健康，他每天跑步。**: 为了 names health as the purpose of running.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

17.6.4 Know the boundary

- 他每天为了健康而跑步 also places the purpose after the subject.
- A purpose is a goal, not evidence that it has been achieved; 因为 explains a cause instead.

17.6.5 Use the distinction

- 为了 names health as the purpose of running.
- 他每天为了健康而跑步 also places the purpose after the subject. A purpose is a goal, not evidence that it has been achieved; 因为 explains a cause instead.

17.6.6 Try it with help closed

A person runs regularly to improve health. 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: 为了健康，他每天跑步。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 他每天为了健康而跑步 also places the purpose after the subject.
- A purpose is a goal, not evidence that it has been achieved; 因为 explains a cause instead.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

18 Comparison Patterns

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.

18.1 ■ 跟 ... 比 (起来) (compared with ...)

18.1.1 A comparison needs a named baseline

- You compare this year's summer with last year's.
- **跟去年比，今年更热。** – 去年 is the baseline; 今年 is the period being evaluated.

18.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **跟 ... 比 (起来) (compared with ...)**. 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.

跟去年比，今年更热。

gēn qù nián bǐ jīn nián gèng rè

Word guide: 跟 – with; 去年 – last year; 比 – compare; 今年 – this year; 更 – even more; 热 – hot.

18.1.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **跟去年比，今年更热。**: 去年 is the baseline; 今年 is the period being evaluated.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

18.1.4 Know the boundary

- 跟去年比起来 also works.
- A changed baseline can change the claim; hotter than last year does not mean hotter than every year on record.

18.1.5 Use the distinction

- 去年 is the baseline; 今年 is the period being evaluated.
- 跟去年比起来 also works. A changed baseline can change the claim; hotter than last year does not mean hotter than every year on record.

18.1.6 Try it with help closed

You compare this year's summer with last year's. 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: 跟去年比, 今年更热。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 跟去年比起来 also works.
- A changed baseline can change the claim; hotter than last year does not mean hotter than every year on record.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

18.2 ■ 比 ... 更 / 还 (even more than)

18.2.1 A comparison does not set an absolute height

- Two short children differ in height.
- **他比我更高。** – The other child is taller relative to the speaker.

18.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **比 ... 更 / 还 (even more than)**. 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.

他比我更高。

tā bǐ wǒ gèng gāo

Word guide: 他 – he; 比 – than; 我 – me; 更 – even more; 高 – tall.

18.2.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **他比我更高。**: The other child is taller relative to the speaker.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

18.2.4 Know the boundary

- 更 can strengthen the comparison without proving that either child is tall against an adult standard.
- An ordinary 比 comparison uses 高, 更高 or 还高 rather than 比我很高.

18.2.5 Use the distinction

- The other child is taller relative to the speaker.
- 更 can strengthen the comparison without proving that either child is tall against an adult standard. An ordinary 比 comparison uses 高, 更高 or 还高 rather than 比我很高.

18.2.6 Try it with help closed

Two short children differ in height. 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: 他比我更高。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 更 can strengthen the comparison without proving that either child is tall against an adult standard.
- An ordinary 比 comparison uses 高, 更高 or 还高 rather than 比我很高.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

18.3 ■ 比 ... Adj + 多了 (much more than)

18.3.1 A large gap differs from a precise measurement

- An older child is much taller than a younger child.
- **他比我高多了。** – 多了 presents the height difference as large.

18.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **比 ... Adj + 多了 (much more than)**. 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.

他比我高多了。

tā bǐ wǒ gāo duō le

Word guide: 他 – he; 比 – than; 我 – me; 高 – tall; 多了 – much more.

18.3.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **他比我高多了。**: 多了 presents the height difference as large.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

18.3.4 Know the boundary

- 高多了 does not state a precise number of centimetres.
- 高一点 describes a smaller gap; 高十厘米 supplies a numerical difference.

18.3.5 Use the distinction

- 多了 presents the height difference as large.
- 高多了 does not state a precise number of centimetres. 高一点 describes a smaller gap; 高十厘米 supplies a numerical difference.

18.3.6 Try it with help closed

An older child is much taller than a younger child. 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: 他比我高多了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 高多了 does not state a precise number of centimetres.
- 高一点 describes a smaller gap; 高十厘米 supplies a numerical difference.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

18.4 ■ N1 + 有 + N2 + Adj (as ... as)

18.4.1 Ask whether a level is reached

- You want to know whether a child's height reaches an older sibling's height.
- **你有他高吗?** – The question asks about reaching the comparison level.

18.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **N1 + 有 + N2 + Adj (as ... as)**. 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.

你有他高吗?

nǐ yǒu tā gāo ma

Word guide: 你 – you; 有 – as ... as; 他 – him; 高 – tall.

18.4.3 Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **你有他高吗?** : The question asks about reaching the comparison level.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

18.4.4 Know the boundary

- The question itself does not assert equality.
- An answer such as 没有 confirms a lower height; 有 in this comparison differs from 有一本书, where it expresses possession.

18.4.5 Use the distinction

- The question asks about reaching the comparison level.
- The question itself does not assert equality. An answer such as 没有 confirms a lower height; 有 in this comparison differs from 有一本书, where it expresses possession.

18.4.6 Try it with help closed

You want to know whether a child's height reaches an older sibling's height. 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: 你有他高吗?

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The question itself does not assert equality.
- An answer such as 没有 confirms a lower height; 有 in this comparison differs from 有一本书, where it expresses possession.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

19 Complex Sentence Patterns

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.

19.1 ■ 除了 ... 都 / 还 (except / besides)

19.1.1 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.

19.1.2 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.

19.1.3 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.

19.1.4 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.

19.1.5 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.

19.1.6 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.

19.2 ■ 如果 ... 的话 (if ...)

19.2.1 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.

19.2.2 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.

19.2.3 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.

19.2.4 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.

19.2.5 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.

19.2.6 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.

19.3 ■ 如果 ... , 就 ... (if ..., then ...)

19.3.1 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.

19.3.2 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.

19.3.3 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.

19.3.4 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.

19.3.5 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.

19.3.6 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.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 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.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

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

19.4.1 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.

19.4.2 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.

19.4.3 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.

19.4.4 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.

19.4.5 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.

19.4.6 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.

20 Comparing similar adverbs

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.

20.1 ■ 才 vs 就 (late vs early)

20.1.1 One clock time supports two reactions

- An early worker expects arrival at six; a late worker expects arrival at nine.
- 他八点就到了。她八点才到。 – 就 and 才 present the same arrival time as early or late against different expectations.

20.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 才 vs 就 (late vs early). 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.

他六点就起床了。
tā liù diǎn jiù qǐ chuáng le
Word guide: 他 – he; 六点 – six o’clock; 就 – already; 起床 – get up.

20.1.3 Read examples in context

他九点才起床。
tā jiǔ diǎn cái qǐ chuáng
Word guide: 他 – he; 九点 – nine o’clock; 才 – not until; 起床 – get up.

- In the opening example, 他八点就到了。她八点才到。: 就 and 才 present the same arrival time as early or late against different expectations.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

20.1.4 Know the boundary

- Check the expected time, not only the clock number.
- 了 is common in the completed 就 example; the words themselves do not assign a tense to every sentence.

20.1.5 Use the distinction

- 就 and 才 present the same arrival time as early or late against different expectations.
- Check the expected time, not only the clock number. 了 is common in the completed 就 example; the words themselves do not assign a tense to every sentence.

20.1.6 Try it with help closed

An early worker expects arrival at six; a late worker expects arrival at nine. 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: 他八点就到了。她八点才到。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Check the expected time, not only the clock number.
- 了 is common in the completed 就 example; the words themselves do not assign a tense to every sentence.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

20.2 ■ 刚 vs 刚才 (just now: adverb vs time-word)

20.2.1 Place a recent-time expression correctly

- A friend left shortly before you arrived.
- **他刚走。刚才他还在这儿。** – 刚 modifies the leaving; 刚才 names the earlier time when he was here.

20.2.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **刚 vs 刚才 (just now: adverb vs time-word)**. 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.

他刚走。

tā gāng zǒu

Word guide: 他 – he; 刚 – just; 走 – leave.

20.2.3 Read examples in context

刚才他在这儿。

gāng cái tā zài zhèr

Word guide: 刚才 – a moment ago; 他 – he; 在 – be at; 这儿 – here.

- In the opening example, **他刚走。刚才他还在这儿。**: 刚 modifies the leaving; 刚才 names the earlier time when he was here.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

20.2.4 Know the boundary

- 刚 can describe a short interval relative to a stated event, as in 刚到学校就下雨了.
- 刚才 can occur before or after the subject and in 刚才的电话; it is a time expression, not merely a longer 刚.

20.2.5 Use the distinction

- 刚 modifies the leaving; 刚才 names the earlier time when he was here.
- 刚 can describe a short interval relative to a stated event, as in 刚到学校就下雨了. 刚才 can occur before or after the subject and in 刚才的电话; it is a time expression, not merely a longer 刚.

20.2.6 Try it with help closed

A friend left shortly before you arrived. 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: 他刚走。刚才他还在这儿。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 刚 can describe a short interval relative to a stated event, as in 刚到学校就下雨了.
- 刚才 can occur before or after the subject and in 刚才的电话; it is a time expression, not merely a longer 刚.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

20.3 ■ 有点 vs 一点 (a bit too... vs a little ...er)

20.3.1 An evaluation becomes a request

- A coat costs more than you want to pay, so you ask for a small reduction.
- **这件衣服有点贵。便宜一点吧。** – 有点贵 evaluates the price; 便宜一点 asks for a lower price.

20.3.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **有点 vs 一点 (a bit too... vs a little ...er)**. 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.

这件衣服有点贵。

zhè jiàn yī fu yǒu diǎn guì

Word guide: 这 – this; 件 – (measure word); 衣服 – clothes; 有点 – a bit; 贵 – expensive.

20.3.3 Read examples in context

便宜一点吧！

pián yì yì diǎn ba

Word guide: 便宜 – cheap; 一点 – a little.

- In the opening example, 这件衣服有点贵。便宜一点吧。: 有点贵 evaluates the price; 便宜一点 asks for a lower price.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

20.3.4 Know the boundary

- 有点 precedes the adjective and 一点 follows it here.
- 有点 often expresses an unwanted state but can express mild surprise or feelings such as 有点高兴; negative evaluation is usual, not compulsory.

20.3.5 Use the distinction

- 有点贵 evaluates the price; 便宜一点 asks for a lower price.
- 有点 precedes the adjective and 一点 follows it here. 有点 often expresses an unwanted state but can express mild surprise or feelings such as 有点高兴; negative evaluation is usual, not compulsory.

20.3.6 Try it with help closed

A coat costs more than you want to pay, so you ask for a small reduction. 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: 这件衣服有点贵。便宜一点吧。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 有点 precedes the adjective and 一点 follows it here.
- 有点 often expresses an unwanted state but can express mild surprise or feelings such as 有点高兴; negative evaluation is usual, not compulsory.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

20.4 ■ 再 vs 又 (again: future vs past)

20.4.1 Distinguish a new plan from a known recurrence

- A visitor came today and plans another visit tomorrow.
- 今天他又来了，明天再来。 – 又 marks today’s recurrence; 再 proposes the next visit.

20.4.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 再 vs 又 (again: future vs past). 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.

他又迟到了。

tā yòu chí dào le

Word guide: 他 – he; 又 – again; 迟到 – late.

20.4.3 Read examples in context

明天再来吧！

míng tiān zài lái ba

Word guide: 明天 – tomorrow; 再 – again; 来 – come.

- In the opening example, 今天他又来了，明天再来。: 又 marks today’s recurrence; 再 proposes the next visit.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

20.4.4 Know the boundary

- This is a useful basic contrast, not a past/future tense system.
- 明天又是星期一 is a known recurrence in the future; 再 also links subsequent steps, as in 先看再说.

20.4.5 Use the distinction

- 又 marks today’s recurrence; 再 proposes the next visit.
- This is a useful basic contrast, not a past/future tense system. 明天又是星期一 is a known recurrence in the future; 再 also links subsequent steps, as in 先看再说.

20.4.6 Try it with help closed

A visitor came today and plans another visit tomorrow. 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: 今天他又来了，明天再来。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This is a useful basic contrast, not a past/future tense system.
- 明天又是星期一 is a known recurrence in the future; 再 also links subsequent steps, as in 先看再说.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

21 Comparing similar conjunctions

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.

21.1 ■ 还是 vs 或者 (or: question vs statement)

21.1.1 An embedded question still asks for a choice

- You do not know which drink a guest prefers.
- **我不知道他喝茶还是咖啡。** – 还是 keeps the alternative choice inside the statement of uncertainty.

21.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **还是 vs 或者 (or: question vs statement)**. 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.

你喝茶还是咖啡？

nǐ hē chá hái shì kā fēi

Word guide: 你 – you; 喝 – drink; 茶 – tea; 还是 – or; 咖啡 – coffee.

21.1.3 Read examples in context

茶或者咖啡都行。

chá huò zhě kā fēi dōu xíng

Word guide: 茶 – tea; 或者 – or; 咖啡 – coffee; 都 – both; 行 – fine.

- In the opening example, **我不知道他喝茶还是咖啡。**: 还是 keeps the alternative choice inside the statement of uncertainty.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

21.1.4 Know the boundary

- Compare 茶或者咖啡都行, a statement offering acceptable options.
- Choose 还是 for an alternative question, including an embedded one, rather than using the whole sentence’s final punctuation alone.

21.1.5 Use the distinction

- 还是 keeps the alternative choice inside the statement of uncertainty.
- Compare 茶或者咖啡都行, a statement offering acceptable options. Choose 还是 for an alternative question, including an embedded one, rather than using the whole sentence’s final punctuation alone.

21.1.6 Try it with help closed

You do not know which drink a guest prefers. 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: 我不知道他喝茶还是咖啡。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Compare 茶或者咖啡都行, a statement offering acceptable options.
- Choose 还是 for an alternative question, including an embedded one, rather than using the whole sentence’s final punctuation alone.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

22 Comparing similar time words

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.

22.1 ■ 以后 vs 然后 vs 后来 (then / after)

22.1.1 A plan's next step differs from a later story

- You first eat and then plan to study; later you describe what actually happened.
- **先吃饭，然后学习。后来我们又复习了一遍。** – 然后 gives the next step, while 后来 introduces the later part of the account.

22.1.2 Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **以后 vs 然后 vs 后来 (then / after)**. 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.

先吃饭，然后睡觉。

xiān chī fàn rán hòu shuì jiào

Word guide: 先 – first; 吃饭 – eat; 然后 – then; 睡觉 – sleep.

22.1.3 Read examples in context

后来我们没去。

hòu lái wǒ men méi qù

Word guide: 后来 – later; 我们 – we; 没 – not; 去 – go.

- In the opening example, **先吃饭，然后学习。后来我们又复习了一遍。**: 然后 gives the next step, while 后来 introduces the later part of the account.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

22.1.4 Know the boundary

- 以后 can follow a reference event: 吃饭以后学习.
- A future plan does not normally use 后来 to mean next; choose from temporal relationship, not the shared English word then.

22.1.5 Use the distinction

- 然后 gives the next step, while 后来 introduces the later part of the account.
- 以后 can follow a reference event: 吃饭以后学习. A future plan does not normally use 后来 to mean next; choose from temporal relationship, not the shared English word then.

22.1.6 Try it with help closed

You first eat and then plan to study; later you describe what actually happened. 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: 先吃饭，然后学习。后来我们又复习了一遍。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 以后 can follow a reference event: 吃饭以后学习.
- A future plan does not normally use 后来 to mean next; choose from temporal relationship, not the shared English word then.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.