

Verbs

HSK 4 Grammar

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

让 / 叫 / 请 / 使 (causative)

■ Follow who experiences the resulting state

- A kind action makes you feel moved.
- 这件事使我很感动。** – The action causes the speaker's feeling of being moved.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **让 / 叫 / 请 / 使 (causative)**. 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.

这件事使我很感动。

zhè jiàn shì shǐ wǒ hěn gǎn dòng

Word guide: 这 – this; 件 – (measure word); 事 – matter; 使 – make; 我 – me; 很 – very; 感动 – moved.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这件事使我很感动。**: The action causes the speaker's feeling of being moved.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 使 is formal and 让 often works in ordinary speech.
- 请 asks and 让 can permit, so all four causative-looking verbs are not freely interchangeable.

■ Use the distinction

- The action causes the speaker's feeling of being moved.
- 使 is formal and 让 often works in ordinary speech. 请 asks and 让 can permit, so all four causative-looking verbs are not freely interchangeable.

■ Try it with help closed

A kind action makes you feel moved. 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: 这件事使我很感动。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 使 is formal and 让 often works in ordinary speech.
- 请 asks and 让 can permit, so all four causative-looking verbs are not freely interchangeable.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

要看 / 得看 (it depends on)

■ An unresolved decision depends on a factor

- An outdoor plan has not been settled because of the weather.
- 这要看天气。** – The decision depends on what the weather is like.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **要看 / 得看 (it depends on)**. 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.

这要看你的决定。

zhè yào kàn nǐ de jué dìng

Word guide: 这 – this; 要看 – depends on; 你 – you; 决定 – decision.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这要看天气。**: The decision depends on what the weather is like.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 看 has the dependency sense here.
- The sentence does not tell you what the weather will be or what choice will follow each possibility.

■ Use the distinction

- The decision depends on what the weather is like.
- 看 has the dependency sense here. The sentence does not tell you what the weather will be or what choice will follow each possibility.

■ Try it with help closed

An outdoor plan has not been settled because of the weather. 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: 这要看天气。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 看 has the dependency sense here.
- The sentence does not tell you what the weather will be or what choice will follow each possibility.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

好像 (it seems / as if)

■ An impression leaves room for error

- A person behaves as though they do not know the answer.
- 他好像不知道。 – The speaker has the impression that the person does not know.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 好像 (it seems / as 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.

他好像不知道。

tā hǎo xiàng bù zhī dào

Word guide: 他 – he; 好像 – seems; 不 – not; 知道 – know.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 他好像不知道。: The speaker has the impression that the person does not know.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 好像 can also describe resemblance.
- In this inference use, the actual knowledge remains unconfirmed.

■ Use the distinction

- The speaker has the impression that the person does not know.
- 好像 can also describe resemblance. In this inference use, the actual knowledge remains unconfirmed.

■ Try it with help closed

A person behaves as though they do not know 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: 他好像不知道。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 好像 can also describe resemblance.
- In this inference use, the actual knowledge remains unconfirmed.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

在于 (lies in / consists in)

■ Identify the issue rather than a location

- A group explains that limited time is the central problem.
- 问题在于时间不够。 – 在于 links the problem to insufficient time.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 在于 (lies in / consists in). 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.

关键在于努力。

guān jiàn zài yú nǔ lì

Word guide: 关键 – the key; 在于 – lies in; 努力 – effort.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **问题在于时间不够。**: 在于 links the problem to insufficient time.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- This is an abstract explanatory relationship.
- The speaker's analysis may need evidence; it is not a physical location statement.

■ Use the distinction

- 在于 links the problem to insufficient time.
- This is an abstract explanatory relationship. The speaker's analysis may need evidence; it is not a physical location statement.

■ Try it with help closed

A group explains that limited time is the central problem. 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: 问题在于时间不够。

- 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 abstract explanatory relationship.
- The speaker's analysis may need evidence; it is not a physical location statement.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

以为 (mistakenly think)

■ An assumption may be corrected

- You thought a friend had left, but now see them in the room.
- **我以为你走了。** – The earlier assumption conflicts with what you now observe.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **以为 (mistakenly think)**. 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.

我以为你走了。

wǒ yǐ wéi nǐ zǒu le

Word guide: 我 – I; 以为 – thought; 你 – you; 走 – leave.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我以为你走了。**: The earlier assumption conflicts with what you now observe.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 以为 commonly implies a mistaken assumption in this context.
- It is not a logical guarantee that every belief introduced by 以为 is false.

■ Use the distinction

- The earlier assumption conflicts with what you now observe.
- 以为 commonly implies a mistaken assumption in this context. It is not a logical guarantee that every belief introduced by 以为 is false.

■ Try it with help closed

You thought a friend had left, but now see them in the room. 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: 我以为你走了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 以为 commonly implies a mistaken assumption in this context.
- It is not a logical guarantee that every belief introduced by 以为 is false.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

通过 (through / by means of)

■ A method needs someone using it

- Study helped you improve.
- **通过学习, 我进步了。** – 学习 names the means by which the speaker improved.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **通过 (through / by means 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.

通过学习，我进步了。

tōng guò xué xí wǒ jìn bù le

Word guide: 通过 – through; 学习 – study; 我 – I; 进步 – improve.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **通过学习，我进步了。**: 学习 names the means by which the speaker improved.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 我 remains the subject of 进步.
- A 通过 phrase names a means or channel, not automatically the person doing every following action.

■ Use the distinction

- 学习 names the means by which the speaker improved.
- 我 remains the subject of 进步. A 通过 phrase names a means or channel, not automatically the person doing every following action.

■ Try it with help closed

Study helped you improve. 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: 通过学习，我进步了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 我 remains the subject of 进步.
- A 通过 phrase names a means or channel, not automatically the person doing every following action.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

来自 (come from)

■ Origins extend beyond places

- Information comes from a particular report.
- **这个消息来自一份报告。** – 来自 names the report as the information’s source.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **来自 (come from)**. 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.

这些学生来自不同国家。

zhè xiē xué shēng lái zì bù tóng guó jiā

Word guide: 这些 – these; 学生 – students; 来自 – come from; 不同 – different; 国家 – countries.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这个消息来自一份报告。**: 来自 names the report as the information’s source.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- The source can be a place, person or document.
- 来自 does not prove that the source is accurate or trustworthy.

■ Use the distinction

- 来自 names the report as the information’s source.
- The source can be a place, person or document. 来自 does not prove that the source is accurate or trustworthy.

■ Try it with help closed

Information comes from a particular report. 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: 这个消息来自一份报告。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The source can be a place, person or document.
- 来自 does not prove that the source is accurate or trustworthy.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

来 as a dummy verb (I'll do it)

■ Recover the action behind an offer

- A difficult task needs a volunteer and you offer to do it.
- **我来吧。** – 来 stands for undertaking the shared task in this context.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **来 as a dummy verb (I'll 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.

我来吧。

wǒ lái ba

Word guide: 我 – I; 来 – (do it).

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **我来吧。**: 来 stands for undertaking the shared task in this context.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- In another context 我来 can mean coming to a place.
- The surrounding activity determines the omitted action.

■ Use the distinction

- 来 stands for undertaking the shared task in this context.
- In another context 我来 can mean coming to a place. The surrounding activity determines the omitted action.

■ Try it with help closed

A difficult task needs a volunteer and you offer to do 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: 我来吧。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- In another context 我来 can mean coming to a place.
- The surrounding activity determines the omitted action.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.