

HSK 6 语法

中文版

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1 副词

1.1 动词 + 得 + 倒 + 形容词—the rebuking 倒

Tucked inside a complement, 倒 turns the comment **sour** —“easy for *you* to say.” It implies the opposite of reality and is aimed mostly at the listener, with 说 / 想.

Structure: Subject + Verb + 得 + 倒 + Adjective

{zh: 说 |shuō|saying it / 得 |de / 倒 |dào|easy enough / 容易 |róng yì / , 那 |nà|then / 你 |nǐ|you / 来 |lái|do it / ! }

Easy for you to say—you do it then!

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 想 |xiǎng|wish / 得 |de / 倒 |dào|nicely / 美 |měi / ! 不 |bù|don't / 工
作 |gōng zuò|work / 还 |hái|yet / 想 |xiǎng|want / 拿 |ná|to be paid / 工资 |gōng zī / ?
}

You wish! Get paid without working?

Remember: 得 + 倒 = a sarcastic jab —“说得倒容易” = “easy enough for you to say.” Reach for it to push back at the other person’s 说 / 想. (你想得倒美! = “you wish!”)

Watch out

- This 倒 (dào, “but / contrary”) rebukes; don’t confuse it with 倒 (dǎo, “fall over”).

1.2 很是 + 形容词—“very, quite” (literary)

很是 is a dressed-up 很—the same “very,” but with a formal, literary flavour you’ll meet in writing rather than everyday speech. The extra 是 makes the emphasis feel weightier.

Structure: Subject + 很是 + Adjective

{zh: 你 |nǐ|your / 的 |de / 表现 |biǎo xiàn|performance / 让 |ràng|made / 领导 |lǐng
导 |dǎo|the boss / 很是 |hěn shì|very / 满意 |mǎn yì|pleased / 。 }

Your performance pleased the boss greatly.

{zh: 这样 |zhè yàng|doing it this way / 做 |zuò / 很是 |hěn shì|quite / 必要 |bì
要 |yào|necessary / 。 }

Doing it this way is quite necessary.

Remember: 很是 = 很 in its Sunday best —a written, weightier “very,” pairing with two-syllable adjectives (很是满意, 很是高兴). If it sounds too formal to say out loud, that’s exactly the right feel.

Watch out

- Keep it for writing—in speech, plain 很 / 非常 is natural.

1.3 足足 + 数量 — “a full, all of”

足足 stresses that an amount is **fully that much** — “a full, all of, every bit of.” It always pairs with a number, often with 有 or 等.

Structure: 足足 + Verb (+ Number) · Verb + 足足

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 等 |děng|waited / 了 |le / 她 |tā|for her / 足足 |zú zú|a full / 两个 |liǎng ge|two / 小时 |xiǎo shí|hours / 。 }

I waited a full two hours for her.

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 在 |zài|in / 中国 |Zhōng guó|China / 住 |zhù|lived / 了 |le / 足足 |zú zú|all of / 十年 |shí nián|ten years / 。 }

He lived in China for all of ten years.

Remember: 足足 = “a FULL, every bit of” (足 = “enough / full”) — it always rides a number and underlines that the amount is *large*: 足足两个小时 (“a *whole* two hours”), 足足十年 (“all of ten years”).

Watch out

- It needs a quantity — 足足 with no number to amplify is incomplete.

1.4 一再 + 动词 — “again and again, repeatedly”

一再 means doing something **insistently, again and again** — “repeatedly, time and again.” It precedes a two-syllable verb (often of speech or request), and can take 地.

Structure: Subject + 一再 + Verb

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 一再 |yí zài|again and again / 跟 |gēn / 你 |nǐ|you / 说 |shuō|told / , 出门 |chū mén|out and about / 要 |yào|to be / 小心 |xiǎo xīn|careful / 。 }

I've told you again and again to be careful when you're out.

{zh: 老师 |lǎo shī|the teacher / 一再 |yí zài|repeatedly / 强调 |qiáng diào|stressed / 这 |zhè|this / 一点 |yì diǎn|point / 。 }

The teacher stressed this point over and over.

Remember: 一再 = “time and again, insistently” — formal, with two-syllable verbs of speech/thought (一再强调, 一再请求, 一再解释). It's the close cousin of 再三.

Watch out

- Reserve it for repeated *deliberate* acts — not a plain “often” (that's 常常).

1.5 凡是 + 名词 + 都 / 就 / 一律 — “all, every (no exception)”

凡是 sweeps over **every member** of a category — “any, every, whoever / whatever” (= 只要是). It opens the sentence and pairs with 都 / 就 / 一律.

Structure: 凡是 + Noun + 都 / 就 / 一律 + Predicate

{zh: 凡是 |fán shì|all / 会员 |huì yuán|members / 都 |dōu / 有 |yǒu|get / 折扣 |zhé kòu|a discount / 。 }

All members get a discount.

{zh: 凡是 |fán shì|any / 不 |bù / 听话 |tīng huà|disobedient / 的 |de / 孩子 |hái zi|child / 都 |dōu / 没 |méi|gets no / 糖 |táng|sweets / 吃 |chī / 。 }

Any child who misbehaves gets no sweets.

Remember: 凡是 = "any and every, without exception" (= 只要是) —it states a blanket rule and pairs with 都 / 就 / 一律 to nail it down (凡是会员都...). Use it to leave *no* member out.

Watch out

- It needs the 都 / 就 / 一律 downstream to complete the "every" sweep.

1.6 向来 (都) + 动词—"always, all along"

向来 describes a **long-standing habit or trait** —"always, has always, all along." It's very close to 一向.

Structure: Subject + 向来 (都) + Verb / Adjective

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 向来 |xiàng lái|has always / 都 |dōu / 很 |hěn|very / 守时 |shǒu shí|punctual / 。 }

He's always been punctual.

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 向来 |xiàng lái|have never / 不 |bù / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|liked / 点 |diǎn|ordering / 外卖 |wài mài|takeaway / 。 }

I've never liked ordering takeaway.

Remember: 向来 = a settled, unchanging pattern over time ("has always been this way") —interchangeable with 一向 (further down this file). It looks back over the long run.

Watch out

- It's for *long-held* traits —not a one-off recent stretch (that's 一直).

1.7 果然—"sure enough, as expected"

果然 confirms a **prediction came true** —"sure enough, just as expected." It's the opposite of 竟然 / 居然 ("unexpectedly").

Structure: Subject + 果然 + Predicate · 果然如此 / 果然不出所料

{zh: 第一名 |dì yī míng|first place / 果然 |guǒ rán|sure enough / 是 |shì|is / 她 |tā|her / ! 我 |wǒ|I / 就 |jiù / 知道 |zhī dào|knew it / 。 }

First place is her, sure enough —I knew it!

{zh: 天气预报 |tiān qì yù bào|the forecast / 说 |shuō|said / 下雨 |xià yǔ|rain / , 果然如此 |guǒ rán rú cǐ|and so it did / 。 }

The forecast said rain, and sure enough it did.

Remember: 果然 = "sure enough, just as I foresaw" —it *confirms* a prediction (果然如此, "just so"). It's the mirror image of 竟然 / 居然 ("and yet, unexpectedly"): foreseen vs surprising.

Watch out

- If the outcome *surprised* you, you want 竟然 / 居然, not 果然.

1.8 似乎—"it seems, as if"

似乎 hedges toward an **impression** —"it seems, apparently, as if." It's a formal cousin of 好像, used for an uncertain judgement, or to flag "seems X but actually Y."

Structure: Subject + 似乎……

{zh: 老板 |lǎo bǎn|the boss / 今天 |jīn tiān|today / 似乎 |sì hū|seems / 不太 |bú tài|not very / 高兴 |gāo xìng|happy / 。 }

The boss seems a little upset today.

{zh: 她 |tā|she / 似乎 |sì hū|seems to be / 隐瞒 |yǐn mán|hiding / 了 |le / 什么 |shén me|something / 。 }

She seems to be hiding something.

Remember: 似乎 = the formal 好像 ("it seems, as if") —a hedged, uncertain impression. It can quietly set up "似乎…其实…" ("seems so, but actually…").

Watch out

- It's writing-leaning —in casual speech 好像 is the natural choice.

1.9 偏偏—"contrary to expectation, of all things"

偏偏 marks a frustrating **clash with what was required or hoped** —"of all things, just had to." It can also mean "only …(annoyingly)," singling out the one exception.

Structure: A , Subject + 偏偏 + B

{zh: 不 |bù|we told him not to / 叫 |jiào / 他 |tā / 去 |qù|go / , 他 |tā|he / 偏偏 |piān piān|of all things / 要 |yào|insisted on / 去 |qù|going / 。 }

We told him not to go, and of course he insisted.

{zh: 别人 |bié rén|everyone else / 都 |dōu / 早 |zǎo|early / 到 |dào|arrived / 了 |le / , 偏偏 |piān piān|only / 他 |tā|he / 一个人 |yí ge rén|alone / 迟到 |chí dào|was late / 。 }

Everyone else was early —only he was late.

Remember: 偏偏 = a frustrated "of all things / just HAD to" —things go *against* what you wanted (叫他别去, 他偏偏要去, "told him not to, and *of course* he insisted"). It can also single out the one annoying exception ("only he…").

Watch out

- It always carries *annoyance* —things deliberately not going your way.

1.10 再不……，也……—“even the most …, still”

Here 再不…也… concedes an extreme —“however un-…one is, still ….” It grants the unfavourable case and overrides it (即使不…也…).

Structure: 再不 + Adjective , 也 + Result

{zh: 再不 |zài bù|however un- / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|fond / , 你 |nǐ|you / 也 |yě|still / 得 |děi|have to / 去 |qù|go / 一趟 |yí tàng|once / 。 }

However little you like it, you still have to go.

{zh: 再不 |zài bù|even if not / 饿 |è|hungry / , 也 |yě|still / 吃 |chī|eat / 点 |diǎn|a little / 吧 |ba / 。 }

Even if you're not hungry, eat a bit.

Remember: 再不 X 也 Y = “however un-X, still Y” —it grants even the unfavourable extreme and holds the result firm (再不喜欢也得去, “however little you like it, you still have to go”). 即使不…也….

Watch out

- This 再不 (“however not…”) differs from the warning 再不…就…了 (“if not now, then…!”) in HSK 5.

1.11 一律—“uniformly, without exception”

一律 means a rule applies **to all alike** —“uniformly, across the board, without exception.” It's written / official, often pairs with 都, and is mostly for people.

Structure: 一律 (+ 都) + Verb / Adjective

{zh: 明天 |míng tiān|tomorrow's / 的 |de / 会议 |huì yì|meeting / 一律 |yí lǜ|without exception / 都 |dōu / 要 |yào|must / 参加 |cān jiā|attend / 。 }

Everyone must attend tomorrow's meeting.

{zh: 七十岁 |qī shí suì|over-seventies / 以上 |yǐ shàng / 坐 |zuò|riding / 公交 |gōng jiāo|the bus / 一律 |yí lǜ|all / 免费 |miǎn fèi|free / 。 }

Over-70s ride the bus free, no exceptions.

Remember: 一律 = “one treatment for ALL, across the board” —official/written, often with 都 (一律免费, “free for everyone, no exceptions”). Picture a single rule stamped on every case alike.

Watch out

- It's for *uniform treatment*, mostly of people —heavier and more official than a plain 都.

1.12 无非 (是) — “nothing but, merely”

无非 plays a matter **down to its essentials** — “nothing more than, merely, only.” It often ends with 罢了 or 而已. The 是 is optional with a verb, but **required** with a noun.

Structure: 无非 + (是) + Verb / Noun (+ 罢了 / 而已)

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 无非 |wú fēi|only / 批评 |pī píng|told off / 了 |le / 他 |tā|him / 几句 |jǐ jù|a bit / , 他 |tā|he / 怎么 |zěnmē|why / 哭 |kū|crying / 了 |le / ? }

I only told him off a little — why’s he crying?

{zh: 孩子 |hái zi|the child / 想 |xiǎng|wants / 得到 |dé dào / 的 |de / 无非 |wú fēi|is nothing but / 是 |shì / 你 |nǐ|your / 的 |de / 关心 |guān xīn|attention / 罢了 |bà le / 。 }

All the child wants is your attention, nothing more.

Remember: 无非 = “nothing more than, merely” — it strips a thing to its plain core, often capped with 罢了 / 而已 (“...that’s all”). The 是 is optional before a verb, but **required** before a noun (无非是个误会).

Watch out

- It deflates (“it’s only...”) — don’t use it where you mean to emphasise.

1.13 一向 — “always, all along”

一向 marks a **consistent, long-held** habit or attitude — “always, all along.” The feeling is “it’s always been this way.”

Structure: Subject + 一向 + Habit / Attitude

{zh: 小王 |Xiǎo Wáng|Xiao Wang / 一向 |yí xiàng|has always / 上班 |shàng bān|come to work / 很 |hěn|very / 早 |zǎo|early / , 这次 |zhè cì|this time / 怎么 |zěnmē|what’s / 了 |le|wrong / ? }

Xiao Wang’s always early to work — what happened this time?

{zh: 妈妈 |mā ma|mum / 一向 |yí xiàng|has always / 支持 |zhī chí|backed / 我 |wǒ|my / 的 |de / 决定 |jué dìng|decisions / 。 }

Mum has always backed my decisions.

Remember: 一向 = “it’s always been this way” — a settled disposition over the long run. It’s the twin of 向来 (earlier in this file); both look back over a long, unbroken habit.

Watch out

- For one *recent* unbroken stretch (“the whole time lately”), use 一直, not 一向.

1.14 到时候 — “when the time comes”

到时候 points to a **future moment** when something will apply — “when the time comes, by then.”

Structure: …… , 到时候 + ……

{zh: 现在 |xiàn zài|now / 不 |bù|if you don't / 好好 |hǎo hǎo|properly / 准备 |zhǔn bèi|prepare / , 到时候 |dào shí hou|when the time comes / 肯定 |kěn dìng|surely / 考不好 |kǎo bu hǎo|do badly / 。 }

If you don't prepare now, you'll do badly when the time comes.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 先 |xiān|first / 自己 |zì jǐ|yourself / 试试 |shì shì|try / , 到时候 |dào shí hou|then / 我 |wǒ|I / 再 |zài / 教 |jiāo|teach / 你 |nǐ|you / 。 }

Try it yourself first; I'll teach you when the time comes.

Remember: 到时候 = "when the time comes, by then" —it points ahead to a future moment. Handy set phrases: 到时候见 ("see you then"), 到时候看吧 ("we'll see then").

Watch out

- It looks *forward* —don't use it for "at that (past) time," which is 那时候.

1.15 何必—"why bother, there's no need"

何必 is a **rhetorical** "why (must) ...?" —arguing that something is **unnecessary**. It often ends with 呢, and 何必呢? can stand alone for "why bother?"

Structure: Subject + 何必 + Predicate (+ 呢)

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 已经 |yǐ jīng|already / 道歉 |dào qiàn|apologised / 了 |le / , 你 |nǐ|you / 何必 |hé bì|why / 还 |hái|still / 生气 |shēng qì|be angry / ? }

He's already apologised —why stay angry?

{zh: 都是 |dōu shì|we're all / 一家人 |yì jiā rén|family / , 何必 |hé bì|why bother / 这么 |zhè me|being so / 客气 |kè qi|formal / ? }

We're all family —no need to be so formal.

Remember: 何必 = a rhetorical "why (must) you...?" = "there's no need." It nudges someone to drop a pointless effort (你何必生气? "why be angry?"); 何必呢? alone = "why bother?". Proverb: 早知如此, 何必当初 ("if you'd known, why do it in the first place?").

Watch out

- It's not a real question —it's arguing that the thing is *unnecessary*.

2 Auxiliary Words

2.1 Sentence + 来着—”(was just) …, what was it again?”

来着 tags onto a sentence to recall **what was happening or said a moment ago** —”(someone) was just …, what was it again?” It’s casual and spoken. It has **no negative form** (never 不 / 没来着), and in a question it appears only with 什么, 谁, or 哪儿.

Structure: Sentence + 来着

{zh: 昨天 |zuó tiān|yesterday / 有 |yǒu|someone / 人 |rén / 来 |lái|came / 找 |zhǎo|looking for / 你 |nǐ|you / 来着 |lái zhe / 。 }

Someone came looking for you yesterday.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 刚才 |gāng cái|just now / 说 |shuō|were saying / 什么 |shén me|what / 来着 |lái zhe / ? }

What were you just saying again?

Remember: 来着 = ”…what was it again?” —a casual tag for recalling the just-past (你刚才说什么**来着**?). Two limits: **no negative** (never 没来着), and in questions only with 什么 / 谁 / 哪儿.

Watch out

- It’s purely for the *recent* past —not the distant past, and not future.

3 连词

3.1 以免 + 动词短语—“so as to avoid, lest”

以免 introduces an **unwanted outcome to prevent** —“so as to avoid, in order not to, lest.” (It’s a shortened 以便避免.) The first clause gives a warning; the 以免 clause names the bad result. It needs a **complete verb phrase**, not a bare word.

Structure: Action , 以免 + Undesirable Result

{zh: 这儿 |zhèr|there are / 有 |yǒu / 高压电线 |gāo yā diàn xiàn|high-voltage wires here / , 请 |qǐng|please / 不要 |bú yào|don’t / 靠近 |kào jìn|go near / , 以免 |yǐ miǎn|lest / 发生 |fā shēng|something / 危险 |wēi xiǎn|dangerous happen / 。 }

There are high-voltage wires —please keep away, lest something dangerous happen.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 赶紧 |gǎn jǐn|hurry up and / 走 |zǒu|go / , 以免 |yǐ miǎn|so as not to / 晚 |wǎn|be late / 了 |le / 。 }

Hurry up and go, so you’re not late.

Remember: 以免 = 以 (“so as to”) + 免 (“avoid”) = “lest / so as to avoid.” The 以免 clause names the *bad* thing you’re heading off (小心点, 以免出事). It needs a full verb phrase: 以免晚了 , not 以免晚.

Watch out

- It always introduces the *unwanted* outcome —for a *wanted* purpose, use 以便 (“so as to”).

3.2 以及—“as well as, and”

以及 links **nouns or phrases** (chiefly in writing), often appending less-central items at the end —“as well as, along with, and.” The part **before** 以及 is usually the main one. It can also join clauses. It’s more formal than 和.

Structure: A、B 以及 C

{zh: 听觉 |tīng jué|hearing / 、 视觉 |shì jué|sight / 以及 |yǐ jí|as well as / 触觉 |chù jué|touch / 都 |dōu|are all / 属于 |shǔ yú / 感官 |gǎn guān|senses / 。 }

Hearing, sight, as well as touch are all senses.

{zh: 院子里 |yuàn zi lǐ|the yard / 种着 |zhòng zhe|has growing / 玫瑰 |méi gui|roses / 、 茉莉 |mò lì|jasmine / 以及 |yǐ jí|and / 其他 |qí tā|other / 花草 |huā cǎo|plants / 。 }

The yard has roses, jasmine, and other plants.

Remember: 以及 = a formal “and / as well as,” with the **MAIN** items before it and secondary ones after (玫瑰、茉莉 以及其他花草). More formal than 和, and it can also join clauses.

Watch out

- Put the central items *before* 以及—what follows reads as an add-on.

3.3 总之—“in short, in a word”

总之 **sums up** what came before —“in short, in a word, all in all.” It introduces a wrapping-up conclusion.

Structure: (……,) 总之, ……

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 经常 |jīng cháng|often / 迟到 |chí dào|late / , 工作 |gōng zuò|with work / 也 |yě|also / 不 |bù|not / 负责 |fù zé|responsible / , 总之 |zǒng zhī|in short / , 公司 |gōng sī|the firm / 必须 |bì xū|must / 解雇 |jiě gù|let go of / 他 |tā|him / 。 }

He's often late and not responsible —in short, the firm has to let him go.

{zh: 不管 |bù guǎn|whatever / 理由 |lǐ yóu|reason / 是 |shì / 什么 |shén me / , 总之 |zǒng zhī|in short / 我 |wǒ|I / 不会 |bú huì|won't / 再 |zài|again / 相信 |xiāng xìn|trust / 他 |tā|him / 了 |le / 。 }

Whatever his reasons, in short I won't trust him again.

Remember: 总之 = 总 (“sum up”) + 之 = “in a word, to sum up.” It gathers the scattered points into one bottom line —the verbal “long story short.”

Watch out

- It needs preceding points to gather —it caps an argument, it doesn't open one.

3.4 则—“whereas, while (contrast)”

则 marks a **contrast between two clauses** —“whereas, while” (the same idea as 却). It's formal and written, sits at the head of the second clause's predicate, and often appears with 而.

Structure: Clause 1 , (而) + Subject + 则 + Predicate

{zh: 南方人 |nán fāng rén|southerners / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|like / 吃 |chī|eating / 甜 |tián|sweet / 的 |de / , 北方人 |běi fāng rén|northerners / 则 |zé|whereas / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|like / 吃 |chī|eating / 咸 |xián|salty / 的 |de / 。 }

Southerners like sweet food, whereas northerners like salty.

{zh: 我 |wǒ|my / 老婆 |lǎo po|wife / 习惯 |xí guàn|is used to / 乡村 |xiāng cūn|country / 生活 |shēng huó|life / , 我 |wǒ|I / 则 |zé|whereas / 习惯 |xí guàn|am used to / 城市 |chéng shì|city / 生活 |shēng huó|life / 。 }

My wife is used to country life, whereas I'm used to the city.

Remember: 则 = formal “whereas” —it heads the *second* clause's predicate (北方人则…) to set two cases side by side. It often pairs with 而 (而…则…). Same contrast as 却, dressier register.

Watch out

- It sits after the second subject, before the verb —北方人则喜欢…, not 则北方人….

4 名词

4.1 本 + 名词—“this, one’s own”

In formal written Chinese, **本** means “**this (very) / one’s own**” —always the speaker’s own side. It pairs with single-syllable nouns (人, 校, 市, 国, 周, 月, 年, 次) and a few two-syllable ones (公司, 组织). 本人 = “I, myself” (common on résumés).

Structure: 本 + Noun

{zh: 顾客至上 |gù kè zhì shàng|customer-first / 是 |shì|is / 本 |běn|our / 公司 |gōng sī|company’s / 的 |de / 理念 |lǐ niàn|ethos / 。 }

“Customer first” is our company’s ethos.

{zh: 本 |běn|this / 校 |xiào|school / 不 |bù|doesn’t / 允许 |yǔn xǔ|allow / 外校 |wài xiào|outside / 学生 |xué shēng|students / 随便 |suí biàn|to freely / 进出 |jìn chū|come and go / 。 }

This school doesn’t allow outside students to come and go freely.

Remember: 本 = “**this very / our own (side)**” —the voice of notices and officialese: 本公司 (“our company”), 本校 (“this school”), 本人 (“I, myself”). It always speaks from the in-group.

Watch out

- It’s self-referential and formal —for a plain “this,” use 这.

4.2 词 + 性—“-ness, -ity” (a quality)

The suffix **性** turns a word into an **abstract quality** —“-ness, -ity, -ability” (also “-ic”). Like 化, it’s a productive suffix: 可能性, 重要性, 科学性, 可行性.

Structure: Word + 性

{zh: 这个 |zhè ge|this / 方案 |fāng àn|plan / 没有 |méi yǒu|has no / 可行性 |kě xíng xìng|feasibility / 。 }

This plan isn’t feasible.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|your / 的 |de / 作品 |zuò pǐn|work / 越来越 |yuè lái yuè|more and more / 有 |yǒu|has / 创造性 |chuàng zào xìng|creativity / 。 }

Your work is more and more creative.

Remember: 性 = “-ness / -ity” —turns a word into an abstract *quality*: 可能性 (possibility), 重要性 (importance), 可行性 (feasibility), 创造性 (creativity). It’s the noun-making sibling of the verb-making 化.

Watch out

- It builds a *noun of quality* —pair it with 有 / 没有 (有可行性), not used like an adjective.

5 助词

5.1 是否 + 动词 / 形容词—“whether (or not)”

是否 is a formal, written **是不是**—“whether (or not).” It forms or embeds a yes-no question, before a verb or adjective.

Structure: 是否 + Verb / Adjective

{zh: 请 |qǐng|please / 确认 |què rèn|confirm / 信息 |xìn xī|the details / 是否 |shì fǒu|whether / 正确 |zhèng què|correct / 。 }

Please confirm whether the details are correct.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|your / 父母 |fù mǔ|parents / 是否 |shì fǒu|whether / 同意 |tóng yì|agree to / 你们 |nǐ men|you / 住 |zhù|living / 在一起 |zài yì qǐ|together / ? }

Do your parents agree to you living together?

Remember: 是否 = the written 是不是 (“whether”). Same job, formal register — natural in a form or report, stiff in chat (where you’d say 是不是).

Watch out

- It sits before the verb/adjective: 是否正确, not 正确是否 (that “...or not” tail is 与否, below).

5.2 动词 / 形容词 + 与否—“whether or not”

与否 is a classical particle for “...or not” —it nominalises a yes-no question into an abstract phrase, sitting at the end of a clause. It’s highly formal.

Structure: Verb / Adjective + 与否

{zh: 成功 |chéng gōng|success / 与否 |yǔ fǒu|or not / , 要 |yào / 靠 |kào|is down to / 自己 |zì jǐ|yourself / 。 }

Whether or not you succeed is down to you.

{zh: 这 |zhè|this / 件 |jiàn / 事 |shì|matter / 重要 |zhòng yào|important / 与否 |yǔ fǒu|or not / , 取决于 |qǔ jué yú|depends on / 你 |nǐ|how you / 怎么 |zěn me / 看 |kàn|see it / 。 }

Whether this matters depends on how you see it.

Remember: 与否 = “...or not,” tacked on the **END** to make a topic —成功与否 (“the matter of whether you succeed”). It turns a yes-no question into a noun-like phrase. Highly formal; 是否 leads, 与否 trails.

Watch out

- It comes *after* the verb/adjective (成功与否) —the front-position version is 是否.

5.3 名词 + 之 + 名词—literary 的

之 is the **classical** / **written** equivalent of possessive 的, found in set phrases, titles, and formal documents. It can't replace every 的—it's fixed to certain pairings.

Structure: Noun + 之 + Noun

{zh: 害人 |hài rén|to harm others / 之 |zhī / 心 |xīn|a mind / 不可有 |bù kě yǒu|one must not have / 。 }

Never mean harm to others.

{zh: 这些 |zhè xiē|these / 方式 |fāng shì|methods / 仍 |réng|still / 有 |yǒu|have / 不足 |bù zú|short- / 之 |zhī / 处 |chù|comings / 。 }

These methods still have shortcomings.

Remember: 之 = the literary 的—but *fixed* to set expressions, not a free swap: 三分之一 (a third), 意料之中 (as expected), 不足之处 (shortcomings). Learn the phrases whole.

Watch out

- You can't sprinkle 之 in for any 的—I之书 is wrong; it's 我的书.

5.4 Statement + 嘛—“obviously, of course”

The particle 嘛 marks something as **self-evident** from the speaker's point of view — “obviously, of course.” (Same sound as the yes-no 吗, but a different job.)

Structure: Statement + 嘛

{zh: 不 |bù|if you don't / 想 |xiǎng|want to / 去 |qù|go / 就 |jiù|then / 不要 |bú yào|don't / 去 |qù|go / 嘛 |ma / 。 }

If you don't want to go, then don't —obviously.

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 挺 |tǐng|pretty / 有钱 |yǒu qián|well-off / 的 |de / 嘛 |ma / 。 }

He's clearly pretty well-off.

Remember: 嘛 = “obviously, of course” —frames the point as self-evident (不想去就不要去嘛, “then just don't go, *obviously*”). Same sound as the question 吗, opposite job: 嘛 *asserts*, 吗 *asks*.

Watch out

- Don't mishear it as 吗—嘛 makes a (slightly impatient) statement, not a question.

5.5 Sentence + 呗—“(so) obviously, then”

The casual particle 呗 signals that something is **obvious or simply how it is** —“well, obviously; then just ...; so be it.” It can also carry resignation or a lack of enthusiasm.

Structure: Sentence + 呗

{zh: 不会 |bú huì|if you can't / 就 |jiù|then / 好好 |hǎo hǎo|just / 学 |xué|learn it / 呗 |bei / 。 }

If you can't, then just learn it —simple.

{zh: 不 |bù|if you don't / 想 |xiǎng|want to / 去 |qù|go / 就 |jiù|then / 不 |bù|don't / 去 |qù|go / 呗 |bei / 。 }

If you don't want to go, then don't, then.

Remember: 呗 = a shrug: "well, obviously / then just.../ so be it." Very colloquial, often a touch resigned (不会就学呗, "if you can't, then just learn it —what else"). It waves the matter away as plain.

Watch out

- It's very casual and can sound dismissive —read the resignation in its tone.

6 介词

6.1 鉴于 + Observation , Conclusion —“in light of, in view of”

鉴于 introduces a **consideration that grounds a decision** —“in light of, in view of, seeing that.” It’s formal and official, and opens the sentence.

Structure: 鉴于 + Observation , Conclusion / Suggestion

{zh: 鉴于 |jiàn yú|in view of / 是 |shì|it’s / 紧急 |jǐn jí|an emergency / 情况 |qíng kuàng / , 我们 |wǒ men|we / 应该 |yīng gāi|should / 尽快 |jǐn kuài|as soon as possible / 做出 |zuò chū|make / 决定 |jué dìng|a decision / 。 }

Given it’s an emergency, we should decide as soon as possible.

{zh: 鉴于 |jiàn yú|in view of / 上周 |shàng zhōu|last week’s / 的 |de / 事件 |shì jiàn|incident / , 政府 |zhèng fǔ|the government / 加强 |jiā qiáng|tightened / 了 |le / 安保 |ān bǎo|security / 。 }

In view of last week’s incident, the government tightened security.

Remember: 鉴于 = “in light of, given that…” (鉴 = “examine / consider”) —it cites the *basis* for the decision that follows. Formal, official, sentence-opening: 鉴于… , (因此) we should… . It’s the weightier cousin of 由于.

Watch out

- It grounds a *decision/conclusion* on a consideration —heavier and more official than a plain 因为.

7 Sentence patterns

7.1 岂不是 + Rhetorical Question — “wouldn’t that be …?”

岂不是 asks a **rhetorical** question expecting agreement — “wouldn’t that be …?, isn’t that …?” The speaker already knows the answer.

Structure: 岂不是 + Rhetorical Question

{zh: 他们 |tā men|they / 不 |bù|don’t / 来 |lái|come / 岂不是 |qǐ bú shì|wouldn’t that be / 更 |gèng|even / 好 |hǎo|better / ? }

Wouldn’t it be even better if they didn’t come?

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 这样 |zhè yàng|doing it / 做 |zuò|this way / 岂不是 |qǐ bú shì|aren’t you just / 给 |gěi|making / 自己 |zì jǐ|yourself / 找 |zhǎo / 麻烦 |má fan|trouble / ? }

Aren’t you just making trouble for yourself?

Remember: 岂不是 = a literary “wouldn’t that be…?!” (岂 = “how could it not”) —the answer is taken for granted, so it argues a point rather than asks (他们不来岂不是更好? = “surely that’d be better”).

Watch out

- It’s rhetorical —don’t expect (or give) a literal yes/no.

7.2 非 (要) ……不可 — “simply must, insist on”

非 (要) ……不可 marks **strong determination** — “simply must, insist on.” The 不可 can drop when the speaker **dislikes** the action (他非要喝). The frame 非 + … + 不可 also means “is bound to (happen).”

Structure: Subject + 非 (要) + Verb Phrase + 不可

{zh: 这个 |zhè ge|this / 项目 |xiàng mù|project / 非 |fēi|simply has to / 他 |tā|him / 来 |lái / 做 |zuò|be done by / 不可 |bù kě / 。 }

This project simply has to be done by him.

{zh: 今天 |jīn tiān|today / 那么 |nà me|so / 冷 |lěng|cold / , 我 |wǒ|my / 女儿 |nǚ ér|daughter / 非要 |fēi yào|insists on / 穿 |chuān|wearing / 裙子 |qún zi|a skirt / 。 }

It’s so cold, yet my daughter insists on wearing a skirt.

Remember: 非…不可 = a double-negative lock: “must / insist on.” 非 (“not unless”) + 不可 (“can’t not”) clamp shut on “simply have to.” The 不可 can drop when you *disapprove* (非要穿). It also means “bound to”: 再不走非迟到不可.

Watch out

- Don’t read 非 as plain “not” here —非…不可 is a positive “must,” via two negatives.

7.3 兼——“concurrently, and also”

兼 means holding **two roles or jobs at once** — “and also, doubling as, concurrently.” It can come before or after the verb.

Structure: Subject + 兼 + Role / Verb + A 和 B · 是 + N1 + 兼 + N2

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 是 |shì|is / 这 |zhè|this / 首 |shǒu / 歌 |gē|song's / 的 |de / 主唱 |zhǔ chàng|lead singer / 兼 |jiān|and also / 词 |cí / 作者 |zuò zhě|lyricist / 。 }

He's both the lead singer and the lyricist of this song.

{zh: 在 |zài|in / 那 |nà|that / 部 |bù / 电影 |diàn yǐng|film / 里 |lǐ / , 他 |tā|he / 兼 |jiān|was both / 做 |zuò / 导演 |dǎo yǎn|director / 和 |hé|and / 男主角 |nán zhǔ jué|lead actor / 。 }

In that film he was both director and lead actor.

Remember: 兼 = “doubling as, both ...and ...” —one person, two hats at once: 主唱兼词作者 (“lead singer and lyricist”). It compactly joins two simultaneous capacities.

Watch out

- It joins *roles/jobs*, not random nouns —for plain “and” between things, use 和.

7.4 莫非——“could it be that ...?”

莫非 voices a **dawning suspicion** as a guess or rhetorical question — “could it be that ...?, don't tell me” It's like 难道, usually opens the second clause, and 不成 is optional.

Structure: Fact , 莫非 + conjecture (+ 不成)? · 莫非 + rhetorical question

{zh: 这么 |zhè me|so / 晚 |wǎn|late / 他 |tā|he / 还 |hái|still / 没 |méi|hasn't / 回来 |huí lái|come back / , 莫非 |mò fēi|could it be / 出 |chū|something / 了 |le / 什么 |shén me / 事 |shì|happened / ? }

So late and he's not back —could something have happened?

{zh: 莫非 |mò fēi|don't tell me / 你 |nǐ|you / 真的 |zhēn de|really / 相信 |xiāng xìn|believe / 他 |tā|him / ? }

Don't tell me you actually believe him?

Remember: 莫非 = a worried “could it be...? / don't tell me...” —a suspicion dawning on the speaker (难道). The 不成 tail is optional. Picture the penny *starting* to drop with unease.

Watch out

- It floats a *guess*, not a fact —the answer is feared/suspected, not known.

7.5 由此 + 动词——“from this, hence”

由此 draws a consequence **from a reason or situation** — “from this, hence, thereby.” It usually pairs with 可见 / 看来 / 说来.

Structure: Reasons , 由此 + Result / Implication

{zh: 由此 |yóu cǐ|from this / 可见 |kě jiàn|it's clear / , 改革 |gǎi gé|reform / 是 |shì|is / 多么 |duō me|how / 必要 |bì yào|necessary / 。 }

From this we can see how necessary reform is.

{zh: 人们 |rén men|people / 滥用 |làn yòng|overuse / 农药 |nóng yào|pesticides / , 由此 |yóu cǐ|and from this / 产生 |chǎn shēng|came / 了 |le / 食品 |shí pǐn|food- / 安全 |ān quán|safety / 问题 |wèn tí|problems / 。 }

People overuse pesticides, and food-safety problems have come from this.

Remember: 由此 = "from this (it follows)..." (由"from" + 此"this") —and the set wrap-ups 由此可见 / 看来 / 说来 = "from this we can see / it would seem...". A formal "therefore, from the above."

Watch out

- It points *back* to what was just said as the basis —it can't open with no prior reason.

7.6 A + 莫过于 + B —"nothing is more ...than B"

莫过于 (literally "none surpasses") singles out the **utmost case** —"nothing is more ...than B." It's literary and emphatic.

Structure: Topic / Question + 莫过于 + Answer

{zh: 人生 |rén shēng|in life / 最 |zuì|the saddest / 悲伤 |bēi shāng / 的 |de / 事 |shì|thing / 莫过于 |mò guò yú|is nothing more than / 失去 |shī qù|losing / 你 |nǐ|you / 爱 |ài|love / 的 |de / 人 |rén|someone / 。 }

Nothing in life is sadder than losing someone you love.

{zh: 这里 |zhè lǐ|here / 最 |zuì|the best / 好 |hǎo / 的 |de / 大学 |dà xué|university / 莫过于 |mò guò yú|is none other than / 北大 |Běi Dà|Peking University / 。 }

The best university here is none other than Peking University.

Remember: 莫过于 = "none surpasses" = "nothing is more ...than B." It crowns B the supreme example, usually after a 最 phrase (最...的莫过于...). Literary and emphatic.

Watch out

- B is the *peak* case —don't follow 莫过于 with a middling example.

7.7 与其 A , 不如 B —"rather than A, better to B"

与其 A , 不如 B weighs two options and **picks B** —"rather than A, better to B." You can add 还 / 倒 / 真 before 不如. The variant **与其说 A , 不如说 B** means "more B than A."

Structure: 与其 + A , (还) 不如 + B · 与其说 A , 不如说 B

{zh: 与其 |yǔ qí|rather than / 在 |zài|at / 家 |jiā|home / 看 |kàn|watch / 电视 |diàn shì|TV / , 不如 |bù rú|better to / 出去 |chū qù|go out / 走走 |zǒu zou|for a walk / 。 }

Rather than watch TV at home, better to go out for a walk.

{zh: 与其说 |yǔ qí shuō|more than / 他 |tā|he / 是 |shì|is / 我 |wǒ|my / 老师 |lǎo shī|teacher / , 不如说 |bù rú shuō|rather / 他 |tā|he / 是 |shì|is / 我 |wǒ|my / 朋友 |péng you|friend / 。 }

He's more a friend than a teacher.

Remember: 与其 A 不如 B = "rather than A, better B" —it rejects A, picks B. The 与其 sets up the option you *drop*, 不如 the one you *take*. Variant 与其说 A 不如说 B = "more B than A" (recasting a description).

Watch out

- Order is fixed: 与其 + the rejected option first, 不如 + the chosen one second.

7.8 跟 + 名词 + 似的—"just like, as if"

跟…似的 draws a **vivid comparison** —"just like, as if (it were) …" (the same as 像…一样). It's common in descriptive writing. The 似 can be read *shì* or *sì*.

Structure: 跟 + Noun / Pronoun / Adjective + 似的

{zh: 她们 |tā men|the two of them / 俩 |liǎ / 好 |hǎo|are as close / 得 |de / 跟 |gēn|as / 亲姐妹 |qīn jiě mèi|real sisters / 似的 |shì de / 。 }

The two of them are as close as real sisters.

{zh: 最近 |zuì jìn|lately / 天气 |tiān qì|the weather / 热 |rè|is as hot / 得 |de / 跟 |gēn|as / 蒸笼 |zhēng lóng|a steamer / 里 |lǐ / 似的 |shì de / 。 }

It's been as hot as a steamer lately.

Remember: 跟…似的 = 像…一样 ("just like, as if") —a vivid simile (热得跟蒸笼似的, "hot as a steamer"). 似的 caps the comparison; 似 reads *shì* or *sì*.

Watch out

- It's a *simile* frame —pair it with a vivid image, not a literal fact.

7.9 不愧是 + 名词—"truly worthy of, lives up to"

不愧是 (or 不愧为) praises someone as **fully deserving a title** —"truly is a …, lives up to the name of." It carries praise, so you use it of **others, not yourself**.

Structure: Subject + 不愧是 / 不愧为 + reputation

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 不愧是 |bú kuì shì|truly is / 一名 |yì míng|an / 优秀 |yōu xiù|excellent / 的 |de / 老师 |lǎo shī|teacher / 。 }

He truly is an excellent teacher.

{zh: 她 |tā|her / 的 |de / 表演 |biǎo yǎn|acting / 太 |tài|so / 棒 |bàng|superb / 了 |le / , 不愧是 |bú kuì shì|no wonder she's / 拿过 |ná guo|won / 奥斯卡 |Ào sī kǎ|an Oscar / 的 |de / 。 }

Her acting was superb —no wonder she's an Oscar winner.

Remember: 不愧是 = "nothing to be ashamed of = truly lives up to it" (愧 = "ashamed"). It *praises* — "no wonder he's a top teacher." Reserve it for **others**, never yourself. 是 swaps freely for 为.

Watch out

- It's a compliment — saying 我不愧是...of yourself sounds boastful and odd.

7.10 由 + Person + 做主 — "be in charge, decide"

由...做主 assigns **decision-making authority** — "(it's) for ...to decide, ...is in charge."

Structure: Area of responsibility + 由 + Person + 做主

{zh: 我们 |wǒ men|our / 家 |jiā|household / 由 |yóu / 我 |wǒ|my / 妈妈 |mā ma|mum / 做主 |zuò zhǔ|runs / , 她 |tā|she / 说 |shuō|says / 什么 |shén me|whatever / 我们 |wǒ men|we / 就 |jiù|just / 做 |zuò|do / 什么 |shén me / 。 }

In our house, my mum's the boss — whatever she says, we do.

{zh: 所有 |suǒ yǒu|everything / 的 |de / 事 |shì / 都 |dōu / 由 |yóu|is / 你 |nǐ|your / 做主 |zuò zhǔ|call / , 出 |chū|if something / 了 |le / 事情 |shì qing|goes wrong / 也 |yě|also / 由 |yóu / 你 |nǐ|you / 负责 |fù zé|are responsible / 。 }

Everything's your call — and you're responsible if anything goes wrong.

Remember: 由 X 做主 = "it's X's call, X is the boss" — 由 (assigns the doer) + 做主 ("be master of it"). 家里由我妈做主 ("at home, mum's in charge"). It hands the *decision* firmly to X.

Watch out

- It assigns authority, not just action — the named person *decides*, not merely does.

7.11 非得 + Action + 不可 / 不行 / 不成 — "must, have to"

非得...不可 / 不行 / 不成 is an emphatic **necessity** — "(one) simply has to, must." It's the fuller form of 非...不可, with 得 stressing the obligation.

Structure: Statement , 非 (得) + Action + 不可 / 不行 / 不成

{zh: 现在 |xiàn zài|now / 是 |shì|it's / 紧急 |jǐn jí|an emergency / 情况 |qíng kuàng / , 非得 |fēi děi|simply must / 马上 |mǎ shàng|at once / 动 |dòng / 手术 |shǒu shù|operate / 不可 |bù kě / 。 }

It's an emergency — we simply have to operate at once.

{zh: 有 |yǒu|if you have / 话 |huà|something to say / 好好 |hǎo hǎo|just say it / 说 |shuō / , 干嘛 |gàn ma|why / 非得 |fēi děi|must you / 吵架 |chǎo jià|argue / ? }

Talk it out properly — why must you argue?

Remember: 非得...不可 = "simply HAVE to" — the fuller, more insistent 非...不可, with 得 (*děi*, "must") driving the obligation home (非得马上手术不可). It leaves *no* alternative.

Watch out

- The closing 不可 / 不行 / 不成 are interchangeable —keep one of them to seal the “no choice” frame.

7.12 一来……, 二来……—“firstly ..., secondly ...”

一来…二来… lists **two (or more) reasons or aims** —“for one thing ..., for another ...” The 是 and 也 are optional.

Structure: 一来 + Reason 1 , 二来 + Reason 2

{zh: 这次 |zhè cì|this time / 来 |lái|coming to / 中国 |Zhōng guó|China / , 一来 |yì lái|for one thing / 是 |shì / 提高 |tí gāo|to improve / 中文 |Zhōng wén|my Chinese / , 二来 |èr lái|for another / 是 |shì / 了解 |liǎo jiě|to understand / 中国 |Zhōng guó|Chinese / 文化 |wén huà|culture / 。 }

I came to China to improve my Chinese, and to understand its culture.

{zh: 别 |bié|don't / 去 |qù|go / 那 |nà|there / 旅游 |lǚ yóu|travelling / , 一来 |yì lái|for one thing / 宾馆 |bīn guǎn|hotels / 贵 |guì|are pricey / , 二来 |èr lái|for another / 没 |méi|there's no / 什么 |shén me / 风景 |fēng jǐng|scenery / 。 }

Don't go there —for one thing the hotels are pricey, for another there's no scenery.

Remember: 一来…二来…= “for one thing..., for another...” —a tidy way to count off reasons or aims (一来…, 二来…, 三来…). The 是 / 也 are optional padding.

Watch out

- It enumerates *reasons/purposes*, not a time sequence —that's 先…然后….

8 动词

8.1 谅 + Subject + Verb Phrase — “I bet (you wouldn’t dare)”

In spoken Chinese, 谅 voices a confident, slightly challenging bet — “I bet ..., I’m sure ..., you wouldn’t dare.” The speaker is daring the other person, so it almost always comes with 不 / 没 plus 也, and the speaker is usually 我.

Structure: 谅 + Subject + 也 + 不 / 没 + Verb Phrase

{zh: 谅 |liàng|I bet / 他 |tā|he / 也 |yě / 不敢 |bù gǎn|wouldn’t dare / ! }

I bet he wouldn’t dare!

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 谅 |liàng|bet / 你 |nǐ|you / 也 |yě / 不敢 |bù gǎn|wouldn’t dare / 去 |qù|go and / 投诉 |tóu sù|complain / 。 }

I bet you wouldn’t dare go and complain.

Remember: 谅 = a daring “I bet you wouldn’t...” —a confident challenge, leaning on 也 + 不 / 没 (谅他也不敢, “bet he wouldn’t dare”). The speaker is usually 我, sizing up the other person.

Watch out

- It’s spoken and a touch confrontational —it almost always carries the 不/没 + 也, not a plain positive.

9 动词短语

9.1 Subject + 不屑 (于) + Verb — “won’t stoop to, disdain to”

不屑 means thinking an action is **beneath one’s dignity** — “disdain to, won’t lower oneself to, can’t be bothered with.” There’s clear contempt in it: the subject looks down on doing the thing. You can say 不屑 or, more literary, 不屑于.

Structure: Subject + 不屑 (于) + Verb / Verb Phrase

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 是 |shì|is / 个 |gè|a / 诚实 |chéng shí|honest / 的 |de / 人 |rén|man / , 不屑 |bú xiè|won’t stoop to / 说谎 |shuō huǎng|lying / 。 }

He’s an honest man —he won’t stoop to lying.

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 不屑于 |bú xiè yú|is above / 说 |shuō|saying / 别人 |bié rén|other people’s / 的 |de / 坏话 |huài huà|bad things / 。 }

He’s above bad-mouthing other people.

Remember: 不屑 = “it’s beneath me” —disdain to do it (屑 = “worth bothering with,” so 不屑 = “not worth my while”). 不屑说谎 = “won’t stoop to lying.” 不屑于 is the more literary variant.

Watch out

- It carries *contempt* —the subject feels the action is below them, not merely declines it.

9.2 Action + 以便 (+ 能) + Outcome — “so that, in order to”

以便 is a formal “in order to, so as to (make it easier to).” It links an action to the **desired outcome** that action makes possible, and often takes a following **能**.

Structure: Action , 以便 (+ 能) + Outcome

{zh: 我们 |wǒ men|we / 很 |hěn|very / 早 |zǎo|early / 就 |jiù / 去 |qù|went to / 了 |le / 机场 |jī chǎng|the airport / , 以便 |yǐ biàn|so that / 能 |néng|we could / 赶上 |gǎn shàng|catch / 最 |zuì|the / 早 |zǎo|earliest / 的 |de / 飞机 |fēi jī|flight / 。 }

We went to the airport very early so we could catch the earliest flight.

{zh: 请 |qǐng|please / 留下 |liú xià|leave / 电话 |diàn huà|your number / , 以便 |yǐ biàn|so that / 我们 |wǒ men|we / 联系 |lián xì|can contact / 您 |nín|you / 。 }

Please leave your number so we can contact you.

Remember: 以便 = “so as to (make it easier to)” —names a **WANTED outcome** the action enables (早点去, 以便能赶上). Its mirror is 以免 (“so as to *avoid*” a bad one): 以便 chases the good, 以免 dodges the bad.

Watch out

- Formal/written —in speech use 为了 or the mid-clause 好.

10 假设句

10.1 假使……，就……—“if …then …”

假使 is a formal, written word for “if, supposing, in the event that.” It opens a hypothetical condition, and the result clause usually carries **就** (or 便). It’s a close sibling of 如果 / 假如 / 倘若—the difference is register, not meaning.

Structure: 假使 + Condition , (就 / 便) + Result

{zh: 假使 |jiǎ shǐ|if / 没有 |méi yǒu|there were no / 水 |shuǐ|water / , 生命 |shēng mìng|life / 就 |jiù|then / 无法 |wú fǎ|couldn’t / 存在 |cún zài|exist / 。 }

If there were no water, life couldn’t exist.

{zh: 假使 |jiǎ shǐ|if / 你 |nǐ|you / 是 |shì|were / 我 |wǒ|me / , 你 |nǐ|you / 会 |huì|would / 怎么 |zěnmē|how / 做 |zuò|do it / ? }

If you were me, what would you do?

Remember: 假使 = a formal/written “if, supposing” (假 = “suppose”) —same meaning as 如果 / 假如 / 倘若, just dressier; the result takes 就 / 便. Climb the register ladder: 要是 (casual) → 如果 → 假如 → 假使 / 倘若 (literary).

Watch out

- In everyday speech it sounds bookish —use 如果 / 要是.

11 因果句

11.1 因(为) ……，而……—”because …, (one) thereby …”

因(为) …而… is a formal cause-and-effect frame: 因为 states the cause, and 而 introduces the resulting action or state —”because of X, (one) therefore Y.” In this written style 因为 often shortens to just 因, giving a tighter sentence.

Structure: Subject + 因(为) + Cause + 而 + Result

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 因为 |yīn wèi|because / 生病 |shēng bìng|got ill / 而 |ér|so / 请假 |qǐng jià|took leave / 。 }

Because I got ill, I took time off.

{zh: 欧洲 |Ōu zhōu|Europe’s / 的 |de / 经济 |jīng jì|economy / 因为 |yīn wèi|because of / 债务 |zhài wù|the debt / 危机 |wēi jī|crisis / 而 |ér / 陷入 |xiàn rù|fell into / 衰退 |shuāi tuì|recession / 。 }

Europe’s economy fell into recession because of the debt crisis.

Remember: 因(为) …而…—而 is the hinge swinging from cause to effect (“because X, thereby Y”). In careful writing, 因为 contracts to a tight 因 (因病请假, “took leave due to illness”).

Watch out

- Keep the 而—it’s what links the effect to the cause in this frame.

12 句型

12.1 借 + Noun + 之名 — “in the name of, under the guise of”

借…之名 means doing one thing under the cover of another — “in the name of, under the pretext of, using … as an excuse.” It usually hints that the stated name is just a **front** for a hidden motive.

Structure: Subject + 借 + Noun + 之名 + Situation

{zh: 有些 |yǒu xiē|some / 人 |rén|people / 借 |jiè|in / 慈善 |cí shàn|charity's / 之名 |zhī míng|name / 骗钱 |piàn qián|swindle money / 。 }

Some people swindle money in the name of charity.

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 借 |jiè|under the pretext / 开会 |kāi huì|of a meeting / 之名 |zhī míng| , 去 |qù|went / 旅游 |lǚ yóu|travelling / 。 }

Under the pretext of a meeting, he went off travelling.

Remember: 借 X 之名 = “borrowing X’s name as a cover” (借 = “borrow”) — it hints the name is a *front* masking the real aim (借慈善之名骗钱). Contrast the neutral 以…的名义 (“in the name of,” below).

Watch out

- It implies a *pretext* — for a neutral “in the name of,” use 以…的名义.

12.2 通过 + Action , 使 + Result — “through …, cause …”

通过…, 使… is a formal cause-and-effect pair: 通过 names the **means** (an action or process), and 使 names the **effect** it brings about — “by means of …, it makes / causes ….”

Structure: 通过 + Verb (situation) , 使 + Result

{zh: 通过 |tōng guò|through / 锻炼 |duàn liàn|exercise / , 使 |shǐ|the / 身体 |shēn tǐ|body / 更 |gèng|becomes / 健康 |jiàn kāng|healthier / 。 }

Through exercise, the body is made healthier.

{zh: 通过 |tōng guò|through / 这 |zhè|this / 件 |jiàn / 事 |shì|matter / , 使 |shǐ|it made / 我 |wǒ|me / 明白 |míng bai|understand / 了 |le / 很多 |hěn duō|a great deal / 。 }

Through this affair, I came to understand a great deal.

Remember: 通过 = the MEANS, 使 = the EFFECT — “by way of X, it brings about Y” (通过锻炼, 使身体更健康). Keep the two halves balanced: process first, result second.

Watch out

- Don’t give *both* halves their own subject — it’s the means-clause that 使 acts on, not a new actor.

12.3 以 + Body + 的名义 — “in the name of, on behalf of”

以…的名义 states the **authority or capacity** an act is carried out under — “in the name of, on behalf of.” Unlike 借…之名, it’s neutral: it simply names whose name is being used.

Structure: 以 + Person / Body + 的名义 + Action

{zh: 别 |bié|don’t / 以 |yǐ|in / 我 |wǒ|my / 的名义 |de míng yì|name / 给 |gěi / 公司 |gōng sī|the company / 写信 |xiě xìn|write to / 。 }

Don’t write to the company in my name.

{zh: 法院 |fǎ yuàn|the court / 以 |yǐ|in / 政府 |zhèng fǔ|the government’s / 的名义 |de míng yì|name / 起诉 |qǐ sù|sued / 了 |le / 他 |tā|him / 。 }

He was sued in the name of the government.

Remember: 以…的名义 = “in X’s name / on behalf of” —**NEUTRAL**. It simply states the capacity an act is done under (以政府的名义). Its shady cousin is 借…之名 (“under the *pretext* of”): same idea, opposite tone.

Watch out

- No hidden agenda implied —for “under the guise of,” you want 借…之名.

12.4 势必 — “inevitably, be bound to”

势必 (literally “the situation must …”) asserts that circumstances make an outcome **certain** — “is bound to, will inevitably.” It introduces the unavoidable result and is formal in tone.

Structure: …… , 势必 + inevitable result

{zh: 这样 |zhè yàng|carrying on / 下去 |xià qù|like this / , 势必 |shì bì|is bound to / 失败 |shī bài|fail / 。 }

Carry on like this and failure is inevitable.

{zh: 物价 |wù jià|prices / 上涨 |shàng zhǎng|rising / , 势必 |shì bì|will inevitably / 影响 |yǐng xiǎng|affect / 人们 |rén men|people’s / 的 |de / 生活 |shēng huó|lives / 。 }

Rising prices are bound to affect people’s lives.

Remember: 势必 = 势 (the circumstances) + 必 (must) = “the situation makes it inevitable.” Stronger than a plain 一定—it claims the *circumstances themselves* force the result. Formal.

Watch out

- It pins the certainty on *circumstances* —for a personal “definitely will,” 一定 / 肯定 fit better.

12.5 倘若 + Condition , (就 / 便) ……—“if, supposing”

倘若 is a highly literary “if, supposing, in the event that.” Like 假使, it opens a hypothetical, with the result clause often taking **就** or **便**. It belongs to formal prose and set polite phrases.

Structure: 倘若 + Condition , (就 / 便) + Result

{zh: 倘若 |tǎng ruò|if / 有 |yǒu|there is / 不 |bù|any- / 周到 |zhōu dào|thing overlooked / 之处 |zhī chù / , 请 |qǐng|please / 多 |duō / 包涵 |bāo hán|bear with us / 。 }

If anything has been overlooked, please bear with us.

{zh: 倘若 |tǎng ruò|if / 失败 |shī bài|it fails / , 我们 |wǒ men|we / 再 |zài|will then / 想 |xiǎng|think of / 别的 |bié de|another / 办法 |bàn fǎ|way / 。 }

If it fails, we'll think of another way.

Remember: 倘若 = the most literary “if” —even dressier than 假使, at home in formal prose and set courtesies (倘若有不周之处, “if anything’s been overlooked”). Result takes 就 / 便.

Watch out

- Reserve it for writing and polite set phrases —in speech use 如果 / 要是.

12.6 所 + Verb + 的—the literary 所 structure

The 所 + Verb + 的 frame turns a verb into a formal noun phrase —“that which is …ed, what (one) …s.” It names the **object** of the action in a measured, written tone. Dropping it (我想说的) means the same thing more plainly.

Structure: (Subject +) 所 + Verb + 的 (+ Noun)

{zh: 这 |zhè|this / 就是 |jiù shì|is exactly / 我 |wǒ|what I / 所 |suǒ / 想 |xiǎng|want / 说 |shuō|to say / 的 |de / 。 }

This is exactly what I want to say.

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 所 |suǒ / 做 |zuò|everything he / 的 |de|does / 一切 |yí qiè / 都 |dōu|is all / 是 |shì / 为了 |wèi le|for / 你 |nǐ|you / 。 }

Everything he does is for you.

Remember: 所 + verb + 的 = “that which is …ed” —a formal dressing-up. 我所想说的 = 我想说的 (“what I want to say”), just more literary. 所 flags the verb’s *object*, so the verb is transitive.

Watch out

- It adds formality, not meaning —the plain 我想说的 says the same thing in speech.

13 Let alone

13.1 连……都(也)……, 何况……—”even …, let alone …”

何况 means ”let alone, much less, all the more so.” It pairs with a **连……都(也) …** clause: first you state an extreme case (even A is true), then **何况** pushes to a case that’s all the more so (so of course B). It’s often a **rhetorical** question, closed with **呢**; adding **更 / 又** before **何况** sharpens it.

Structure: Subject + 连 + A + 都(也) + Verb , (更) 何况 + B + 呢?

{zh: 连 |lián|even / 大人 |dà rén|adults / 都 |dōu / 觉得 |jué de|find it / 难 |nán|hard / , 何况 |hé kuàng|let alone / 孩子 |hái zi|children / 呢 |ne / ? }

Even adults find it hard, let alone children.

{zh: 这 |zhè|this / 点 |diǎn|bit of / 钱 |qián|money / 连 |lián|even / 吃饭 |chī fàn|for food / 都 |dōu / 不够 |bú gòu|isn’t enough / , 何况 |hé kuàng|let alone / 买 |mǎi|buying / 房 |fáng|a house / ? }

This bit of money isn’t even enough for food, let alone buying a house.

Remember: 连 A 都…, (更) 何况 B 呢? = ”even A…, LET ALONE B!” —it climbs from a strong case to an even stronger one (何况 = ”how much more so”). Usually rhetorical, sealed with 呢; 更 / 又 before 何况 add punch.

Watch out

- It runs *small* → *big* (like 更不用说): A the lesser case, B the greater —don’t flip them.

14 副词辨析

14.1 按照 vs. 根据 — “in accordance with” vs. “on the basis of”

Both mean “according to,” but they look at different things. **按照** means following a **rule, plan, order or standard** to the letter — “in accordance with.” **根据** means drawing on **evidence, grounds or a source** — “on the basis of, going by”; it can also be a noun (有根据 = “well-grounded”), which **按照** cannot.

Structure: 按照 + rule / plan + Action · 根据 + evidence / source + Conclusion

{zh: 请 |qǐng|please / 按照 |àn zhào|in accordance with / 规定 |guī dìng|the rules / 排队 |pái duì|queue up / 。 }

Please queue up in accordance with the rules.

{zh: 根据 |gēn jù|going by / 天气 |tiān qì|the weather / 预报 |yù bào|forecast / , 明天 |míng tiān|tomorrow / 会 |huì|will / 下雨 |xià yǔ|rain / 。 }

Going by the forecast, it'll rain tomorrow.

Remember: **按照** = follow a **RULE/plan** (“by the book”); **根据** = reason from **EVIDENCE** (“going by the data”). 按照规定 (per the rules) vs 根据预报 (per the forecast). Only **根据** doubles as a noun (毫无根据, “groundless”).

Watch out

- A rule to obey → 按照; grounds to infer from → 根据.

14.2 不得不 vs. 只好 — “have no choice” vs. “have no better choice”

Both say you’re forced into something unwanted, but the squeeze differs. **不得不** = there is **no other** choice at all — you simply can’t avoid it (stronger, like 不得已). **只好** = there is **no better** choice — you settle for the least-bad option. Also, **不得不** must be followed by a positive verb; **只好** can take 不 / 没.

Structure: 不得不 + positive Verb · 只好 + Verb (可带不 / 没)

{zh: 出门 |chū mén|going out / 没 |méi|without / 带 |dài|bringing / 钱 |qián|money / , 不得不 |bù dé bù|I had no choice but to / 向 |xiàng|from / 朋友 |péng you|a friend / 借 |jiè|borrow / 。 }

I went out without money, so I had no choice but to borrow from a friend.

{zh: 外面 |wài mian|outside / 下 |xià|it's / 大雨 |dà yǔ|pouring / 了 |le / , 我 |wǒ|I / 只好 |zhǐ hǎo|had no better option than to / 不 |bù|not / 出去 |chū qù|go out / 了 |le / 。 }

It's pouring outside, so I'll just not go out.

Remember: **不得不** = **NO OTHER** choice (forced, no escape); **只好** = **NO BETTER** choice (settle for least-bad). And the grammar tell: 不得不 takes only a *positive* verb, while 只好 can take 不 / 没 (只好不去).

Watch out

- You can't say 不得不不去—for "had to *not* do," use 只好不去.

14.3 不断 vs. 不停—"unceasingly" vs. "without stopping"

Both describe something that keeps going. **不断** = "continually, again and again" —a process that repeats or grows over time (it can imply increase), and as an adverb it often takes **地**. **不停** = "without a pause" —the action literally never stops for a moment, often as **V + 个不停** or **不停地 + V**.

Structure: 不断 (地) + Verb · 不停地 + Verb / Verb + 个不停

{zh: 科技 |kē jì|technology / 在 |zài|is / 不断 |bú duàn|continually / 地 |de / 进步 |jìn bù|advancing / 。 }

Technology is continually advancing.

{zh: 她 |tā|she / 激动 |jī dòng|was so excited / 得 |de|that she / 说 |shuō|talked / 个不停 |gè bù tíng|without stopping / 。 }

She was so excited she talked non-stop.

Remember: **不断** = "again and again / growing over time" (**断** = "break," so **不断** = "unbroken, recurring"); **不停** = "no pause at all" (**停** = "stop"). 不断进步 (keeps advancing) vs 说个不停 (talks non-stop). 个不停 clips onto the verb: 笑个不停.

Watch out

- 不断 allows gaps that keep recurring; 不停 means *literally* no pause.

14.4 反而 vs. 却—"on the contrary" vs. "but, yet"

Both mark a turn, but with different force. **反而** = "on the contrary, instead" —the result is the **opposite** of what you'd expect, and it can sit before **or** after the subject. **却** = a milder "but, yet," and it can only come **after** the subject. 反而 often completes the pattern 不但没 / 不但不..., 反而....

Structure: (Subj.) 反而 + opposite outcome · Subj. + 却 + contrast

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 帮 |bāng|helped / 了 |le / 他 |tā|him / , 他 |tā|yet he / 反而 |fǎn ér|on the contrary / 生气 |shēng qì|got angry / 了 |le / 。 }

I helped him, yet he got angry instead.

{zh: 她 |tā|she / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|likes / 甜食 |tián shí|sweets / , 却 |què|but / 从不 |cóng bù|never / 吃 |chī|eats / 巧克力 |qiǎo kè lì|chocolate / 。 }

She likes sweets, but never eats chocolate.

Remember: **反而** = the **OPPOSITE** of what you'd expect (a reversal); **却** = a plain "but / yet" (a contrast). 反而 can go before or after the subject and completes 不但没...反而...; 却 only sits *after* the subject.

Watch out

- 却 can't lead the clause —她却…, never 却她…; 反而 is freer.

14.5 根本 vs. 到底—“(not) at all” vs. “in the end, on earth”

根本 = “(not) at all, simply, fundamentally” —it intensifies a **negation** (根本不 / 根本没), flatly denying something. **到底** = “after all, in the end” or, in a question, “on earth / exactly” —it presses for the **final result or truth**. You can't swap them.

Structure: 根本 + 不 / 没 + Verb · 到底 + Question

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 根本 |gēn běn|simply / 没 |méi|didn't / 出去 |chū qù|go out / , 你 |nǐ|how / 怎么 |zěn me / 会 |huì|could / 看到 |kàn dào|have seen / 我 |wǒ|me / ? }

I didn't go out at all —how could you have seen me?

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 到底 |dào dǐ|on earth / 想 |xiǎng|what do you want / 怎么样 |zěn me yàng / ? }

What on earth do you want?

Remember: 根本 intensifies a **NEGATION** (“not at all”: 根本不/没); 到底 presses for an **ANSWER** (“on earth / in the end”). One flatly *denies*, the other *demand*s the truth. In a statement, 到底 = “after all, it turned out…”.

Watch out

- 根本 leans on a following 不 / 没; 到底 leans on a question word or a result.

14.6 根据 vs. 据—“according to” (long vs. short)

These overlap in meaning —“according to, on the basis of” —but differ in style. **据** is terse and literary, and pairs with **single-character or short** items (据说, 据实, 据悉). **根据** is the everyday word, takes **two-or-more-character** objects, and can also act as a noun.

Structure: 据 + short word + Clause · 根据 + (longer) source + Clause

{zh: 据 |jù|it is / 说 |shuō|said / , 他 |tā|he / 已经 |yǐ jīng|has already / 出国 |chū guó|gone abroad / 了 |le / 。 }

It's said he's already gone abroad.

{zh: 根据 |gēn jù|according to / 调查 |diào chá|the survey / 结果 |jié guǒ|results / , 大家 |dà jiā|everyone / 都 |dōu / 很 |hěn|is very / 满意 |mǎn yì|satisfied / 。 }

According to the survey results, everyone is very satisfied.

Remember: 据 = terse/literary + **SHORT** items (据说, 据悉, 据实); 根据 = everyday + longer objects, and a noun too. Same idea, opposite ends of the formality scale.

Watch out

- 据 wants a tight, short partner (据说); a longer source takes 根据 (根据调查结果).

14.7 恢复 vs. 还原—“recover / restore” vs. “return to the original”

Both mean returning to a former state, but with a different feel. **恢复** = “recover, restore” something that was **damaged, disrupted or lost** —health, order, normal service. **还原** = “return to the **exact** original state, reset, reduce” —it stresses going back precisely to how it was (it’s also the chemistry term “reduce”).

Structure: 恢复 + Noun (health / order) · 把…还原 (成…)

{zh: 经过 |jīng guò|after / 治疗 |zhì liáo|treatment / , 他 |tā|he / 的 |de / 身体 |shēn tǐ|health / 慢慢 |màn màn|slowly / 恢复 |huī fù|recovered / 了 |le / 。 }

After treatment, his health slowly recovered.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 可以 |kě yǐ|can / 把 |bǎ / 设置 |shè zhì|the settings / 还原 |huán yuán|restore / 成 |chéng|to / 默认值 |mò rèn zhí|the defaults / 。 }

You can reset the settings to the defaults.

Remember: **恢复** = bring back something **DAMAGED/lost** (health, order); **还原** = return to the **EXACT** original / reset. 恢复健康 (recover) vs 还原设置 (reset to factory). 还原 stresses *precisely as before*, with no “was broken” overtone.

Watch out

- For health/order coming back, it’s 恢复—还原 sounds like a reset/reduction.

14.8 居然 vs. 反而—“surprisingly” vs. “on the contrary”

Both flag the unexpected, but differently. **居然** = “surprisingly, to one’s astonishment” —it simply marks the event as **astonishing**, often letting the speaker tack on a comment. **反而** = “on the contrary” —it marks a **reversal**, the opposite of what should have followed, and pairs with 不但没 / 不但不…, 反而…, where 居然 can’t.

Structure: 居然 + astonishing fact (+ comment) · 不但没 / 不但不…, 反而…

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 这么 |zhè me|so / 小 |xiǎo|young / 居然 |jū rán|astonishingly / 能 |néng|can / 背 |bèi|recite / 几百 |jǐ bǎi|hundreds of / 首 |shǒu / 唐诗 |Táng shī|Tang poems / , 真 |zhēn|truly / 了不起 |liǎo bu qǐ|remarkable / 。 }

So young, yet he can recite hundreds of Tang poems —truly remarkable.

{zh: 吃 |chī|after taking / 了 |le / 这些 |zhè xiē|these / 药 |yào|pills / , 他 |tā|he / 不但 |bú dàn|not only / 没 |méi|didn’t / 好 |hǎo|get better / , 反而 |fǎn ér|but instead / 更 |gèng|got even / 严重 |yán zhòng|worse / 了 |le / 。 }

After taking these pills, not only did he not improve —he got worse.

Remember: **居然** = “astonishingly!” (just marks surprise, + optional comment); **反而** = “on the contrary” (a reversal). Only 反而 completes 不但没 / 不但不…, 反而…。 居然 is amazement; 反而 is a flip.

Watch out

- A surprise that isn’t a *reversal* takes 居然; the “opposite happened” twist takes 反而.

14.9 一度 vs. 一时—“at one time” vs. “for a (short) while”

Both touch on time but mean different spans. **一度** = “once, at one time” —a **past phase** (often a difficult one: 一度想放弃), and it appears in 一年一度 (“annual”). **一时** = “for a short while, momentarily, for the moment” —brief or sudden, often “can’t … right now” (一时想不起来).

Structure: 一度 + past Verb phrase · 一时 + (不能) Verb

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 过去 |guò qù|in the past / 一度 |yí dù|at one time / 想 |xiǎng|wanted to / 放弃 |fàng qì|give up / 。 }

At one point in the past he wanted to give up.

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 一时 |yí shí|for the moment / 想不起来 |xiǎng bu qǐ lái|can’t recall / 他 |tā|his / 的 |de / 名字 |míng zi|name / 。 }

I can’t recall his name for the moment.

Remember: 一度 = “once, at one time” (a PAST phase; also 一年一度 = “annual”); 一时 = “for a brief moment / right now” (一时想不起来). 度 = a stretch/opportunity; 时 = a moment.

Watch out

- 一时 is the “can’t … *just now*” word —don’t use 一度 for a momentary lapse.

14.10 一直 vs. 一向—“all along (continuously)” vs. “all along (habitually)”

Both mean “all along,” but one is an unbroken stretch and the other a long-standing habit. **一直** = “continuously, the whole time” —an unbroken action from some point, and it can even run **into the future** (我会一直支持你). **一向** = “consistently, habitually up to now” —a settled trait, and it only reaches up to the **present**.

Structure: 一直 + Verb (can be future) · 一向 + habit / trait (up to now)

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 会 |huì|will / 一直 |yí zhí|always / 支持 |zhī chí|support / 你 |nǐ|you / 。 }

I will always support you.

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 一向 |yí xiàng|has always / 很 |hěn|been very / 守时 |shǒu shí|punctual / 。 }

He’s always been punctual.

Remember: 一直 = an **UNBROKEN** stretch (can extend into the **FUTURE**: 我会一直支持你); 一向 = a **HABITUAL** trait, only up to **NOW** (一向很守时). Continuous line vs settled habit.

Watch out

- For a promise reaching forward, only 一直 works —一向 can’t point to the future.

15 名词辨析

15.1 彼此 vs. 对方—“each other” vs. “the other party”

Both can translate as “each other,” but they pull in different directions. **彼此** is **reciprocal** —“one another, both sides, mutually” —and can sit right before a verb like 互相 (彼此信任 = “trust each other”). **对方** points to **the other specific party** —the single counterpart facing you —and can’t go before a verb that way. 彼此 may follow 你们 / 我们 / 大家; 对方 cannot.

Structure: 彼此 + Verb · 对方 + Noun (= the other side)

{zh: 我们 |wǒ men|we / 应该 |yīng gāi|should / 彼此 |bǐ cǐ|each other / 信任 |xìn rèn|trust / 。 }

We should trust each other.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 要 |yào|should / 听听 |tīng ting|listen to / 对方 |duì fāng|the other side’s / 的 |de / 意见 |yì jiàn|view / 。 }

You should hear the other side’s view.

Remember: 彼此 = reciprocal “each other” (works before a verb, like 互相: 彼此信任); 对方 = the one SPECIFIC counterpart (“the other side”: 对方的意见). 彼此 = mutual flow both ways; 对方 = the person across the table.

Watch out

- 对方 is a *noun* (the other party) —it can’t sit before a verb the way 彼此 / 互相 do.

15.2 人家 vs. 别人—“others / them” vs. “other people”

Both refer to people other than the speaker, but **别人** is the neutral one —“other people, someone else.” **人家** is colloquial and often **specific or emotionally coloured**: it can mean “they / that person (you know who),” and even a coy “I / me.” In plain “other people” sentences the two are interchangeable; only 人家 carries the extra coloured uses.

Structure: 别人 + ... (neutral) · 人家 + ... (colloquial, often specific / coy)

{zh: 别人 |bié rén|other people’s / 的 |de / 事 |shì|business / 你 |nǐ|you / 别 |bié|don’t / 管 |guǎn|meddle in / 。 }

Don’t meddle in other people’s business.

{zh: 人家 |rén jia|they’ve / 都 |dōu|already / 不 |bù|stopped / 理 |lǐ|paying attention to / 你 |nǐ|you / 了 |le / , 你 |nǐ|and you / 还 |hái|still / 说 |shuō|keep talking / 。 }

They’ve already stopped paying you any attention, and you keep on.

Remember: 别人 = neutral “other people”; 人家 = colloquial & often SPECIFIC or charged (“they / that person —you know who,” even a coy “me”). 别人的事 (anyone’s business) vs 人家都不理你了 (they —pointedly —ignore you). 人家 carries feeling; 别人 doesn’t.

Watch out

- 人家 can mean a coy "I / me" (人家不要嘛, "I don't want to") —别人 never can.