Laowai

HSK 4

HSK 2.0 / Grammar

Connect ideas clearly / 104 topics



Open the linked lesson for the full explanation and more examples.

Open this study guide

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HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Connect ideas clearly

Compare viewpoints, qualify a statement and explain how events relate. Study the whole construction, including the words on either side of its connector.

下雨了，于是我们回家了。

Xiàyǔ le, yúshì wǒmen huí jiā le.

It started raining, so we went home.

Study this construction

How to use this guide

Read the example, cover the translation and say what the sentence means. Open the linked lesson for the full explanation and additional examples. Where practice is available, the online guide links to it.

The HSK 2.0 level labels retained with the reference lessons.

Topics in this selection

Adverbs and degree - 25 topics

Conjunctions and complex sentences - 20 topics

Verb phrases - 17 topics

Sentence structure and word order - 13 topics

Adjectives - 1 topics

Negation - 3 topics

Numbers, quantities and classifiers - 2 topics

Particles - 4 topics

Questions - 2 topics

Prepositions and coverbs - 2 topics

Modality and auxiliary verbs - 2 topics

Complements - 2 topics

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Noun phrases - 4 topics

Aspect, time and completion - 1 topics

Comparisons - 6 topics

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Adverbs and degree

Strong Adjective Intensifiers with 死了 (Sǐ Le)

Adj. + 死了

After an adjective, 死了 can express an extreme degree with an emotional, conversational tone. Many familiar uses concern uncomfortable states such as hunger, heat, tiredness, or annoyance.

我饿死了。

Wǒ è sǐ le!

I'm starving!

Full lesson and examples →

Approximation and Similarity with 差不多 (Chàbuduō)

Subj. + 差不多

差不多 expresses closeness rather than an exact match. It can serve as the predicate when two things or a group are broadly alike.

这几个地方都差不多。

Zhè jǐ gè dìfang dōu chàbuduō.

These places are all pretty much the same.

Full lesson and examples →

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Just Happened in Chinese with 刚 and 刚刚

Subj. + 刚 + Verb

刚 and 刚刚 can present an event as having happened recently. They normally occur after the subject and before the action phrase.

我们刚知道。

Wǒmen gāng zhīdào.

We just found out.

Full lesson and examples →

Just Right and Happen To with 正好 (Zhènghǎo)

Subj. + 正好 + Verb Phrase

正好 can show that circumstances happen to align with another need, event, or expectation. Before a verb phrase, it often presents an action or situation as occurring at a convenient or relevant moment.

我正好要出去，垃圾我来扔吧。

Wǒ zhènghǎo yào chūqù, lājī wǒ lái rēng ba.

I'm just about to leave. I'll take out the trash.

Full lesson and examples →

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原来 (Yuánlái): Originally and It Turns Out

Former state with 原来(的) / New information with 原来

原来 can refer to how something was originally or previously. Before a predicate, it establishes an earlier situation, often contrasted with a later change.

你原来的发型也很可爱。

Nǐ yuánlái de fàxíng yě hěn kě'ài.

Your original hairstyle was also very cute.

Full lesson and examples →

Almost Happened with 差点 (Chàdiǎn) in Chinese

Subj. + 差点 + Predicate

差点 before a predicate says that the described outcome came close to happening. In the straightforward affirmative pattern, it did not actually occur.

车差点撞到我。

Chē chàdiǎn zhuàngdào wǒ.

The car almost hit me.

Full lesson and examples →

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Have Always with 从来都 (Cónglái Dōu) in Chinese

从来 + 都 (是) + Predicate

从来 in an affirmative statement commonly combines with 都 to describe a pattern that has held throughout the relevant period. It can introduce a repeated practice or an enduring way of being.

他从来都这样。

Tā cónglái dōu zhèyàng.

He's always like this.

Full lesson and examples →

As a Result and Ended Up with 结果 (Jiéguǒ)

Reason / Condition ， 结果 + Result

结果 can introduce what followed from a preceding situation or sequence. The background comes first, and 结果 begins the clause giving the outcome.

她穿得很少， 结果感冒了。

Tā chuān de hěn shǎo, jiéguǒ gǎnmào le.

She didn't dress warmly enough, and as a result, she caught a cold.

Full lesson and examples →

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Enough with 够 (Gòu) Before and After Verbs

Subj. + 够 + Predicate (+ 了)

够 expresses sufficiency relative to a need or standard. Before a verb, it can say that an amount is enough for carrying out that activity.

我们买了很多菜，够吃了。

Wǒmen mǎi le hěn duō cài, gòu chī le.

We bought a lot of food. It's enough for us to eat.

Full lesson and examples →

A Considered Better Choice with 还是 (Háishì)

还是 + Verb

还是 before an action can present it as the preferable choice after alternatives have been considered. The speaker may be revising a plan or recommending the more sensible option in the circumstances.

还是明天去吧。

Háishì míngtiān qù ba.

We'd better go tomorrow.

Full lesson and examples →

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Had Better and It Is Best To with 最好 (Zuìhǎo)

Subj. + 最好 + Predicate

最好 can present an action as the best or most advisable course in the circumstances. In this use it appears before the recommended predicate, commonly after the subject.

你最好先休息一下。

Nǐ zuìhǎo xiān xiūxi yīxià.

You'd better get some rest first.

Full lesson and examples →

One by One and Gradually with Repeated 一 Phrases

一 + Measure Word + 一 + Measure Word

Repeating 一 with a classifier can describe handling or doing things one unit at a time. The classifier identifies the relevant unit, and a noun may be included when needed.

别吵，一个一个说。

Bié chǎo, yī gè yī gè shuō.

Don't argue. Speak one by one.

Full lesson and examples →

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Also All with 也都 (Yě Dōu) in Chinese

也都 + Verb / Adj.

也 and 都 can appear together when an added group shares a situation already mentioned. 也 connects the new statement to earlier information, while 都 indicates that the predicate applies throughout the relevant group. The normal order in this combined pattern is 也 before 都, followed by the predicate.

我很好，我的家人也都很好。

Wǒ hěn hǎo, wǒ de jiārén yě dōu hěn hǎo.

I'm good. So is everyone in my family.

Full lesson and examples →

Quite and Pretty with 挺……的 (Tǐng...De)

挺 + Adj. + 的

挺 before an adjective gives a conversational evaluation of degree, often rendered as “quite,” “rather,” or “pretty.” 的 commonly appears at the end of the descriptive phrase. The construction can express a favorable observation, a reservation, or a plain assessment, depending on the adjective and the situation.

这个老师挺年轻的。

Zhège lǎoshī tǐng niánqīng de.

This teacher is quite young.

Full lesson and examples →

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看来 (Kànlái): Drawing a Conclusion or Naming a Perspective

看来 + Judgment to the Situation；在 + Person + 看来

看来 introduces a conclusion the speaker draws from available evidence. The evidence may be visible, but it can also be a broader situation or a set of facts.

看来他不来了，都这么晚了。

Kànlái tā bù lái le, dōu zhème wǎn le.

It seems he's not coming. It's already so late.

Full lesson and examples →

只好 (Zhǐhǎo): Having No Better Choice in Chinese

只好 + Verb Phrase

只好 presents an action as the remaining practical choice after alternatives have become unavailable or unacceptable. A preceding clause often explains the difficulty, and the 只好 clause states what the person consequently does.

餐厅都关门了，我们只好去吃 KFC。

Cāntīng dōu guānmén le, wǒmen zhǐhǎo qù chī KFC.

The other restaurants are all closed, so we had no choice but to eat at KFC.

Full lesson and examples →

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可 (Kě) for Emphasis: Strong Descriptions and Firm Warnings

可 + Adj. (+ 了)

可 can add strong conversational emphasis to a description or action. Before an adjective, it often appears with final 了 and makes the quality sound striking or personally significant.

这只小狗可淘气了！

Zhè zhǐ xiǎo gǒu kě táoqì le!

This puppy is so naughty!

Full lesson and examples →

恐怕 (Kǒngpà): I Am Afraid and Concerned Predictions

(Subject +) 恐怕 + Clause / Predicate

恐怕 introduces an assessment that may be unwelcome, concerning, or inconvenient. It can soften bad news or present a prediction cautiously, rather than describing literal fear.

今天恐怕要下雨。

Jīntiān kǒngpà yào xià yǔ.

I'm afraid it's going to rain today.

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

甚至 (Shènzhì): Adding an Extreme or Surprising Case

甚至

甚至 adds a case that goes further than the listener might expect. It may highlight a surprising member of a group or introduce a stronger statement after an initial observation.

每个观众甚至裁判都站起来给他鼓掌。

Měi gè guānzhòng shènzhì cáipàn dōu zhàn qǐlái gěi tā gǔzhǎng.

Each and every member of the audience, and even the referee, stood up and applauded for him.

Full lesson and examples →

不得不 (Bùdébù): Have To and Cannot Avoid Doing

Subj. + 不得不 + Verb

不得不 says that circumstances leave a person unable to avoid an action. It often explains a reluctant practical choice, but it can also introduce an acknowledgment or feeling that the evidence compels.

你真的太厉害了， 我不得不承认。

Nǐ zhēn de tài lìhài le, wǒ bùdébù chéngrèn.

You are so good. I have to admit it.

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

到底 (Dàodǐ): What Exactly, After All, and Finally

到底

到底 has several related uses centered on reaching the decisive point. In a question, it intensifies the request to establish what is actually true, often giving a sense of exactly or on earth.

到底是个大老板，出手就是大方。

Dàodǐ shì ge dà lǎobǎn, chūshǒu jiùshì dàfang.

After all, he's a big boss, so naturally he spends generously.

Full lesson and examples →

究竟 (Jiūjìng): Asking What Exactly or Finding the Real Answer

Subject + 究竟 + Question Predicate / Affirmative-Negative Predicate?

究竟 emphasizes the desire to establish the actual answer to a question. It can accompany a question word asking who, what, when, or why, or an affirmative-negative form asking whether something will happen.

这个人究竟是谁?

Zhège rén jiūjìng shì shéi?

Who on earth is this guy?

Full lesson and examples →

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本来 (Běnlái): Original Plans and Things True All Along

本来……

本来 can describe an original plan, expectation, or state before later circumstances changed it. The first clause establishes what was intended or expected, and a following contrast explains the actual development. 是…的 often frames an intention, but 本来 itself does not require that one fixed construction.

我本来是要去的，不过后来不太舒服，就没去。

Wǒ běnlái shì yào qù de, bùguò hòulái bù tài shūfu, jiù méi qù.

I originally wanted to go, but I didn't go because I didn't feel very well.

Full lesson and examples →

千万 (Qiānwàn): Be Sure To and Whatever You Do, Do Not

千万 + 要 / 别 / 不要 / 不能 + Verb Phrase

千万 adds strong insistence to an instruction. It is especially common in warnings telling someone to avoid an action, but it can also urge them to make certain they do something.

这个菜很难吃，千万不要点！

Zhège cài hěn nánchī, qiānwàn bùyào diǎn!

This dish is horrible. Make sure you don't order it!

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

竟然 (Jìngrán): Express an Unexpected Result

Subject + 竟然 / 竟 + predicate

竟然 marks a fact as surprising relative to an expectation. The surprise may concern success, failure, someone's behavior, or an unexpected combination of circumstances.

这么简单的问题，他竟然答错了。

Zhème jiǎndān de wèntí, tā jìngrán dá cuò le.

He actually got such a simple question wrong.

竟然 marks a result contrary to the expected ease.

Full lesson and examples →

Conjunctions and complex sentences

But in Chinese: 可是 (Kěshì) and 但是 (Dànshì)

……，可是 / 但是……

可是 and 但是 introduce a contrast with what has just been said. Place either word before the clause that adds the contrary information.

我喜欢他， 可是他不喜欢我。

Wǒ xǐhuan tā, kěshì tā bù xǐhuan wǒ.

I like him, but he doesn't like me.

Full lesson and examples →

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A Softer But with 不过 (Bùguò) in Chinese

…… ， 不过 ……

不过 can introduce a contrasting point or qualification after another statement. It often feels conversational and can make a reservation sound less abrupt than a stronger contrast marker.

这件衣服我很喜欢， 不过有点贵。

Zhè jiàn yīfu wǒ hěn xǐhuan, bùguò yǒudiǎn guì.

I like this piece of clothing, but it's a little bit expensive.

Full lesson and examples →

Adding an Afterthought with 还有 (Háiyǒu)

…… ， 还有 ， ……

还有 can introduce an additional point after information already given. The new material may be another request, reminder, condition, or practical detail.

你需要吃药。 还有，要多休息。

Nǐ xūyào chī yào. Háiyǒu, yào duō xiūxi.

You need to take medicine. Also, you should get more rest.

Full lesson and examples →

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In Addition and Separately with 另外 (Lìngwài)

……，另外，……

另外 can introduce another point alongside what has already been said. As a clause connector, it often begins the additional statement, and 还 or 也 may appear later to reinforce the additive relationship.

这个课文太难了，我不想学。 另外，我也没准备。

Zhège kèwén tài nán le, wǒ bù xiǎng xué. Lìngwài, wǒ yě méi zhǔnbèi.

This lesson is too difficult and I don't want to read it. Besides, I didn't prepare for it.

Full lesson and examples →

Besides and Moreover with 再说 (Zàishuō)

……，再说，……

再说 can introduce another reason supporting a decision or judgment. The preceding statement establishes the position, and the following clause strengthens it with an additional consideration.

这么晚，别走了。 再说，外面正在下雪。

Zhème wǎn, bié zǒu le. Zàishuō, wàimiàn zhèngzài xiàxuě.

It's so late. Stay. Besides, it's snowing outside.

Full lesson and examples →

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来 (Lái) for Purpose: Connecting a Method to an Action

通过 / 用 + Method + 来 + Verb Phrase

来 can connect a way of doing something with the result you want to achieve. The first part identifies the tool, channel, or method; the verb phrase after 来 explains its purpose.

用这种方法来赚钱，真丢人。

Yòng zhè zhǒng fāngfǎ lái zhuànqián, zhēn diūrén.

It's shameful to earn money in this way.

Full lesson and examples →

Adjective + 是 + Adjective: Conceding a Point in Chinese

Adj. + 是 + Adj.， 但是.....

Repeating an adjective around 是 acknowledges a point before qualifying it. The speaker accepts that the description is true, but the following clause introduces a limitation, drawback, or different consideration.

工作忙是忙， 但是我很开心。

Gōngzuò máng shì máng, dànshì wǒ hěn kāixīn.

Work may be busy, but I'm very happy.

Full lesson and examples →

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于是 (Yúshì): So Then and Consequences in a Narrative

…… ， 于是 ……

于是 introduces the next development as a consequence of the preceding situation. It is especially common in storytelling, where a change or observation prompts someone to act.

我看大家都买了， 于是我也买了。

Wǒ kàn dàjiā dōu mǎi le, yúshì wǒ yě mǎi le.

I saw that everyone had bought it, so I bought it too.

Full lesson and examples →

而 (Ér): Connecting Contrasts and Saying But Rather

Clause A，而 + Clause B; 不是 A，而是 B; 是 A，而不是 B

而 links related ideas while highlighting a difference between them. It is common in written and relatively formal speech, though familiar patterns also appear in conversation.

我们是来办事的， 而不是来玩的。

Wǒmen shì lái bànshì de, ér bù shì lái wán de.

We're here to do work, not to have fun.

Full lesson and examples →

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尽管 (Jǐnguǎn): Express Although and Despite

尽管 + fact，subject + 但是 / 还是 + contrasting result

尽管 introduces a fact that might seem to prevent the outcome in the next clause. The second part shows that the outcome holds anyway, creating a concessive relationship.

尽管很多人批评他，他还是坚持这么做。

Jǐnguǎn hěn duō rén pīpíng tā, tā háishì jiānchí zhème zuò.

Despite the fact that many people criticize him, he still insists on doing it.

Full lesson and examples →

倒 (Dào): Mark an Unexpected Contrast

Subject + 倒 + predicate

倒 draws attention to a fact that differs from an expectation or another part of the discussion. It can introduce a surprising evaluation, correct an assumed motive, or concede one point while implying a reservation elsewhere.

我帮他，倒不是因为喜欢他，是因为他工作很努力。

Wǒ bāng tā, dào bù shì yīnwèi xǐhuan tā, shì yīnwèi tā gōngzuò hěn nǔlì.

I helped him not because I liked him, but because he worked very hard.

Full lesson and examples →

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却 (Què): Express But or Yet Within a Clause

Context，subject + 却 + contrasting predicate

却 marks a contrast within a clause, often showing that the outcome differs from what the preceding facts lead someone to expect. A person's position, intentions, or circumstances may suggest one result, while the sentence reports another.

他是老板，却没有人听他的。

Tā shì lǎobǎn, què méiyǒu rén tīng tā de.

He's the boss, but nobody listens to him.

Full lesson and examples →

由于 (Yóuyú): Introduce a Cause or Reason

由于 + cause，result

由于 introduces the cause behind a situation, often in explanatory or formal writing. The cause may be a noun phrase naming a circumstance or a clause explaining what happened.

由于温室效应的影响，全球的气候变得越来越反常了。

Yóuyú wēnshì xiàoyìng de yǐngxiǎng, quánqiú de qìhòu biàn de yuèláiyuè fǎncháng le.

Due to the influence of the greenhouse effect, the whole Earth's climate is getting more and more abnormal.

Full lesson and examples →

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既然...就 (Jìrán...Jiù): Since That Is the Case

既然 + accepted fact，(那) + subject + 就 + conclusion

既然 introduces a premise that the speaker treats as established or accepted for the discussion. The next clause draws a practical conclusion from that premise, often proposing what someone should do.

你既然不想说， 那就别说了。

Nǐ jìrán bù xiǎng shuō, nà jiù bié shuō le.

Since you don't want to say, then just don't say.

Full lesson and examples →

因此 (Yīncǐ): Express Therefore in Chinese

Cause，(subject +) 因此 + result

因此 introduces a consequence that follows from information already given. It points backward to the reason and forward to the resulting situation, much like therefore or consequently.

我病了， 因此心情不好。

Wǒ bìng le, yīncǐ xīnqíng bù hǎo.

I am sick, therefore I am not in a good mood.

Full lesson and examples →

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除非 (Chúfēi): Express Unless and Only If

除非 + exception，否则 / 不然 + result; 除非 + condition，才 + enabled result

除非 identifies an exception to the situation described in the rest of the sentence. With a negative main statement, it often corresponds to unless: the main outcome holds except under the named condition.

我不去，除非你也去。

Wǒ bù qù, chúfēi nǐ yě qù.

I won't go unless you go too.

Full lesson and examples →

即使...也 (Jíshǐ...Yě): Even If

即使 + hypothetical condition，subject + 也 + unchanged result

即使 introduces a condition that might normally affect a decision or outcome. The second clause says that the stated result still holds despite it.

即使你不想让我去，我也要去。

Jíshǐ nǐ bù xiǎng ràng wǒ qù, wǒ yě yào qù.

Even if you don't want me to go, I still have to go.

Full lesson and examples →

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要是...就 (Yàoshi...Jiù): Say If in Conversation

要是 + condition，subject + 就 + consequence

要是 introduces a condition in everyday spoken Chinese. The next clause explains the consequence, response, or decision that follows if the condition applies.

你要是真想我， 就给我打电话。

Nǐ yàoshi zhēn xiǎng wǒ, jiù gěi wǒ dǎ diànhuà.

If you do miss me, then give me a call.

Full lesson and examples →

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不管…都 (Bùguǎn…Dōu): No Matter What

不管 + question word / alternatives，subject + 都 / 也 + unchanged result

不管 presents a range of possibilities and says that the main result holds across them. The first clause can use a question word such as who, where, or what, or it can name alternatives joined with 还是.



不管天气怎么样，我们都去散步。

Bùguǎn tiānqì zěnmeyàng, wǒmen dōu qù sànbù.

Whatever the weather is like, we go for a walk.

Full lesson and examples →

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无论 and 不论: Express No Matter or Regardless

无论 / 不论 + question word / alternatives，subject + 都 / 也 + result

无论 introduces possibilities that do not affect the conclusion. It can range over people, places, degrees, actions, or two explicitly named alternatives.

无论多么成功，他总觉得自己不够好。

Wúlùn duōme chénggōng, tā zǒng juéde zìjǐ bù gòu hǎo.

No matter how successful he is, he always thinks he isn't enough.

Full lesson and examples →

Verb phrases

Never in Chinese with 从来不 and 从来没

从来 + 不 / 没(有) + Verb

从来 extends a negative statement across the relevant period of experience or habitual behavior. With 不, it commonly says that somebody never does something as a practice or principle.

她从来不喝酒。

Tā cónglái bù hējiǔ.

She never drinks.

Full lesson and examples →

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要看 and 得看: Saying It Depends in Chinese

这 / 那 + 要看 / 得看 + Unclear Situation

要看 and 得看 present a factor that will determine an answer or outcome. In conversation, 这 or 那 can stand for the issue already being discussed, followed by the relevant factor.

这得看你的时间。

Zhè děi kàn nǐ de shíjiān.

This depends on when you are available.

Full lesson and examples →

好像 (Hǎoxiàng): Expressing Seems and Tentative Impressions

好像……

好像 introduces an impression that the speaker has not fully confirmed. It can precede a description, an identity statement, or an action, so its use is broader than commenting only on visual appearance.

他好像是英国人。

Tā hǎoxiàng shì Yīngguó rén.

He seems to be British.

Full lesson and examples →

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以为 (Yǐwéi): An Assumption That Turns Out to Be Wrong

Subj. + 以为……

以为 introduces an assumption that the speaker now questions, corrects, or treats as mistaken. The following clause states the belief itself, while the surrounding conversation supplies the contrast with reality.

我以为他是德国人。

Wǒ yǐwéi tā shì Déguó rén.

I thought he was German.

Full lesson and examples →

通过 (Tōngguò): Passing, Approval, and Achieving Through a Method

通过 + Agent / Method， ……

通过 can function as a verb describing passage through an opening or across a route. It also means passing a test or gaining approval, where the passage is figurative.

从我家到那儿要通过两座桥。

Cóng wǒ jiā dào nàr yào tōngguò liǎng zuò qiáo.

To get there from my house, you have to cross two bridges.

Full lesson and examples →

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来自 (Láizì): Stating an Origin or Source in Chinese

Subject + 来自 + Place / Source

来自 identifies the origin of a person, object, idea, or influence. Put the thing whose origin you are describing before 来自, then name its source afterward.

我来自中国。

Wǒ láizì Zhōngguó.

I come from China.

Full lesson and examples →

我来 and 你来: Using 来 to Say Who Will Do It

(让 +) Subj. + 来

来 can stand for an action that is already obvious from the situation. Instead of repeating the full task, name the person who will take it on and add 来.

你来！

Nǐ lái!

You do it!

Full lesson and examples →

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少 (Shǎo) Before Verbs: Do Less or Cut Back

少 + Verb

Before a verb, 少 asks for a smaller amount or a lower frequency of the action. It is useful for advice about habits, instructions about quantities, and requests to reduce something excessive.

请少放点盐。

Qǐng shǎo fàng diǎn yán.

Use less salt, please.

Full lesson and examples →

多 (Duō) Before Verbs: Do More or More Often

多 + Verb

多 before a verb increases the amount, frequency, or extent of the action. It appears naturally in encouragement and practical advice, but it can also describe an intention or need when a subject and modal are included.

多吃点。

Duō chī diǎn.

Eat a little more.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

到 (Dào) After a Verb: Continuing Until a Time or Event

(一直 +) Verb + 到 + Time / Event; Verb + Object + Verb + 到 + Endpoint

到 after an activity introduces the point up to which it continues. The endpoint may be a clock time, a date, or an event that brings the activity to a stop.

你们要玩到几点?

Nǐmen yào wán dào jǐ diǎn?

When will you be done playing?

Full lesson and examples →

Separable Verbs in Chinese: Verb-Object Phrases and Word Order

Separable verb: Verb ... [other material] ... Object

Many expressions learned as single verbs contain a verbal part and an object part. This internal structure explains why extra material can appear between their syllables.

我没有时间见面。

Wǒ méiyǒu shíjiān jiànmiàn.

I don't have time to meet.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

并 (Bìng): Connect Related Verb Phrases

Verb phrase 1 + 并 + verb phrase 2

并 can join two related verb phrases within a single statement. It is particularly useful in concise written language when the actions share a subject and form part of one account, decision, or instruction.

我同意并支持你的决定。

Wǒ tóngyì bìng zhīchí nǐ de juédìng.

I agree with and support your decision.

Full lesson and examples →

由 (Yóu): Identify Who Handles or Causes an Action

Topic + 由 + person + verb phrase

由 introduces the person or group responsible for performing an action or bringing something about. A sentence often begins with the task or matter under discussion, then uses 由 to say who handles it.

这件事由我说了算。

Zhè jiàn shì yóu wǒ shuō le suàn.

This matter is up to me.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

并且 (Bìngqiě): Add And Also or Moreover

Clause / verb phrase 1 + 并且 + clause / verb phrase 2

并且 adds a second related point to the first. It may simply connect actions, or it may build the argument by presenting something further.

我同意并且支持你的决定。

Wǒ tóngyì bìngqiě zhīchí nǐ de juédìng.

I agree with and support your decision.

Full lesson and examples →

值得 (Zhídé): Say Something Is Worth Doing

Subject + 值得 + verb phrase; subject + 很值得

值得 evaluates whether an action deserves someone's time, effort, attention, or approval. The action follows it directly, so a thing or experience can be presented as worth reading, trying, studying, or discussing.

巴金的散文很值得一看。

Bājīn de sǎnwén hěn zhídé yī kàn.

Ba Jin's prose deserves a look.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Verb + 着 + Verb + 着: As an Action Continues

Verb + 着 + verb + 着，(就) + new development (+ 了)

Repeating a verb with 着 portrays an activity continuing for a while before something changes. The speaker follows the action as it unfolds, then comments on a discovery, interruption, or unexpected result.

说着说着我就发现自己也糊涂了。

Shuō zhe shuō zhe wǒ jiù fāxiàn zìjǐ yě hútu le.

After talking and talking, I realized that I had confused myself.

Full lesson and examples →

在于 (Zàiyú): Lie In or Depend On

Topic + 在于 + essential factor / determining condition

在于 identifies where the essence, importance, or determining factor of something lies. The topic may be a problem, a value, a success, or a choice, while the following phrase explains what really matters.

问题在于时间不够。

Wèntí zàiyú shíjiān bú gòu.

The problem lies in not having enough time.

The following clause identifies the essential difficulty.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Sentence structure and word order

Chinese Location Phrases with 在、上、下 and 里

在 + Place + 上 / 下 / 里 / 旁边

在 introduces a location, but an ordinary object noun often needs a position word to specify the relationship. 上, 下, 里, and other locality expressions follow the reference noun to say whether something is on, under, inside, or beside it. The complete location phrase can then state where a subject is or an action happens.

在中国

zài Zhōngguó

in China

Full lesson and examples →

连...都...: Saying Even in Chinese

连 + Subj. + 都 (+ 不 / 没) + Verb

连…都… singles out a surprising case that makes the rest of a claim more striking. Put 连 before the focused person, thing, or event, and 都 before the predicate.

这个问题太简单了，连三岁小孩都知道。

Zhège wèntí tài jiǎndān le, lián sān suì xiǎohái dōu zhīdào.

This question is so easy that even a three-year-old kid knows the answer.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

倍 (Bèi): Times as Much and Multiplicative Comparisons

Noun 1 + 是 + Noun 2 + 的 + Number + 倍

倍 expresses a ratio between two quantities. In the 是…的…倍 structure, the number states the total size of the first quantity relative to the second.

他现在的工资是两年前的四倍。

Tā xiànzài de gōngzī shì liǎng nián qián de sì bèi.

His current salary is four times what it was two years ago.

Full lesson and examples →

一点也不 and 一点都不: Not at All in Chinese

Subj. + 一点 + 也 / 都 + 不 + Adj.

一点也不 and 一点都不 deny even a minimal degree of a quality or feeling. Put the expression before the description you want to negate.

那个问题一点儿也不难。

Nàge wèntí yīdiǎnr yě bù nán.

That question isn't difficult at all.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

不知道...好: Not Knowing What Would Be Best to Do

Subject + 不知道 + Embedded Question + (才 +) 好

不知道…好 expresses uncertainty about which action would be appropriate or best in a situation. It is especially useful when the speaker faces a practical choice, feels awkward, or cannot decide how to respond.

我真的不知道怎么办才好。

Wǒ zhēnde bù zhīdào zěnme bàn cái hǎo.

I really don't know what to do about this.

Full lesson and examples →

来说 (Láishuō): For Someone, Generally, and Speaking Broadly

对 + Person + 来说 / 一般 来说

来说 appears in frames that establish how the following comment should be understood. 对…来说 identifies a person or group whose perspective, circumstances, or interests are relevant. The comment need not report their spoken opinion; it may describe what is easy, important, or suitable for them.

对我来说， 中文不容易。

Duì wǒ lái shuō, Zhōngwén bù róngyì.

For me, Chinese is not easy.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

一…就…: As Soon As and Immediate Reactions in Chinese

Subj. + 一 + Event 1，就 + Event 2

一…就… links a triggering event with an action or result that follows promptly. Put 一 before the trigger and 就 before what happens next.



老师一来大家就不说话了。

Lǎoshī yī lái dàjiā jiù bù shuōhuà le.

As soon as the teacher came, everyone stopped talking.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

连...都不: Not Even an Action or a Single Thing

连 + verb + 都 + 不 / 没 + repeated verb; 连 + 一 + measure word + noun + 都 / 也 + negative predicate

连 can focus on something so basic or minimal that its absence is striking. Placing a verb after 连 and repeating it after a negative emphasizes that the action was not performed at all, even at the most elementary level.

朋友？这个人我连见都没见过。

Péngyou? Zhège rén wǒ lián jiàn dōu méi jiàn guo.

Friends? I've never even met this person.

Full lesson and examples →

任何 (Rènhé): Any or Whichever in Chinese

任何 + noun + 都 / 也 + predicate

任何 modifies a noun to leave the choice of individual unrestricted. It can mean any member of a class, whoever is involved, or whatever item fits the description.

你到派对以后任何饮料都不要喝。

Nǐ dào pàiduì yǐhòu rènhé yǐnliào dōu bùyào hē.

After you arrive at the party, don't drink anything.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

既…又 and 既…也: Both And in Chinese

Subject + 既 + predicate 1 + 又 / 也 + predicate 2

既 links two descriptions that both apply to the same person, thing, or situation. The following 又 or 也 introduces the second description, making the combination explicit.

这个同事既积极又努力。

Zhège tóngshì jì jījí yòu nǔlì.

This colleague is both proactive and hard-working.

Full lesson and examples →

不但, 不仅, and 不只: Not Only But Also Patterns

不但 / 不仅 / 不只 + first point，而且 / 还 / 也 + additional point

不但, 不仅, and 不只 introduce a statement that the speaker intends to extend. The following clause adds another fact, often with 而且, 还, or 也.

我不只对排球感兴趣， 而且对足球也很感兴趣。

Wǒ bùzhǐ duì páiqiú gǎnxìngqù, érqiě duì zúqiú yě hěn gǎnxìngqù.

I am not only interested in volleyball, but also in soccer.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

以…为… (Yǐ…Wéi…): Take or Use A as B

以 + A + 为 + B

以…为… presents something as serving a particular role, basis, standard, or purpose. The item after 以 is what is being taken or used, and the item after 为 identifies how it is regarded.

请以这份报告为参考。

Qǐng yǐ zhè fèn bàogào wéi cānkǎo.

Please use this report as a reference.

The item after 以 is assigned the role after 为.

Full lesson and examples →

为…而… (Wèi…Ér…): Act for a Purpose or Cause

Subject + 为 + purpose / cause + 而 + action

为…而… places an action in the service of a purpose, person, or cause. The phrase after 为 identifies what motivates or gives direction to the action, and 而 introduces the action itself.

很多中国父母为孩子而活。

Hěnduō Zhōngguó fùmǔ wèi háizi ér huó.

Many Chinese parents live for their children.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Adjectives

The Whole and All with 全 (Quán) in Chinese

全 + Noun

全 can present something as a whole or say that a statement covers an entire set. Before suitable nouns, it forms expressions referring to the whole family, country, body, or another established unit.

我们全家都去过北京。

Wǒmen quán jiā dōu qù guo Běijīng.

Our entire family has been to Beijing.

Full lesson and examples →

Negation

Emphasizing Negatives with 又不 and 又没

又 + 不 / 没 + Verb

又 before a negative predicate can emphasize a fact that the speaker thinks should already be recognized. It often pushes back against an assumption or argues that another person's response is unnecessary.

问我干吗？我又不知道。

Wèn wǒ gànmá? Wǒ yòu bù zhīdào.

Why ask me? I definitely don't know.

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

并不 and 并没有 (Bìng): Emphasize a Chinese Negation

Subject + 并 + 不 / 没有 + predicate

并 adds corrective emphasis to a negative statement. It often signals that an assumption is mistaken: something is less easy, less welcome, or less successful than another person might suppose.

在中国创业并不容易，有很多的挑战。

Zài Zhōngguó chuàngyè bìng bù róngyì, yǒu hěn duō de tiǎozhàn.

In China, starting a business really isn't easy. There are a lot of challenges.

Full lesson and examples →

害得 (Hàide): Describe an Unwanted Consequence

Cause + 害得 + affected person + unwanted result

害得 connects a cause with an unpleasant consequence for someone. It is common in conversation when the speaker complains about noise, another person's behavior, or a decision that created trouble.

下午喝了两杯咖啡， 害得我晚上睡不着。

Xiàwǔ hē le liǎng bēi kāfēi, hàide wǒ wǎnshang shuì buzháo.

I had two cups of coffee. It kept me from falling asleep at night.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Numbers, quantities and classifiers

Just and Only with 就 (Jiù) for Small Quantities

就 + Subject + Predicate

就 can single out a limited participant or amount. Before a subject, it can identify the only person or thing for which the statement holds.

这件事就我知道。

Zhè jiàn shì jiù wǒ zhīdào.

I'm the only person that knows about this.

Full lesson and examples →

分之 (Fēn Zhī): Chinese Fractions and Percentages

Denominator + 分之 + Numerator

Chinese fractions name the total number of equal parts before naming how many parts are taken. Put the denominator before 分之 and the numerator after it.

我的手机电量只有百分之五了。

Wǒ de shǒujī diànliàng zhǐ yǒu bǎi fēn zhī wǔ le.

My phone only has 5% power left.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Particles

And Things Like That with 什么的 (Shénme De)

Noun 1, Noun 2 + 什么的

什么的 can follow an informal list to indicate other items of the same general kind. The listener is expected to infer the category from what has been named.

我奶奶不吃肉，只吃蔬菜、豆腐什么的。

Wǒ nǎinai bù chī ròu, zhǐ chī shūcài, dòufu shénme de.

My grandma doesn't eat meat. She only eats vegetables, tofu, and so on.

Full lesson and examples →

And So On with 等 and 等等 in Chinese

..... 等 / 等等

等 and 等等 can follow a list to leave room for other members of the same category. They are useful in explanations and more formal descriptions as well as ordinary speech.

西瓜、菠萝、葡萄等等，我都喜欢吃。

Xīguā, bōluó, pútao, děngděng, wǒ dōu xǐhuan chī.

Watermelons, pineapples, grapes, and so on... I like them all.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

吧...吧: Weighing Two Unsatisfactory Options in Chinese

Option 1吧，.....；Option 2 吧，.....

Repeated 吧 lets a speaker consider competing options aloud. State one possible choice, add 吧, and explain its consequence or drawback; then repeat the arrangement for the alternative.

冬天去吧，太冷；夏天去吧，太热。

Dōngtiān qù ba, tài lěng; xiàtiān qù ba, tài rè.

If we go in the winter, it's too cold. If we go in the summer, it's too hot.

Full lesson and examples →

Sentence-Final 的 (De): Certainty and Reassurance

.....的

At the end of some statements, 的 expresses the speaker's confidence in what they are saying. It can make a prediction reassuring, a promise firm, or a reminder more emphatic.

他会好的。

Tā huì hǎo de.

He will get better.

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Questions

吗 with Question Words: Embedded Questions in Chinese

Subject + 知道 / 明白 / 能告诉... + Embedded Question + 吗?

吗 asks whether the larger proposition is true. A question word can appear in that proposition when it belongs to an embedded question, rather than directly asking the listener for the missing information.

这是什么?

Zhè shì shénme?

What is this?

Full lesson and examples →

难道 (Nándào): Challenging an Idea with a Rhetorical Question

难道 + Proposition + (吗)?

难道 marks a question that challenges a proposition the speaker finds difficult to accept. It often presents the alternative as surprising, implausible, or contrary to what should be known.

难道你真的相信他吗?

Nándào nǐ zhēn de xiāngxìn tā ma?

You don't actually believe him, do you?

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Prepositions and coverbs

在…上, 在…下, and 在…方面: Abstract Chinese Frames

在 + Topic + 上， Subj. .....

在 combines with location words to frame abstract ideas as well as physical places. 在…上 often names the issue or field in which a comment applies. 在…方面 similarly introduces an aspect of a broader subject, making it useful for discussing skills, work, habits, or differences. These phrases generally appear before the main predicate.

在这个问题上，我们的看法是一样的。

Zài zhège wèntí shàng, wǒmen de kànfǎ shì yīyàng de.

In regards to this problem, our opinions are the same.

Full lesson and examples →

随着 (Suízhe): Along With and Changes That Develop Together

随着 + Noun / Developing Process，Subject + Predicate

随着 links an action or development to something it accompanies or follows. In a simple sentence, the noun after 随着 can identify music, wind, or another influence that shapes the action.

树枝随着风不停地摇动。

Shùzhī suízhe fēng bù tíng de yáodòng.

The branch keeps swaying in the wind.

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Modality and auxiliary verbs

不用 (Bùyòng): Saying There Is No Need to Do Something

Subj. + 不用 + Verb Phrase

不用 says an action is unnecessary. Place it before the verb phrase whose necessity you are denying.

不用谢。

Bùyòng xiè.

You don't need to thank me.

Full lesson and examples →

得 (Děi): Must and Have To in Spoken Chinese

Subject + 得 + Verb Phrase

When pronounced děi, 得 expresses a need to carry out the following action. It is common in conversation when circumstances, duties, or a practical problem make an action necessary.

我们得走了。

Wǒmen děi zǒu le.

We have to leave now.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Complements

起来 (Qǐlai): Upward Movement, Starting, and Impressions

Verb + 起来

起来 can describe upward movement after an action verb. In these literal uses, the action results in something rising, being lifted, or taking an upright position.

请大家站起来。

Qǐng dàjiā zhàn qǐlái.

Everyone, please stand up.

Full lesson and examples →

起来 (Qǐlái): Gather, Collect, or Put Things Away

Verb + 起来

起来 can extend a directional idea into actions that gather, combine, or secure things. Instead of moving physically upward, items may be brought together into a total, collected into one place, or put away for later.

13 和 15 加起来是多少?

Shísān hé shíwǔ jiā qǐlái shì duōshǎo?

How much are 13 and 15 added up?

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Noun phrases

所有 (Suǒyǒu): All, All Of, and Not All in Chinese

所有 (+ 的) + Noun

所有 refers to the complete set of things or people identified by the following noun phrase. 的 may appear between 所有 and the noun, depending on the expression. The set can be defined by ownership, a location, or another modifier; it does not have to include everything of that kind in the world.

你买了她所有的书?

Nǐ mǎi le tā suǒyǒu de shū?

You've bought all her books?

Full lesson and examples →

之一 (Zhī Yī): Saying One Of in Chinese

Subject + 是 + Group Noun Phrase + 之一

之一 selects one member of a group named before it. Unlike English “one of,” the Chinese expression follows the entire group description.

她是我最好的朋友之一。

Tā shì wǒ zuì hǎo de péngyou zhī yī.

She is one of my best friends.

Full lesson and examples →

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

另 and 另外: Another, the Other, and the Remaining Ones

另 / 另外 + Number + [Measure Word] + Noun

另 and 另外 distinguish an additional item or a different part of a group from one already mentioned. Follow them with the appropriate number and classifier before the noun.

我有两个手机，一个是小米， 另一个是 iPhone。

Wǒ yǒu liǎng gè shǒujī, yī gè shì Xiǎomǐ, lìng yī gè shì iPhone.

I have two cell phones. One is a Xiaomi, and the other is an iPhone.

Full lesson and examples →

其中 (Qízhōng): Among Them, Of Which, and Within a Set

Established Group / Whole，其中 + Subset / Member + Predicate

其中 refers back to a group or whole that has already been established. It introduces something within that set without repeating the complete group description.

我有四辆汽车， 其中三辆都是宝马。

Wǒ yǒu sì liàng qìchē, qízhōng sān liàng dōu shì Bǎomǎ.

I have four cars. Of them, three are BMW's.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

Aspect, time and completion

一方面...另一方面...: Presenting Two Sides in Chinese

一方面 + Aspect A，(另)一方面 + Aspect B

一方面 introduces one aspect of a situation, and 另一方面 introduces another. The shorter repeated 一方面 is also common.

自己做饭一方面健康，一方面还能省点钱。

Zìjǐ zuòfàn yī fāngmiàn jiànkāng, yī fāngmiàn hái néng shěng diǎn qián.

On one hand, cooking for yourself is healthy; on the other hand, it can also help to save some money.

Full lesson and examples →

Comparisons

离 vs 从: Distance From and Starting From in Chinese

离 vs. 从

离 measures separation relative to a reference point. It commonly introduces the place from which a distance is assessed, or an event whose remaining time is being considered.

从下个月起，公司会越来越忙。

Cóng xiàge yuè qǐ, gōngsī huì yuèláiyuè máng.

Starting from next month, the company will be busier and busier.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

以后 vs 的时候: After an Event or When It Happens

以后 vs 的时候

以后 places the main event after the situation named before it. It is useful for plans that begin once another event is complete, or changes noticed after an arrival or transition.

下飞机以后给我打电话。

Xià fēijī yǐhòu gěi wǒ dǎ diànhuà

Give me a call after you get off the plane.

Full lesson and examples →

本来 versus 原来: Originally, All Along, or It Turns Out

本来 + original plan / fact; 原来 + discovery; 原来的 + noun

本来 often points to an original plan, an expected state, or a fact that held all along. A later contrast may explain why the plan changed.

我本来是要去参加你的生日派对的，可是周末突然要加班。

Wǒ běnlái shì yào qù cānjiā nǐ de shēngrì pàiduì de, kěshì zhōumò tūrán yào jiābān.

I was originally going to go to your birthday party, but I had to work some extra time this weekend.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

关于 versus 对于: About a Topic or Regarding an Object

关于 + topic + 的 + noun; 对于 + object，response / evaluation

关于 commonly introduces the subject matter of a discussion, text, question, or other piece of information. 对于 more often identifies the person or matter toward which a response, evaluation, or understanding is directed. The meanings can overlap in topic-opening sentences, but the usual grammatical patterns reveal different ways of organizing the information.

对于那个人我并不了解。

Duìyú nàge rén wǒ bìng bù liǎojiě.

As for that person, I just don't know him very well at all.

Full lesson and examples →

适合 versus 合适: Suit Someone or Be Suitable

A + 适合 + B; subject + 很 / 不 + 合适

适合 and 合适 both concern suitability, but they fit different structures. 适合 is a verb that connects something with the person, situation, or activity it suits. 合适 is an adjective that judges something as appropriate or suitable. The distinction is grammatical as well as lexical, so reversing the characters without changing the sentence can produce an unnatural result.

这个工作很适合我。

Zhège gōngzuò hěn shìhé wǒ.

This job really suits me.

Full lesson and examples →

Laowai

HSK 2.0 Level 4 grammar

反而 versus 相反: Unexpected Reversal or Opposite

Subject + 反而 + predicate; 相反，clause; 相反的 + noun

反而 describes a result that reverses the expected direction, so it belongs within the predicate structure of its clause. 相反 can introduce an opposing statement as a transition, or describe two things as opposite. The meanings can overlap when an outcome contradicts expectations, but the words have different grammatical possibilities and cannot be exchanged in every position.

这样做帮不了他，相反，还会害了他。

Zhèyàng zuò bāng bùliǎo tā, xiāngfǎn, hái huì hài le tā.

This won't help him. On the contrary, it will harm him.

Full lesson and examples →

Sources and further study

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