Laowai

HSK 5

HSK 3.0 / Grammar

Control emphasis and tone / 41 topics



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

Open this study guide

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HSK 3.0 Level 5 grammar

Control emphasis and tone

Make a contrast, express a concession and organise a longer explanation. Notice how the construction changes what the listener expects next.

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.

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.

Laowai's teaching crosswalk to the 2021 proficiency framework. Vocabulary links use the 2025 examination lists; the grammar selections are study guides, not the official 2025 syllabus.

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Adverbs and degree

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 →

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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 →

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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 3.0 Level 5 grammar

Questions

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 →

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Conjunctions and complex sentences

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.



下雨了，于是我们回家了。

Xiàyǔ le, yúshì wǒmen huí jiā le.

It started raining, so we went home.

Full lesson and examples →

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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 →

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 →

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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 →

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 →

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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 →

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 →

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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 →

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 →

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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 →

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.

不管你穿什么都好看。

Bùguǎn nǐ chuān shénme dōu hǎokàn.

No matter what you wear, it looks good on you.

Full lesson and examples →

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 →

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Noun phrases

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 →

Prepositions and coverbs

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 →

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Negation

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 →

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Verb phrases

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 →

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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 →

HSK 3.0 Level 5 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 →

Complements

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 →

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Sentence structure and word order

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 →

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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 →

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Comparisons

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 →

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 →

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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 →

Sources and further study

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