

Sentence patterns (把 & 被)

HSK 3

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

一 ... 也 / 都 ... 不 / 没 (not even one)

■ A complete zero differs from a small number

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 一 ... 也 / 都 ... 不 / 没 (not even one). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

一个人也没有。

yī ge rén yě méi yǒu

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

■ Read examples in context

我一点也不累。

wǒ yì diǎn yě bù lèi

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

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

You opened the room and found no one inside. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 一个人也没有。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

越 ... 越 ... (the more ..., the more ...)

■ One changing quantity is linked to another

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 越 ... 越 ... (the more ..., the more ...). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

我越想越生气。

wǒ yuè xiǎng yuè shēng qì

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

■ Read examples in context

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

A larger group needs more chairs. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 人越多，需要的椅子越多。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

把 sentences (do something to the object)

■ A book is moved to a known place

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **把 sentences (do something to the object)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

我把书放在桌子上。

wǒ bǎ shū fàng zài zhuō zi shàng

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

■ Read examples in context

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

You put a particular book on the table. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我把书放在桌子上。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

被 sentences (the passive)

■ A passive names the affected item

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 被 sentences (the passive). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

书被他拿走了。

shū bèi tā ná zǒu le

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

■ Read examples in context

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

Someone took the book away, and you describe what happened to the book. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 书被他拿走了。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

Place + Verb + 着 + Noun (existential)

■ Describe a room from its location

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Place + Verb + 着 + Noun (existential)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

墙上挂着一幅画。

qiáng shàng guà zhe yì fú huà

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

■ Read examples in context

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

A painting hangs on the wall, and you tell someone what is there. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 墙上挂着一幅画。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

想 + QW + 就 + QW (whatever you like)

■ A choice can be carried into an action

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 想 + QW + 就 + QW (whatever you like). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

你想吃什么就吃什么。

nǐ xiǎng chī shén me jiù chī shén me

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

■ Read examples in context

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

A friend lets you pick any available dish. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 你想吃什么就吃什么。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

Question Word + 都 (every / all)

■ Negation changes a whole-set claim

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Question Word + 都 (every / all)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

谁都知道。

shéi dōu zhī dào

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

■ Read examples in context

我什么都不想吃。

wǒ shén me dōu bù xiǎng chī

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

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

Everyone in the relevant group knows the answer. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 谁都知道。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

Question words as “some- / any-”

■ An indefinite choice is deliberately unnamed

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Question words as “some- / any-”**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

我想吃点什么。

wǒ xiǎng chī diǎn shén me

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

■ Read examples in context

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

You feel hungry but have not chosen a specific food. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我想吃点什么。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.

为了 (in order to / for the sake of)

■ A purpose need not have been achieved

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

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 为了 (in order to / for the sake of). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

为了健康，他每天跑步。

wèi le jiàn kāng tā měi tiān pǎo bù

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

■ Read examples in context

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

■ Know the boundary

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

■ Use the distinction

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

■ Try it with help closed

A person runs regularly to improve health. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 为了健康，他每天跑步。

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

Practise this pattern step by step.