

Sentence patterns – quantity & scope

HSK 4

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.

连 ... 都 ... 不 / 没 (not even)

■ A missing basic action is striking

- Someone is so occupied that they are not eating even meals.
- 他连饭都不吃。 – 连 makes the absence of eating a striking case.

■ Build the form

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

他连饭都不吃。

tā lián fàn dōu bù chī

Word guide: 他 – he; 连 – even; 饭 – food; 都 – even; 不 – not; 吃 – eat.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 他连饭都不吃。: 连 makes the absence of eating a striking case.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- The expectation comes from context.
- The sentence does not necessarily assert an absolute absence of every other activity.

■ Use the distinction

- 连 makes the absence of eating a striking case.
- The expectation comes from context. The sentence does not necessarily assert an absolute absence of every other activity.

■ Try it with help closed

Someone is so occupied that they are not eating even meals. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他连饭都不吃。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The expectation comes from context.
- The sentence does not necessarily assert an absolute absence of every other activity.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

为 ... 而 ... (for the sake of)

■ A purpose can remain unachieved

- A team works hard in pursuit of a dream.
- 他们为梦想而奋斗。 – The dream is the motivation for the effort.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 为 ... 而 ... (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.

他们为梦想而奋斗。

tā men wèi mèng xiǎng ér fèn dòu

Word guide: 他们 – they; 为 – for; 梦想 – dream; 而 – (for); 奋斗 – strive.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 他们为梦想而奋斗。: The dream is the motivation for the effort.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 为 is read wèi in this purpose frame.
- Naming the goal does not mean the team has already achieved it.

■ Use the distinction

- The dream is the motivation for the effort.
- 为 is read wèi in this purpose frame. Naming the goal does not mean the team has already achieved it.

■ Try it with help closed

A team works hard in pursuit of a dream. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他们为梦想而奋斗。

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- Naming the goal does not mean the team has already achieved it.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

任何 + Noun + 都 / 也 (any)

■ Any refers to the relevant domain

- A teacher invites questions about the lesson.
- 任何问题都可以问。 – The invitation covers any question within the relevant situation.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 任何 + Noun + 都 / 也 (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.

任何问题都可以问。

rèn hé wèn tí dōu kě yǐ wèn

Word guide: 任何 – any; 问题 – question; 都 – all; 可以 – can; 问 – ask.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 任何问题都可以问。: The invitation covers any question within the relevant situation.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 都 is common in this all-cases frame.
- 任何 does not require 都 or 也 in every construction, as in 没有任何问题.

■ Use the distinction

- The invitation covers any question within the relevant situation.
- 都 is common in this all-cases frame. 任何 does not require 都 or 也 in every construction, as in 没有任何问题.

■ Try it with help closed

A teacher invites questions about the lesson. 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: 任何问题都可以问。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
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- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

既 ... 也 / 又 ... (both ... and ...)

■ Two qualities need not share an emotional value

- An item is expensive but useful, and both qualities are acknowledged.
- 这个东西既贵又好用。 – 既 ... 又 ... combines the cost and usefulness as coexisting qualities.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 既 ... 也 / 又 ... (both ... and ...). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

这个菜既便宜又好吃。

zhè ge cài jì pián yì yòu hǎo chī

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 菜 – dish; 既 – both; 便宜 – cheap; 又 – and; 好吃 – tasty.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这个东西既贵又好用。** : 既 ... 又 ... combines the cost and usefulness as coexisting qualities.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- One quality can be a drawback and the other a benefit.
- The construction does not force two positive or two negative judgments.

■ Use the distinction

- 既 ... 又 ... combines the cost and usefulness as coexisting qualities.
- One quality can be a drawback and the other a benefit. The construction does not force two positive or two negative judgments.

■ Try it with help closed

An item is expensive but useful, and both qualities are acknowledged. 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.

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Practise this pattern step by step.

在 + Place + 上 / 下 / 里 / 旁边 (location)

■ Place the relation after its reference object

- A book rests on a table.
- **书在桌子上。** – 上 follows 桌子 to describe the book's location relative to it.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **在 + Place + 上 / 下 / 里 / 旁边 (location)**. 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.

书在桌子上。

shū zài zhuō zi shàng

Word guide: 书 – book; 在 – is; 桌子 – table; 上 – on.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 书在桌子上。: 上 follows 桌子 to describe the book's location relative to it.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 在床下 and 在包里 describe different relations.
- Not every location needs an extra position word: 在北京 is already a place expression.

■ Use the distinction

- 上 follows 桌子 to describe the book's location relative to it.
- 在床下 and 在包里 describe different relations. Not every location needs an extra position word: 在北京 is already a place expression.

■ Try it with help closed

A book rests on a 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: 书在桌子上。

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- 在床下 and 在包里 describe different relations.
- Not every location needs an extra position word: 在北京 is already a place expression.
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Practise this pattern step by step.