

Complex sentence patterns

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.

Adj + 是 + Adj, 但是 ... (concede, then object)

■ Conceding a quality does not settle a decision

- An item is good, but the price is unacceptable.
- **好是好，但是太贵。** – The speaker accepts the quality before raising the price objection.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Adj + 是 + Adj, 但是 ... (concede, then 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.

好是好，但是太贵。

hǎo shì hǎo dàn shì tài guì

Word guide: 好 – good; 是 – (indeed); 好 – good; 但是 – but; 太 – too; 贵 – expensive.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **好是好，但是太贵。**: The speaker accepts the quality before raising the price objection.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- The concession is not a retraction of the quality.
- The final decision depends on the objection and context.

■ Use the distinction

- The speaker accepts the quality before raising the price objection.
- The concession is not a retraction of the quality. The final decision depends on the objection and context.

■ Try it with help closed

An item is good, but the price is unacceptable. 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: 好是好，但是太贵。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The concession is not a retraction of the quality.
- The final decision depends on the objection and context.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

一 ... 就 ... (as soon as / whenever)

■ An immediate link can describe a habit

- You usually sleep shortly after reaching home.
- 我一到家就睡觉。 – The arrival triggers sleeping in the described routine.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 一 ... 就 ... (as soon as / whenever). 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.

我一到家就睡觉。

wǒ yī dào jiā jiù shuì jiào

Word guide: 我 – I; 一 – as soon as; 到家 – get home; 就 – then; 睡觉 – sleep.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 我一到家就睡觉。: The arrival triggers sleeping in the described routine.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- The frame also describes one event in an appropriate past context.
- It does not specify an exact number of seconds between the actions.

■ Use the distinction

- The arrival triggers sleeping in the described routine.
- The frame also describes one event in an appropriate past context. It does not specify an exact number of seconds between the actions.

■ Try it with help closed

You usually sleep shortly after reaching home. 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: 我一到家就睡觉。

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- The frame also describes one event in an appropriate past context.
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- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

一方面 ... , 一方面 ... (on one hand / on the other)

■ Two sides may reinforce or conflict

- Work and rest both matter when planning a week.
- 一方面要工作, 另一方面要休息。 – The two aspects are set alongside each other for consideration.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 一方面 ... , 一方面 ... (on one hand / on the other). 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.

一方面要工作, 一方面要休息。

yì fāng miàn yào gōng zuò yì fāng miàn yào xiū xi

Word guide: 一方面 – on one hand; 要 – need to; 工作 – work; 一方面 – on the other; 要 – need to; 休息 – rest.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 一方面要工作, 另一方面要休息。: The two aspects are set alongside each other for consideration.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- The aspects can be complementary or in tension.
- The frame does not assert that both must be done simultaneously.

■ Use the distinction

- The two aspects are set alongside each other for consideration.
- The aspects can be complementary or in tension. The frame does not assert that both must be done simultaneously.

■ Try it with help closed

Work and rest both matter when planning a week. 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: 一方面要工作，另一方面要休息。

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- The aspects can be complementary or in tension.
- The frame does not assert that both must be done simultaneously.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.