

Conjunctions

HSK 5

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.

要不 ... 吧 (how about ...)

■ Offer an alternative without issuing an order

- A group is tired; you propose stopping for a rest.
- 要不休息一下吧。 – The speaker offers a possible alternative.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 要不 ... 吧 (how about ...). 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.

太累了，要不休息一下吧。

tài lèi le yào bù xiū xi yí xià ba

Word guide: 太 – too; 累 – tired; 要不 – how about; 休息 – rest; 一下 – a bit.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 要不休息一下吧。: The speaker offers a possible alternative.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 吧 often softens this suggestion.
- Tone and circumstances still matter; wording alone does not guarantee politeness.

■ Use the distinction

- The speaker offers a possible alternative.
- 吧 often softens this suggestion. Tone and circumstances still matter; wording alone does not guarantee politeness.

■ Try it with help closed

A group is tired; you propose stopping for a rest. 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: 要不休息一下吧。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 吧 often softens this suggestion.
- Tone and circumstances still matter; wording alone does not guarantee politeness.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.