Adjectives

HSK 3 Grammar

Original teaching practice. Read one pattern, cover its model and try the questions before checking the separate answer section. Examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA) retain the course-reference provenance.

Adjective + 极了 (extremely)

很好吃 is not enough

- Your friend has cooked for you, and the food is far better than "quite good".
- **这个菜好吃极了！** – "This dish is absolutely delicious!" 极了 pushes the adjective to its top degree.

Put 极了 after the adjective

- **Subject + Adjective + 极了**: the adjective comes first and 极了 closes the clause.
- The adjective stands alone in front of 极了, so 很 and 非常 drop out: 好极了, 冷极了, 忙极了.

今天热极了。
jīn tiān rè jí le
Word guide: 今天 – today; 热 – hot; 极了 – extremely.



Feelings work the same way

- Feeling words take 极了 too: **听到这个消息，我高兴极了。** – "When I heard the news, I was overjoyed."
- A few feeling verbs also accept it: **我喜欢极了。** – "I absolutely love it."

考完以后，我累极了。
kǎo wán yǐ hòu wǒ lèi jí le
Word guide: 考完 – finish the exam; 以后 – after; 我 – I; 累 – tired; 极了 – extremely.

Two places it goes wrong

- No 很 or 非常 in front: say 好极了, not 很好极了, because 极了 already carries the degree.
- 极了 never comes before the adjective: 冷极了, not 极了冷.

很 + Adj, 非常 + Adj and Adj + 极了

- 很 + Adj is the neutral description (天气很好); 非常 + Adj is strong and fits writing as well as speech.
- Adj + 极了 is spoken and exclamatory, often a reaction: A: 外面冷吗? B: 冷极了!

外面冷吗？冷极了！
wài miàn lěng ma lěng jí le
Word guide: 外面 – outside; 冷 – cold; 冷 – cold; 极了 – extremely.

Recap

- **Adjective + 极了** = extremely, absolutely; it ends the clause.
- No 很 or 非常 before it. Use it to react with feeling, mostly in speech.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Doubling adjectives (AA / AABB)

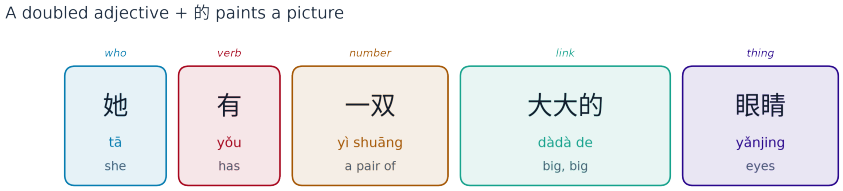
Describing a picture in a lively way

- You are describing a child's drawing: big eyes, a round face, a very tidy room.
- **她有一双大大的眼睛。** – "She has big, big eyes." Doubling the adjective paints a vivid picture.

One-syllable adjectives: AA

- A one-syllable adjective repeats as **AA**, usually followed by 的 before a noun: 大大的眼睛, 红红的苹果.
- The second syllable is often said lightly; the tone of the first stays clear.

她有一双大大的眼睛。
tā yǒu yì shuāng dà dà de yǎn jing
Word guide: 她 – she; 有 – has; 一双 – a pair of; 大大的 – big, big; 眼睛 – eyes.



Two-syllable adjectives: AABB

- A two-syllable adjective AB doubles each syllable: 干净 → **干干净净**, 高兴 → **高高兴兴**, 清楚 → **清清楚楚**.
- The doubled form can describe a noun or an action: 房间干干净净的 / 他高高兴兴地回家了。

他把房间打扫得干干净净的。
tā bǎ fáng jiān dǎ sǎo de gān gān jìng jìng de
Word guide: 他 – he; 房间 – room; 打扫 – cleaned; 干干净净 – spotlessly clean.

What doubling already says

- No 很 or 非常 in front: 大大的眼睛, not 很大大的眼睛, because doubling already adds the degree.
- The common adjectives taught here use AABB, as in 干干净净. Some other adjectives allow ABAB, so learn each adjective and its accepted reduplicated form.

Doubled adjectives describe, they do not compare

- Doubled forms describe how something looks or feels; they do not take 不: say 不干净, not 不干干净净.
- Many are fixed habits of speech. Learn common ones as chunks: 慢慢地走, 好好地休息, 高高兴兴地玩。

你好好休息吧。
nǐ hǎo hǎo xiū xi ba
Word guide: 你 – you; 好好 – properly; 休息 – rest.

Recap

- One syllable: **AA(的)** – 大大的, 红红的. Two syllables: **AABB** – 干干净净, 高高兴兴.
- Doubling adds vividness and degree, so drop 很 and do not negate it with 不.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Adjective + 地 + Verb (making an adverb)

How did they do it?

- Your grandmother crosses the busy road carefully; your little brother does his homework seriously for once.
- **奶奶慢慢地走过马路。** – "Grandma slowly walks across the road." 地 turns a description into how the action is done.

Adjective + 地 + Verb

- **Subject + Adjective + 地 + Verb**: the description comes before the verb and 地 (de) links them.
- Two-syllable adjectives are the most common: 认真地学习, 高兴地说, 安静地看书.

他认真地学习。
tā rèn zhēn de xué xí
Word guide: 他 – he; 认真 – seriously; 学习 – study.



Doubled and phrase descriptions

- Doubled adjectives often take 地: **孩子们高高兴兴地回家了。** – "The children went home happily."
- A short phrase works too: 很快地吃完了饭, 非常小心地打开盒子.

孩子们高高兴兴地回家了。
hái zi men gāo gāo xìng xìng de huí jiā le
Word guide: 孩子们 – the children; 高高兴兴 – happily; 回家 – go home.

Keep the order and the character straight

- 地 comes before the verb: 认真地学习. After the verb you need 得: 他学得很认真.
- Write 地, not 的, between the description and the verb; both are read de.

地 before the verb, 得 after it

- 他认真地写作业 tells how he does it: carefully, while doing it.
- 他写得很认真 comments on the result or manner after the fact: "He writes very carefully."

他写得很认真。
tā xiě de hěn rèn zhēn
Word guide: 他 – he; 写 – writes; 很 – very; 认真 – carefully.

Recap

- **Adjective + 地 + Verb** = do something in that way: 慢慢地走, 认真地学习.
- 地 sits before the verb; 得 follows the verb. Keep 的 for nouns.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Practice without the models

Adjective + 极了 (extremely)

0101.1 Complete the reaction to a great film: 这个电影好看 ……！

0101.2 Which sentence is correct?

- A. 天气很好极了。
- B. 天气非常好极了。
- C. 天气极了好。
- D. 天气好极了。

0101.3 A friend asks 外面冷吗? Replying 冷极了！ is natural spoken Chinese.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0101.4 Build: “I was overjoyed when I heard the news.”

Arrange all chunks: 极了。 / 听到这个消息， / 我 / 高兴

0101.5 Your friend has cooked for you, and the food is far better than “quite good”. 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.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

Doubling adjectives (AA / AABB)

0102.1 Double 清楚 (clear): 老师把问题说得 …… 的。

0102.2 Which phrase is correct?

- A. 红红的苹果
- B. 不红红的苹果
- C. 很红红的苹果
- D. 红红红的苹果

0102.3 Match each adjective to its doubled form.

- 1. 高兴
- 1. 干净
- 1. 慢
- 1. 大
- A. 大大
- B. 干干净净
- C. 慢慢
- D. 高高兴兴

0102.4 干净 can be doubled as 干净干净 to describe a room.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0102.5 You are describing a child’s drawing: big eyes, a round face, a very tidy room. 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.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

Adjective + 地 + Verb (making an adverb)

0103.1 Fill in the particle: 她安静 …… 看书。

0103.2 Choose the particle for both blanks: 他高兴 ___ 说: “ 我考得 ___ 很好！ ”

- A. 地 … 地
- B. 的 … 的
- C. 得 … 地
- D. 地 … 得

0103.3 Build: “Grandma walks slowly across the road.”

Arrange all chunks: 走过 / 奶奶 / 马路 / 。 / 慢慢地

0103.4 他学习认真地。is a correct way to say “He studies seriously.”

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0103.5 Your grandmother crosses the busy road carefully; your little brother does his homework seriously for once. 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.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

Answers and explanations

■ Adjective + 极了 (extremely)

0101.1 极了

好看极了 = “absolutely brilliant”. 极了 follows the adjective directly.

0101.2 D. 天气好极了。

极了 follows a bare adjective. 很 and 非常 would add a second degree word, and 极了 never comes first.

0101.3 True.

Adj + 极了 is typical of spoken reactions. In a formal report 非常冷 would be more usual.

0101.4 听到这个消息，我高兴极了。

Time clause first, then Subject + Adjective + 极了: 听到这个消息，我高兴极了。

0101.5 One possible response: 这个菜好吃极了!

Check meaning and form:

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- No 很 or 非常 in front: say 好极了, not 很好极了, because 极了 already carries the degree.
- 极了 never comes before the adjective: 冷极了, not 极了冷.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

This is supported productive practice. Compare meaning and structure; your answer need not copy the model. A partner or teacher must hear the spoken response to comment on pronunciation.

■ Doubling adjectives (AA / AABB)

0102.1 清清楚楚

A two-syllable adjective AB doubles as AABB, so 清楚 becomes 清清楚楚.

0102.2 A. 红红的苹果

AA + 的 + noun. Doubling already adds degree, so 很 is not added, and doubled forms are not negated with 不.

0102.3 1–D: 高兴 = 高高兴兴; 2–B: 干净 = 干干净净; 3–C: 慢 = 慢慢; 4–A: 大 = 大大

One syllable gives AA; two syllables give AABB.

0102.4 False.

The two-syllable adjectives taught here double as AABB (干干净净). ABAB is the usual pattern for two-syllable verbs such as 研究研究; only a few descriptive adjectives such as 雪白 take ABAB.

0102.5 One possible response: 她有一双大大的眼睛。

Check meaning and form:

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- No 很 or 非常 in front: 大大的眼睛, not 很大大的眼睛, because doubling already adds the degree.
- The common adjectives taught here use AABB, as in 干干净净. Some other adjectives allow ABAB, so learn each adjective and its accepted reduplicated form.
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■ Adjective + 地 + Verb (making an adverb)

0103.1 地

Adjective + 地 + Verb. 安静地看书 = “read quietly”.

0103.2 D. 地 … 得

高兴地说 (地 before the verb) and 考得很好 (得 after the verb).

0103.3 奶奶慢慢地走过马路。

Subject + Adjective + 地 + Verb + Object.

0103.4 False.

地 + description must come before the verb (他认真地学习), or use 得 after it (他学得很认真).

0103.5 One possible response: 奶奶慢慢地走过马路。

Check meaning and form:

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 地 comes before the verb: 认真地学习. After the verb you need 得: 他学得很认真.
- Write 地, not 的, between the description and the verb; both are read de.
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