Adjectives

HSK 4 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.

全 + Noun (the whole / all of)

One word that gathers the whole group

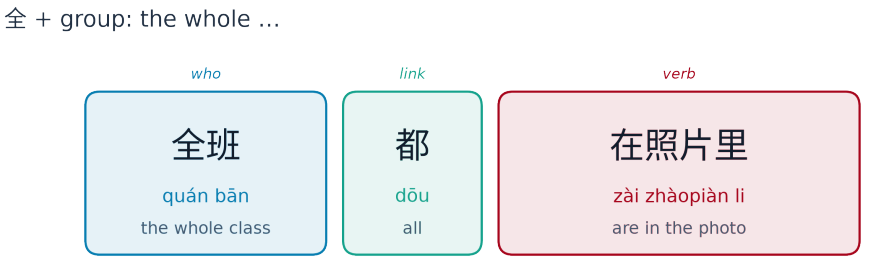
- The photo from your class trip arrives. Everyone is in it: **全班都在照片里。** – the whole class is in the photo. **全** gathers every member of the group into one word.
- Today you will say *the whole* _____ about families, classes, companies and years – and you will learn where 全 stops, because it does not mean "every".

全班都在照片里。
quán bān dōu zài zhàopiàn lǐ
Word guide: 全班 – the whole class; 都 – all; 在 – be in/at; 照片 – photo; 里 – inside.

Build the form

- The pattern is **全 + noun**, usually followed by **都 + verb**: 全班 + 都 + 在照片里. The 都 marks that the verb covers the whole gathered group.
- More groups: **全家** the whole family, **全国** the whole country, **全年** the whole year, **全校** the whole school. The noun after 全 names the container; 全 fills it.

全年我们都在实习。
quán nián wǒmen dōu zài shíxí
Word guide: 全年 – the whole year; 我们 – we; 都 – all; 在 – at; 实习 – do internships.



■ Read it in real situations

- 全家都来了。– the whole family came (the family we are talking about).
- 这家公司全年都招人。– this company hires all year round.
- 全班都通过了考试。– the whole class passed the exam. 通过 to pass; 考试 exam.

全班都通过了考试。
quán bān dōu tōngguò le kǎoshì
Word guide: 全班 – the whole class; 都 – all; 通过 – pass; 考试 – exam.

■ 全 is not 每, and not every

- **全 + noun** gathers one bounded group: 全家 = the whole of *this* family. **每 + noun** distributes over individuals: 每个家庭都爱拍照 – *every* family loves taking photos (each one, separately). A bounded whole and a universal "every" are different claims.
- The classic mistake: 全家都喜欢这个餐厅。does **not** mean "all families like this restaurant" – it says *our/the* family does. For a universal claim you want 所有 or 每个: 所有家庭 …
- Near-correct check: 全年 vs 每年. 全年都在工作 = working the whole year through; 每年都来 = comes every year. Pick the one that matches your meaning.

■ Use it yourself

- Say it about your life: your family, your class, your city. 我家 …, 我们全班 …, 全城 … – one true sentence each, out loud or written down.
- Compare **全家来了** and **全家都来了**: both can be grammatical. Adding 都 explicitly emphasises that every family member came; it is common in this pattern, but not compulsory.

■ New context, same decision

- A shop sign: 全场半价 – the whole store at half price (场 here is the venue). A weather report: 全市有雨 – rain across the whole city. Same 全, new containers; check each group is one bounded whole.
- Tomorrow, before you reopen this page: say "my whole family came" and "every family" aloud. If the two come out identical, redo the contrast step – that difference is the lesson.
- 全 + noun gathers one bounded group (全家, 全班, 全国); 都 commonly emphasises that every member is included; it is not compulsory. For "every", use 每/所有 – 全家都来了 is about *this* family, not all families.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Adj + 死了 (extremely ...)

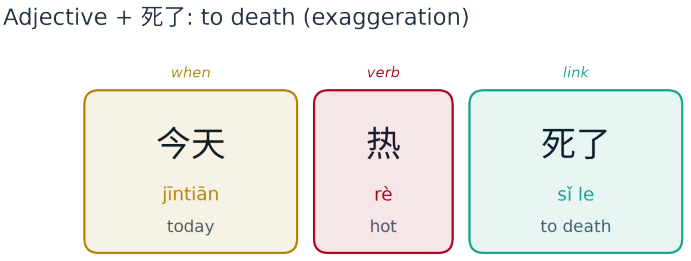
Melting in July

- You come into the classroom after cycling across town in 38 degrees.
- **今天热死了！** – "It's boiling today!" 死了 exaggerates a feeling to the extreme.

Adjective + 死了

- **Adj + 死了** = "extremely, to death" in casual speech: 累死了, 饿死了, 忙死了.
- It ends the clause, and the adjective stands alone: 冷死了, not 很冷死了.

我饿死了，快吃饭吧！
wǒ è sǐ le kuài chī fàn ba
Word guide: 我 – I; 饿 – hungry; 死了 – to death; 快 – quickly; 吃饭 – eat.



Mostly complaints, sometimes joy

- Complaints are typical: **这个作业难死了。** – "This homework is impossibly hard."
- Strong positive feelings work too: **听到这个消息，我高兴死了！** – "I was over the moon when I heard!"

这个作业难死了。
zhè ge zuò yè nán sǐ le
Word guide: 这个 – this; 作业 – homework; 难 – hard; 死了 – to death.

Casual only

- Use it with friends and family; in an essay or a formal email, write 非常累 or 十分饿 instead.
- No 很 or 非常 in front, and nothing between the adjective and 死了: 累死了, not 很累死了.

■ 死了 versus 极了 and 得要命

- 好极了 sounds enthusiastic and fits praise; 好死了 is rare, because 死了 leans to complaints.
- 得要命 is equally colloquial: 累得要命 – "dead tired". With verbs of missing: 想死你了 – "I miss you like crazy."

我想死你了!
wǒ xiǎng sǐ nǐ le
Word guide: 我 – I; 想 – miss; 死 – to death; 你 – you.

■ Recap

- **Adj + 死了** = extremely (colloquial, often a complaint): 热死了, 累死了, 难死了.
- No 很 before it; keep it out of formal writing, where 非常 / 十分 fit.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Practice without the models

■ 全 + Noun (the whole / all of)

0101.1 Using the lesson pattern in this demonstrated example: The whole family came: …… 家都来了。

0101.2 What does 全 mean before a noun?

- A. the whole / all of
- B. only / just

0101.3 全 often pairs with 都 (全家都来了).

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0101.4 Build: "The whole family came."

Arrange all chunks: 都 / 来了 / 全家

0101.5 All members of a family arrive at a gathering. What does 全家都来了。 communicate?

- A. 全家 means only one family member.
- B. 全家 includes the entire family being discussed.

0101.6 In the opening situation: 全家 includes the entire family being discussed.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0101.7 Recall the situation: One word that gathers the whole group. Decide what the speaker wanted to communicate. 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.

■ Adj + 死了 (extremely ...)

0102.1 Complain to a friend: “I’m exhausted!” 我累 ……！

0102.2 Which sentence suits a formal report?

- A. 这个地区的冬天冷死。
- B. 这个地区的冬天很冷死了。
- C. 这个地区的冬天冷死了。
- D. 这个地区的冬天非常冷。

0102.3 Build: “This homework is impossibly hard.”

Arrange all chunks: 死了。 / 难 / 这个作业

0102.4 想死你了 means “I miss you terribly.”

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0102.5 You come into the classroom after cycling across town in 38 degrees. 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

■ 全 + Noun (the whole / all of)

0101.1 全

全 + Noun = the whole / all the …: 全家 (the whole family).

0101.2 A. the whole / all of

全 = whole / entire: 全班, 全国, 全世界.

0101.3 True.

Yes – 全 + Noun + 都 is very common: 全家都来了.

0101.4 全家都来了

全 + Noun + 都 + Verb: 全家 + 都 + 来了.

0101.5 B. 全家 includes the entire family being discussed.

全家 includes the entire family being discussed. The group is defined by context. 全家 does not refer to every family in the world.

0101.6 True.

The group is defined by context. 全家 does not refer to every family in the world. 全家 includes the entire family being discussed.

0101.7 One possible response: 全班都在照片里。

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.
- **全 + noun** gathers one bounded group: 全家 = the whole of *this* family. **每 + noun** distributes over individuals: 每个家庭都爱拍照 – *every* family loves taking photos (each one, separately). A bounded whole and a universal "every" are different claims.
- The classic mistake: 全家都喜欢这个餐厅。does **not** mean "all families like this restaurant" – it says *our/the* family does. For a universal claim you want 所有 or 每个: 所有家庭 …
- 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.

■ Adj + 死了 (extremely …)

0102.1 死了

Adj + 死了 exaggerates the feeling.

0102.2 D. 这个地区的冬天非常冷。

死了 is casual; a report uses 非常 or 十分.

0102.3 这个作业难死了。

Subject + Adj + 死了.

0102.4 True.

With 想 (miss), 死 exaggerates the longing.

0102.5 One possible response: 今天热死了!

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.
- Use it with friends and family; in an essay or a formal email, write 非常累 or 十分饿 instead.
- No 很 or 非常 in front, and nothing between the adjective and 死了: 累死了, not 很累死了.
- 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.