Prepositional Phrase

HSK 5 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.

以上 / 以下 (and above / and below)

One more visitor, or two?

- A fictional room notice says **三十人以下，包括三十人。** – thirty people or fewer, including thirty. There are twenty-nine people inside.
- One more person reaches the limit. Two more make thirty-one: beyond this notice's allowed range.

Put the unit before the range word

- Use **number + unit + 以上 / 以下**: 十八岁以上 – eighteen years old and above; 三十人以下 – thirty people and below.
- In the age example, 才能 makes the age a required condition. It does not tell us whether every other entry condition is satisfied.

十八岁以上才能看。
shí bā suì yǐ shàng cái néng kàn
Word guide: 十八 – eighteen; 岁 – years; 以上 – and above; 才 – only then; 能 – can; 看 – watch.

Separate an included limit from a strict one

- Our notice explicitly includes thirty. **不到三十人** – fewer than thirty people – excludes thirty; **超过三十人** – more than thirty – also excludes thirty.
- For whole people, the largest count below thirty is twenty-nine. Read a notice's explicit definition before deciding whether its endpoint is included.

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Headcounts at a boundary

Explicitly inclusive: 三十人以下，包括三十人
29 allowed | 30 allowed | 31 beyond the limit

Strictly below: 不到三十人
29 below thirty | 30 excluded | 31 excluded

Strictly above: 超过三十人
29 excluded | 30 excluded | 31 above thirty

The wording of the actual notice defines its endpoint.

Keep the number and unit together

- **十八岁以上，包括十八岁** includes age eighteen in this fictional clip rule. It does not mean eighteen people, or under eighteen.
- **三十元以下，包括三十元** sets a money limit. The same number with 人 sets a headcount limit: units change what is counted.

Recalculate when the notice changes

- A new notice says **二十五人以下，包括二十五人**. With twenty-four people inside, one more fits; two more do not.
- The old thirty-person answer cannot be reused. Identify the new limit, whether it is included, and the current count.

Make a decision from the full notice

- For the original inclusive thirty-person notice, compare the final count with thirty: twenty-nine plus one is allowed; twenty-nine plus two is not.
- 以上 / 以下 give a range. They do not establish whether a room is open, a ticket is available, or another condition is met.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Practice without the models

以上 / 以下 (and above / and below)

0701.1 Using the lesson pattern in this demonstrated example: 18 and over may watch: 十八岁 …… 才能看。

0701.2 A notice explicitly says 三十人以下，包括三十人. Which range is allowed?

- A. More than thirty people
- B. Thirty people or fewer

0701.3 以上 / 以下 attach after the number or level.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0701.4 A sign gives a capacity limit of thirty, including thirty. What does 三十人以下，包括三十人。communicate?

- A. The explicitly stated allowed range includes thirty and smaller numbers.
- B. 不到三十人 includes exactly thirty people.

0701.5 The original notice includes thirty people. With twenty-nine inside, two more people stay within the limit.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

0701.6 The notice includes a maximum of thirty people. Twenty-nine are inside. What is the largest number of additional people allowed?

0701.7 A different sign says 不到三十人. What is the largest whole-person count below thirty?

- A. Twenty-nine
- B. Thirty
- C. Thirty-one

0701.8 A new notice includes a maximum of twenty-five people. Twenty-four are inside. Can two more enter under this limit?

- A. No: the final count would be twenty-six
- B. Yes: use the old thirty-person limit

0701.9 Recall the situation: One more visitor, or two?. 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.

Answers and explanations

■ 以上 / 以下 (and above / and below)

0701.1 以上

Number + 以上 = and above: 十八岁以上.

0701.2 B. Thirty people or fewer

The notice includes thirty explicitly. 不到三十人 instead excludes thirty.

0701.3 True.

Yes – 十八岁以上, 三十人以下.

0701.4 A. The explicitly stated allowed range includes thirty and smaller numbers.

The explicitly stated allowed range includes thirty and smaller numbers. 以上 and 以下 commonly include the boundary, but a real notice may define it explicitly. Do not confuse 三十人以下 with 不到三十人, which excludes thirty.

0701.5 False.

Twenty-nine plus two is thirty-one, beyond thirty.

0701.6 1

Thirty minus twenty-nine is one. Two additional people would make thirty-one.

0701.7 A. Twenty-nine

不到 excludes thirty. With whole people, the next smaller count is twenty-nine.

0701.8 A. No: the final count would be twenty-six

Twenty-four plus two is twenty-six, beyond twenty-five. Only one more reaches the included endpoint.

0701.9 One possible response: 三十人以下，包括三十人。

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.
- **十八岁以上，包括十八岁** includes age eighteen in this fictional clip rule. It does not mean eighteen people, or under eighteen.
- **三十元以下，包括三十元** sets a money limit. The same number with 人 sets a headcount limit: units change what is counted.
- 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.

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