

Adverbs

Ref Hsk6 Grammar

动词 + 得 + 倒 + 形容词 — the rebuking 倒

Tucked inside a complement, 倒 turns the comment **sour** — “easy for *you* to say.” It implies the opposite of reality and is aimed mostly at the listener, with 说 / 想.

Structure: Subject + Verb + 得 + 倒 + Adjective

{zh: 说 |shuō|saying it / 得 |de / 倒 |dào|easy enough / 容易 |róng yì / , 那 |nà|then / 你 |nǐ|you / 来 |lái|do it / ! }

Easy for you to say — you do it then!

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 想 |xiǎng|wish / 得 |de / 倒 |dào|nicely / 美 |měi / ! 不 |bù|don't / 工作 |gōng zuò|work / 还 |hái|yet / 想 |xiǎng|want / 拿 |ná|to be paid / 工资 |gōng zī / ? }

You wish! Get paid without working?

Remember: 得 + 倒 = a sarcastic jab — “说得倒容易” = “easy enough for *you* to say.” Reach for it to push back at the other person's 说 / 想. (你想得倒美! = “you wish!”)

Watch out

- This 倒 (dào, “but / contrary”) rebukes; don't confuse it with 倒 (dǎo, “fall over”).

很是 + 形容词 — “very, quite” (literary)

很是 is a dressed-up 很 — the same “very,” but with a formal, literary flavour you'll meet in writing rather than everyday speech. The extra 是 makes the emphasis feel weightier.

Structure: Subject + 很是 + Adjective

{zh: 你 |nǐ|your / 的 |de / 表现 |biǎo xiàn|performance / 让 |ràng|made / 领导 |lǐng dǎo|the boss / 很是 |hěn shì|very / 满意 |mǎn yì|pleased / 。 }

Your performance pleased the boss greatly.

{zh: 这样 |zhè yàng|doing it this way / 做 |zuò / 很是 |hěn shì|quite / 必要 |bì yào|necessary / 。 }

Doing it this way is quite necessary.

Remember: 很是 = 很 in its Sunday best — a written, weightier “very,” pairing with two-syllable adjectives (很是满意, 很是高兴). If it sounds too formal to say out loud, that’s exactly the right feel.

Watch out

- Keep it for writing — in speech, plain 很 / 非常 is natural.

足足 + 数量 — “a full, all of”

足足 stresses that an amount is **fully that much** — “a full, all of, every bit of.” It always pairs with a number, often with 有 or 等.

Structure: 足足 + Verb (+ Number) · Verb + 足足

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 等 |děng|waited / 了 |le / 她 |tā|for her / 足足 |zú zú|a full / 两个 |liǎng ge|two / 小时 |xiǎo shí|hours / 。 }

I waited a full two hours for her.

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 在 |zài|in / 中国 |Zhōng guó|China / 住 |zhù|lived / 了 |le / 足足 |zú zú|all of / 十年 |shí nián|ten years / 。 }

He lived in China for all of ten years.

Remember: 足足 = “a FULL, every bit of” (足 = “enough / full”) — it always rides a number and underlines that the amount is *large*: 足足两个小时 (“a whole two hours”), 足足十年 (“all of ten years”).

Watch out

- It needs a quantity — 足足 with no number to amplify is incomplete.

一再 + 动词 — “again and again, repeatedly”

一再 means doing something **insistently, again and again** — “repeatedly, time and again.” It precedes a two-syllable verb (often of speech or request), and can take 地.

Structure: Subject + 一再 + Verb

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 一再 |yí zài|again and again / 跟 |gēn / 你 |nǐ|you / 说 |shuō|told / , 出门 |chū mén|out and about / 要 |yào|to be / 小心 |xiǎo xīn|careful / 。 }

I’ve told you again and again to be careful when you’re out.

{zh: 老师 |lǎo shī|the teacher / 一再 |yí zài|repeatedly / 强调 |qiáng diào|stressed / 这 |zhè|this / 一点 |yì diǎn|point / 。 }

The teacher stressed this point over and over.

Remember: 一再 = “time and again, insistently” — formal, with two-syllable verbs of speech/thought (一再强调, 一再请求, 一再解释). It’s the close cousin of 再三.

Watch out

- Reserve it for repeated *deliberate* acts — not a plain “often” (that’s 常常).

凡是 + 名词 + 都 / 就 / 一律 — “all, every (no exception)”

凡是 sweeps over **every member** of a category — “any, every, whoever / whatever” (= 只要是). It opens the sentence and pairs with 都 / 就 / 一律.

Structure: 凡是 + Noun + 都 / 就 / 一律 + Predicate

{zh: 凡是 |fán shì|all / 会员 |huì yuán|members / 都 |dōu / 有 |yǒu|get / 折扣 |zhé kòu|a discount / 。 }

All members get a discount.

{zh: 凡是 |fán shì|any / 不 |bù / 听话 |tīng huà|disobedient / 的 |de / 孩子 |hái zi|child / 都 |dōu / 没 |méi|gets no / 糖 |táng|sweets / 吃 |chī / 。 }

Any child who misbehaves gets no sweets.

Remember: 凡是 = “any and every, without exception” (= 只要是) — it states a blanket rule and pairs with 都 / 就 / 一律 to nail it down (凡是会员都 ...). Use it to leave *no* member out.

Watch out

- It needs the 都 / 就 / 一律 downstream to complete the “every” sweep.

向来 (都) + 动词 — “always, all along”

向来 describes a **long-standing habit or trait** — “always, has always, all along.” It’s very close to 一向.

Structure: Subject + 向来 (都) + Verb / Adjective

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 向来 |xiàng lái|has always / 都 |dōu / 很 |hěn|very / 守时 |shǒu shí|punctual / 。 }

He’s always been punctual.

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 向来 |xiàng lái|have never / 不 |bù / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|liked / 点 |diǎn|ordering / 外卖 |wài mài|takeaway / 。 }

I've never liked ordering takeaway.

Remember: 向来 = a settled, unchanging pattern over time (“has always been this way”) — interchangeable with 一向 (further down this file). It looks back over the long run.

Watch out

- It's for *long-held* traits — not a one-off recent stretch (that's 一直).

果然 — “sure enough, as expected”

果然 confirms a **prediction came true** — “sure enough, just as expected.” It's the opposite of 竟然 / 居然 (“unexpectedly”).

Structure: Subject + 果然 + Predicate · 果然如此 / 果然不出所料

{zh: 第一名 |dì yī míng|first place / 果然 |guǒ rán|sure enough / 是 |shì|is / 她 |tā|her / ！我 |wǒ|I / 就 |jiù / 知道 |zhī dào|knew it / 。 }

First place is her, sure enough — I knew it!

{zh: 天气预报 |tiān qì yù bào|the forecast / 说 |shuō|said / 下雨 |xià yǔ|rain / , 果然如此 |guǒ rán rú cǐ|and so it did / 。 }

The forecast said rain, and sure enough it did.

Remember: 果然 = “sure enough, just as I foresaw” — it *confirms* a prediction (果然如此, “just so”). It's the mirror image of 竟然 / 居然 (“and yet, unexpectedly”): foreseen vs surprising.

Watch out

- If the outcome *surprised* you, you want 竟然 / 居然, not 果然.

似乎 — “it seems, as if”

似乎 hedges toward an **impression** — “it seems, apparently, as if.” It's a formal cousin of 好像, used for an uncertain judgement, or to flag “seems X but actually Y.”

Structure: Subject + 似乎

{zh: 老板 |lǎo bǎn|the boss / 今天 |jīn tiān|today / 似乎 |sì hū|seems / 不太 |bú tài|not very / 高兴 |gāo xìng|happy / 。 }

The boss seems a little upset today.

{zh: 她 |tā|she / 似乎 |sì hū|seems to be / 隐瞒 |yǐn mán|hiding / 了 |le / 什么 |shén me|something / 。 }

She seems to be hiding something.

Remember: 似乎 = the formal 好像 (“it seems, as if”) — a hedged, uncertain impression. It can quietly set up “似乎 ... 其实 ...” (“seems so, but actually...”).

Watch out

- It's writing-leaning — in casual speech 好像 is the natural choice.

偏偏 — “contrary to expectation, of all things”

偏偏 marks a frustrating **clash with what was required or hoped** — “of all things, just had to.” It can also mean “only ... (annoyingly),” singling out the one exception.

Structure: A , Subject + 偏偏 + B

{zh: 不 |bù|we told him not to / 叫 |jiào / 他 |tā / 去 |qù|go / , 他 |tā|he / 偏偏 |piān piān|of all things / 要 |yào|insisted on / 去 |qù|going / 。 }

We told him not to go, and of course he insisted.

{zh: 别人 |bié rén|everyone else / 都 |dōu / 早 |zǎo|early / 到 |dào|arrived / 了 |le / , 偏偏 |piān piān|only / 他 |tā|he / 一个人 |yí ge rén|alone / 迟到 |chí dào|was late / 。 }

Everyone else was early — only he was late.

Remember: 偏偏 = a frustrated “of all things / just HAD to” — things go *against* what you wanted (叫他别去, 他偏偏要去, “told him not to, and *of course* he insisted”). It can also single out the one annoying exception (“only he...”).

Watch out

- It always carries *annoyance* — things deliberately not going your way.

再不 , 也 — “even the most ..., still”

Here 再不 ... 也 ... concedes an extreme — “however un... one is, still” It grants the unfavourable case and overrides it (≈ 即使不 ... 也 ...).

Structure: 再不 + Adjective , 也 + Result

{zh: 再不 |zài bù|however un- / 喜欢 |xǐ huan|fond / , 你 |nǐ|you / 也 |yě|still / 得 |děi|have to / 去 |qù|go / 一趟 |yí tàng|once / 。 }

However little you like it, you still have to go.

{zh: 再不 |zài bù|even if not / 饿 |è|hungry / , 也 |yě|still / 吃 |chī|eat / 点 |diǎn|a little / 吧 |ba / 。 }

Even if you're not hungry, eat a bit.

Remember: 再不 X 也 Y = “however un-X, still Y” — it grants even the unfavourable extreme and holds the result firm (再不喜欢也得去, “however little you like it, you still have to go”). ≈ 即使不 ... 也

Watch out

- This 再不 (“however not...”) differs from the warning 再不 ... 就 ... 了 (“if not now, then...!”) in HSK 5.

一律 — “uniformly, without exception”

一律 means a rule applies to **all alike** — “uniformly, across the board, without exception.” It’s written / official, often pairs with 都, and is mostly for people.

Structure: 一律 (+ 都) + Verb / Adjective

{zh: 明天 |míng tiān|tomorrow’s / 的 |de / 会议 |huì yì|meeting / 一律 |yí lǜ|without exception / 都 |dōu / 要 |yào|must / 参加 |cān jiā|attend / 。 }

Everyone must attend tomorrow’s meeting.

{zh: 七十岁 |qī shí suì|over-seventies / 以上 |yǐ shàng / 坐 |zuò|riding / 公交 |gōng jiāo|the bus / 一律 |yí lǜ|all / 免费 |miǎn fèi|free / 。 }

Over-70s ride the bus free, no exceptions.

Remember: 一律 = “one treatment for ALL, across the board” — official/written, often with 都 (一律免费, “free for everyone, no exceptions”). Picture a single rule stamped on every case alike.

Watch out

- It’s for *uniform treatment*, mostly of people — heavier and more official than a plain 都.

无非 (是) — “nothing but, merely”

无非 plays a matter **down to its essentials** — “nothing more than, merely, only.” It often ends with 罢了 or 而已. The 是 is optional with a verb, but **required** with a noun.

Structure: 无非 + (是) + Verb / Noun (+ 罢了 / 而已)

{zh: 我 |wǒ|I / 无非 |wú fēi|only / 批评 |pī píng|told off / 了 |le / 他 |tā|him / 几句 |jǐ jù|a bit / , 他 |tā|he / 怎么 |zěn me|why / 哭 |kū|crying / 了 |le / ? }

I only told him off a little — why's he crying?

{zh: 孩子 |hái zi|the child / 想 |xiǎng|wants / 得到 |dé dào / 的 |de / 无非 |wú fēi|is nothing but / 是 |shì / 你 |nǐ|your / 的 |de / 关心 |guān xīn|attention / 罢了 |bà le / 。 }

All the child wants is your attention, nothing more.

Remember: 无非 = “nothing more than, merely” — it strips a thing to its plain core, often capped with 罢了 / 而已 (“...that's all”). The 是 is optional before a verb, but **required** before a noun (无非是个误会).

Watch out

- It deflates (“it's only...”) — don't use it where you mean to emphasise.

一向 — “always, all along”

一向 marks a **consistent, long-held** habit or attitude — “always, all along.” The feeling is “it's always been this way.”

Structure: Subject + 一向 + Habit / Attitude

{zh: 小王 |Xiǎo Wáng|Xiao Wang / 一向 |yí xiàng|has always / 上班 |shàng bān|come to work / 很 |hěn|very / 早 |zǎo|early / , 这次 |zhè cì|this time / 怎么 |zěn me|what's / 了 |le|wrong / ? }

Xiao Wang's always early to work — what happened this time?

{zh: 妈妈 |mā ma|mum / 一向 |yí xiàng|has always / 支持 |zhī chí|backed / 我 |wǒ|my / 的 |de / 决定 |jué dìng|decisions / 。 }

Mum has always backed my decisions.

Remember: 一向 = “it's always been this way” — a settled disposition over the long run. It's the twin of 向来 (earlier in this file); both look back over a long, unbroken habit.

Watch out

- For one *recent* unbroken stretch (“the whole time lately”), use 一直, not 一向.

到时候 — “when the time comes”

到时候 points to a **future moment** when something will apply — “when the time comes, by then.”

Structure: , 到时候 +

{zh: 现在 |xiàn zài|now / 不 |bù|if you don't / 好好 |hǎo hǎo|properly / 准备 |zhǔn bèi|prepare / , 到时候 |dào shí hou|when the time comes / 肯定 |kěn dìng|surely / 考不好 |kǎo bu hǎo|do badly / 。 }

If you don't prepare now, you'll do badly when the time comes.

{zh: 你 |nǐ|you / 先 |xiān|first / 自己 |zì jǐ|yourself / 试试 |shì shì|try / , 到时候 |dào shí hou|then / 我 |wǒ|I / 再 |zài / 教 |jiāo|teach / 你 |nǐ|you / 。 }

Try it yourself first; I'll teach you when the time comes.

Remember: 到时候 = “when the time comes, by then” — it points ahead to a future moment. Handy set phrases: 到时候见 (“see you then”), 到时候看吧 (“we'll see then”).

Watch out

- It looks *forward* — don't use it for “at that (past) time,” which is 那时候.

何必 — “why bother, there's no need”

何必 is a **rhetorical** “why (must) ...?” — arguing that something is **unnecessary**. It often ends with 呢, and 何必呢? can stand alone for “why bother?”

Structure: Subject + 何必 + Predicate (+ 呢)

{zh: 他 |tā|he / 已经 |yǐ jīng|already / 道歉 |dào qiàn|apologised / 了 |le / , 你 |nǐ|you / 何必 |hé bì|why / 还 |hái|still / 生气 |shēng qì|be angry / ? }

He's already apologised — why stay angry?

{zh: 都是 |dōu shì|we're all / 一家人 |yì jiā rén|family / , 何必 |hé bì|why bother / 这么 |zhè me|being so / 客气 |kè qì|formal / ? }

We're all family — no need to be so formal.

Remember: 何必 = a rhetorical “why (must) you...?” = “there's no need.” It nudges someone to drop a pointless effort (你何必生气? “why be angry?”); 何必呢? alone = “why bother?”. Proverb: 早知如此, 何必当初 (“if you'd known, why do it in the first place?”).

Watch out

- It's not a real question — it's arguing that the thing is *unnecessary*.