

An illustration of two women in profile, facing each other as if in conversation. The woman on the left has long dark hair, wears glasses, a light blue top, and a grey cardigan. The woman on the right has dark hair pulled back and wears a dark t-shirt. The background is a soft, abstract wash of light colors. A blue square with white text is positioned above the women, and an orange rounded rectangle with white text is at the bottom.

*Follow
my
Lead*

Grammar

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Let's Learn Together!

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Ni Hao,

Follow my Lead - Chinese is a program that was inspired by setting goals and reaching them one step at a time. This program was designed for English speakers to learn a new language that is different from English in more ways than one. In this book, you will learn step by step different Chinese grammar that is easy to grasp and can be useful in the real world. With dedication and practice, English speakers can learn how to speak Chinese in an uncomplicated way.

Team members of
Follow my Lead

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Locations

“Zài” (在) is a word used to describe someone or something being in a place. “Zài” is similar to “is”, “are”, and “am” when describing a location of a person or thing. The difference for the Chinese language is that this is the **only** word necessary when describing something to be somewhere.

Structure: [something] zài [place]

Example 1

Wǒ **zài** zhèlǐ.
I am here.

Example 2

Sam **zài** nàlǐ.
Sam is there.

Example 3

Bāoguǒ **zài** zhōngguó.
The package is in China.

Yes/No Questions

To ask yes/no questions in Chinese, use “ma” (吗). Any statement can be turned into a yes/no question by adding “ma” at the end.

Structure: [statement] ma?

Example 1

Nǐ hǎo **ma**?
Are you good? (How are you?)

Example 2

Zhè shì tā de **ma**?
Is this his?

Example 3

Wǒ kěyǐ huí jiā **ma**?
Can I go home?

Wanting Things

“Yào” (要) is used when talking about simply wanting something. “Yào” can also be used to describe the future, as in “I’m going to...”. Caution when using “yào” to mean “to want”. As in English, using this word can come off as a demand.

Structure 1: [subject] yào [noun]

Structure 2: [subject] yào [action]

Example 1

Tāmen xiǎng **yào** guǒzhī.
They want juice.

Example 2

Tā **yào** qù dúshū.
He’s going to study.

Example 3

Wǒ **yào** wán.
I want to play.

Possession

“De” (的) is the most common character in Chinese because it is used to signify possession. To talk about one thing belonging to another thing, or attaching qualities to things, is the key definition of “de”. Therefore, this word is one of the most resourceful word in the Chinese language. “De” can be compared to “apostrophe s” in English.

Example 1

Zhè shì wǒ **de**.
This is mine

Example 2

Nà shì cuò **de**.
This is wrong

Example 3

Zhè shì tā **de** qiǎokèlì.
This is her chocolate.

Example 4

Wǒ **de** lǎoshī jiào wǒ zhème duō.
My teachers have taught me so much.

Quantities

To talk about quantities in Chinese, measure words must be used. Numbers cannot be used directly before or after nouns. Measure words must be placed in between. There are different measure words depending on what is being counted. The chart below may seem overwhelming, but these measure words are very important in surviving a Chinese rich, community.

Pinyin	Use
bǎ	chair, knife, umbrella, toothbrush; objects with handles
bāo	pack of cigarettes; packets of objects
bēi	tea, coffee, cup
běn	book, magazine
bù	film
chuàn	for items that come in bunches or clusters, e.g.: grapes or bananas
chuáng	blankets
dǐng	hats
dǔ	walls
duì	for items that are paired (but not necessarily so)
fèn	newspaper; share; portion; copies
fēng	letter (written document)
fù	sunglasses
gè	general measure word; people
gēn	bananas; other long, slender objects
guàn	can (of soda or food); jar; tin
hù	homes; households
jiā	companies; buildings; households
jià	bridge; airplane

Pinyin	Use
jiān	room
jiàn	clothes; luggage
jiè	events; used for events like the Olympics, World Cup, and such that occur frequently
jīn	pound (actually 0.5 kilograms)
jù	phrase; remark
juǎn	reel; spool; toilet paper; camera film
kē	tree
kè	text; lesson
kǒu	family members; household
kuài	soap; piece of land; Olympic medals; other things that come in hunks, chunks, or lumps; a measure of currency
liàng	car; bicycle; wheeled vehicles
lún	round (of talks, sports)
pǐ	horses; bolt of cloth
píng	bottles
qǐ	cases (used for criminal case); batch, group (e.g.: visitors)
qún	crowd; group (of people); flock (of birds, sheep); swarm (bees); herd (animals)
shǒu	poems
shuāng	chopsticks; items that necessarily come in pairs
sōu	boats; ships
tái	computers; televisions; radios; other machines
tào	set (of furniture, stamps)
tiáo	streets; rivers; fish; snakes; other long, winding objects
tóu	domestic animals; head of cattle; mules; other larger animals
wèi	person (polite usage)
zhāng	map; bed; table; other flat, rectangular objects
zhī	animal; one of a pair of body parts (hands, feet, ears); earrings; rings
zhī	pencil, cigarette, pen; other long, thin objects
zhī	pencil, cigarette, pen; other long, thin objects
zuò	mountains; bridges; buildings

Fill in the Blank

Use the words in the charts on the last two pages to fill in the blanks and complete the sentences.

1. Wǒ yǒu yī _____ zhuō zi. _____
I have one table.

2. Tā yǒu sān _____ qiān bǐ. _____
He has three pencils.

3. Nǐ yǒu wǔ _____ shū. _____
You have five books.

4. Tā hē le yī _____ chá. _____
She has a cup of tea.

5. Yī gōng _____ ròu. _____
A kilo of meat.

6. Tā yǒu liǎng _____ bǐnggān. _____
She has two cookies.

7. Wǒ yíng le yī _____ zìxíng chē. _____
I won a bike.

8. Sān _____ gǒu. _____
Three dogs.

9. Sān _____ jiǔ. _____
Three bottles of wine.

10. Wǒ diū le yì _____ yàoshi. _____
I lost a key.

11. Yì _____ chuán. _____
One ship.

12. Tā yǒu _____ qǐ xíngshì ànjiàn. _____
He has three criminal cases.

13. Nǐ yǒu liù _____ mǎ. _____
You have six horses.

14. Nánhái shīqùle sān _____ yáchǐ. _____
The boy lost three of his teeth.

15. Wǒ xūyào bā _____ zuòyè. _____
I need eight copies of the assignment.

16. Dú yī _____ guīzé. _____
Read the set of rules.

17. Yǒu liǎng zhāng _____. _____
There are two beds

18. Sì _____ xié. _____
Four pairs of shoes.

19. Yǒu yī _____ rén. _____
There is a group of people.

20. Yì _____ zhǐ jīn. _____
A package of paper towels

“To Have And To Have Not”

“Yǒu” (有) is used to talk about having things. The use of “yǒu” is equivalent to the English use of “have” or “has”.

Structure: [subject] yǒu [object]

Example 1

Wǒ **yǒu** yī gè gēgē.
I have an older brother.

Example 2

Tā **yǒu** yī zhī gāngbǐ.
She has a pen.

Example 3

Tāmen **yǒu** règǒu.
They have hotdogs.

“Méi” (没) is used in junction with “yǒu” to describe not having something. If “yǒu” must be negated, always use “méi”.

Structure: [subject] méiyǒu [object]

Example 1

Wǒ **méiyǒu** gǒu.
I don't have a dog.

Example 2

Nǐ **méiyǒu** ménpiào.
You don't have a ticket.

Example 3

Tā **méiyǒu** diànhuà.
He doesn't have a phone.

- “Bù” (不) is used when “yǒu” (have) isn't in the sentence. “Bù” is comparable to the English words “not” and “don't”.

Structure: [subject] bù [verb]

Example 1

Wǒ **bù** xǐhuan yuǎnzú.
I don't like hiking.

Example 2

Tā **bù** huì qù.
He won't go.

Example 3

Nǐ **bù** néng ràng wǒ.
You can't make me.

Fill in the Blank

Use either the words “yǒu”, “méiyǒu”, or “bù” to fill in the blanks and complete the sentences.

1. Wǒ _____ diànnǎo. _____
I don't have a computer.

2. Nǐ _____ tiānfù. _____
You have a talent.

3. Wǒ yě _____. _____
I don't either

4. Bié _____ yánsù. _____
Don't be serious.

5. Wǒ yě _____ guò. _____
I haven't had any.

6. Wǒ _____ wèi zhuórè. _____
I've got heartburn.

7. Wǒmen _____ 5 gè rén. _____
We have 5 people.

8. Tā de tóufǎ _____ yánsè. _____
Her hair doesn't have color.

9. Nǐ _____ sǎn ma? _____
Do you have an umbrella?

10. Wǒ tīng _____ dòng. _____
I don't understand.

11. Tāmen _____ diànshì. _____
They don't have a TV.

12. _____ chéng wèntí de. _____
Not a problem.

13. Tā _____ lǐyóu. _____
She doesn't have a reason.

14. Wǒmen _____ kèrén. _____
We have company.

15. Tā gǎnjué _____ shūfú. _____
He doesn't feel well.

16. Wǒ _____ niúnnǎi. _____
I have no more milk.

17. Tā _____ xǐhuan māo. _____
She doesn't like cats.

18. Nǐ _____ xuǎnzé. _____
You don't have a choice.

19. Tā _____ kǒuchòu. _____
He has bad breath.

20. Wǒ _____ zàihū. _____
I don't care.

To Be

The closest comparable Chinese word to the English word “to be” is “shì” (是). “Shì” is used to link nouns together.

Structure: [noun] shì [noun]

Example 1

Wǒ **shì** bì yè sheng.
I am a graduate.

Example 2

Nà **shì** yī gè níngméng.
That is a lemon.

Example 3

Tā **shì** wǒ de māmā.
She is my mom.

“Shì” cannot be used to link adjectives to nouns. To do so, “hěn” (很) must be used.

Structure: [noun] hěn [adjective]

Example 1

Tā **hěn** āi.
She is short.

Example 2

Wàimiàn **hěn** lěng.
It is cold outside.

Example 3

Bǐnggān **hěn** hào chī.
The cookies are delicious.

Fill in the Blank

Use either the words “shì” or “hěn” to fill in the blanks and complete the sentences.

1. Tā ___ fēngzi.
He is mad.

2. Tā ___ bēibǐ.
He is despicable.

3. Zhè ___ tā de.
That is hers.

4. Yǐzi ___ lán sè de.
The chair is blue.

5. Wǒ ___ bàoqiàn.
I'm very sorry.

6. Wǒ ___ Shenyce.
I am Shenyce.

7. Wàimiàn ___ hēi.
It's dark outside.

8. Tā ___ wǒ de péngyǒu.
He is my friend.

9. Gǒu máo ___ ruǎn.
The dog's hair is soft.

10. Dìbǎn ___ āngzāng.
The floor is dirty.

“And...”

To link nouns, “hé” (和) will be used. “Hé” is equivalent to the English word “and”. Both “hé” and “and” are used in identical ways to one another. But one major difference is that you can’t link verbs using “hé”.

Structure: [subject] hé [object]

Example 1

Wǒ de mèimei **hé** wǒ.
My younger sister and I.

Example 2

Wǒ xǐhuan huāshēngjiàng **hé** guǒdòng.
I like peanut butter and jelly.

Example 3

Píngguǒ **hé** júzi shì bùtóng de.
Apples and oranges are different.

Answer Key

Quantities

- Fill in the Blank

1. zhāng, 2. zhī, 3. běn, 4. bēi, 5. jīn, 6. gè, 7. liàng, 8. tóu, 9. píng, 10. bǎ,
11. sōu, 12. qǐ, 13. pǐ, 14. kē, 15. fèn, 16. tào, 17. chuáng,
18. shuāng, 19. qún, 20. bāo

“To Have And To Have Not”

- Fill in the Blank

1. méiyǒu, 2. yǒu, 3. bù, 4. bù, 5. méiyǒu, 6. yǒu, 7. yǒu, 8. méiyǒu, 9. yǒu,
10. bù, 11. méiyǒu, 12. bù, 13. méiyǒu, 14. yǒu, 15. bù,
16. méiyǒu, 17. bù, 18. méiyǒu, 19. yǒu, 20. bù

“To Be”

- Fill in the Blank

1. shì, 2. hěn, 3. shì, 4. shì, 5. hěn, 6. shì, 7. hěn, 8. shì, 9. hěn, 10. hěn

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