



GRAMMAR • DEVELOPING BEGINNER

Build Longer Mandarin Sentences, Step by Step

Grow a short Mandarin sentence by adding time, place, quantity, description, manner, and reason in an order that still sounds natural.

Wǒ hē chá.

我喝茶。

I drink tea.

Core



By the end, you can...

- ✓ Add time and place before the main action
- ✓ Keep number-measure word-noun groups together
- ✓ Expand a familiar sentence without translating English word for word

Developing beginner

35-50 minutes

15 pages

Answer guide

Self-contained print practice. Audio and web tools are optional.



1

The sentence-block map

After this page, you can See which details normally sit before and after the action.

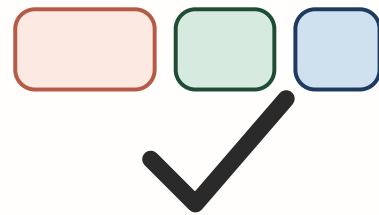
BUILD

A reliable starting line

SUBJECT + TIME + PLACE + MANNER
+ ACTION + QUANTITY/OBJECT. You
will not fill every slot in every
sentence. Treat each block as a
movable meaning unit, not as a
word-by-word English translation.

Put it in your own words.

Cover this card and explain the idea in one sentence.



A visual anchor for this page's idea



2

The sentence-block map CONTINUED

After this page, you can See which details normally sit before and after the action.

∞ BUILD

One sentence, four rungs

1

Wǒ xuéxí.

我学习。

I study.

core

2

Wǒ wǎnshang xuéxí.

我晚上学习。

I study in the evening.

add time

3

Wǒ wǎnshang zài jiā xuéxí.

我晚上在家学习。

I study at home in the evening.

add place

4

Wǒ wǎnshang zài jiā xué yí ge xiǎoshí Zhōngwén.

我晚上在家学一个小时中文。

I study Chinese at home for one hour in the evening.

add duration + object



Cover + retrieve

Choose one line. Hide it, say it once, then uncover and repair one detail.



3

Add time before the action

After this page, you can Place today, tomorrow, weekdays, and clock time naturally.

 **MOVE**

Time can frame the sentence



Wǒ jīntiān gōngzuò.

我今天工作。

I work today.

subject + time



Míngtiān wǒ bù gōngzuò.

明天我不工作。

Tomorrow I do not work.

time + subject



Wǒmen xīngqīliù shàngwǔ shí diǎn jiàn.

我们星期六上午十点
见。

We will meet at 10 a.m. on Saturday.

large to small



Cover + retrieve

Choose one line. Hide it, say it once, then uncover and repair one detail.



4

Add time before the action

CONTINUED

After this page, you can Place today, tomorrow, weekdays, and clock time naturally.

MOVE

Put the time in a natural place

Rewrite each set as one sentence.

1

WORKED EXAMPLE

I drink coffee in the morning.

wǒ / zǎoshang / hē kāfēi

我 / 早上 / 喝咖啡

One answer wǒ / zǎoshang / hē kāfēi

我早上喝咖啡。

Why it works: 早上 may also begin the sentence.

2

We will eat together tomorrow evening.

wǒmen / míngtiān wǎnshang / yìqǐ chīfàn

我们 / 明天晚上 / 一起吃饭

**One more from you**

Make a new response with the same target pattern.

Finish from memory. Choose one completed response, cover the page, and make it again.



5

Add place before the action

After this page, you can Use 在 + place as the setting, not as an English-style ending.

PLACE

Set the scene with 在



Tā zài xuéxiào xué Zhōngwén.

她在学校学中文。

She studies Chinese at school.

place before action



Wǒmen wǎnshang zài cāntīng jiàn.

我们晚上在餐厅见。

We will meet at the restaurant tonight.

time + place



Bàba zài chúfáng zuòfàn.

爸爸在厨房做饭。

Dad cooks in the kitchen.

setting



Cover + retrieve

Choose one line. Hide it, say it once, then uncover and repair one detail.



6

Add place before the action

CONTINUED

After this page, you can Use 在 + place as the setting, not as an English-style ending.

PLACE

Move the place block

Repair the translated-English order.

3

WORKED EXAMPLE

Repair: 我看书在图书馆。

One answer wǒ zài tú shū guǎn kàn shū

我在图书馆看书。

Why it works: It completes the requested job using the target pattern.

4

Repair: 她明天买东西在商店。



One more from you

Make a new response with the same target pattern.

Finish from memory. Choose one completed response, cover the page, and make it again.



7

Keep noun groups together

After this page, you can Add quantity and description without splitting the noun phrase.

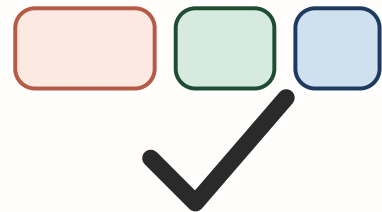
GROUP

Two compact blocks

Quantity stays together: NUMBER + MEASURE WORD + NOUN, as in 两杯茶. A simple description normally comes before the noun, as in 热茶 or 我喜欢的书.

Put it in your own words.

Cover this card and explain the idea in one sentence.



A visual anchor for this page's idea



8

Keep noun groups together

 CONTINUED

After this page, you can Add quantity and description without splitting the noun phrase.

GROUP

Build the object block

Use every piece once.

5

WORKED EXAMPLE

two cups of hot tea

liǎng / bēi / rè / chá

两 / 杯 / 热 / 茶

One answer liǎng / bēi / rè / chá

两杯热茶

Why it works: It completes the requested job using the target pattern.

6

the three Chinese books I bought

wǒ mǎi de / sān / běn / Zhōngwén shū

我买的 / 三 / 本 / 中文书



One more from you

Make a new response with the same target pattern.

Finish from memory. Choose one completed response, cover the page, and make it again.



9

Add manner and reason carefully

After this page, you can Say how or why without overloading one sentence.

EXPAND

How, then why

1

Qǐng màn màn shuō.

请慢慢说。

Please speak slowly.

manner before action

2

Tā rènzhēn de xiě Hànzì.

他认真地写汉字。

He writes Chinese characters carefully.

written-style 地

3

Yīnwèi xià yǔ, suǒyǐ wǒ zài jiā chī fàn.

因为下雨，所以我在家吃饭。

Because it is raining, I am eating at home.

reason + result



Cover + retrieve

Choose one line. Hide it, say it once, then uncover and repair one detail.



10

Add manner and reason carefully CONTINUED

After this page, you can Say how or why without overloading one sentence.

 EXPAND

One reason, one result

7

Complete: 因为_____, 所以我_____. Then read it aloud once.

Success looks like A reason follows 因为 and a result follows 所以.

Choose your mode Write in Hanzi · write in tone-marked pinyin · say and record it



11

Build your own ladder

After this page, you can Retrieve the order and personalize the final sentence.

✓ BUILD

Add one rung at a time

1

Write a subject + action.

☐

2

Add a time before the action.

☐

3

Add 在 + place before the action.

☐

4

Add one quantity or described object.

☐

5

Read every rung aloud before adding the next.

☐



12

Build your own ladder CONTINUED

After this page, you can Retrieve the order and personalize the final sentence.

 **BUILD**

My six-rung ladder

8

Start with 我... and build six versions. Change only one block on each line.

Success looks like Each rung keeps prior meaning and adds one natural detail.

Choose your mode Write in Hanzi · write in tone-marked pinyin · say and record it



13

Check your work

After this page, you can compare your response, understand the repair, and choose one item to replay later.

✓ ANSWER GUIDE

Answers with useful feedback

Closed tasks have a direct answer. Open tasks include a model or success criteria; your response does not need to match word for word.

1

I drink coffee in the morning.

wǒ / zǎoshang / hē kāfēi

我早上喝咖啡。

Why: 早上 may also begin the sentence.

2

We will eat together tomorrow evening.

wǒmen / míngtiān wǎnshang / yìqǐ chīfàn

我们明天晚上一起吃饭。

3

Repair: 我看书在图书馆。

wǒ zài tú shū guǎn kàn shū

我在图书馆看书。

4

Repair: 她明天买东西在商店。

tā míng tiān zài shāng diàn mǎi dōng xī

她明天在商店买东西。

5

two cups of hot tea

liǎng / bēi / rè / chá

两杯热茶

6

the three Chinese books I bought

wǒ mǎi de / sān / běn / Zhōngwén shū

我买的三本中文书

Do not stop at checking. Circle one repair and make that response again with the answer covered.



14

Check your work CONTINUED

After this page, you can compare your response, understand the repair, and choose one item to replay later.

✓ ANSWER GUIDE

Answers with useful feedback

Closed tasks have a direct answer. Open tasks include a model or success criteria; your response does not need to match word for word.

7

Complete: 因为_____, 所以我_____. Then read it aloud once.

ONE POSSIBLE ANSWER

Yīnwèi jīntiān xià yǔ, suǒyǐ wǒ zài jiā kàn shū.

因为今天下雨，所以我在家看书。

Success criteria: A reason follows 因为 and a result follows 所以.

8

Start with 我... and build six versions. Change only one block on each line.

ONE POSSIBLE ANSWER

Wǒ hē chá. → Wǒ jīntiān hē chá. → Wǒ jīntiān zài jiā hē chá. → Wǒ jīntiān zài jiā màn màn de hē chá. → Wǒ jīntiān zài jiā màn màn de hē liǎng bēi chá. → Wǒ jīntiān zài jiā màn màn de hē liǎng bēi rè chá.

我喝茶。→ 我今天喝茶。→ 我今天在家喝茶。→ 我今天在家慢慢地喝茶。→ 我今天在家慢慢地喝两杯茶。→ 我今天在家慢慢地喝两杯热茶。

Success criteria: Each rung keeps prior meaning and adds one natural detail.

Do not stop at checking. Circle one repair and make that response again with the answer covered.