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# 我的中国寄宿家庭

## My Chinese Homestay Family

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坐了很长时间的飞机以后，我终于到了机场。开始找我的寄宿家庭的时候，我觉得很累也有点儿紧张，因为我不知道会发生什么。能不能好好地跟他们住在一起？要是我不喜欢他们的菜怎么办？我以前都没离开过家，可是现在到了中国成都！

不久，一位女士走过来，笑着问“你是Diana吗？”

她是赵太太，我寄宿家庭的妈妈。她给我介绍了她的丈夫赵先生，还有她的两个孩子，哥哥和妹妹。

那天我真的很累，所以一到她家，她给我看了我的房间以后，就跟我说了晚安了。

虽然赵太太和赵先生，还有他们的孩子都很好，但是我还是很紧张。

第二天早上，我起床起得很早。每个人都坐到桌子旁边的时候，赵先生就叫我吃早饭。那是一碗有鸡蛋和辣椒的面！

“可是.....这是早上，早饭.....你们吃辣的面？”我不知道说什么了。

赵先生笑了，“对！这是成都的早饭，吃吧！”

我吃了一口那个很不一样的早饭，觉得真的很好吃。

吃完了早饭以后，哥哥问：“Diana，你喜欢打篮球吗？我和我朋友要去打篮球，你想去吗？”

“可以啊！感觉很好玩儿。”我笑着说。

从那以后，我在中国生活再也不紧张了。

# 生词 Vocabulary

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## Proper Nouns

成都	Chéngdū	Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province in southwest China
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## Nouns

寄宿家庭	jìsù jiāting	homestay family (for an exchange student)
机场	jīchǎng	airport
孩子	háizi	child
丈夫	zhàngfu	husband
房间	fángjiān	room
旁边	pángbiān	beside
鸡蛋	jīdàn	chicken egg
辣椒	làjiāo	hot pepper; chili pepper
面	miàn	noodles

## Verbs

开始	kāishǐ	to start
发生	fāshēng	to happen; to occur
介绍	jièshào	to introduce
离开	líkāi	to leave; to depart from
打篮球	dǎ lánqiú	to play basketball

## Adjectives

紧张	jǐnzhāng	nervous
累	lèi	tired
好吃	hǎochī	tasty; delicious

## Adverbs

终于	zhōngyú	at long last; finally
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## 语法点 Grammar Points

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### 1. 过 (guò)

**aspect particle.** *ever; before; have never (when used in the past)*

You may have heard that there are no verb conjugations in Chinese. If that's the case, then, how do you use Mandarin to talk about things that happened in the past? The aspect particle 过 (guò) is one part of the answer to this question.

过 (guo) is used to talk about something that you have done or experienced before. To use it, employ the following structure:

Subject + Verb + 过 + Object

For example:

我去过法国。

Wǒ qùguo Fǎguó.

I've been to France before.

In the above example, 过 (guo) is used to explain that the speaker has been to France before. Note that the sentence does not provide any information about when exactly the speaker went to France, nor does it tell us how many times the speaker made the trip. All we know from the sentence is that the speaker has had the experience of going to France at least once at some time in the past.

While the English sentence above contains the conjugated verbs “have” and “been” as well as the word “before,” all these different elements are

not necessary in Chinese. 过 (guo) serves the same purpose as all three of these English words combined.

过 (guo) is also frequently used as part of a question. It's a handy word to use if you want to know whether or not someone has ever done something before.

For example:

你吃**过**中国菜吗?

Nǐ chī**guo** Zhōngguó cài ma?

Have you ever eaten Chinese food before?

In the question above, 过 (guo) is used to ask whether you've ever had the experience of eating Chinese food.

Let's say, for the sake of argument, that you've never eaten Chinese food. Well then, you'll need to know how to use 过 (guo) in the negative. To do so, make use of the following structure:

Subject + 没 + Verb + 过 + Object

For example:

我没有吃**过**中国菜。

Wǒ méiyǒu chī**guo** Zhōngguó cài.

I've never eaten Chinese food.

In the sentence above, 过 (guo) can be translated as “never” and is used to explain that the speaker has never had the experience in question, namely, eating Chinese food.

Let’s look at another example:

我没有离开过家。

Wǒ méiyǒu líkāiguō jiā.

I have never left home before.

In the sentence above, 过 (guo) is used to explain that the speaker has never had the experience of leaving home before.

Chances are that you already know that there are two words that are used to negate a sentence in Mandarin: 没 (méi) and 不 (bù). Note that when talking in the negative about past experiences with 过 (guo), you should always use 没 (méi), not 不 (bù). The two are not interchangeable.

## 2. 虽然...但是 (suīrán...dànshì)

*grammatical pattern. although...but; even though...but; though...but*

虽然...但是 (suīrán...dànshì) is a very useful and common grammatical pattern in Mandarin Chinese. It is similar to “although” or “even though” in English.

Like in English, it is generally used as part of sentences made up of at least two clauses in which the first clause introduces a situation and the second clause expresses something that is somehow contradictory to or seemingly in conflict with the first clause.

When writing sentences with the word “although” in English, the second clause does not need to begin with “but.” In Chinese, however, the second clause in sentences that feature 虽然 (suīrán) must be introduced with 但是 (dànshì; but). It’s important to pay attention to this major difference between English and Chinese.

Note that 可是 (kěshì; but) is also sometimes used in place of 但是 (dànshì).

Let’s look at an example to learn how to use 虽然...但是 (suīrán...dànshì) in a sentence:

虽然赵太太很好，但是我还是很紧张。

Suīrán Zhào Tàitai hěn hǎo, dànshì wǒ hái shì hěn jǐnzhāng.

Even though Mrs. Zhao was very nice, I still felt nervous.

In the example above, the first part of the sentence starts with 虽然 (suīrán) and sets the stage for the rest of the sentence by introducing the fact that Mrs. Zhao is very nice.

In the next clause, 但是 (dànshì) is used to introduce a fact that is somewhat contradictory to the situation presented in the first clause. Normally, we would expect a nice person to make others feel at ease, but in this case, the speaker still feels nervous in spite of Mrs. Zhao’s niceness.

Let’s look at another example:

她**虽然**很年轻，**但是**她已经有自己的公司了。

Tā **suīrán** hěn niánqīng, **dànshì** tā yǐjīng yǒu zìjǐ de gōngsī le.

Although she's very young, she already has her own company.

Here, the first clause introduces the fact that the subject of the sentence is very young. Then, in the second half of the sentence, the fact that the subject already owns her own company is presented as an unexpected fact that contrasts with the fact that the subject is very young.

Note that the **虽然** (**suīrán**) in this example does not come at the very beginning of the first clause. This example demonstrates that it is possible for **虽然** (**suīrán**) to come either at the beginning of the first clause before the subject, or, as in this case, after the subject.

While the position of **虽然** (**suīrán**) can be adjusted without changing the meaning of the sentence in which it is used, it isn't possible to change the position of **但是** (**dànshì**), which must always come at the beginning of the second clause, right after the comma.

### 3. Degree complements with **得** (de)

***grammatical structure.** used to modify verbs and adjectives*

In Chinese, degree complements (**程度补语 chéngdù bǔyǔ**) are used to modify, or describe the degree, extent or quality of verbs and adjectives. In this grammar point, we will focus on using degree complements with verbs.

When used with verbs, degree complements represent a way to talk about the quality of the action that the verbs describe. They are also used to describe how well or how poorly the actions expressed by the verbs were done.

When used after a verb, degree complements follow this pattern:



## Subject + Verb + 得 + Degree Complement

Beginning students may assume that 得 (de) itself is the degree complement, but this is not the case. In fact, 得 (de) is what is called a structural particle, and it has several different grammatical functions in Chinese. Linking verbs with their degree complements is just one of these functions.

So what are degree complements? Usually, they are descriptive phrases most commonly made up of both an adverb and an adjective.

Here is a list of some commonly-seen degree complements:

- 很好 (hěn hǎo): very good; combination of the adverb 很 and the adjective 好
- 很不错 (hěn bùcuò): very nice, not bad; combination of 很 (adv.) and 不错 (adj.)
- 还可以 (hái kěyǐ): not bad; combination of 还 (adv.) and 可以 (adj.)
- 非常差 (fēicháng chà): very poor; combination of 非常 (adv.) and 差 (adj.)
- 很漂亮 (hěn piàoliang): very beautiful, brilliant; combination of 很 (adv.) and 漂亮 (adj.)
- 很快 (hěn kuài): very fast; combination of 很 (adv.) and 快 (adj.)

Let's look at a simple example to see how to use these phrases:

你做得很好。

Nǐ zuò de hěn hǎo.

You did very well.

In the sentence above, 你 (nǐ; you) is the subject. 很好 (hěn hǎo; very good) is the degree complement, and it tells us how well the subject did the action described by the verb 做 (zuò; to do).

The particle 得 (de) connects the verb and the degree complement 很好 (hěn hǎo), letting us know that the person in the sentence did something very well.

The same pattern can be seen in the following example:

这篇文章写得**很不错**。

Zhè piān wénzhāng xiě de **hěn bùcuò**.

This article is very well written.

Here, the degree complement 很不错 (hěn bùcuò; very good) modifies the verb 写 (xiě; to write) and works to tell readers how well the article was written.

The examples above are relatively straightforward, but things get trickier if you try to include an object in your sentence along with your degree complement. This is because it is not OK for both an object and a degree complement to come after a verb in Chinese.

To ensure that your sentence ends with a verb plus a degree complement, it's necessary to use one of two grammatical strategies to make sure that the object comes before the verb in your sentence. One strategy involves putting the object in front of the verb, while the other strategy involves repeating the verb.

For example, let's say we want to say that someone speaks English well. We can say the sentence in two different ways:

你的英文说得很好。

Nǐ de Yīngwén shuō de hěnhǎo.

You speak English very well.

你说英文说得很好。

Nǐ shuō Yīngwén shuō de hěnhǎo.

You speak English very well.

In the two examples above, 英文 (Yīngwén) is the object. In English, we would normally place the object after the verb “speak,” as in “You speak English very well.” In Chinese, however, only 得 (dé) and the degree complement can come after the verb, so the object must be moved to the front using one of our aforementioned grammatical strategies.

In example 1 above, the object 英文 (Yīngwén) comes before the verb 说 (shuō). In example 2, the verb 说 (shuō) is repeated. Even though the grammar is different, the meaning of both sentences is the same.

As you continue to learn Chinese, you will find that there are some verbs, called separable verbs, which are made up of both a verb part and an object part. Some verbs that you may have already learned, such as 睡觉 (shuìjiào; to sleep), actually fall into this special category.

Don't worry too much about the ins and outs of these special verbs right now since you will learn more about them later. All you need to know at the moment is that, confusingly for some beginners, the verb part of these separable verbs also repeats when used with degree complements.

For example:

我起床起得很早。

Wǒ qǐchuáng qǐ de hěn zǎo.

I get up early.

In this example, the 起 (qǐ) part of the separable verb 起床 (qǐchuáng; to get up; to get out of bed) repeats in order to ensure that 床 (chuáng), the object part of the verb, does not come after the verb in the sentence.

## 测试 Quiz

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1. Diana为什么紧张?
  - a. 因为她不喜欢吃辣椒。
  - b. 因为她不知道会发生什么。
  - c. 因为她不喜欢坐飞机。
  - d. 因为她不喜欢中国。
  
2. Diana的寄宿家庭有多少人?
  - a. 两个人
  - b. 三个人
  - c. 四个人
  - d. 五个人
  
3. Diana的寄宿家庭给她吃什么早饭?
  - a. 鸡蛋
  - b. 辣椒
  - c. 有鸡蛋和辣椒的米饭
  - d. 有鸡蛋和辣椒的面
  
4. Diana觉得成都的早饭怎么样?
  - a. 很好吃
  - b. 很不好吃
  - c. 一般般
  - d. 太辣
  
5. 谁想Diana去打篮球?
  - a. 妹妹
  - b. 哥哥
  - c. 妈妈
  - d. 爸爸

*Answer key on final page of PDF.*

### Wǒde Zhōngguó jìsù jiāting

Zuò le hěn cháng shíjiān de fēijī yǐhòu, wǒ zhōngyú dào le jīchǎng. Kāishǐ zhǎo wǒde jìsù jiāting de shíhou, wǒ juéde hěn lèi yě yǒu diǎnr jǐnzhāng, yīnwei wǒ bù zhīdao huì fāshēng shénme. Néng bù néng hǎohao de gēn tāmen zhù zài yīqǐ? Yàoshi wǒ bù xǐhuan tāmen de cài zěnme bàn? Wǒ yìqián dōu méi líkāiguó jiā, kěshì xiànzài dào le Zhōngguó Chéngdū!

Bùjiǔ, yī wèi nǚshì zǒu guòlai, xiàozhe wèn: “Nǐ shì Diana ma?”

Tā shì Zhào Tàitai, wǒ jìsù jiāting de māma. Tā gěi wǒ jièshào le tāde zhàngfu Zhào Xiānsheng, háiyǒu tāde liǎng gè háizi, gēge hé mèimei.

Nàtiān wǒ zhēnde hěn lèi, suǒyǐ yī dào tā jiā, tā gěi wǒ kànle wǒde fángjiān yǐhòu, jiù gēn wǒ shuō wǎn’ān le.

Suīrán Zhào Tàitai hé Zhào Xiānshēng, háiyǒu tāmen de háizi dōu hěn hǎo, dànshì wǒ háishì hěn jǐnzhāng.

Dì’èr tiān zǎoshang, wǒ qǐchuáng qǐ de hěn zǎo. Měi gè rén dōu zuò dào zhuōzi pángbiān de shíhou, Zhào Xiānshēng jiù jiào wǒ chī zǎofàn. Nà shì yī wǎn yǒu jīdàn hé làjiāo de miàn!

“Kě shì ..... zhè shì zǎoshang, zǎofàn ..... nǐmen chī làde miàn?” Wǒ bù zhīdao shuō shénme le.

Zhào Xiānshēng xiàole, “ Dui! Zhè shì Chéngdū de zǎofàn, chī bā!”

Wǒ chīle yī kǒu nà ge hěn bù yīyàng de zǎofàn, juéde zhēnde hěn hǎochī.

Chī wán le zǎofàn yǐhòu, gēge wèn: “Diana, nǐ xǐhuan dǎlánqiú ma? Wǒ hé wǒ péngyou yào qù dǎlánqiú, nǐ xiǎng qù ma?”

“Kěyǐ ā! Gǎnjué hěn hǎo wánr.” Wǒ xiàozhe shuō.

Cóng nà yǐhòu, wǒ zài Zhōngguó shēnghuó zài yě bù jǐnzhāng le.

### **My Chinese Homestay Family**

After a long flight, I finally arrived at the airport. As I began searching for my Chinese homestay family, I felt tired and also a little nervous. I didn't know what to expect. Would I be able to get along with my homestay family? What if I didn't like the food? I had never left my home country before and now, here I was, in Chengdu, China!

Before too long, a lady came over to me and, with a smile, asked "Are you Diana?"

This was Mrs. Zhao, my new host mom. She introduced me to her husband, Mr. Zhao, and her two kids, Meimei and Gege.

I was really tired after my flight, so once we'd arrived at her home, Mrs. Zhao showed me my room and wished me a good night.

Even though Mrs. and Mr. Zhao were really friendly, and so were the kids, I still felt nervous.

The next morning, I woke up early. Once everyone was seated around the table, Mr. Zhao invited me to have some breakfast, which consisted of a bowl of noodles with a fried egg and some chillies!

"But... It's morning, it's breakfast... You're eating spicy noodles?" I didn't quite know what to say.

Mr. Zhao laughed, "Yes! This is a Chengdu breakfast. Try it!"

I took a bite of this very different breakfast, and it was delicious.

After finishing breakfast, Gege asked, "Hey Diana, do you like basketball? My friends and I are going to play in the park. Do you wanna come?"

"Sure! That sounds fun." I smiled.



From then on, I no longer felt nervous about my new life in China.

Quiz Answer Key:

1. b 2. c 3. d 4. a 5. b



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