



Quick Chinese Lessons  
by That's Mandarin

# Lesson 3



# 1. “Or” in Chinese: When to Use 还是 (háishi) and 或者 (huòzhě)

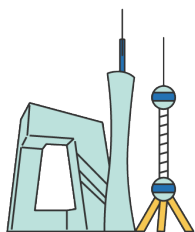
Many Chinese learners get confused with 还是 (háishi) with 或者 (huòzhě) as they both mean “or”. But they’re used differently too.

## 1. 还是 (háishi)

还是 (háishi) is usually used in questions, such as “Do you want to drink tea or coffee?”; “Do you like Shanghai or Beijing?” Use it to ask someone to choose between 2 options.

STRUCTURE:

A + 还是 (háishi) + B?



你喜欢上海还是北京?

Nǐ xǐhuan Shànghǎi hái shì Běijīng?

Do you like Shanghai or Beijing?

## 2. 或者 (huòzhě)

**或者 (huòzhě)** is used in **positive or negative statements**, such as “Either tea or coffee is fine.”

STRUCTURE:

**A + 或者 (huòzhě) + B**

Take a look at the following dialogue in which both words can be used:



A: 你要茶**还是**咖啡?

Nǐ yào chá háishi kāfēi?

Do you want to drink tea or coffee?



B: 茶**或者**咖啡。

Chá huòzhě kāfēi.

Either tea or coffee is fine.

## 2. “And” in Chinese: When to Use 和 (hé) and when 又 (yòu)?

The Chinese word 和 (hé) is another basic, but important word which is often misused by Chinese learners. Although its equivalent meaning in English is indeed “**and**”, when it comes to the usage of this word, we need to get rid of our “English way of thinking”.

In English, the word “and” can connect nouns, adjectives, phrases, and sentences.

For example:

“I like apples and bananas” (Noun + **and** + Noun);

“I am happy and excited” (Adjective + **and** + Adjective);

“I am interested in reading novels and playing chess” (Phrase + **and** + Phrase);

“I am Mike and this is my friend Tom” (Sentence + **and** + Sentence).

1. In Chinese, 和 (hé) can only connect 2 **nouns, pronouns or noun phrases**.

### STRUCTURE

#### Noun + 和 (hé) + Noun



我喜欢苹果**和**香蕉。

Wǒ xǐhuan píngguǒ hé xiāngjiāo.

I like apples and bananas.



我对读小说**和**下棋感兴趣。

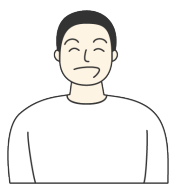
Wǒ duì dú xiǎoshuō hé xiàqí gǎn xìngqù.

I am interested in reading novels and playing chess.

2. To connect 2 **adjectives**, use 又 (yòu).

STRUCTURE

**又 (yòu) + Adjective + 又 (yòu) + Adjective**



我**又**高兴**又**激动。

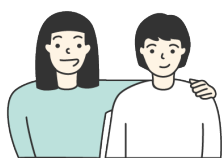
Wǒ yòu gāoxìng yòu jīdòng.

I am happy and excited.

3. And for “Sentence + and + Sentence”, just add a comma in writing, and a pause in speech to separate them:

STRUCTURE

**Sentence , Sentence**



我是 Emma**,** 这是我的朋友 Tom。

Wǒ shì Emma, zhè shì wǒ de péngyou Tom.

I am Emma, and this is my friend Tom.

### 3. “Suitable”: 合适 (héshì) vs. 适合 (shìhé)

The words 合适 (héshì) and 适合 (shìhé) sometimes also cause trouble to Chinese learners as both words consist of exactly the same characters, and their meanings are very similar. But they are used differently.

#### 1. 合适 (héshì)

合适 (héshì) is an adjective which means “suitable”.

STRUCTURE

Subject + 很 (hěnn) + 合适 (héshì)



这件衬衫很合适。

Zhè jiàn chènshān hěnn héshì.

This shirt is the right one.

#### 2. 适合 (shìhé)

适合 (shìhé) is a verb which means “to suit”.

STRUCTURE

Subject + 很 (hěnn) + 适合 (shìhé) + Person



这件衬衫很适合你。

Zhè jiàn chènshān hěnn shìhé nǐ.

This shirt suits you well.

### 3. “To Meet”: 见 (jiàn) or 见面 (jiànmiàn)

Both 见 (jiàn) and 见面 (jiànmiàn) mean “to meet”, “to see”. You can use any of these two words in a sentence to express the say “A meets B”.

Let's look at the examples.

#### 1. 见 (jiàn)

见 (jiàn), is a verb to “to see/meet”, and it can be followed by a person.

STRUCTURE

A + 见 (jiàn) + B



我想见你。

Wǒ xiǎng jiàn nǐ.

I want to see you.

#### 2. 见面 (jiànmiàn)

见面 (jiànmiàn), to see/meet, and it can not be directly followed by a person. You will need to use the word 和 (hé), “with”.

STRUCTURE:

A + 和 (hé) + B + 见面 (jiànmiàn)



昨天我和他见面了。


Zuótiān wǒ hé tā jiànmiàn le.

I met him yesterday.

## Next Steps

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