

“你最近怎么样？”

If you're tired of answering this question in the same old way and ready to sophisticate your spoken Chinese a bit, this is for you!

These sentences are recommended for **Intermediate** (B1) and **above**.

“我最近**很好**。” 😊

Replies	Commentary
<p>一个字：很好！ Yī gè zì: hěn hǎo! One word: very good!</p>	<p>OK, obviously it's not really "one character." It's a <i>joke</i>. (Use this one at your peril... your audience <i>could</i> think you're not too bright! Switch to 两个字 if you don't want to risk it.)</p>
<p>很好啊，我学会了…… Hěn hǎo a, wǒ xué huì le... Great, I've learned...</p>	<p>For this one, you need to add on something new you've learned recently. It's an easy conversation starter.</p>
<p>不错不错，还算顺心。 Bùcuò bùcuò, hái suàn shùnxīn. Not bad, not bad. Quite satisfactory, I'd say.</p>	<p>This is a rather low-key way of saying that everything is going great. (It's not the Chinese way to brag about good fortune.)</p>
<p>托您的福，还不错。 Tuō nín de fú, hái bùcuò. All thanks to you, pretty good!</p>	<p>This one is a bit hard to explain, but it's a rather traditional expression most often used between service providers and clients.</p>
<p>挺好的，吃嘛嘛香，身体倍儿棒。 Tíng hǎo de, chī ma-ma xiāng, shēntǐ bèi er bàng. Great! Eating well and staying healthy.</p>	<p>This one has a strong northern Chinese flavor to it. It's also the hardest one to explain... First use it on your northern Chinese friends, then ask them what it means!</p>

“我最近一般。” 😐

Replies	Commentary
<p>还行吧，也就那样。 Hái xíng ba, yě jiù nà yàng.</p> <p>Not too bad, same ol' same ol'.</p>	<p>Pretty standard response which doesn't give much information. Use this when there's not much to say.</p>
<p>老样子。你呢？ Lǎo yàng zi. Nǐ ne?</p> <p>Same as always. How about you?</p>	<p>Pretty standard response which doesn't give much information and then quickly passes the question back to the asker.</p>
<p>一般般，不好不坏。 Yī bān bān, bù hǎo bù huài.</p> <p>So-so, not good, not bad.</p>	<p>Pretty standard response which doesn't give much information. Chinese people are sometimes impressed when foreigners use the (very colloquial) phrase “一般般”.</p>
<p>还行，凑合。 Hái xíng, còu he.</p> <p>All right, getting by.</p>	<p>Pretty standard response which doesn't give much information. It just has the somewhat more difficult word 凑合 added in.</p>
<p>还行吧，勉强混口饭吃。 Hái xíng ba, miǎn qiǎng hùn kǒu fàn chī.</p> <p>OK, I guess. Still managing to feed myself.</p>	<p>Perhaps the most colloquial in this list, this is one of the more interesting ways to not give much information!</p>

“我最近不好。” 😞

Replies	Commentary
<p>唉，不怎么样。 Āi, bù zěnmeyàng.</p> <p>::sigh:: Not so good.</p>	<p>This one feels a little bit like a plea for attention. Use it if you have your sad story ready.</p>
<p>最近太背了，喝凉水都塞牙。 Zuìjìn tài bèi le, hē liángshuǐ dōu sāi yá.</p> <p>I've been so unlucky lately, even a drink of water gets stuck in my teeth.</p>	<p>This is a more colorful and exaggerated way to say things haven't been going smoothly for you. It gives the impression that your spirits are still pretty good in the face of adversity.</p>
<p>别提了，乱七八糟。 Bié tí le, luànqī-bāzāo.</p> <p>Don't ask... my life is a disaster.</p>	<p>A fairly standard exclamation of misfortune, it's also a bit of a plea for attention.</p>
<p>哎呀，一塌糊涂。 Āiyā, yītā hútú.</p> <p>Oh man... my life is a mess.</p>	<p>Again, a fairly standard exclamation of misfortune, it's also a bit of a plea for attention.</p>
<p>不说了，说来话长。 Bù shuō le, shuō lái huà cháng.</p> <p>I'm not even going to get into it... it's a long story.</p>	<p>This response indicates that you don't really want to go into detail, but depending on who the listener is, they may try to drag the story out of you anyway.</p>