

所以 causal relationship

- Used as correlative conjunctions
  - 所以 is often partner with 因为
  - reason → 所以 + outcome
1. 因为他妈妈是法国人，所以他会说法语。  
Cause / Reason      effect/Outcome
  2. 他不太舒服，所以不想吃东西。  
Cause / Reason      effect/Outcome

于是 sequential relationship (it has a meaning “then”)

- This is used to place emphasis on the chronology of two connected happenings: A → B, in continuation. Often it’s used in recounting past events or a story.
- The second clause is a new situation or action caused by the first clause. However, if there is a discernible causal relationship, 于是 can be replaced by 所以。

1. 他很喜欢这件毛衣，于是就买下来了。  
Then I bought.
- = 他很喜欢这件毛衣，所以就买下来了。  
Cause/reason      effect/outcome
2. 下雨了，于是我们不去踢足球了。  
Then we don’t go to play soccer
- = 下雨了，所以我们不去踢足球了。  
Cause/reason      effect/outcome

As the above examples illustrate, 于是 introduces the next thing to happen in sequence. There is some degree of interchangeability with these words: you can use 所以 in place of 于是 most of the time, but not often the other way around.

1. 他想学跳舞，我也想，于是我们一起去上跳舞课。  
Then we go to the dancing class together  
= 他想学跳舞，我也想，所以我们一起去上跳舞课。  
Cause/reason      effect/outcome
2. 今天下雪，我又忘了带外套，所以觉得特别冷。  
Cause/reason      effect/outcome
3. 上海人多车多，所以开车容易紧张。  
Cause/reason      effect/outcome