KR

KOREAN LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 1 · Greetings & Goodbyes

Korean Basic Conversation 1

Chapter 1 · Greetings & Goodbyes

👋 Greetings & Goodbyes — 인사

Welcome to your first Korean conversation lesson. By the end of this chapter you can say hello at any time of day, ask how someone has been, say thank you and sorry, knock on a door, and say goodbye the right way. Korean has two different goodbyes, and which one you use depends on whether you are the one leaving or the one staying. You already read Hangul in Korean Alphabet 1, so every phrase is written in Hangul with its romanization underneath.

eo = ㅓ (short, open "uh") **eu** = ㅡ (unrounded "oo") **ae** = ㅐ (like the vowel in "bed")

[ ] = how the word is actually said, where it differs from the spelling (Korean Grammar 1, chapter 2)

① Haven't Seen You for a While — 오랜만에

A:

안녕하세요?

Annyeonghaseyo?

Hello.

B:

안녕하세요? 잘 지내세요?

Annyeonghaseyo? Jal jinaeseyo?

Hello. How have you been?

A:

네, 잘 지내요. 감사합니다.

Ne, jal jinaeyo. Gamsahamnida.

Yes, I've been well. Thank you.

B:

천만에요.

Cheonmaneyo.

Not at all.

② At the Office — 회사에서

A:

안녕하세요, 민수 씨.

Annyeonghaseyo, Minsu ssi.

Hello, Minsu. (씨 is a polite "Mr/Ms"; see Chapter 2.)

B:

아, 안녕하세요, 지연 씨!

A, annyeonghaseyo, Jiyeon ssi!

Oh, hello, Jiyeon!

A:

잘 지내세요?

Jal jinaeseyo?

How are you?

B:

네, 잘 지내요. 또 봐요.

Ne, jal jinaeyo. Tto bwayo.

Yes, I'm well. See you again.

③ Sorry! — 죄송합니다

A:

죄송합니다!

Joesonghamnida!

I'm so sorry!

B:

괜찮아요.

Gwaenchanayo.

It's okay.

A:

정말 죄송합니다.

Jeongmal joesonghamnida.

I'm really sorry.

B:

아니에요, 괜찮아요.

Anieyo, gwaenchanayo.

No, really, it's fine.

④ Knocking at a Door — 문 앞에서

A:

실례합니다.

Sillyehamnida.

Excuse me. (May I come in?)

B:

네, 들어오세요.

Ne, deureooseyo.

Yes, please come in.

A:

안녕하세요. 감사합니다.

Annyeonghaseyo. Gamsahamnida.

Hello. Thank you.

⑤ Leaving a Friend's Home — 집에서

A:

안녕히 계세요.

Annyeonghi gyeseyo.

Goodbye. (I'm leaving, you're staying.)

B:

안녕히 가세요. 또 오세요.

Annyeonghi gaseyo. Tto oseyo.

Goodbye. (You're leaving, I'm staying.) Come again.

A:

네, 감사합니다. 안녕히 주무세요.

Ne, gamsahamnida. Annyeonghi jumuseyo.

Yes, thank you. Good night.

⑥ Two Friends (casual) — 친구에게

A:

안녕! 잘 지내?

Annyeong! Jal jinae?

Hi! How've you been?

B:

응, 잘 지내. 너는?

Eung, jal jinae. Neoneun?

Yeah, I'm well. And you?

A:

나도 잘 지내. 그럼 또 봐!

Nado jal jinae. Geureom tto bwa!

Me too. Well then, see you!

B:

응, 잘 가! 고마워!

Eung, jal ga! Gomawo!

Yeah, bye! Thanks!

🔑 Key Phrases — 중요한 표현

*Korean has three speech levels you will meet in this chapter: **formal polite** (-ㅂ니다), **everyday polite** (-요) and **casual** (no 요). With anyone you don't know well, in a shop, in a hotel or at work, use the polite column. The casual column is for close friends and family, and for understanding what you hear (Korean Grammar 1, chapter 10).*

SITUATION	POLITE	CASUAL
Hello	안녕하세요 *annyeonghaseyo*	안녕 *annyeong*
How have you been?	잘 지내세요? *jal jinaeseyo?*	잘 지내? *jal jinae?*
Thank you	감사합니다 / 고맙습니다 *gamsahamnida [감사함니다] / gomapseumnida [고맙씀니다]*	고마워 *gomawo*
You're welcome	천만에요 *cheonmaneyo*	아니야 *aniya*
I'm sorry	죄송합니다 / 미안합니다 *joesonghamnida / mianhamnida*	미안해 *mianhae*
It's okay	괜찮아요 *gwaenchanayo [괜차나요]*	괜찮아 *gwaenchana*
Excuse me (entering, passing, interrupting)	실례합니다 *sillyehamnida*	(not used)
Goodbye (you are staying)	안녕히 가세요 *annyeonghi gaseyo*	잘 가 *jal ga*

SITUATION	POLITE	CASUAL
Goodbye (you are leaving)	안녕히 계세요 *annyeonghi gyeseyo*	잘 있어 *jal isseo*
See you again	또 봐요 *tto bwayo*	또 봐 *tto bwa*
Good night	안녕히 주무세요 (to elders) *annyeonghi jumuseyo*	잘 자 *jal ja*
Yes / no	네 / 아니요 *ne / aniyo*	응 / 아니 *eung / ani*

🔤 Three Verbs You Can Already Use — 동사

*The goodbyes are built from the verbs **가다** (to go), **오다** (to come) and **있다** (to be, to stay). You don't need the full grammar yet; just notice the endings (Korean Grammar 1, chapters 6 and 10).*

VERB	EVERYDAY POLITE (-요)	FORMAL (-ㅂ니다)	CASUAL	RESPECTFUL (-세요)
to go (가다)	가요 *gayo*	갑니다 *gamnida*	가 *ga*	가세요 *gaseyo*
to come (오다)	와요 *wayo*	옵니다 *omnida*	와 *wa*	오세요 *oseyo*
to be, to stay (있다)	있어요 *isseoyo*	있습니다 *itseumnida [읻씀니다]*	있어 *isseo*	계세요 *gyeseyo* (special respectful form)

How the Goodbyes Work

안녕히 means "in peace". The person who *stays* says **안녕히 가세요** ("go in peace", from 가다) to the person leaving. The person who *leaves* says **안녕히 계세요** ("stay in peace", from the respectful form of 있다). The casual versions work the same way: the one staying says **잘 가**, the one leaving says **잘 있어**. If you are both walking away, say **안녕히 가세요** to each other.

🌙 Hello, Thanks and Sorry — 인사, 감사, 사과

MEANING	KOREAN	HOW IT IS USED
hello	안녕하세요 *annyeonghaseyo*	the everyday greeting, all day, to anyone
hello (very formal)	안녕하십니까 *annyeonghasimnikka*	speeches, announcements, news, very formal settings
hello (casual)	안녕 *annyeong*	friends and family; also means "bye"
hello (on the phone)	여보세요 *yeoboseyo*	answering or starting a phone call
thank you	감사합니다 *gamsahamnida*	safe in every setting; shops, hotels, offices
thank you (warm)	고맙습니다 *gomapseumnida*	equally polite, often heard between people who know each other
I'm very sorry	죄송합니다 *joesonghamnida*	apologising to strangers, customers, superiors
I'm sorry	미안합니다 *mianhamnida*	a lighter apology; 미안해 to friends
excuse me (calling someone)	저기요 *jeogiyo*	getting a waiter's or a stranger's attention

📖 Vocabulary — 어휘

20 key words. Read the Korean first, then check the romanization and the "Say it" column.

#	KOREAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	안녕하세요	*an-nyeong-ha-se-yo*	hello	phrase
2	안녕히 가세요	*an-nyeong-hi ga-se-yo*	goodbye (said to the one leaving)	phrase

#	KOREAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
3	안녕히 계세요	*an-nyeong-hi gye-se-yo*	goodbye (said by the one leaving)	phrase
4	안녕	*an-nyeong*	hi / bye (casual)	phrase
5	감사합니다	*gam-sa-ham-ni-da*	thank you	phrase
6	고맙습니다	*go-map-sseum-ni-da*	thank you (warm)	phrase
7	죄송합니다	*jwe-song-ham-ni-da*	I'm very sorry	phrase
8	미안합니다	*mi-an-ham-ni-da*	I'm sorry	phrase
9	실례합니다	*sil-lye-ham-ni-da*	excuse me (entering, passing)	phrase
10	괜찮아요	*gwaen-cha-na-yo*	it's okay; I'm fine	phrase
11	네	*ne*	yes	phrase
12	아니요	*a-ni-yo*	no	phrase
13	잘 지내세요?	*jal ji-nae-se-yo*	how have you been?	phrase
14	천만에요	*cheon-ma-ne-yo*	you're welcome; not at all	phrase
15	또 봐요	*tto bwa-yo*	see you again	phrase
16	안녕히 주무세요	*an-nyeong-hi ju-mu-se-yo*	good night (respectful)	phrase
17	잘 자요	*jal ja-yo*	good night (to someone close)	phrase
18	들어오세요	*deu-reo-o-se-yo*	please come in	phrase
19	저기요	*jeo-gi-yo*	excuse me (calling someone)	phrase
20	여보세요	*yeo-bo-se-yo*	hello (on the phone)	phrase

Real Korean Tip — Bowing (인사)

A greeting is often accompanied by a bow. For everyday hellos and thanks a small nod of the head (sometimes with a slight bend from the waist) is enough. A deeper bow, from the waist at about 30 degrees, is used in business and to show respect; the deepest bow, at about 45 degrees, is for sincere thanks or apology. Bow to people who are older than you or senior to you, such as teachers, bosses and officials.

One Hello for the Whole Day

Unlike English "good morning / good afternoon / good evening", **안녕하세요** works from morning to night, and it is also the greeting you give a stranger when you make eye contact. It isn't really a question, so you don't answer "I'm fine"; you just say it back. To ask how someone has been, especially if you haven't seen them for a while, use **잘 지내세요?** The word **안녕** itself means peace or well-being, which is why 안녕하세요 is often explained as "are you at peace?" Casual **안녕?** is a short form of it.

Which Goodbye in a Shop or Café?

The rule "the one who leaves says 안녕히 계세요" is clearest at someone's home or office. In a shop, restaurant or café, staff usually say **안녕히 가세요** to you as you leave, and customers often just say **감사합니다**. Learners' sources disagree about whether customers should also say 안녕히 계세요, so treat this as a tendency, not a rule: a smile and **감사합니다** is always safe.

As Heard in Dramas — 드라마에서

In Korean TV shows you will mostly hear **casual speech** (반말) between friends and family: **안녕**, **잘 가**, **응**, **고마워**, **미안해**, **괜찮아?** ("Are you okay?", very common in dramas). The same sentences with **-요** or **-ㅂ니다** on the end appear when characters speak to bosses, elders or strangers, so switches between the two levels tell you how characters feel about each other. On the phone, characters answer with **여보세요**. Don't copy casual speech with strangers or older people, though, even if characters do among themselves.

Grammar Pointer

The endings you saw here are explained in Korean Grammar 1, chapter 6 (the everyday polite **-요**), chapter 10 (the formal **-ㅂ니다** and the respectful **-세요**) and chapter 2 (why **감사합니다** is said "gam-sa-ham-ni-da" and **괜찮아요** "gwaen-cha-na-yo").

✍️ Try It Yourself — 연습

Say each answer out loud first, then click to check.

1. You meet the receptionist at your hotel. What do you say?

▼ Show answer

안녕하세요. (Annyeonghaseyo.)

2. You bump into a stranger on the street. What do you say, and how might they reply?

▼ Show answer

죄송합니다. (Joesonghamnida.) They might reply 괜찮아요. (Gwaenchanayo.)

3. You are leaving a friend's flat and your friend is staying. What do you say, and what does your friend say?

▼ Show answer

You say 안녕히 계세요. (Annyeonghi gyeseyo.) Your friend says 안녕히 가세요. (Annyeonghi gaseyo.)

4. You knock at an office door and want to ask permission to enter. What do you say?

▼ Show answer

실례합니다. (Sillyehamnida.) The person inside might say 들어오세요. (Deureooseyo.)

5. Which is casual and which is polite: 안녕 and 안녕하세요?

▼ Show answer

안녕 is casual (friends and family); 안녕하세요 is polite (everyone else).

6. What is the difference in meaning between 가세요 and 계세요 in the goodbyes?

▼ Show answer

가세요 comes from 가다, "to go", so it is said to the person who is leaving. 계세요 comes from the respectful form of 있다, "to be, to stay", so it is said to the person who is staying.