KR

KOREAN LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 3 · Numbers & Contact Details

Korean Basic Conversation 1

Chapter 3 · Numbers, Age & Contact Details

🔢 Numbers, Age & Contact Details — 숫자와 연락처

*Korean has **two number systems**, and this chapter teaches both because you need both to give your age and your phone number. It is split into **three parts**: **Part 1** the Sino-Korean numbers 0 to 100 (phone numbers, room numbers), **Part 2** the native Korean numbers and age, and **Part 3** phone numbers, email addresses and messaging apps. The 20-word vocabulary table and the practice are at the end. Korean Grammar 1, chapter 9 explains the number systems in more detail.*

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

① Part 1 — A Room Number — 방 번호

A:

안녕하세요. 방이 몇 호예요?

Annyeonghaseyo. Bang-i myeot ho-yeyo?

Hello. What's the room number?

B:

삼백십이 호예요.

Sambaek-sibi ho-yeyo.

It's room 312.

A:

삼백십이 호요? 감사합니다.

Sambaek-sibi hoyo? Gamsahamnida.

Room 312? Thank you.

② Part 1 — Counting Practice — 숫자 연습

A:

일, 이, 삼, 사, 오!

Il, i, sam, sa, o!

One, two, three, four, five!

B:

육, 칠, 팔, 구, 십!

Yuk, chil, pal, gu, sip!

Six, seven, eight, nine, ten!

A:

잘했어요!

Jalhaesseoyo!

Well done!

③ Part 2 — How Old Are You? — 몇 살이에요?

A:

몇 살이에요?

④ Part 2 — Asking Politely — 나이가 어떻게 되세요?

A:

실례합니다. 나이가 어떻게 되세요?

Myeot sal-ieyo?

How old are you?

B:

스물다섯 살이에요. 지연 씨는요?

Seumuldaseot sal-ieyo. Jiyeon ssi-neunyo?

I'm 25. And you, Jiyeon?

A:

저는 서른두 살이에요.

Jeoneun seoreundu sal-ieyo.

I'm 32.

Sillyehamnida. Naiga eotteoke doeseyo?

Excuse me. May I ask your age?

B:

마흔두 살이에요.

Maheundu sal-ieyo.

I'm 42.

A:

아, 그래요? 감사합니다.

A, geuraeyo? Gamsahamnida.

Oh, I see. Thank you.

⑤ Part 3 — A Phone Number — 전화번호

A:

전화번호가 뭐예요?

Jeonhwabeonhoga mwoyeyo?

What's your phone number?

B:

공일공, 일이삼사, 오육칠팔이에요.

Gong-il-gong, il-i-sam-sa, o-yuk-chil-pal-ieyo.

It's 010, 1234, 5678.

A:

다시 한번 말씀해 주세요.

Dasi hanbeon malsseumhae juseyo.

Please say that once more.

B:

네. 공일공, 일이삼사, 오육칠팔이에요.

Ne. Gong-il-gong, il-i-sam-sa, o-yuk-chil-pal-ieyo.

Sure. 010, 1234, 5678.

⑥ Part 3 — Email and Messaging — 이메일과 카톡

A:

이메일 주소가 어떻게 되세요?

Imeil jusoga eotteoke doeseyo?

What's your email address?

B:

amy 골뱅이 gmail 점 com이에요.

Amy golbaengi gmail jeom com-ieyo.

It's amy at gmail dot com.

A:

카톡도 있어요?

Katok-do isseoyo?

Do you have KakaoTalk too?

B:

네, 있어요.

Ne, isseoyo.

Yes, I do.

① Part 1 — Sino-Korean Numbers 0 to 100 — 한자어 숫자

These numbers came from Chinese. Use them for phone numbers, room and floor numbers, dates, minutes and money (Korean Grammar 1, chapter 9).

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
영 / 공	일	이	삼	사	오	육	칠	팔	구	십
yeong / gong	*il*	*i*	*sam*	*sa*	*o*	*yuk*	*chil*	*pal*	*gu*	*sip*

From 11 you simply put the numbers together, tens first. There is no special word for 11, 12 or 20.

NUMBER	BUILT AS	KOREAN	SAY IT
11	10 + 1	십일	*si-bil*
12	10 + 2	십이	*si-bi*
16	10 + 6	십육	*sim-nyuk*
20	2 × 10	이십	*i-sip*
25	2 × 10 + 5	이십오	*i-si-bo*
30	3 × 10	삼십	*sam-sip*
40	4 × 10	사십	*sa-sip*
50	5 × 10	오십	*o-sip*
60	6 × 10	육십	*yuk-ssip*
70	7 × 10	칠십	*chil-ssip*
80	8 × 10	팔십	*pal-ssip*
90	9 × 10	구십	*gu-sip*
99	9 × 10 + 9	구십구	*gu-sip-gu*

NUMBER	BUILT AS	KOREAN	SAY IT
100		백	*baek*
312	3 hundreds + 12	삼백십이	*sam-baek-si-bi*

영 or 공? Two Words for Zero

영 yeong is zero in counting and sums; **공** gong is the zero you say when reading out a **phone number** (010 is **공일공**). Nobody says 영일영.

Watch the Sound of 6

The number **육** is said "yuk" on its own, but after a vowel (or after ㄹ) it is often said **륙** "ryuk": the digits 5 and 6 read one after another in a phone number sound like **오륙** "o-ryuk". Number 16, **십육**, is said "sim-nyuk". You don't have to write this, only recognise it when you hear it (Korean Grammar 1, chapter 2).

② Part 2 — Native Korean Numbers and Age — 고유어 숫자와 나이

These are the old Korean numbers. Use them for age (살), counting things with a counter, and the hour when telling the time (Korean Grammar 1, chapter 9).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
하나	둘	셋	넷	다섯	여섯	일곱	여덟	아홉	열
hana	*dul*	*set*	*net*	*daseot*	*yeoseot*	*ilgop*	*yeodeol*	*ahop*	*yeol*

The tens have their own words: 스물 seumul 20, 서른 seoreun 30, 마흔 maheun 40, 쉰 swin 50, 예순 yesun 60, 일흔 ileun 70, 여든 yeodeun 80, 아흔 aheun 90. Put the ones after the tens: 스물다섯 25, 서른두 32, 마흔두 42.

Age with 살

The counter for years of age is **살** sal. Five numbers change shape in front of it: 하나 → 한, 둘 → 두, 셋 → 세, 넷 → 네, 스물 → 스무.

AGE	KOREAN	SAY IT
1	한 살	*han sal*
3	세 살	*se sal*
10	열 살	*yeol sal*
19	열아홉 살	*yeo-ra-hop sal*
20	스무 살	*seu-mu sal*
25	스물다섯 살	*seu-mul-da-seot sal*
30	서른 살	*seo-reun sal*
42	마흔두 살	*ma-heun-du sal*

To say your age: 저는 스물다섯 살이에요. (I am 25.) To ask: 몇 살이에요? with people of your own age or younger, or the more polite 나이가 어떻게 되세요? The word 나이 nai means "age".

> **"Korean Age" Is Gone**
>
> For many years a Korean was born "one year old" and gained a year every 1 January, so people were often one or two years older than their age elsewhere. On **28 June 2023** South Korea adopted the international way of counting age (the age you would give in Britain) as the official standard. Some legal areas, such as military service, school entry and the legal drinking and smoking ages, still count by calendar year. Older Korean speakers, and dramas set before 2023, may still use the old system, so if you are puzzled by an age, you can ask.

> **Why Koreans Ask Your Age**
>
> Age decides which speech level two people use and what they call each other (older friends are called by special words you will meet in Chapter 5), so you may be asked how old you are soon after

> meeting. It is usually normal, not rude, but among adults you've just met it is kinder to wait or to use the polite 나이가 어떻게 되세요? — and you are free not to answer.

③ Part 3 — Phone Numbers, Email and Messaging — 전화번호와 이메일

*Use Sino-Korean digits for phone numbers, say **공** for zero, and read the digits one by one in groups. A mobile number begins **010** (**공일공**).*

NUMBER	SPOKEN	SAY IT
010-1234-5678	공일공 일이삼사 오육칠팔	*gong-il-gong, il-i-sam-sa, o-ryuk-chil-pal*
010-9012-3456	공일공 구공일이 삼사오육	*gong-il-gong, gu-gong-i-ri, sam-sa-o-ryuk*

Pause between the groups. If you want to say the hyphen, you can read it as 에 (written 의, said "e"): 공일공 에 일이삼사 에 오육칠팔. Most people simply pause. To say "My number is ..." add 이에요 or 예요, chosen by the last digit (Chapter 2):

LAST DIGIT	ENDS IN	ENDING	EXAMPLE
1 일, 3 삼, 6 육, 7 칠, 8 팔, 0 공	consonant	이에요	...오육칠팔이에요
2 이, 4 사, 5 오, 9 구	vowel	예요	...삼사오구예요

Contact words

KOREAN	MEANING	EXAMPLE
전화번호 *jeonhwabeonho*	phone number	전화번호가 뭐예요?
휴대폰 *hyudaepon*	mobile phone	휴대폰 번호가 뭐예요?
연락처 *yeollakcheo*	contact details	연락처를 알려 주세요.

KOREAN	MEANING	EXAMPLE
이메일 주소 *imeil juso*	email address	이메일 주소가 어떻게 되세요?
골뱅이 *golbaengi*	the @ sign (literally a sea snail)	amy 골뱅이 gmail
점 *jeom*	dot	gmail 점 com
카톡 *katok*	KakaoTalk, the messaging app most Koreans use	카톡 있어요?

Asking for a Number Politely

연락처를 알려 주세요 means "please let me know your contact details", and 전화번호 좀 알려 주세요 "could you tell me your phone number?" The little word **좀** jom softens a request, a bit like "please" or "just". To ask for something to be said again: 다시 한번 말씀해 주세요 (**다시** = again, **한번** = once). Korean Grammar 1, chapter 10 explains the polite request ending **-세요**.

🔤 Three More Verbs — 동사

Three useful verbs for giving and asking for information.

VERB	EVERYDAY POLITE (-요)	FORMAL (-ㅂ니다)	CASUAL
to know (알다)	알아요 *arayo*	압니다 *amnida*	알아 *ara*
to not know (모르다)	몰라요 *mollayo*	모릅니다 *moreumnida*	몰라 *molla*
to say, to speak (말하다)	말해요 *malhaeyo*	말합니다 *malhamnida*	말해 *malhae*

📖 Vocabulary — 어휘

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

#	KOREAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	영	*yeong*	zero (counting)	number
2	공	*gong*	zero (phone numbers)	number
3	번호	*beo-no*	number	noun
4	전화번호	*jeon-hwa-beo-no*	phone number	noun
5	휴대폰	*hyu-dae-pon*	mobile phone	noun
6	연락처	*yeol-lak-cheo*	contact details	noun
7	이메일	*i-me-il*	email	noun
8	주소	*ju-so*	address	noun
9	골뱅이	*gol-baeng-i*	@ sign	noun
10	점	*jeom*	dot; point	noun
11	카톡	*ka-tok*	KakaoTalk (messaging app)	noun
12	나이	*na-i*	age	noun
13	살	*sal*	years old (counter)	counter
14	호	*ho*	room number (counter)	counter
15	몇	*myeot*	how many; what number	question word
16	다시	*da-si*	again	adverb
17	좀	*jom*	please; a little (softener)	adverb
18	알다	*al-da*	to know	verb
19	모르다	*mo-reu-da*	to not know	verb

#	KOREAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
20	말하다	*mal-ha-da*	to say, to speak	verb

As Heard in Dramas — 드라마에서

You will hear **몇 살이야?** (casual "how old are you?") and **몇 살이에요?** a lot, because in a drama two people often work out who is older before deciding how to speak to each other. Phone numbers are rarely spoken in full on screen; instead characters say **번호 좀 줘** or **카톡 해** (or **카톡 보낼게**, "I'll message you"). Ages in dramas are usually given with the native numbers: **스물일곱 살**, **서른 살**, **마흔 살**.

Grammar Pointer

The two number systems are explained in Korean Grammar 1, chapter 9 (including the counters and the five short forms before a counter). The sound changes in numbers (**십육** "sim-nyuk", **오륙** "o-ryuk") come from Korean Grammar 1, chapter 2.

✍️ Try It Yourself — 연습

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

1. Say 17, 45 and 100 in Sino-Korean.

▼ Show answer

십칠, 사십오, 백. (Sip-chil, sa-si-bo, baek.)

2. Read out the phone number 010-5678-9012.

▼ Show answer

공일공 오육칠팔 구공일이 (Gong-il-gong, o-ryuk-chil-pal, gu-gong-i-ri.)

3. Say "I am 25" and "I am 30."

▼ Show answer

저는 스물다섯 살이에요. and 저는 서른 살이에요.

4. Which number system do you use for an age, and which for a phone number?

▼ Show answer

Age (with 살) uses the **native** numbers; phone numbers use the **Sino-Korean** numbers, with 공 for zero.

5. Ask someone's phone number, then ask them politely to say it again.

▼ Show answer

전화번호가 뭐예요? and 다시 한번 말씀해 주세요.

6. Why is "twenty years old" 스무 살 and not 스물 살?

▼ Show answer

Five native numbers take a short form before a counter: 한, 두, 세, 네 and 스무. So 스물 (20) becomes 스무 in front of 살.