KR

KOREAN LESSON

Korean Grammar 2 · Chapter 10 · Sentence Endings

🎶 Sentence Endings and Putting It Together — 문장 끝 어미

*Native speakers hardly ever end a sentence on a bare -아/어요. They add a **sentence-final ending** that shows what the speaker feels about the sentence: surprise, a realisation, a request for agreement, an explanation, a reminder, a promise, an invitation. The grammar underneath is the same as in the previous nine chapters, but these endings carry the **tone**, and tone is what makes Korean sound natural. This final chapter teaches nine of them, with the contrasts that matter, and then recaps the whole course.*

THE NINE AT A GLANCE

Discovery: -네요 · -군요

Seeking agreement: -죠

Explaining / reminding: -거든요 · -잖아요

Trailing off, softening: -는데요

Deciding / inviting / asking: -(으)ㄹ게요 · -(으)ㄹ래요 · -(으)ㄹ까요

1. Discovering something: -네요 and -군요

-네요 attaches directly to the stem of verbs, adjectives and 이다 and tells the listener that you have just noticed something: **아들이 귀엽네요** "Oh, your son is so cute (I hadn't realised)", **이 음식점은 음식이 정말 맛있네요** "Wow, the food at this restaurant is really delicious". The past is **-았/었네요** (**밥을 빨리 먹었네요** "You ate quickly!") and a guess is **-겠네요** (**아프겠네요** "That must hurt"). It also works as a reply: **그렇네요.** "So it is." The informal -네 drops 요: **아! 잔돈이 없네!** "Oh! I've got no change!". Since the start of -네 is ㄴ, a ㄹ-stem drops its ㄹ (**사네요**, **기네요**), a general point not covered by the sources checked.

-군요 is the "I see!" realisation: adjectives take the bare stem (**비싸군요**), 이다 takes 이 (**과학 선생님이군요**), and **verbs add -는** (**아들이 수영을 잘 하는군요** "Oh, so your son is good at

swimming"). Past: **-았/었군요**; a guess: **-겠군요**. 있다/없다 take the adjective pattern (**없군요**). The plain forms are **-구나** (mostly self-talk, informal) and **-군**; **-군요** is polite.

	-네요	-군요
Verb	**가네요**	**가는군요**
Adjective	**크네요**	**크군요**
이다	**학생이네요**	**학생이군요**
Past	**갔네요**	**갔군요**
Feel	impression, often about what you see now	realisation, "I see", often self-directed

The two are close, and the source treats both as "I didn't realise". As a rough guide, -네요 reacts to something in front of you and is addressed to the listener; -군요 reacts to new information.

2. Seeking agreement: -죠 (-지요)

-죠 is the polite contraction of **-지요**; the informal form is **-지**. It attaches to the bare stem with no irregular changes (it begins with ㅈ), and takes -았/었- and -(으)ㄹ 거-: **갔죠**, **갈 거죠**. It asks the listener to confirm something the speaker already believes: **날씨가 춥죠?** "It's cold, isn't it?", **선생님! 바쁘죠?** "Teacher! You're busy, aren't you?". With a falling tone it states something as obvious: **배고프지!** "Of course I'm hungry!", **나는 지금 가야지!** "I really must go now!" (-아/어야지 from Chapter 9). With a question word it is a real question: **내가 뭐 먹었지?** "What did I eat?" (to oneself). Without a question word, talking to yourself with -지 is unnatural.

3. Explaining why: -거든요

-거든요 attaches to the bare stem of verbs, adjectives and 이다 (no irregulars; it starts with ㄱ), and gives the listener a reason or piece of background that they do not have: **문을 닫았어요. 이제 냉방 중이거든요.** "I closed the door. The air conditioning is on now, you see." Past **-았/었거든요**; future **-(으)ㄹ 거거든요** (**갈 거거든요**). It answers an unspoken "why?": **저는 마카다미아를 좋아하거든요.** "(The reason is that) I like macadamia nuts." With **아니거든요!** it flatly contradicts: "No, it isn't!". The informal form is **-거든**.

4. Reminding: -잖아요

-잖아요 attaches to a stem (and to 이다, to the past and the future) to say "you know / you should know / as you know": **이 길은 자전거 전용 길이잖아요** "This is a road for bicycles only, you know", **나는 돈이 없잖아!** "I've got no money, remember!", **이 서비스는 이미 종료됐잖아요** "This service ended already". It treats the fact as shared, so it can sound sharp: **toward older people it can sound rude**. The source suggests -다시피 for that situation (**아시다시피** "as you know"). It is also the opener **있잖아요...** "You know what...". The contrast with -거든요 is simple: -거든요 gives information the listener *lacks*; -잖아요 recalls information the listener *has*.

5. Softening and trailing off: -는데요

-는데요 is the clause ending -(으)ㄴ/는데 of Chapter 5 with 요 and nothing after it. Verbs and 있다/없다 take -는데요, adjectives -(으)ㄴ데요, 이다 -인데요; the past is -았/었는데요. The ending leaves the next thought for the listener: **가기 싫은데요...** "I don't want to go, though...", **나는 추운데요...** "But I'm cold...". Used to answer someone's suggestion, it softly objects; used to open a request, it sets the scene (**지금 시간이 없는데요** "I don't have time right now..."). The source notes that answering with it can come across as a little rude, so pair it with a polite tone.

6. Deciding, inviting, asking: -(으)ㄹ게요, -(으)ㄹ래요, -(으)ㄹ까요

Three endings that all attach to a verb stem with -ㄹ (after a vowel) or -을 (after a consonant) look alike. They differ by **who** acts and **what the speaker is doing**:

ENDING	FUNCTION	EXAMPLE
-(으)ㄹ게요	a promise or decision by the *speaker*, unless the listener objects (a statement, never a question)	**문을 열어 줄게요.** "I'll open the door for you."
-(으)ㄹ래요	"Do you want to...?" (question), "I'd rather... / I don't want to..." (statement), a polite request with 주다, or a blunt threat	**내일 공부하러 독서실에 갈래요?** "Shall we go to the library to study tomorrow?" · **나는 안 먹을래요.** "I don't want to eat."

ENDING	FUNCTION	EXAMPLE
-(으)ㄹ까요	"Shall we…?", "Shall I…?", "Do you think it will…?"	**밥을 먹을까요?** "Shall we eat?" · **내일 비가 올까요?** "Do you think it will rain tomorrow?"

- **-(으)ㄹ게요** is always about the speaker's own act. Compare **문을 열어 줄게요** (statement: "I'll open it for you") with **문을 열어 줄까요?** (question: "Shall I open it for you?"). It is not used with the listener's act.
- **-(으)ㄹ래요** has four uses: invitation (**갈래요?**), the speaker's wish (**안 먹을래요**), a polite request with 주다 (**김치를 더 주실래요?** "Could you please give me more kimchi?") and a threat (**맞을래?** "Do you want to get hit?"). The "wish" use is for short, simple sentences. It is usually more casual than -(으)ㄹ까요.
- **-(으)ㄹ까요** asked to yourself ("Should I…?") loses its 요: **밥을 먹을까?**. As a thought it combines with 하다: **그 영화를 볼까 해요** "I'm thinking of watching that film"; the past **볼까 했어요** means that you thought of it but did not.

The sources checked did not give ㄹ-stem or irregular rules for these three; from general knowledge, ㄹ-stems keep the ㄹ and add no 으 (**살게요**, **만들까요**, **놀래요**), and Chapter 3's irregulars change before the vowel (**추울까요**, **들을게요**, **도울래요**).

7. Putting it together: tone and politeness

The endings above live almost entirely in **해요체** and informal **해체** (Chapter 1). Some drop the 요 for friends (-네, -군, -지, -거든, -잖아, -는데, -(으)ㄹ게, -(으)ㄹ래, -(으)ㄹ까), and their politeness interacts with the other chapters:

- **Honorifics** (Chapter 2) go inside: **바쁘시죠?**, **가시네요**, **드실래요?**, **하시거든요**. Do not use -잖아요 to a senior without care.
- **Irregular verbs** (Chapter 3): after -네요, -군요, -죠, -거든요 and -잖아요 the stem is unchanged (**춥네요**, **춥죠**), but before -(으)ㄹ- endings it changes (**추울까요**, **추울게요**).
- **Tenses** (Chapter 4): -았/었네요, -았/었죠, -았/었거든요, -겠네요. A finished action: **벌써 갔네요**.
- **Connectors** (Chapters 5 and 6) become sentence endings when the main clause is dropped: -는데요 is the example in this chapter.

- **Quotation** (Chapter 8): reports already end in a sentence-final form (**-대요**, **-래요**, **-재요**).
- **Ability, obligation and guessing** (Chapter 9): **-(으)ㄹ 수 있죠?** "You can, can't you?", **-아/어야 하잖아요** "You know we have to...".

Watch out: -거든요 and -잖아요 are not "because"

Neither one is a connector. **비가 와서 안 갔어요** uses -아/어서 (Chapter 5) to tie a reason to its result in one sentence. -거든요 appears *after* the result has already been said and adds the reason: **안 갔어요. 비가 오거든요.** And -잖아요 appeals to knowledge that the listener already has.

Watch out: three -ㄹ endings, one question

Ask yourself **who is acting**: only you → -(으)ㄹ게요 (promise); you and the listener together, or you asking about the listener's wish → -(으)ㄹ래요 / -(으)ㄹ까요; a guess about the world → -(으)ㄹ까요 ("Do you think it will...?"). And remember that -(으)ㄹ게요 is never a question.

In Use — 실제 예문

① A meal with a new friend

A:

이 식당 정말 맛있네요! 뭐 더 시킬까요?

This restaurant is really good! Shall we order something more?

B:

저는 배가 불러서 안 시킬래요. 그런데 김치는 더 먹을래요. 제가 시킬게요.

I'm full so I won't order anything. But I'll have more kimchi. I'll order it.

② Explaining and reminding

A:

왜 아직 안 갔어요? 오늘 약속이 있잖아요.

Why haven't you gone yet? You've got an appointment today, you know.

B:

알아요. 그런데 비가 많이 오거든요. 날씨가 좋으면 가겠는데요...

I know. But it's raining a lot, you see. If the weather were good I'd go, but...

③ Confirming and realising

A:

한국에 오래 사셨죠?

You've lived in Korea a long time, haven't you?

B:

네, 십 년 됐어요. 아, 그래서 한국어를 이렇게 잘하시는군요!

Yes, ten years. Oh, so that's why you speak Korean this well!

📋 Quick Reference — 요약표

ENDING	FEEL	EXAMPLE
-네요	"Oh, I notice that..."	**귀엽네요**
-군요	"I see that..."	**잘 하는군요**
-죠	"..., right?" / "of course"	**춥죠?**
-거든요	"..., you see" (reason)	**바쁘거든요**
-잖아요	"..., you know / remember"	**있잖아요**
-는데요	"..., but" (softener)	**싫은데요...**
-(으)ㄹ게요	"I'll..." (promise)	**할게요**
-(으)ㄹ래요	"Do you want to...? / I'd rather..."	**갈래요?**
-(으)ㄹ까요	"Shall we/I...? / Will it...?"	**먹을까요?**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — 연습

Work out the answer first, then click to check.

1. React with surprise: "This house is big!" (-네요) and "Oh, so you're a teacher!" (-군요).

▼ Show answer

이 집이 크네요! · 아, 선생님이군요!

2. Confirm: "It's raining, isn't it?" and "You went there, didn't you?" (-죠).

▼ Show answer

비가 오죠? · 거기 갔죠?

3. Add the reason with -거든요: "I couldn't come. I was busy, you see."

▼ Show answer

못 왔어요. 바빴거든요.

4. Remind with -잖아요: "You know, it's your birthday today."

▼ Show answer

오늘 생일이잖아요.

5. Make a soft objection with -는데요: "I don't have time now..." (**시간이 없다**).

▼ Show answer

지금 시간이 없는데요...

6. Choose -(으)ㄹ게요 or -(으)ㄹ까요: "I'll call you later." / "Shall I call you later?"

▼ Show answer

나중에 전화할게요. · 나중에 전화할까요?

7. Invite with -(으)ㄹ래요: "Would you like to drink some coffee?" and refuse: "I don't want to eat."

▼ Show answer

커피 마실래요? · 안 먹을래요.

8. Which sounds like a promise and which a question: **도와 줄게요** / **도와 줄까요**?

▼ Show answer

도와 줄게요 = "I'll help you" (promise). **도와 줄까요?** = "Shall I help you?" (question).

🎓 Course Complete — 수료를 축하합니다!

*You have finished **Korean Grammar 2**. Here is what the ten chapters gave you.*

CHAPTER	TOPIC	KEY TOOLS
1	Speech Levels in Depth	the seven levels; 합쇼체, 해요체, 해체, 해라체; choosing a level
2	Honorifics and Humble Forms	**-(으)시-**, 께서/께, 드리다, 뵙다, 저/저희
3	Irregular Verbs and Adjectives	ㅂ, ㄷ, ㅅ, ㅎ, ㅡ, 르, ㄹ and 러
4	Tenses and Aspect	**-았/었었-**, **-겠-**, **-고 있다**, **-던**, **-(으)ㄴ 지**
5	Connecting Clauses 1	**-고**, **-지만**, **-는데**, **-아/어서**, **-(으)니까**, **-(으)면**, **-거나**, **-(으)ㄹ 때**
6	Connecting Clauses 2	**-(으)려고**, **-(으)러**, **-(으)면서**, **-자마자**, **-다가**, **-기 전에**
7	Modifiers and Relative Clauses	**-는 / -(으)ㄴ / -(으)ㄹ / -던**, **-는 것**, **-기**, **-(으)ㅁ**
8	Quotation and Reported Speech	**-다고**, **-(으)냐고**, **-(으)라고**, **-자고**, **-대요**
9	Ability, Obligation, Permission and Guessing	**-(으)ㄹ 수 있다**, **-아/어도 되다**, **-(으)면 안 되다**, **-(으)ㄹ 것 같다**
10	Sentence Endings	**-네요**, **-군요**, **-죠**, **-거든요**, **-잖아요**, **-(으)ㄹ게요**

You can now read and use the grammar that fills the gap between beginner Korean and fluent, natural speech: when to switch speech level, how to honour and lower people correctly, how to conjugate the irregular verbs, how to say *when* and *how* things happen, how to join and nest clauses, how to report speech, and how to add the small endings that give a sentence its tone.

The best way to keep it all alive is to read and listen to real Korean and notice these patterns turning up.

> **A note on sources**
>
> Throughout this course the main references were Wikipedia pages on Korean speech levels, honorifics and pronouns, the Elon grammar reference, and the howtostudykorean.com lessons. Where a point is general knowledge and was not confirmed in those sources, the chapter says so.