KR

KOREAN LESSON

Korean Grammar 2 · Chapter 5 · And, But, So

🔗 Connecting Clauses 1 — 연결 어미

*A Korean sentence can chain many clauses, and each clause (except the last) ends with a **connecting ending** (**연결 어미**) attached to the stem. This chapter covers the everyday set: and, but, background, because, if/when, or and at the time of. The main skill is knowing, for each ending, **what may sit in front of it** (tense?) and **what may follow it** (a command or suggestion?).*

THE TWO QUESTIONS TO ASK OF EVERY CONNECTOR

1. Does it allow a tense marker inside it? -고, -아/어서 and -거나 usually take the tense only on the *final* verb. -지만, -는데, -(으)니까 and -(으)면 can carry -았/었- or -겠- themselves.

2. Can the last clause be a command or suggestion? After -아/어서: no. After -(으)니까, -(으)면, -는데, -(으)ㄹ 때 and -거나: yes.

1. And: -고

-고 attaches to the bare stem of any verb, adjective or 이다 (**학생이고**), with no irregular change at all: **춥고**, **듣고**, **살고**, **바쁘고**. It **lists** things (**이 집은 크고 예뻐요** "This house is big and pretty") or puts actions in **sequence** (**밥을 먹고 학교에 가요** "I eat and go to school"). Tense goes on the last verb and covers the whole sentence: **밥을 먹고 학교에 갔어요**. The sentence connector for starting a new sentence is **그리고**.

2. But: -지만

-지만 attaches directly to the stem of verbs, adjectives and 이다. Because it begins with ㅈ, there are **no irregulars**: **춥지만**, **듣지만**, **바쁘지만**. It can carry its own tense: **밥을 먹었지만 배고파요** "Even though I ate, I'm hungry"; **한국에 안 갈 거지만 한국어를 배우고 싶어요** "Even though I won't go to Korea, I want to learn Korean". Examples: **저는 먹고 싶지만 배고프지 않아요** "I want to eat but I'm not hungry". The sentence connector is **그렇지만**.

3. Background and soft contrast: -(으)ㄴ/는데

-(으)ㄴ/는데 sets the scene, softly contrasts, or eases into a request or question. Its form depends on the word class:

WORD	PRESENT	PAST	EXAMPLES
Verb (incl. 있다 / 없다)	-는데	-았/었는데	**가는데** · **있는데** · **갔는데**
Adjective	-(으)ㄴ데	-았/었는데	**큰데** · **좋은데** · **추운데** · **추웠는데**
이다	-인데	-였는데 / -이었는데	**학생인데** · **학생이었는데**

ㄹ-stems drop the ㄹ before -는/-ㄴ: **사는데**, **만드는데**, **먼데**. It is used in three main ways:

- **Background: 지금 시장에 가는데 같이 갈래요?** "I'm going to the market now; will you come with me?"
- **Soft contrast: 음식은 맛있는데 값이 비싸요.** "The food is tasty, but it's expensive."
- **Easing into a request: 길을 잘 모르는데 좀 도와 주세요.** "I don't know the way well; please help me."

The sentence connector is **그런데** ("by the way", "but").

4. Because (1): -아/어서

Attach **-아서** after a stem vowel ㅏ or ㅗ and **-어서** after any other vowel; 하다 gives **해서**. Contractions work as for -아/어요: **봐서**, **마셔서**, **예뻐서**, and Chapter 3's irregulars apply: **추워서**, **몰라서**, **바빠서**. 이다 becomes **(이)라서**: **학생이라서**, **의사라서**. It has two jobs:

- **Reason: 피곤해서 쉬고 있어요.** "I'm tired, so I'm resting."
- **"And then" (sequence): 공원에 가서 운동해요.** "I go to the park and then exercise." With 가다 and 오다 the "and then" reading is by far the usual one: **저는 학교에 가서 공부할 거예요** "I will go to school and then study".

Two limits:

- **No tense marker before -아/어서.** The tense belongs only on the final verb: **머리가 아파서 학교에 안 갔어요** "My head hurt, so I didn't go to school", never 아팠어서. For the future, **피곤해서 일찍 잘 거예요**.
- **No command or suggestion in the last clause.** You cannot say 바빠서 나중에 전화하세요. Use -(으)니까: **바쁘니까 나중에 전화하세요** "I'm busy, so please call later".

The sentence connector is **그래서** ("so, therefore").

5. Because (2): -(으)니까

Attach **-으니까** to a consonant stem and **-니까** to a vowel stem: **먹으니까**, **가니까**. ㄹ-stems drop the ㄹ (**사니까**, **만드니까**), and irregulars from Chapter 3 change as before a vowel: **추우니까**, **들으니까**, **지으니까**. 이다 gives **학생이니까**. It may carry a tense: **비가 왔으니까**.

-(으)니까 is the ending for a reason that leads to a **suggestion or command**: **날씨가 좋으니까 나가요** (or **나가자** in plain speech) "The weather is good, so let's go out"; **비가 오니까 가지 마세요** "It's raining, so don't go".

-아/어서 versus -(으)니까

	-아/어서	-(으)니까
Tense inside the clause	No	Yes (-았/었으니까)
Command / suggestion after it	No	Yes
Reason sounds…	an objective cause leading to a result	the speaker's own ground for a decision or request
Also means "and then"	Yes (가서, 와서)	No
Example	**피곤해서 잤어요.**	**피곤하니까 자요.**

Teachers and researchers admit that the line between the two is not always sharp: in some sentences either works, depending on the speaker's intent and the relationship between speaker and listener. The two firm limits above are the safe rules.

6. If / when: -(으)면

Vowel stem + **-면**, consonant stem + **-으면**: **가면**, **먹으면**. ㄹ-stems add only -면 (**살면**, **만들면**); the ㅂ-, ㄷ- and ㅅ-irregulars change as before a vowel (**추우면**, **들으면**, **지으면**), while ㅡ- and 르-stems are unchanged because -면 has no 아/어 (**쓰면**, **모르면**). 이다 gives **학생이면**. Uses:

- **Future "when/if": 집에 도착하면 빨래를 할 거예요.** "When I arrive home, I'll do the laundry." **학교에 가면 알려 주세요.** "When you go to school, let me know."
- **Condition: 진정하지 않으면 콜라를 주지 않을 거예요.** "If you don't calm down, I won't give you a cola."
- **General truths: 비가 오면 날씨가 추워져요.** "When it rains, the weather gets colder."
- **"If it had been..." (unreal past): 내가 공부했으면 합격했을 거예요.** "If I had studied, I would have passed."

The sentence connector is **그러면** (also 그럼): "in that case".

7. Or: -거나

-거나 joins verbs or adjectives as alternatives. It attaches to the bare stem with no irregular change (like -고 and -지만): **주말에는 영화를 보거나 책을 읽어요** "On weekends I watch a film or read a book". The tense goes on the last verb only: **영화를 보거나 책을 읽었어요**. The noun version is **이나 / 나** (Korean Grammar 1). The sentence connector is **또는** or **아니면**.

8. When / at the time of: -(으)ㄹ 때

Vowel stem + **-ㄹ 때**, consonant stem + **-을 때**: **갈 때**, **먹을 때**. ㄹ-stems keep the ㄹ (**살 때**, **만들 때**), and irregulars change as before a vowel: **추울 때**, **들을 때**. 이다 gives **학생일 때**. It means "when", "at the time that", and it can add 마다 for "every time": **한국에 있을 때마다** "every time I'm in Korea".

The tense in the 때-clause is relative to the main verb, not to the sentence's time. The plain form (**갈 때**) means "while going / at the moment of going", the past form (**갔을 때**) means "when (I) went / after going":

CLAUSE	MEANING
집에 갈 때 전화할 거예요.	I'll call *on the way* home (during the going).
집에 갔을 때 전화할 거예요.	I'll call *when I've got* home.
집에 가면 전화할 거예요.	I'll call *when/if I get* home.

The source checked (howtostudykorean Lesson 42) warns that 집에 갈 때 means calling *during* the going, and recommends 집에 가서 or 집에 가면 for "after arriving". The 갔을 때 row is from general knowledge, and usage varies with the verb.

Watch out: what these endings do not change

-고, -지만 and -거나 start with a consonant (ㄱ, ㅈ, ㄱ), so **none of the Chapter 3 irregulars change** in front of them: 춥고, 듣지만, 짓거나. The vowel-starting group (-아/어서, -(으)니까, -(으)면, -(으)ㄹ 때, and -(으)ㄴ데 on adjectives) triggers every irregular, and ㄹ-stems drop the ㄹ before -(으)니까 and -(으)ㄴ데 and before -는데.

Watch out: sentence connectors

The same ideas, starting a new sentence: **그리고** and, **그렇지만 / 하지만** but, **그런데** but, by the way, **그래서** so, **그러니까** so (leads to a request), **그러면 / 그럼** in that case, **또는 / 아니면** or. These are formed with 그렇다 / 하다 plus the endings above, which is why they look alike.

In Use — 실제 예문

① A weekend plan

A:

이번 주말에 뭐 해요?

What are you doing this weekend?

B:

날씨가 좋으면 공원에 가고, 비가 오면 집에서 영화를 보거나 책을 읽을 거예요.

② Asking politely

A:

길을 잘 모르는데 좀 도와 주세요.

I don't know the way well; please help me.

B:

저도 이 동네는 처음이지만 같이 찾아 봐요.

It's my first time in this area too, but let's look together.

If the weather is good I'll go to the park, and if it rains I'll watch a film or read a book at home.

③ Reasons

A:

왜 일찍 갔어요?

Why did you leave early?

B:

머리가 아파서 일찍 갔어요. 지금도 아프니까 오늘은 쉴 거예요.

My head hurt, so I left early. It still hurts now, so I'll rest today.

📋 Quick Reference — 요약표

ENDING	MEANING	TENSE INSIDE?	COMMAND AFTER?	EXAMPLE
-고	and; and then	No	Yes	**먹고 가요**
-지만	but	Yes	Yes	**비싸지만 맛있어요**
-(으)ㄴ/는데	background; soft "but"	Yes	Yes	**가는데 같이 가요**
-아/어서	because; and then	No	No	**피곤해서 잤어요**
-(으)니까	because / since	Yes	Yes	**추우니까 입으세요**
-(으)면	if; when	Yes	Yes	**오면 전화하세요**
-거나	or	No	Yes	**보거나 읽어요**

ENDING	MEANING	TENSE INSIDE?	COMMAND AFTER?	EXAMPLE
-(으)ㄹ 때	when; at the time	Relative	Yes	**갈 때 전화하세요**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — 연습

Work out the answer first, then click to check.

1. Join with -고: **집이 크다 / 예쁘다**, and with -지만: **춥다 / 좋다**.

▼ Show answer

집이 크고 예뻐요. · **춥지만 좋아요.** (no irregular change before -고 or -지만)

2. Make -는데 / -(으)ㄴ데 forms: **가다**, **크다**, **살다**, **학생이다**.

▼ Show answer

가는데 · **큰데** · **사는데** · **학생인데**

3. Say "I was tired, so I slept" and "I'm tired, so I'll sleep early" with -아/어서.

▼ Show answer

피곤해서 잤어요. · **피곤해서 일찍 잘 거예요.** (the tense goes on the last verb only)

4. Why is "바빠서 도와 주세요" wrong, and how do you fix it?

▼ Show answer

-아/어서 cannot be followed by a command. Use -(으)니까: **바쁘니까 도와 주세요**.

5. Make -(으)니까 forms: **춥다**, **살다**, **듣다**.

▼ Show answer

추우니까 · **사니까** · **들으니까**

6. Say "If it's cold, wear a coat" (**입다**, imperative -(으)세요).

▼ Show answer

추우면 코트를 입으세요.

7. What is the difference in meaning between **집에 갈 때** and **집에 갔을 때**?

▼ Show answer

갈 때: at the time of going (on the way). **갔을 때**: when you had gone (after arriving).

8. Say "On weekends I sleep or watch TV" with -거나 (**자다**, **텔레비전을 보다**).

▼ Show answer

주말에는 자거나 텔레비전을 봐요.

Coming up in Chapter 6: Connecting Clauses 2: Purpose, Time and Condition. -(으)려고, -(으)러, -기 위해, -(으)면서, -자마자, -다가, -기 전에 and -(으)ㄴ 후에, -아/어야, and -(으)ㄹ수록.