



Korean Ladder Study Note

어디 가

Casual Wh-Questions with Close Friends

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Colloquial Banmal (Casual)	어디 가 Casual Wh-Questions with Close Friends

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-007>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfdQ7LQDNXY>

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's my problem. I know 어디 가요, but my Korean friends text 어디 가? Is that just... chopped off Korean?

좋은 질문이에요. 가까운 친구나 서로 반말을 쓰기로 한 사이에서는 짧게 “어디 가?”라고 하면 아주 자연스러워요.

But if you are not close, or you did not agree to use 반말, these can sound too blunt. So today we learn the form and the boundary.

So today is not just grammar. It's also: don't accidentally sound rude.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	어디 가? —	Where are you going?
Junho	잠깐 편의점. —	Just to the convenience store for a minute.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	언제 와? —	When are you coming back?
Junho	금방 올게. —	I'll be back soon.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
의문사 + 짧은 반말 동사 uimunsa + jjalbeun banmal dongsa	wh-word + short casual verb	오늘의 패턴은 “의문사 + 짧은 반말 동사”예요. Wh-word plus a short casual verb. 어디 가? 언제 와? 왜 그래?
어디 · 언제 · 왜 eodi · eonje · wae	where · when · why	의문사는 question word예요. 어디 means where, 언제 means when, and 왜 means why.
가 · 와 · 그래 ga · wa · geurae	go · come · be/do like that	And the verbs are tiny. 가, 와, 그래.
와 = come / 가 = go wa = come / ga = go	Direction changes the question	So 와 is come, toward here. 가 is go, away from here or to somewhere else.
가요 → 가 / 와요 → 와 gayo → ga / wayo → wa	In these forms, polite 요 drops for close-friend casual speech	Now notice the grammar shortcut in these 요 forms. Polite 어디 가요 becomes casual 어디 가. Polite 언제 와요 becomes casual 언제 와. For these close-friend forms, 요 drops when the relationship allows banmal.
어디 = where / 언제 = when / 왜 = why eodi = where / eonje = when / wae = why	place question / time question / reason question	Let's unpack the three question words. 어디 is where, 언제 is when, and 왜 is why.



Grammar / Structure Notes

의문사 + 짧은 반말 동사

의문사 + 짧은 반말 동사 — wh-word + short casual verb

어디 가? · 언제 와? · 왜 그래?

어디 · 언제 · 왜

어디 · 언제 · 왜 — where · when · why

Question words for place, time, and reason

가 · 와 · 그래

가 · 와 · 그래 — go · come · be/do like that

Short casual verb forms

어디 가?

어디 + 가 + ? — Where are you going?

맞아요. First, 어디 가? 어디 means where, and 가 is the casual form of 가다, to go.

어디 가?

어디 + 가 + ? — Where are you going?

어디 가? It literally asks where someone is going, but in Korean it can also be a casual, friendly check-in.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
왜 그래?	wae geurae?
어디 가?	eodi ga?
언제 와?	eonje wa?

Self-Check

- 1 Say 어디 가 three times: slow, natural, then inside a short sentence.
- 2 Write one original sentence that was not in the video.
- 3 Rewatch the YouTube lesson and pause when the same pattern appears.

Related / Subsequent Studies



Lesson	Why study it next	Link
고마워 / 미안 / 괜찮아 친구끼리 주고받는 반말 인사	A1 Colloquial: compare 고마워 / 미안 / 괜찮아 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-004
나 / 너 / 우리 Casual Pronouns That Replace 저 and Titles	A1 Colloquial: compare 나 / 너 / 우리 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-008
몰라 / 싫어 / 그만해 친구에게 짧게 거절하고 반응하기	A1 Colloquial: compare 몰라 / 싫어 / 그만해 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-006
밥 먹었어 Everyday Casual Questions Among Friends	A1 Colloquial: compare 밥 먹었어 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-002

My Notes

Your ladder to fluent Korean. This PDF, the website, and the video lessons are free for personal study.