



Korean Ladder Study Note

오늘은 어려울 것 같아요

Canceling Plans Without Sounding Rude

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Conversation Appointments	오늘은 어려울 것 같아요 Canceling Plans Without Sounding Rude

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-CONV-APT-002>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61shdrmCHp8>

Visit [koreanladder.com](https://www.koreanladder.com) for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's my problem. In English I can say, "Sorry, today won't work." But in Korean, I worry it sounds too blunt.

좋은 질문이에요. Korean often sounds kinder when you say it indirectly, like 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요.

So not just, 오늘 안 돼요? That feels like, "Nope, can't."

맞아요. 오늘 안 돼요 is understandable, but it can feel abrupt. 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요 gives the other person more cushion.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	오늘 저녁에 만날까요? —	Shall we meet this evening?
Junho	죄송해요. 갑자기 일이 생겼어요. —	I'm sorry. Something suddenly came up.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	오늘은 어려울 것 같아요. —	I don't think today will work.
Junho	다음 주에 만날까요? —	Shall we meet next week?
Hana	네, 좋아요. 다음 주에 만나요. —	Yes, sounds good. Let's meet next week.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
-(으)ㄹ 것 같아요 -(eu)l geot gat-ayo	it seems / I think it will	오늘의 패턴은 을 것 같아요. In English, it means "I think it will," "it seems," or "it looks like."
어려울 것 같아요 eoryeoul geot gat-ayo	I don't think it will work / I don't think I can	With 어렵다, "to be difficult," we say 어려울 것 같아요. Literally, "it seems it will be difficult." Naturally, "I don't think I can."
어려워요 → 어려울 것 같아요 eoryeowoyo → eoryeoul geot gat-ayo	It's difficult → It seems difficult	That's interesting. 어려워요 is "it's difficult," but 어려울 것 같아요 is softer, like "it may be difficult."
오늘은어려울것같아요 oneul-eun eoryeoul geot gat-ayo	I don't think today will work.	맞아요. And for plans, 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요 sounds very natural.
죄송해요오늘은어려울 것같아요 joesonghaeyo. oneul-eun eoryeoul geot gat-ayo	I'm sorry. I don't think today will work.	Now hear it in a full canceling message. 죄송해요. 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요.
갑자기일이생겼어요 gapjagi il-i saenggyeosseoyo	Something suddenly came up.	A soft reason is helpful too. 갑자기 일이 생겼어요 means "something came up suddenly."
죄송해요갑자기일이생 겼어요오늘은어려울것 같아요 joesonghaeyo. gapjagi il-i saenggyeosseoyo. oneul-eun eoryeoul geot gat-ayo	I'm sorry. Something suddenly came up. I don't think today will work.	So I can say, 죄송해요. 갑자기 일이 생겼어요. 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요.
다음주에만날까요 daeum ju-e mannalkkayo	Shall we meet next week?	다음 주에 만날까요 means "Shall we meet next week?" It is friendly and gives the other person a next step.



Grammar / Structure Notes

-(으)ㄹ 것 같아요

-(으)ㄹ 것 같아요 — it seems / I think it will

Use it to sound less direct.

어려울 것 같아요

어려울 것 같아요 — I don't think it will work / I don't think I can

Soft refusal or soft cancellation

어려워요 → 어려울 것 같아요

어려워요 → 어려울 것 같아요 — It's difficult → It seems difficult

That's interesting. 어려워요 is "it's difficult," but 어려울 것 같아요 is softer, like "it may be difficult."

오늘은어려울것같아요

오늘 + 은 + 어려울 + 것 + 같아요 — I don't think today will work.

맞아요. And for plans, 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요 sounds very natural.

오늘은어려울것같아요

오늘 + 은 + 어려울 + 것 + 같아요 — As for today, it seems difficult.

오늘은 means "as for today." 은 marks the topic. We are talking about today, and saying today is difficult.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
죄송해요	joesonghaeyo
갑자기 일이 생겼어요	gapjagi il-i saenggyeosseoyo
오늘은 어려울 것 같아요	oneul-eun eoryeoul geot gat-ayo
다음 주에 만날까요?	daeum ju-e mannalkkayo?
죄송해요. 갑자기 일이 생겼어요. 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요. 다음 주에 만날까요?	joesonghaeyo. gapjagi il-i saenggyeosseoyo. oneul-eun eoryeoul geot gat-ayo. daeum ju-e mannalkkayo?

Self-Check

- 1 Say 오늘은 어려울 것 같아요 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
우리 언제 만날까요 약속 날짜와 시간 정하기	A1 Conversation: compare 우리 언제 만날까요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-CONV-APT-001
병원 예약 잡고 증상 말하기 Booking a Doctor's Appointment	A2 Conversation: compare 병원 예약 잡고 증상 말하기 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-CONV-APT-002
여러 명 일정 조율 Coordinating a Meeting Among Several People	C1 Conversation: compare 여러 명 일정 조율 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-CONV-APT-001
예약을 변경하고 싶어요 Rescheduling an Appointment	A2 Conversation: compare 예약을 변경하고 싶어요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-CONV-APT-001

My Notes

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