



Korean Ladder Study Note

크다 / 작다 / 많다

Your First Adjective Conjugations

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Grammar Verb Conjugation	크다 / 작다 / 많다 Your First Adjective Conjugations

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-CNJ-003>

Watch the full video on YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37uHs_XhXsQ

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

My mistake is very English-speaker-ish. I want to say, “The bag small,” so I freeze at 가방... 작다? 작아요? What changes?

좋은 질문이에요. Dictionary form is not usually how we end a polite everyday sentence.

In Korean, descriptive words like 크다, 작다, and 많다 act like verbs. They change at the end of the sentence.

오늘의 패턴은 polite present endings, 아요 and 어요. In English, this makes “is big,” “is small,” or “there are many.”

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	이 테이블이 작아요. —	This table is small.
Junho	네, 저 테이블이 커요. —	Yes, that table is big.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	사람이 많아요. —	There are many people.
Hana	이 테이블이 작아요. —	This table is small.
Junho	저 테이블이 커요. —	That table is big.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
크다 / 작다 / 많다 keuda / jakda / manta	to be big / to be small / to be many	In Korean, descriptive words like 크다, 작다, and 많다 act like verbs. They change at the end of the sentence.
어간 + 아요/어요 eogan + ayo/eoyo	verb stem + polite present ending	오늘의 패턴은 polite present endings, 아요 and 어요. In English, this makes “is big,” “is small,” or “there are many.”
크다 = “to be big” keuda	A descriptive verb, not just a loose adjective	So these are adjectives in English, but in Korean they behave like verbs at the end?
크다 → 커요 keuda → keoyo	to be big → is big	맞아요. 크다 means “to be big.” To make it polite present, 크다 becomes 커요.
작다 → 작아요 많다 → 많아요 jakda → jagayo manta → manayo	to be small → is small to be many → are many	작다 becomes 작아요. 많다 becomes 많아요. These two keep the stem, then add 아요.
방이 커요 bang-i keoyo	The room is big.	먼저 자연스러운 예문을 들어 보세요. 방이 커요.
가방이 작아요 gabang-i jagayo	The bag is small.	가방이 작아요.
사람이 많아요 saram-i manayo	There are many people.	사람이 많아요.



Grammar / Structure Notes

크다 / 작다 / 많다

크다 / 작다 / 많다 — to be big / to be small / to be many

Korean descriptive verbs conjugate.

어간 + 아요/어요

어간 + 아요/어요 — verb stem + polite present ending

Use it for friendly everyday speech.

크다 = “to be big”

크다 = “to be big” — A descriptive verb, not just a loose adjective

So these are adjectives in English, but in Korean they behave like verbs at the end?

크다 → 커요

크다 → 커요 — to be big → is big

크 drops the 으 sound before 어요.

작다 → 작아요 많다 → 많아요

작다 → 작아요

많다 → 많아요 — to be small → is small

to be many → are many

작 and 많 take 아요.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
방이 커요	bang-i keoyo
가방이 작아요	gabang-i jagayo
사람이 많아요	saram-i manayo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 크다 / 작다 / 많다 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
공부해요 / 운동해요 Turning 하다 Nouns into Verbs	A1 Grammar: compare 공부해요 / 운동해요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-CNJ-002
아요 / 어요 The Polite Present Tense	A1 Grammar: compare 아요 / 어요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-CNJ-001
ㄷ 불규칙 / ㅅ 불규칙 듣다·걷다 and 짓다·낫다 Irregulars	B1 Grammar: compare ㄷ 불규칙 / ㅅ 불규칙 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-CNJ-002
ㅎ 불규칙 그렇다·빨강다·어떻다 형용사 활용	B1 Grammar: compare ㅎ 불규칙 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-CNJ-003

My Notes

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