



Korean Ladder Study Note

지금

Saying What You Are Doing Right Now

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Grammar Sentence Endings	지금 Saying What You Are Doing Right Now

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

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

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YeH9i7QyJQ>

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's my problem. If I know 먹어요 means I eat, how do I say I am eating right now, not just I eat in general?

좋은 질문이에요. Korean uses the pattern verb stem plus 고 있어요 to say an action is happening now.

So 먹어요 can be I eat or I'm eating sometimes, but 먹고 있어요 clearly says it is happening right now?

맞아요. 먹어요 can describe the present, but 먹고 있어요 focuses on the action continuing right now.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	지금 뭐 하고 있어요? —	What are you doing now?
Junho	저는 저녁을 만들고 있어요. —	I'm making dinner.
Hana	아, 저는 음악을 듣고 있어요. —	Oh, I'm listening to music.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	좋아요. 이따가 전화할게요. —	Okay. I'll call you later.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
동사 어간 + -고 있어요 donsa eogan + -go isseoyo	verb stem + am/is/are doing	좋은 질문이에요. Korean uses the pattern verb stem plus 고 있어요 to say an action is happening now.
먹고 있어요 meok-go isseoyo	am/is/are eating	For example, 먹다 becomes 먹고 있어요. In English, that means I am eating, or someone is eating.
지금 + -고 있어요 jigeum + -go isseoyo	right now + am/is/are doing	맞아요. 먹어요 can describe the present, but 먹고 있어요 focuses on the action continuing right now.
-고 있어요 -go isseoyo	am/is/are doing	오늘의 패턴은 고 있어요예요. In English, think be verb plus verb-ing.
먹다 → 먹 + 고 있어요 → 먹고 있어요 meok-da → meok + go isseoyo → meok-go isseoyo	to eat → eat + am eating	만들기는 쉬워요. 다-form에서 다를 빼고, 고 있어요를 붙여요. In English, remove 다 from the dictionary form, then add 고 있어요.
보고 있어요 bo-go isseoyo	am/is/are watching; am/is/are looking	Let me try the recipe. 보다 is to watch or see. Drop 다, 보, then 보고 있어요.
지금 영화를 보고 있어요 jigeum yeonghwa-reul bo-go isseoyo	I'm watching a movie right now.	네, 정확해요. 보고 있어요 means watching or looking right now, depending on context.
저는 지금 커피를 마시고 있어요 jeo-neun jigeum keopi-reul masi-go isseoyo	I'm drinking coffee right now.	첫 번째 예문이에요. 저는 지금 커피를 마시고 있어요. I am drinking coffee right now.



Grammar / Structure Notes

동사 어간 + -고 있어요

동사 어간 + -고 있어요 — verb stem + am/is/are doing

Use it for an action in progress.

먹고 있어요

먹 + 고 있어요 — am/is/are eating

For example, 먹다 becomes 먹고 있어요. In English, that means I am eating, or someone is eating.

지금 + -고 있어요

지금 + -고 있어요 — right now + am/is/are doing

지금 makes the “right now” feeling extra clear.

-고 있어요

-고 있어요 — am/is/are doing

Attach to the verb stem.

먹다 → 먹 + 고 있어요 → 먹고 있어요

먹다 → 먹 + 고 있어요 → 먹고 있어요 — to eat → eat + am eating

Drop 다, add 고 있어요.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
지금 뭐 하고 있어요?	jigeum mwo ha-go isseoyo?
있어요	isseoyo
먹고 있어요	meok-go isseoyo
보고 있어요	bo-go isseoyo
저는 지금 한국어를 공부하고 있어요	jeo-neun jigeum han-gug-eo-reul gongbu-ha-go isseoyo
공부하고 있어요	gongbu-ha-go isseoyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 지금 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
-(으)까요? / -(으)비시다 Suggesting and Proposing Together	A1 Grammar: compare -(으)까요? / -(으)비시다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-END-003
-(으)세요 Making Polite Requests and Gentle Commands	A1 Grammar: compare -(으)세요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-END-004
-지 마세요 Telling Someone Politely Not to Do Something	A1 Grammar: compare -지 마세요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-END-005
맞아요 / 틀려요 Saying Something Is Right or Wrong	A1 Grammar: compare 맞아요 / 틀려요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-END-008

My Notes

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