



Korean Ladder Study Note

새 / 헌 / 낡은

Saying New, Used, and Old Before a Noun

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Grammar Modifiers & Clauses	새 / 헌 / 낡은 Saying New, Used, and Old Before a Noun

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

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

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3nJZQacTpE>

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Why does 낡다 become 낡은 before a noun, while 새 and 헌 are already used before nouns?

좋은 질문이에요. They all come before a noun, but they do not all work the same way.

So they all sit right before the thing I am describing.

오늘의 핵심은 명사 앞에서 쓰는 꾸밈말이에요. Today we are learning words that describe a noun from right before it.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	새 가방을 찾으세요? —	Are you looking for a new bag?
Junho	아니요, 중고 가방을 찾고 있어요. —	No, I am looking for a secondhand bag.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	그럼 이 헌 가방은 어때세요? —	Then how about this used bag?
Junho	좋아요. 그런데 저 낡은 의자는 너무 오래됐어요. —	Good. But that old, worn chair is too old.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
새 책 · 헌 가방 · 낡은 의자 sae chaek · heon gabang · nalgeun uija	new book · used bag · old, worn chair	새 책, 헌 가방, 낡은 의자. These mean a new book, a used bag, and an old, worn chair.
명사 앞의 꾸밈말 myeongsa apui kkumimmal	a modifier before a noun	오늘의 핵심은 명사 앞에서 쓰는 꾸밈말이에요. Today we are learning words that describe a noun from right before it.
새 · 헌 = 관형사 / 낡은 = 낡다의 관형사형 sae · heon = gwanhyeongsa / nalgeun = naktta-ui gwanhyeongsahyeong	새 and 헌 are fixed prenominal modifiers; 낡은 comes from 낡다.	새와 헌은 원래 명사 앞에서 쓰는 관형사이고, 낡은은 낡다의 관형사형이에요. 새 and 헌 are fixed words used before nouns, while 낡은 is the noun-modifying form of 낡다.
새 / 헌 / 낡은 + 명사 sae / heon / nalgeun + myeongsa	new / used, worn / old, worn + noun	새, 헌, 낡은 뒤에 명사를 붙이면 돼요. Put a noun after 새, 헌, or 낡은.
낡다 → 낡은 + 명사 naktta → nalgeun + myeongsa	old and worn → old, worn + noun	낡다 is a descriptive word meaning old and worn. Before a noun, 낡다 becomes 낡은, as in 낡은 의자.
새 · 헌은 그대로 / 낡다는 낡은으로 sae · heon-eun geudaero / naktta-neun nalgeun-euro	새 and 헌 stay fixed; 낡다 changes to 낡은.	겉으로는 셋 다 명사 앞에 와요. But the grammar is different: 새 and 헌 are fixed 관형사, and 낡은 is made from 낡다.
중고 가방 junggo gabang	secondhand bag	중고 매장이나 중고 거래 사이트에서는 보통 중고 가방이라고 해요. At a secondhand shop or on a resale site, 중고 가방 is the neutral term.
헌 가방 / 중고 가방 heon gabang / junggo gabang	used, worn bag / secondhand bag	헌 가방 means a bag that has already been used, often with some wear. 중고 가방 is often more neutral when you are shopping.



Grammar / Structure Notes

새 책 · 헌 가방 · 낡은 의자

새 책 · + 헌 가방 · + 낡은 의자 — new book · used bag · old, worn chair

새 책, 헌 가방, 낡은 의자. These mean a new book, a used bag, and an old, worn chair.

명사 앞의 꾸밈말

명사 앞의 꾸밈말 — a modifier before a noun

It helps you describe things clearly.

새 · 헌 = 관형사 / 낡은 = 낡다의 관형사형

새 · 헌 = 관형사 / 낡은 = 낡다의 관형사형 — 새 and 헌 are fixed prenominal modifiers; 낡은 comes from 낡다.

Do not assume all three are conjugated forms.

새 / 헌 / 낡은 + 명사

새 / 헌 / 낡은 + 명사 — new / used, worn / old, worn + noun

All three appear before the noun.

새 책이에요.

새 + 책 + 이에요. — It is a new book.

새 책이에요. This is a new book. 새 is already a word that goes before 책.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
이건 새 가방이에요.	igeon sae gabang-ieyo
낡은 의자예요.	nalgeun uijayeyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 새 / 헌 / 낡은 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
무슨 / 어떤 / 어느 Asking What, What Kind, and Which	A1 Grammar: compare 무슨 / 어떤 / 어느 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-MOD-002
이 / 그 / 저 Pointing at Things Near and Far	A1 Grammar: compare 이 / 그 / 저 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-MOD-001
-(으)ㄴ / 는 / (으)ㄹ 것 같다 Expressing Guesses and Impressions	B2 Grammar: compare -(으)ㄴ / 는 / (으)ㄹ 것 같다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B2-GRAM-MOD-001
-(으)ㄹ 만큼 / -(으)ㄹ 정도로 Expressing Degree and Extent	C1 Grammar: compare -(으)ㄹ 만큼 / -(으)ㄹ 정도로 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-GRAM-MOD-002

My Notes

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