



Korean Ladder Study Note

아니예요

Choosing 'Is Not' or 'There Isn't'

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Grammar Negation	아니예요 Choosing 'Is Not' or 'There Isn't'

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

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

Watch the full video on YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrH_q44wKSY

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

If this drink is tea, not coffee, I can say “not coffee.” But if the café has no coffee at all, do I use the same Korean word?

좋은 질문이에요. 아니예요 is for identity: something is not a certain thing. 없어요 is for absence: something is not there, or you do not have it.

So I need to ask myself: am I correcting a label, or saying something is missing?

오늘은 아니예요와 없어요를 나눠서 볼게요. In English, think “is not” for identity and “there isn't” for absence.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	이거 커피예요? —	Is this coffee?
Junho	아니예요. 차예요. —	No. It is tea.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	이거 커피예요? —	Is this coffee?
Junho	아니예요. 차예요. —	No. It is tea.
Hana	커피 있어요? —	Do you have coffee?
Junho	아니요, 없어요. —	No, there isn't any.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
아니예요 anieyo	is not	오늘은 아니예요와 없어요를 나눠서 볼게요. In English, think “is not” for identity and “there isn't” for absence.
N이 아니예요 N-i anieyo	is not N	아니예요는 정체를 부정할 때 써요. In English, it says that a thing is not X. The thing is still right there.
없어요 eopseoyo	there isn't; I don't have	이제 없어요를 볼게요. 없어요 means something is absent, unavailable, or not in your possession. In English: there isn't any, or I don't have it.
커피가 아니예요 / 커피가 없어요 keopiga anieyo / keopiga eopseoyo	is not coffee / there is no coffee	Put the two ideas side by side. 이건 커피가 아니예요 means this drink is not coffee. 커피가 없어요 means coffee is not available.
아니요, 없어요 aniyo, eopseoyo	No, there isn't any.	Another useful difference: 아니요 is a short “no” answer. 아니예요 means “is not.” 없어요 gives the information that something is absent.



Grammar / Structure Notes

아니예요

아니예요 — is not

Use it to say what something is not.

N이 아니예요

N이 아니예요 — is not N

Use it when the item exists but has a different identity.

이건 커피가 아니예요.

이건 커피가 아니예요. — This is not coffee.

The drink is present. Its identity is not coffee.

이건 커피가 아니예요.

이건 + 커피 + 가 + 아니예요. — This is not coffee.

이건 커피가 아니예요. 이건 means this one, and 커피가 아니예요 means it is not coffee.

이건 커피가 아니예요.

이건 커피가 아니예요. — This is not coffee.

Do not use 없어요 when the item is present.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
이거는 책이 아니예요.	igeoneun chaegi anieyo.
책이 없어요.	chaegi eopseoyo.

Self-Check

- 1 Say 아니예요 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
안 Two Ways to Say 'No/Can't'	A1 Grammar: compare 안 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-NEG-001
없어요 Two Beginner Ways to Say You Don't Have or Aren't Doing	A1 Grammar: compare 없어요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-NEG-002
-(으)ㄹ 리가 없다 / -(으)ㄹ 수밖에 없다 Emphatic Negation and Inevitability	B2 Grammar: compare -(으)ㄹ 리가 없다 / -(으)ㄹ 수밖에 없다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B2-GRAM-NEG-001
-지 않아요 / -지 못해요 The Long Negative Forms	A2 Grammar: compare -지 않아요 / -지 못해요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-GRAM-NEG-001

My Notes

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