



Korean Ladder Study Note

선생님 / 언니 / 아저씨

Addressing People You See Every Day

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Honorifics Titles & Address	선생님 / 언니 / 아저씨 Addressing People You See Every Day

Study Links

[Open this lesson on Korean Ladder](https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-ADR-001)

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-ADR-001>

[Watch the full video on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsXh_tCLV_8)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsXh_tCLV_8

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

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Core Idea

Okay, here's my real problem. In English I just say someone's name — 'Hey, Minsu!' So in Korea I did the same thing to my teacher, and people winced.

Same. And I almost called a stranger 너 — like casual 'you.' My friend grabbed my arm. So who DO you use names with?

좋은 질문이에요. In Korean, we very often skip the name and use a title instead — who someone is to you. That's today's one big idea.

호칭은 관계와 상황을 보여줘요. In English — your address term shows the relationship and the setting. Let's meet the everyday ones, group by group.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	사장님, 아메리카노 한 잔 주세요. —	Owner, one americano please.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	네, 잠깐만요. —	Sure, one moment.
Hana	언니, 여기 자주 와요? —	(older friend) do you come here often?
Junho	응, 자주 와. 사장님이 친절하셔서 좋아. —	Yeah, often. I like that the owner is kind.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
이름 대신 호칭 ireum daesin hoching	a title instead of a name	좋은 질문이에요. In Korean, we very often skip the name and use a title instead — who someone is to you. That's today's one big idea.
호칭 = 관계 + 상황 hoching = gwangye + sanghwang	address term = relationship + setting	호칭은 관계와 상황을 보여줘요. In English — your address term shows the relationship and the setting. Let's meet the everyday ones, group by group.
선생님 seonsaengnim	teacher / respected professional	First, the easy one. A teacher — or really any respected professional — is 선생님. 선생님 marks respect. In English, it's like 'teacher,' but warmer and wider.
선생님, 안녕하세요 seonsaengnim, annyeonghaseyo	Hello, teacher.	그래서 학생은 선생님께 이렇게 말해요. So a student greets the teacher like this — listen.
언니 / 오빠 / 누나 / 형 eonni / oppa / nuna / hyeong	older sister/brother — also for close older friends	Next group — older people you're close to but who aren't family by blood. Korean borrows the sibling words: 언니, 오빠, 누나, 형.
여자 → 언니 / 오빠 · 남자 → 누나 / 형 yeoja → eonni / oppa · namja → nuna / hyeong	woman says 언니/오빠; man says 누나/형	이건 성별이 정해요. The speaker's gender chooses the word. A woman calls an older woman 언니, an older man 오빠. A man calls an older woman 누나, an older man 형.
언니, 안녕하세요 eonni, annyeonghaseyo	Hello, (older) sister/friend.	So a younger woman greets her close older friend like this.
언니 = 손위 여자 eonni = sonwi yeoja	언니 = an older woman	맞아요. 정확해요. The key is older. 언니 is only for an older woman. Never for someone your own age.



Grammar / Structure Notes

이름 대신 호칭

이름 대신 호칭 — a title instead of a name

Address people by their role/relationship, not their bare name.

호칭 = 관계 + 상황

호칭 = 관계 + 상황 — address term = relationship + setting

호칭은 관계와 상황을 보여줘요. In English — your address term shows the relationship and the setting. Let's meet the everyday ones, group by group.

선생님

선생님 — teacher / respected professional

Use for teachers, and politely for many professionals.

선생님, 안녕하세요

선생님, 안녕하세요 — Hello, teacher.

그래서 학생은 선생님께 이렇게 말해요. So a student greets the teacher like this — listen.

선생님, 안녕하세요

선생님 + , + 안녕하세요 — Hello, teacher.

Let's see the pieces. The title comes first, then the greeting — no name needed at all.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
사장님, 아메리카노 한 잔 주세요	sajangnim, amerikano han jan juseyo
주세요	juseyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 선생님 / 언니 / 아저씨 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
님 / 씨 Korean Titles and Address	A2 Honorifics: compare 님 / 씨 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-HON-ADR-001
이모 / 사장님 / 기사님 Kinship & Job Titles for Strangers	C1 Honorifics: compare 이모 / 사장님 / 기사님 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-ADR-001
감사합니다 / 죄송합니다 Formal Thanks and Apologies	A1 Honorifics: compare 감사합니다 / 죄송합니다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-LVL-002
요 Polite and Casual Korean	A1 Honorifics: compare 요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-LVL-001

My Notes

Free Korean lessons, one rung at a time. This PDF, the website, and the video lessons are free for personal study.