



Korean Ladder Study Note

뭐라고 부르면 돼요

Asking What to Call Someone as a Beginner

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Honorifics Titles & Address	뭐라고 부르면 돼요 Asking What to Call Someone as a Beginner

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-ADR-005>

Watch the full video on YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YYf4ZwYnDo

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

I meet someone in Korea, and I freeze. Should I say 씨, 아저씨, or something else? I really do not want to guess wrong.

A safe beginner question gives you a better choice: 씨, a title such as 교수님, or another appropriate form of address. Important correction: 님은 혼자 쓰는 호칭이 아니라 이름이나 직함 뒤에 붙여요. For example, 김 교수님.

오늘의 안전한 문장은 실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요?예요. In English, it means, “Excuse me, what should I call you?”

이 문장은 호칭을 추측하지 않고 직접 물어보는 표현이에요. It matters because Korean names and titles depend on the relationship and situation.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요? —	Excuse me, what should I call you?



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	준호 선생님이라고 부르면 돼요. —	You can call me Teacher Junho.
Hana	네, 준호 선생님. 감사합니다. —	Okay, Teacher Junho. Thank you.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
실례지만 sillyejiman	Excuse me, but...	실례지만 is a gentle opener. Then 뭐라고 부르면 돼요? asks what name or title is okay to use.
부르다 → 부르면 bureuda → bureumyeon	to call → if [I] call	여기서 부르면 is from 부르다, “to call.” The conditional ending is 면. It gives the sense of “if I call.”
김 교수님 gim gyosunim	Professor Kim	이제 아주 중요한 규칙이에요. 님은 혼자 쓰는 말이 아니에요. It attaches after a name or a title, as in 김 교수님.
민지 씨 minji ssi	Minji, politely	이름 뒤에는 씨를 붙일 수 있어요. For example, 민지 씨 means “Minji,” politely.
이름 + 씨 ireum + ssi	name + 씨	So 씨 follows a name, and 님 follows a name or title. I should not call someone just 님.
모르면 물어보기 moreumyeon mureobogi	When unsure, ask	맞아요. Also, 씨 is not a universal English-style “sir” or “ma’am.” When you are unsure, asking is safer than attaching 씨 to every person.
아저씨 ajeossi	A context-dependent address for an older man	아저씨 is also not a general replacement for “sir.” 아저씨는 처음 보는 모든 성인 남성에게 쓰는 안전한 호칭이 아니에요. If you are unsure, do not guess it.
준호 선생님 junho seonsaengnim	Teacher Junho	I heard the answer give Hana the exact title, 준호 선생님. Then she simply uses that title.



Grammar / Structure Notes

실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요?

실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요? — Excuse me, what should I call you?

A safe question when you do not know someone's preferred address.

실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요?

실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요? — Excuse me, what should I call you?

Ask first instead of choosing a title yourself.

실례지만

실례지만 — Excuse me, but...

A polite softener before a question.

실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요?

실례지만, + 뭐라고 + 부르면 돼요? — Excuse me, what should I call you?

세 덩어리로 들어 보세요. 실례지만, then 뭐라고, then 부르면 돼요?.

뭐라고 부르면 돼요?

뭐라고 + 부르면 + 돼요? — What should I call you?

뭐라고 means “what, as what.” 부르면 돼요? is literally like asking, “If I call you that, is it okay?” Together, it naturally means, “What should I call you?”

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
실례지만, 뭐라고 부르면 돼요?	sillyejiman, mworago bureumyeon dwaeyo?
부르면 돼요?	bureumyeon dwaeyo?
부르면	bureuda → bureumyeon
뭐라고 부르면 돼요?	mworago bureumyeon dwaeyo?

Self-Check

- 1 Say 뭐라고 부르면 돼요 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
선생님 / 언니 / 아저씨 Addressing People You See Every Day	A1 Honorifics: compare 선생님 / 언니 / 아저씨 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-ADR-001
아줌마 / 아가씨 / 총각 Calling Strangers by Age and Gender	A1 Honorifics: compare 아줌마 / 아가씨 / 총각 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-ADR-002
저기요 다음에 뭐라고 부를까 Choosing a Safe Title After You Get Attention	A1 Honorifics: compare 저기요 다음에 뭐라고 부를까 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-ADR-004
호칭이 애매하면 저기요 A Safe Opener Before Any Title	A1 Honorifics: compare 호칭이 애매하면 저기요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-ADR-003

My Notes

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