



## Korean Ladder Study Note

# 누구세요

## Your First Honorific Questions

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Honorifics Subject Honorifics	누구세요 Your First Honorific Questions

## Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

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

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcWeHf8GJv4>

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

## Core Idea

Okay, real talk. Someone knocks on my door in Seoul. I want to ask 'who are you?' — but I don't want to sound like I'm picking a fight.

Same. In English, 'who are you' is just one phrase. But I keep hearing there's a polite version and a casual version in Korean.

네, 정확해요. The words are almost the same, but one tiny ending decides whether you sound respectful or too blunt.

오늘의 핵심은 -세요예요. Today's key is the ending 세요. It quietly says 'I respect you' to the person you're talking to.

## Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	누구세요? —	Who are you?



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	택배예요. —	It's a delivery.
Hana	지금 어디세요? —	Where are you right now?
Junho	문 앞이에요. —	I'm in front of the door.

## Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
-세요 -seyo	polite honorific ending (to the listener)	오늘의 핵심은 -세요예요. Today's key is the ending 세요. It quietly says 'I respect you' to the person you're talking to.
누구 + 세요 → 누구세요 nugu + seyo → nuguseyo	who → who are you? (polite)	누구 means 'who,' and 어디 means 'where.' Add 세요 and you get 누구세요 and 어디세요 — the polite way to ask.
누구세요 / 어디세요 nuguseyo / eodiseyo	who are you? / where are you? (polite)	So the question word stays, and 세요 is the polite little tail. 누구 plus 세요, 어디 plus 세요.
세요 = 시 + 어요 seyo = si + eoyo	honorific 시 + polite 어요 = 세요	좋은 질문이에요. 세요 is 시 plus 어요. The 시 part lifts up the listener with respect, and 어요 makes it polite and soft.
야 ↔ 세요 ya ↔ seyo	casual (friends) vs. polite (strangers, elders)	네, 조금 무례하게 들려요. 야 is for close friends and kids. With strangers and elders, always use 세요.
누구야 / 어디야 → 누구세요 / 어디세요 nuguya/eodiya → nuguseyo/eodiseyo	casual → polite	So 누구야 and 어디야 are only for my close friends. For anyone else, I add 세요.



## Grammar / Structure Notes

### -세요

-세요 — polite honorific ending (to the listener)

Attach it and your question becomes respectful.

### 누구 + 세요 → 누구세요

누구 + 세요 → 누구세요 — who → who are you? (polite)

어디 + 세요 → 어디세요 (where are you? polite)

### 누구세요?

누구 + 세요 — Who are you? (polite)

들어보세요. 누구세요? That's 'Who are you?' — the version you'd say to a stranger at your door.

### 어디세요?

어디 + 세요 — Where are you? (polite)

그리고 어디세요? On the phone, this means 'Where are you?' — asking politely where someone is.

### 누구세요 / 어디세요

누구세요 / 어디세요 — who are you? / where are you? (polite)

Question word + 세요.

## Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
누구세요?	nuguseyo?
어디세요?	eodiseyo?

## Self-Check

- 1 Say 누구세요 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)시- Adding the Honorific Infix to Any Verb	B1 Honorifics: compare -(으)시- with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-002">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-002</a>
Korean Honorifics 세요 and 께서	A2 Honorifics: compare Korean Honorifics with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-HON-SUB-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-HON-SUB-001</a>
간접 높임 말씀·연세·택에 높임 붙이기	C1 Honorifics: compare 간접 높임 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-SUB-002">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-SUB-002</a>
계시다 / 드시다 / 주무시다 / 연세 / 진지 Special Honorific Words	B1 Honorifics: compare 계시다 / 드시다 / 주무시다 / 연세 / 진지 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-001</a>

## My Notes

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