



## Korean Ladder Study Note

# ㅋ ㅌ ㅍ

## Aspirated and Tense Consonants

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Pronunciation Consonants	ㅋ ㅌ ㅍ Aspirated and Tense Consonants

### Study Links

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

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

[Watch the full video on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uclG0_nKyUI)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uclG0\\_nKyUI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uclG0_nKyUI)

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

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### Core Idea

Okay, real talk — I tried to say 'oyster' and my friend heard 'honey.' What happened?

그건 자음의 세기 때문이에요. Korean lines up three strengths of the same consonant, and the strength changes the meaning.

이름이 있어요. 한 글자가 세 가지 소리를 내요 — 평음, 격음, 경음. One consonant family makes three sounds: plain, aspirated, and tense.

예를 들어 벚을 볼게요. 불은 fire, 풀은 grass, 뿔은 horn. Same lips, three words.

### Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	이거는 뿔이에요? —	Is this a horn?
Junho	아니요, 그건 풀이에요. —	No, that's grass.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	아, 풀. 바람 소리가 들려요. —	Ah, grass — I hear the puff.
Junho	맞아요. 뿔은 더 단단해요. —	Right. 'Ppul' is tighter.

## Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
ㄱ · ㅋ · ㆁ g · k · kk	plain · aspirated · tense	그건 자음의 세기 때문이에요. Korean lines up three strengths of the same consonant, and the strength changes the meaning.
평음 · 격음 · 경음 pyeong-eum · gyeogeum · gyeong-eum	one consonant family, three sounds: plain · aspirated · tense	이름이 있어요. 한 글자가 세 가지 소리를 내요 — 평음, 격음, 경음. One consonant family makes three sounds: plain, aspirated, and tense.
불 · 풀 · 뿔 bul · pul · ppul	fire · grass · horn	예를 들어 ㅂ을 볼게요. 불은 fire, 풀은 grass, 뿔은 horn. Same lips, three words.
불 bul	Aspirated and Tense Consonants	불. 부드럽게, 바람 없이. 'Bul' — soft, no puff of air. 이걸 평음, the plain one.
풀 pul	Aspirated and Tense Consonants	풀. 바람을 내요. 'Pul' — push a puff of air out. 이걸 격음.
뿔 ppul	Aspirated and Tense Consonants	뿔. 목을 조여서 짧고 단단하게. 'Ppul' — tighten your throat, tense and tight, no air. 이걸 경음.
ㅂ → ㅃ → ㅄ —	relaxed → puff → tight	Wait, so 평음 is relaxed, 격음 has the air, and 경음 is the tight one?
ㄷ · ㅌ · ㄸ d · t · tt	plain · aspirated · tense	맞아요. 그리고 같은 방식으로 한 줄 더 있어요. Here's one more row with the same pattern.



# Grammar / Structure Notes

ㄱ · ㅋ · ㆁ

ㄱ · ㅋ · ㆁ — plain · aspirated · tense

One mouth shape, three strengths

평음 · 격음 · 경음

평음 · 격음 · 경음 — one consonant family, three sounds: plain · aspirated · tense

Same shape, different strength

불 · 풀 · 뿔

불 · 풀 · 뿔 — fire · grass · horn

예를 들어 바을 볼게요. 불은 fire, 풀은 grass, 뿔은 horn. Same lips, three words.

ㅂ → ㅃ → ㅍ

ㅂ → ㅃ → ㅍ — relaxed → puff → tight

Wait, so 평음 is relaxed, 격음 has the air, and 경음 is the tight one?

ㄷ · ㅌ · ㄸ

ㄷ · ㅌ · ㄸ — plain · aspirated · tense

Same three strengths

## Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
불	bul
풀	pul
뿔	ppul
굴	gul
손바닥 테스트	sonbadak teseuteu
파, 바	pa / ba
파	pa
달	dal

## Self-Check

1 Say ㅋㅌㅍ 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
ㄴ Plain and Tense Sibilants	A2 Pronunciation: compare ㄴ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-PRON-CNS-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-PRON-CNS-001</a>
ㅏ The Vowels That Now Sound the Same	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅏ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-002">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-002</a>
ㅑ / ㅓ / ㅕ / ㅗ The 'Y' Glide Vowels	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅑ / ㅓ / ㅕ / ㅗ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-004">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-004</a>
ㅛ The Vowels English Speakers Mix Up	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅛ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-001</a>

## My Notes

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