



Korean Ladder Study Note

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The Rounded Glide Vowels Beginners Swap

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Pronunciation Vowels	ㄹ The Rounded Glide Vowels Beginners Swap

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-014>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yb-A2q2idgk>

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's my problem. I see 요리, cooking, and 유리, glass, and somehow my mouth wants to make them sound almost the same.

좋은 질문이에요. 요리 and 유리 differ at the very first vowel sound. 요 starts with the vowel 요. 유 starts with the vowel 유.

If you swap them, the Korean word can become a different word, or just sound unclear.

Today's pattern is the rounded glide vowels: the vowel 요 and the vowel 유. Both start with a small y-like movement, but they land in different places.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	요리 잘하세요? —	Are you good at cooking?



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	아니요, 저는 유리컵도 자주 깨요. —	No, I even often break glass cups.
Hana	그럼 휴지 가져올게요. —	Then I'll bring a tissue.
Hana	요리 잘하세요? —	Are you good at cooking?
Junho	아니요, 저는 유리컵도 자주 깨요. —	No, I even often break glass cups.
Hana	그럼 휴지 가져올게요. —	Then I'll bring a tissue.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
ㅟ / ㅠ yo / yu	rounded glide vowels	Today's pattern is the rounded glide vowels: the vowel 요 and the vowel 유. Both start with a small y-like movement, but they land in different places.
ㅟ → 요, ㅠ → 유 yo, yu	slide into o, slide into u	Think of 요 as a quick slide into 오, and 유 as a quick slide into 우.
요 = y + 오 유 = y + 우 yo = y + o, yu = y + u	same glide, different vowel target	So 요 is like it lands on 오, and 유 lands on 우. That gives my mouth a target.
요 유 yo yu	The Rounded Glide Vowels Beginners Swap	맞아요. For 요, your lips are rounded, but the mouth is a little more open. For 유, the lips are rounded and tighter.
요리 yo-ri	cooking; cuisine	예문으로 들어 볼게요. 요리. 요리 means cooking or cuisine.
유리 yu-ri	glass	유리. 유리 means glass, like the material.
요리 유리 yo-ri yu-ri	The Rounded Glide Vowels Beginners Swap	다시 들어 보세요. 요리. 유리. The second syllable is the same, 리, so the first vowel must be clear.
효도 hyo-do	filial piety; devoted care for parents	Now two high-frequency words. 효도 means being devoted to your parents, often translated as filial piety.



Grammar / Structure Notes

ㅟ / ㅠ

ㅟ / ㅠ — rounded glide vowels

Both start rounded; ㅟ lands like 오, ㅠ lands like 우.

ㅟ → 요, ㅠ → 유

ㅟ → 요, ㅠ → 유 — slide into o, slide into u

Do not flatten them into English spelling.

요 = y + 오 유 = y + 우

요 = y + 오

유 = y + 우 — same glide, different vowel target

So 요 is like it lands on 오, and 유 lands on 우. That gives my mouth a target.

요리

요 + 리 — cooking; cuisine

예문으로 들어 볼게요. 요리. 요리 means cooking or cuisine.

유리

유 + 리 — glass

유리. 유리 means glass, like the material.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
요, 유	yo yu
요 유	yo yu
요리, 유리	yo-ri yu-ri
요리 유리	yo-ri yu-ri
효도, 휴지	hyo-do hyu-ji
효도 휴지	hyo-do hyu-ji
요	yo
유	yu

Self-Check



- 1 Say ㅏ 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
ㅏ The Two Open Vowels Beginners Blur	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅏ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-006
ㅓ The Vowels That Now Sound the Same	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅓ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-002
ㅗ / ㅛ / ㅜ / ㅠ The 'Y' Glide Vowels	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅗ / ㅛ / ㅜ / ㅠ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-004
ㅙ The 'Yae' and 'Ye' Glide Vowels	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅙ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-010

My Notes

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