



Korean Ladder Study Note

입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ

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Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Pronunciation Vowels	입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ 입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-018>

Watch the full video on YouTube

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

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Why do 어 and 오 come out almost the same when I say them? Am I just supposed to open wider?

입술 모양도 중요해요. Lip shape matters too. For 어, don't round your lips. For 오, round them.

So my lips might be turning 어 into something closer to 오.

오늘은 네 모음을 연습해요. Today we practice four vowels: 아, 어, 오, 우. We will use mouth opening, lip shape, and a small tongue adjustment.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	우유 있어요? —	Do you have milk?
Junho	네, 있어요. —	Yes, we do.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	우유 주세요. —	Milk, please.
Junho	네, 여기요. —	Sure, here you go.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
어 ↔ 오 —	Unrounded versus rounded lips	입술 모양도 중요해요. Lip shape matters too. For 어, don't round your lips. For 오, round them.
ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ —	Four vowels: mouth opening, lip shape, tongue position	오늘은 네 모음을 연습해요. Today we practice four vowels: 아, 어, 오, 우. We will use mouth opening, lip shape, and a small tongue adjustment.
오 · 우유 —	Five · milk	작은 차이가 단어를 바꿔요. A small sound difference can change a word. 오 means five. 우 is the first sound in 우유, milk.
아 · 어 · 오 · 우 —	입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ	턱에 힘을 빼세요. Keep your jaw relaxed. These are comfortable movements, not a stretching contest.
아 a	입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ	아. 입을 편하게 크게 벌려요. Open your mouth comfortably wide. Keep your lips unrounded. 아.
아기 agi	Baby	아기. It means baby. Listen to the open first vowel. 아기.
어 · 엄마 —	입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ	어. 입술을 둥글게 모으지 마세요. Keep your lips unrounded, with your mouth a little less open than for 아. 어. 엄마 means mom. 엄마.
오 o	입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ	오. 입술을 둥글게 모아요. Round your lips gently. 오. 오 means five.



Grammar / Structure Notes

어 ↔ 오

어 ↔ 오 — Unrounded versus rounded lips

Mouth opening alone is not enough.

ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅗ · ㅛ

ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅗ · ㅛ — Four vowels: mouth opening, lip shape, tongue position

Read and practice them as 아 · 어 · 오 · 우.

오 · 우유

오 · 우유 — Five · milk

Keep 오 and 우 distinct.

아기

아기 — Baby

Listen for 아 at the beginning.

우유

우유 — Milk

The first vowel is 우.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
아 · 어 · 오 · 우	Relax your jaw. Never force the opening.
아	a
엄마	Unrounded lips; a little less open than 아. 엄마 means mom.
오	o
우	Keep lips rounded. For 우, raise your tongue a little higher than for 오.
아 ↔ 어	Both unrounded. 아 is more open. No forced smile.
오 ↔ 우	Both rounded. The tongue is higher for 우.
아 · 어	Repeat: open, then a little less open. Both unrounded.

Self-Check



- 1 Say 입 벌림으로 잡는 ㅏ · ㅑ · ㅓ · ㅕ · ㅗ 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
ㅑ The Vowels That Now Sound the Same	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅑ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-002
ㅓ / ㅕ / ㅗ / ㅛ The 'Y' Glide Vowels	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅓ / ㅕ / ㅗ / ㅛ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-004
ㅛ The 'Ya' and 'Yeo' Glides Beginners Swap	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅛ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-017

My Notes

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