



Korean Ladder Study Note

생일 / 돌잔치 / 미역국

Korean Birthday Traditions

Level	Topic	Focus
A2 · Elementary TOPIK 2	Culture Holidays	생일 / 돌잔치 / 미역국 Korean Birthday Traditions

Study Links

[Open this lesson on Korean Ladder](https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-CULTURE-HOL-001)

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-CULTURE-HOL-001>

[Watch the full video on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VK21akQJCo0)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VK21akQJCo0>

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

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Core Idea

Okay, real question — my Korean friend had a birthday, and I just froze. What do you actually SAY on the day?

좋은 질문이에요. 오늘은 그걸 다 배워요. We'll cover the words, the food, and the traditions.

오늘의 핵심 패턴은 '생일 축하해요'예요. '축하' is a noun meaning 'congratulations,' and 축하하다 is the verb 'to celebrate.' So together, 생일 축하해요 — 'happy birthday.'

천천히 들어 보세요. 생일 축하해요. One more time — 생일 축하해요.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	생일 축하해요. 미역국 먹었어요? —	Happy birthday. Did you eat seaweed soup?
Hana	네, 아침에 먹었어요. 고마워요. —	Yes, I ate it this morning. Thank you.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	올해도 건강하세요. —	Stay healthy this year, too.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
생일 축하해요 saeng-il chuk-ha-hae-yo	Happy birthday (polite)	오늘의 핵심 패턴은 '생일 축하해요'예요. '축하' is a noun meaning 'congratulations,' and 축하하다 is the verb 'to celebrate.' So together, 생일 축하해요 — 'happy birthday.'
생일 축하해 saeng-il chuk-ha-hae	Happy birthday (casual)	친한 친구한테는 짧게 '생일 축하해'라고 해요. The 요 just drops when you're close.
생일 축하합니다 saeng-il chuk-ha-ham-ni-da	Happy birthday (formal)	어른께는 '생일 축하합니다.' Same words, but 합니다 is the more formal, respectful ending.
해 · 해요 · 합니다 —	casual · polite · formal	Oh, so it's the same building blocks — 해 is casual, 해요 is everyday polite, and 합니다 is formal?
생일 축하해 / 해요 / 합니다 —	friend / polite / formal	맞아요. 같은 말, 세 가지 높임이에요. Same words, three levels of politeness. Pick the level for the person.
돌 dol	a baby's first birthday	이제 아주 특별한 생일, '돌'이에요. 돌 is a baby's very FIRST birthday — a big deal in Korea.
돌잔치 dol-jan-chi	first-birthday party	돌잔치는 돌을 위한 큰 잔치예요. 돌잔치 is the first-birthday party — family, food, and photos.
돌잡이 dol-jab-i	the grab ritual	그리고 '돌잡이'가 있어요. 돌잡이에서는 아기가 물건을 잡아요 — 연필이면 공부, 돈이면 부자. The baby grabs an object: a pencil means a scholar, money means wealth.



Grammar / Structure Notes

생일 축하해요

생일 축하해요 — Happy birthday (polite)

축하 = congratulations · 하다 = to do/celebrate

생일 축하해요

생일 축하해요 — Happy birthday

천천히 들어 보세요. 생일 축하해요. One more time — 생일 축하해요.

생일 축하해

생일 축하해 — Happy birthday (casual)

drop 요 with close friends

생일 축하해요

생일 + 축하 + 해 + 요 — Happy birthday

단어를 쪼개 볼게요. 생일 is 'birthday,' 축하 is 'congratulations,' 해 is the verb, and 요 makes it polite.

생일 축하합니다

생일 + 축하 + 합니다 — Happy birthday (formal)

어른께는 '생일 축하합니다.' Same words, but 합니다 is the more formal, respectful ending.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
미역국	mi-yeok-guk
미역국	mi-yeok-guk

Self-Check

- 1 Say 생일 / 돌잔치 / 미역국 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
새해 복 많이 받으세요 The Korean New Year Greeting Everyone Uses	A1 Culture: compare 새해 복 많이 받으세요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-CULTURE-HOL-001
설날 / 추석 Korea's Two Biggest Holidays	B1 Culture: compare 설날 / 추석 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-CULTURE-HOL-001
K-드라마 단골 대사 Phrases You Always Hear in K-Dramas	A2 Culture: compare K-드라마 단골 대사 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-CULTURE-MED-001
신발 벗고 들어오세요 Shoes, Floors, and Korean Homes	A2 Culture: compare 신발 벗고 들어오세요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-CULTURE-ETQ-001

My Notes

Free Korean lessons, one rung at a time. This PDF, the website, and the video lessons are free for personal study.