



Korean Ladder Study Note

-어 / -지 / -자 / -래?

Casual Sentence Endings Among Friends

Level	Topic	Focus
B1 · Intermediate TOPIK 3	Colloquial Banmal (Casual)	-어 / -지 / -자 / -래? Casual Sentence Endings Among Friends

Study Links

[Open this lesson on Korean Ladder](https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-COLLOQ-BAN-001)

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-COLLOQ-BAN-001>

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

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clnBosw_TkA

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

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Core Idea

Here's my problem. I know 가요, 먹어요, 좋아요. But my Korean friends keep texting 가, 먹어, 좋아. Are they just cutting off 요?

And if I drop 요 with the wrong person, I feel like I might sound rude in about three seconds.

좋은 질문이에요. This style is called 반말. In English, banmal is casual speech for close friends, younger people, or people who already agreed to speak casually.

And banmal is not just removing 요. Today we need four common endings: -어, -지, -자, and -래?

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	야, 배고프지? —	Hey, you're hungry, right?
Junho	응, 완전 배고파. —	Yeah, I'm really hungry.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	그럼 김밥 먹을래? —	Then wanna eat kimbap?
Junho	좋아, 먹자. —	Good, let's eat.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
반말 ban-mal	casual / informal speech	좋은 질문이에요. This style is called 반말. In English, banmal is casual speech for close friends, younger people, or people who already agreed to speak casually.
먹어 meog-eo	eat / I eat / are you eating?	First, -어. This is the plain casual sentence ending. 먹어요 becomes 먹어. 좋아요 becomes 좋아. It can be a statement or a simple question by tone.
맞지 mat-ji	right? / isn't it?	Second, -지. This adds a shared feeling: 'right?', 'you know,' or 'of course.' 맞지 means 'right?' when you expect agreement.
좋지 · 알지 jot-ji · al-ji	good, right · you know, right	좋지 means 'it's good, right.' 알지 means 'you know, right.' The speaker is treating the idea as something both people can share.
가자 ga-ja	let's go	Third, -자. This is the casual 'let's.' 가자 means 'let's go.' 먹자 means 'let's eat.' It sounds like a friendly move toward action.
먹자 meok-ja	let's eat	Use -자 when the plan feels decided or you are inviting the other person into action directly. It's warmer than a command, but it still moves.
갈래 gal-lae	wanna go?	Fourth, -래? This is a casual offer or invite. 갈래? means 'wanna go?' 먹을래? means 'wanna eat?' It leaves room for yes or no.
배고프지 / 배고파 / 먹을래 / 먹자 bae-go-peu-ji / bae-go-pa / meo-geul-lae / meok-ja	right? / plain / wanna? / let's	I heard it. 배고프지 is 'hungry, right?' 배고파 is the plain statement. 먹을래 is the offer. 먹자 is the decision.



Grammar / Structure Notes

반말

반말 — casual / informal speech

for close friends and agreed casual relationships

-어 · -지 · -자 · -래?

-어 · -지 · -자 · -래? — statement · shared assumption · let's · wanna?

four endings, four jobs

먹어

먹 + 어 — eat / I eat / are you eating?

First, -어. This is the plain casual sentence ending. 먹어요 becomes 먹어. 좋아요 becomes 좋아. It can be a statement or a simple question by tone.

먹어

먹어 — plain casual ending

statement or question by tone

맞지

맞 + 지 — right? / isn't it?

Second, -지. This adds a shared feeling: 'right?', 'you know,' or 'of course.' 맞지 means 'right?' when you expect agreement.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
가치 갈래?	gat-i gal-lae

Self-Check

- 1 Say -어 / -지 / -자 / -래? 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
말 놓을까요 Switching to Casual Banmal with Friends	A2 Colloquial: compare 말 놓을까요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-COLLOQ-BAN-001
응 / 어 / 아니 / 몰라 Casual Yes, No, and 'I Dunno'	A2 Colloquial: compare 응 / 어 / 아니 / 몰라 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-COLLOQ-BAN-002
ㅇㅋ / ㄱㄱ / ㅋㅋ Reading Korean Text and Chat Abbreviations	B1 Colloquial: compare ㅇㅋ / ㄱㄱ / ㅋㅋ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-COLLOQ-TXT-001
그럼 / 근데 / 그치 Spoken Shortcuts for 그러면 · 그런데 · 그렇지	B1 Colloquial: compare 그럼 / 근데 / 그치 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-COLLOQ-CTR-001

My Notes

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