



Korean Ladder Study Note

ㄷ 불규칙 / ㅅ 불규칙

듣다·걷다 and 짓다·낫다 Irregulars

Level	Topic	Focus
B1 · Intermediate TOPIK 3	Grammar Verb Conjugation	ㄷ 불규칙 / ㅅ 불규칙 듣다·걷다 and 짓다·낫다 Irregulars

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-CNJ-002>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-IS7YnK5so>

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's a puzzle. 듣다 means 'to listen.' So why does 'I listen' come out 들어요, with a totally different middle?

Hold on — 듣다 and 들어요 don't even look the same in the middle. What happened there?

I keep saying 들어요, and my Korean friend just smiles politely. 뭐가 틀렸어요? What am I getting wrong?

이건 디귤 불규칙이에요. In English — the ㄷ irregular. Before a vowel, the bottom 디귤 turns into 리을. So 듣다 becomes 들어요.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	요즘 무슨 노래를 들어요? —	What songs do you listen to these days?
Junho	발라드를 자주 들어요. 그리고 매일 공원을 걸어요. —	I often listen to ballads. And I walk in the park every day.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	공원을 걸으면서 노래를 들어요? —	You listen to music while walking?
Junho	네, 걸으면서 들어요. —	Yes, I listen while walking.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
ㄷ → ㄹ —	the ㄷ irregular: ㄷ becomes ㄹ before a vowel	이건 디귤 불규칙이에요. In English — the ㄷ irregular. Before a vowel, the bottom 디귤 turns into 리을. So 듣다 becomes 들어요.
ㅅ 탈락 —	the ㅅ irregular: ㅅ drops before a vowel	그리고 짝꿍 규칙이 있어요 — a partner rule, the ㅅ irregular. 모음 앞에서 시옷이 없어져요. Before a vowel, the 시옷 just disappears.
듣다·걷다 / 짓다·낫다 —	today's four irregular verbs	오늘의 동사는 네 개예요. Four verbs: 듣다 and 걷다 for the 디귤 rule, 짓다 and 낫다 for the 시옷 rule.
음악을 들어요 eu-ma-geul deu-reo-yo	I listen to music.	먼저 들어 보세요. 음악을 들어요 — I listen to music. 듣 plus 어요, and the 디귤 melts into 리을.
공원을 걸어요 gong-wo-neul geo-reo-yo	I walk in the park.	같은 규칙이에요. 공원을 걸어요 — I walk in the park. 걷다도 디귤이 리을로 바뀌어요, 걸어요.
집을 지어요 ji-beul ji-eo-yo	I build a house.	이제 시옷이에요. 집을 지어요 — I build a house. 짓 plus 어요, and the 시옷 is simply gone: 지어요.
상처가 나아요 sang-cheo-ga na-a-yo	The wound heals.	낫다도 시옷 불규칙이에요. 상처가 나아요 — the wound heals. 시옷이 없어지고 나아요가 돼요.
듣 + 어요 → 들어요 —	the ㄷ softens to ㄹ before the vowel	Oh — so the consonant softened. 듣 plus 어요 becomes 들어요, because a vowel came right after.



Grammar / Structure Notes

ㄷ → ㄹ

ㄷ → ㄹ — the ㄷ irregular: ㄷ becomes ㄹ before a vowel

듣다 → 들어요

ㅅ 탈락

ㅅ 탈락 — the ㅅ irregular: ㅅ drops before a vowel

짓다 → 지어요

듣다·걷다 / 짓다·낫다

듣다·걷다 / 짓다·낫다 — today's four irregular verbs

오늘의 동사는 네 개예요. Four verbs: 듣다 and 걷다 for the 디귤 rule, 짓다 and 낫다 for the 시옷 rule.

음악을 들어요

음악 + 을 + 들어요 — I listen to music.

먼저 들어 보세요. 음악을 들어요 — I listen to music. 듣 plus 어요, and the 디귤 melts into 리을.

공원을 걸어요

공원 + 을 + 걸어요 — I walk in the park.

같은 규칙이에요. 공원을 걸어요 — I walk in the park. 걷다도 디귤이 리을로 바뀌어요, 걸어요.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
받아요	ba-da-yo

Self-Check

- 1 Say ㄷ 불규칙 / ㅅ 불규칙 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
르 불규칙 / ㅂ 불규칙 Korea's Most Common Irregular Verbs	B1 Grammar: compare 르 불규칙 / ㅂ 불규칙 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-CNJ-001
아요 / 어요 The Polite Present Tense	A1 Grammar: compare 아요 / 어요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-CNJ-001
으 탈락 / ㄹ 탈락 바빠요 · 살아요 · 만들어요	A2 Grammar: compare 으 탈락 / ㄹ 탈락 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-GRAM-CNJ-001
-고 있다 / -아 있다 Ongoing Actions vs Resulting States	B1 Grammar: compare -고 있다 / -아 있다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-TNS-001

My Notes

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