



Korean Ladder Study Note

ㅎ 불규칙

그렇다·빨강다·어떻다 형용사 활용

Level	Topic	Focus
B1 · Intermediate TOPIK 3	Grammar Verb Conjugation	ㅎ 불규칙 그렇다·빨강다·어떻다 형용사 활용

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-CNJ-003>

Watch the full video on YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf36WEvMb_c

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Okay, real question. I learned 빨강다 means red. So red apple should be 빨강은 사과, right? But my Korean friend laughed at me.

그 마음 이해해요. It looks logical. But 빨강다 hides a secret. The ㅎ changes when you add a vowel ending.

This is called ㅎ 불규칙, the ㅎ-irregular. It is a small group of adjectives, but you use them every single day.

The stem ends in the letter 히읃. Words like 그렇다, 빨강다, 어떻게, 이렇다, 저렇다, 파랗다, 노랗다, 하얗다, 까맣다.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	이 빨간 케이크 어때요? —	How's this red cake?
Junho	맛있어요. 색도 예뻐요. —	It's tasty. The color is pretty too.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	그래요? 저도 좋아요. —	Really? I like it too.
Junho	커피는 어때요? —	And how's the coffee?
Hana	커피도 좋아요. —	The coffee is good too.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
ㅎ 불규칙 hieut bulgyuchik	the ㅎ -irregular conjugation	This is called ㅎ 불규칙, the ㅎ -irregular. It is a small group of adjectives, but you use them every single day.
그렇다 · 빨강다 · 어떻다 geureota · ppalgata · eotteota	so / red / how-is-it	The stem ends in the letter 히읃. Words like 그렇다, 빨강다, 어떻게, 이렇다, 저렇다, 파랗다, 노랗다, 하얗다, 까맣다.
빨강 + 은 → 빨간 ppalgat plus eun → ppalgan	red before a noun	Two things happen before many vowel endings. First, the ㅎ disappears. Second, the vowel changes. Let me show you the noun-modifying form.
빨간 사과 ppalgan sagwa	a red apple	So red apple is 빨간 사과. Say it with me. 빨간 사과.
좋은 사과 joeun sagwa	a good apple	정확해요. Now compare a regular adjective. 좋다, good. Before a noun it is 좋은. The letter stays. 좋은 사과, a good apple.
빨간 / 좋은 —	irregular versus regular	That contrast is the whole lesson. 빨간 drops the ㅎ. 좋은 keeps it. 좋다는 not ㅎ -irregular. It just happens to end in the same letter.
빨개요 ppalgaeyo	it's red	Now the polite present tense. Here the vowel change is bigger. 빨강다 becomes 빨개요, not 빨가요.
노래요 noraeyo	it's yellow	좋아요. And the yellow one, 노랗다, works the same way. Before a noun 노란, and in the present tense 노래요.



Grammar / Structure Notes

ㅎ 불규칙

ㅎ 불규칙 — the ㅎ-irregular conjugation

mostly colors plus this-way and that-way words

그렇다 · 빨강다 · 어떻다

그렇다 · 빨강다 · 어떻다 — so / red / how-is-it

stems: 그렇, 빨강, 어떻

빨강 + 은 → 빨간

빨강 + 은 → 빨간 — red before a noun

ㅎ drops, and ㅏ plus 으 gives ㅏ

빨간 사과

빨간 + 사과 — a red apple

So red apple is 빨간 사과. Say it with me. 빨간 사과.

빨간 사과

빨간 + 사과 — a red apple

So... 빨간 사과? Not 빨강은. The ㅎ just vanishes.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
빨개요	ppalgaeyo
그래요	geuraeyo
어때요?	eottaeyo?
빨간 꽃	ppalgan kkot
파래요	haneuri paraeyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say ㅎ 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
ㄷ 불규칙 / ㅅ 불규칙 듣다·걷다 and 짓다·낫다 Irregulars	B1 Grammar: compare ㄷ 불규칙 / ㅅ 불규칙 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-CNJ-002
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
공부해요 / 운동해요 Turning 하다 Nouns into Verbs	A1 Grammar: compare 공부해요 / 운동해요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-CNJ-002
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

My Notes

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