



## Korean Ladder Study Note

# -(으)시-

## Adding the Honorific Infix to Any Verb

Level	Topic	Focus
B1 · Intermediate TOPIK 3	Honorifics Subject Honorifics	-(으)시- Adding the Honorific Infix to Any Verb

## Study Links

[Open this lesson on Korean Ladder](https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-002)

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

[Watch the full video on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zlrZbbYZm8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zlrZbbYZm8>

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

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## Core Idea

Okay, real confession. I know 가세요 and 앉으세요 — but those feel like memorized phrases. What if I want to say someone respected GO, in the past?

Same. I can say 가세요 for 'please go,' but 'she went' politely? My brain just freezes.

There is a system, and it's one little piece. 세요 isn't a magic word — it has a part hiding inside it.

The hidden piece is -(으)시-. We call it the subject honorific. You slide it into the verb to respect the person doing the action.

## Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	선생님 지금 바쁘세요? —	Is the teacher busy right now?
Junho	네, 지금 수업하고 계세요. —	Yes, she's teaching a class right now.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	그럼 언제 오실 거예요? —	Then when will she come?
Junho	두 시에 오실 거예요. —	She'll come at two o'clock.

## Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
-(으)시- -(eu)si-	subject-honorific infix — respects the doer of the action	The hidden piece is -(으)시-. We call it the subject honorific. You slide it into the verb to respect the person doing the action.
가세요 ga-se-yo	(please) go — honorific	Here's the secret. 세요 is really 시 plus 어요. 시 plus 어요 squeezes together into 세요. So 시 was there the whole time.
바쁘다 → 바쁘세요 ba-ppu-da → ba-ppu-se-yo	to be busy → (you) are busy (honorific)	One more surprise — it works on descriptive words too. 바쁘다, 'to be busy,' becomes 바쁘세요. 바쁘세요? means 'Are you busy?' with respect.
세요 = 시 + 어요 se-yo = si + eo-yo	The respect lives in 시 — the ending just makes it polite present.	Wait — so the 시 in 세요 was the respect all along. The 세요 ending wasn't doing it alone.
stem + (으)시 + tense/ending stem + (eu)si + tense	읽 + 으시 + 었어요 → 읽으셨어요 ('(she) read')	So the steps are: find the stem, add 시 or 으시, then bolt on whatever tense I need?
읽으셨어요 il-geu-syeo-sseo-yo	(she) read — honorific past	정확해요. Let me show a consonant stem. 읽다, 'to read,' ends in a consonant, so 읽으시-. Past becomes 읽으셨어요.
먹다→드시다 · 자다→주무시다 · 있다→계시다 deu-si-da · ju-mu-si-da · gye-si-da	eat / sleep / be — special honorific verbs	But careful — three everyday verbs don't take 시. They have their own honorific words. 먹다 'eat' becomes 드시다, 자다 'sleep' becomes 주무시다, and 있다 'be/exist' becomes 계시다.
바쁘세요 · 계세요 · 오실 거예요 ba-ppu-se-yo · gye-se-yo · o-sil geo-ye-yo	busy now · is (doing) now · will come — all honorific	Did you hear it? 바쁘세요, 계세요, 오실 거예요. Same little 시, three different tenses and moods.



# Grammar / Structure Notes

## -(으)시-

-(으)시- — subject-honorific infix — respects the doer of the action

It goes INTO the verb, before the tense and the ending.

## 가세요

가 + 시 + 어요 → 세요 — (please) go — honorific

Here's the secret. 세요 is really 시 plus 어요. 시 plus 어요 squeezes together into 세요. So 시 was there the whole time.

## vowel stem → -시- / consonant stem → -으시-

vowel stem → -시- / consonant stem → -으시- — 가 → 가시-, 읽 → 읽으시-

Same idea as -(으)세요 you already know.

## 할머니가 가세요.

할머니가 + 가 + 세요 — Grandmother is going. (honorific)

Watch it in the present first. 가다 becomes 가시다, and politely 가세요 — 'he goes,' with respect.

## 할머니가 가셨어요.

할머니가 + 가 + 셧 + 어요 — Grandmother went. (honorific)

Now the past. Take 가시- and add the past 었어요. 시 plus 었 becomes 셧. So 가셨어요 — 'she went,' respectfully.

# Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
오셨어요	ha-ra-beo-ji-ga o-syeo-sseo-yo
할아버지가 오셨어요.	ha-ra-beo-ji-ga o-syeo-sseo-yo
읽으세요	chae-geul il-geu-se-yo
책을 읽으세요.	chae-geul il-geu-se-yo
읽 + 으시 → 읽으세요	il-geu-se-yo

# Self-Check

- 1 Say -(으)시- 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
계시다 / 드시다 / 주무시다 / 연세 / 진지 Special Honorific Words	B1 Honorifics: compare 계시다 / 드시다 / 주무시다 / 연세 / 진지 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-001</a>
Korean Honorifics 세요 and 께서	A2 Honorifics: compare Korean Honorifics with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-HON-SUB-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-HON-SUB-001</a>
압존법 When to Lower Honorifics in Front of a Higher Superior	C1 Honorifics: compare 압존법 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-SUB-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-SUB-001</a>
하십시오체 The Formal Speech Level for Announcements	B1 Honorifics: compare 하십시오체 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson <a href="https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-LVL-001">https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-LVL-001</a>

## My Notes

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