



Korean Ladder Study Note

짤 / 움짤 / 짤방

Memes and Reaction Images in Korean Chat

Level	Topic	Focus
C1 · Advanced TOPIK 5	Colloquial Texting	짤 / 움짤 / 짤방 Memes and Reaction Images in Korean Chat

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-COLLOQ-TXT-002>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbY5B1s1o8c>

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Okay, real talk — my Korean friend replied to me with just a picture of a cat. No words. Did I do something wrong?

아니에요, 완벽하게 정상이에요. That cat was a 짤 — a meme image. In Korean chat, a 짤 can BE the whole reply.

짤 is short for 짤방. 짤방은 원래 '짤림 방지'에서 왔어요. It comes from 짤림 방지 — 'preventing your post from getting cut.'

그래서 짤방을 줄여서 '짤'이라고 해요. We shortened 짤방 to just 짤. 그리고 움직이는 짤은 '움짤'이에요.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	야, 아까 그 움짤 뭐야ㅋㅋ —	Hey, what was that GIF from earlier lol
Hana	웃기지? 내 짤 모음에서 꺼냈어. —	Funny, right? I pulled it from my meme folder.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	나도 그거 저장. 단톡방에 뿌려야지. —	Saving that too. Gonna spam it in the group chat.
Hana	ㅋㅋㅋ 찔로 대답 끝. —	Haha, conversation answered with a meme, done.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
찔방 jjalbang	meme / reaction image (originally 'cut-prevention' image)	찔 is short for 찔방. 찔방은 원래 '찔림 방지'에서 왔어요. It comes from 찔림 방지 — 'preventing your post from getting cut.'
찔 / 움찔 / 찔방 jjal / umjjal / jjalbang	meme image / moving GIF / the full original word	그래서 찔방을 줄여서 '찔'이라고 해요. We shortened 찔방 to just 찔. 그리고 움직이는 찔은 '움찔'이에요.
움찔 umjjal	an animated GIF (a 'moving meme')	So 움찔 is a GIF! 움 comes from 움직이다, to move — a moving 찔. That's kind of adorable.
이 찔 진짜 웃기다 i jjal jinjjja utgida	This meme is really funny.	정확해요. Let's see them in a real sentence. 이 찔 진짜 웃기다.
움찔 좀 보내줘 umjjal jom bonaejwo	Send (me) a GIF, please.	한 개 더. 움찔 좀 보내줘. Send me a GIF — very common in a group chat.
좀 jom	softener in requests ≈ 'please / would you'	맞아요. In requests, 좀 makes it gentle and friendly, not literally 'a little.' 움찔 좀 보내줘 = 'send a GIF, would you.'
찔 모음 jjal moeum	a meme collection / a folder of reaction images	그리고 찔을 많이 모아두면 '찔 모음'이라고 해요. A collection of memes is a 찔 모음.
단톡방 / 뿌리다 dantokbang / ppurida	group chat room / to scatter (here: spam an image around)	I caught 단톡방 — that's the group chat, right? And 뿌리다 means to scatter, like spamming it everywhere.



Grammar / Structure Notes

짤방

짤방 — meme / reaction image (originally 'cut-prevention' image)

old forums deleted text-only posts, so people attached any image

짤 / 움짤 / 짤방

짤 / 움짤 / 짤방 — meme image / moving GIF / the full original word

움 = 움직이다 (to move) + 짤

움짤

움짤 — an animated GIF (a 'moving meme')

움직이다 → 움 + 짤

이 짤 진짜 웃기다

이 + 짤 + 진짜 + 웃기다 — This meme is really funny.

정확해요. Let's see them in a real sentence. 이 짤 진짜 웃기다.

이 짤 진짜 웃기다

이 + 짤 + 진짜 + 웃기다 — This meme is really funny.

여기서 '웃기다'는 반말이에요. Notice 웃기다 is casual — in chat we often drop the polite ending. 짤 lives in casual space.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
이 움짤 진짜 웃기다	i umjjal jinjja utgida
짤, 움짤	jjal · umjjal
짤 · 움짤	jjal · umjjal

Self-Check

- 1 Say 짤 / 움짤 / 짤방 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
야민정음 댕댕이 / 머장 / 비빔면 글자 놀이 읽기	C1 Colloquial: compare 야민정음 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-COLLOQ-TXT-001
ㄹㅇ / ㅇㄱㄹㅇ / ㄹㅇㅋㅋ Texting 'For Real' in Korean Chat	B1 Colloquial: compare ㄹㅇ / ㅇㄱㄹㅇ / ㄹㅇㅋㅋ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-COLLOQ-TXT-003
ㅇㅇ / ㄴㄴ / ㅈㅈ / ㅇㅈ More Korean Chat Shorthand	B1 Colloquial: compare ㅇㅇ / ㄴㄴ / ㅈㅈ / ㅇㅈ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-COLLOQ-TXT-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

My Notes

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