



Korean Ladder Study Note

대중교통 예절

Priority Seats, Phone Calls, and Quiet Cars

Level	Topic	Focus
C1 · Advanced TOPIK 5	Culture Etiquette	대중교통 예절 Priority Seats, Phone Calls, and Quiet Cars

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

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

Watch the full video on YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xhu_kE9qbcM

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's what surprises visitors: a subway seat is completely empty, but nobody sits down. 왜 그럴까요? Why?

So I have to ask — 지하철은 뭐가 달라요? What's different about the subway here?

좋은 질문이에요. 지하철은 아주 조용해요. The subway is very quiet — it almost feels like a library on rails.

예절이 중요해요. These manners aren't rules on a sign — they're how we show 배려, consideration for strangers.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	어? 어르신 오셨어요. 여기 앉으세요. —	Oh, an elder got on. Please sit here.
Junho	제가 일어날게요. 자리 양보할게요. —	I'll get up. I'll give up my seat.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	가방은 앞으로 메요. 사람이 많아요. —	Wear your bag in front. It's crowded.
Junho	네, 조용히 갈게요. —	Sure, I'll ride quietly.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
지하철은 jihacheol-eun	as for the subway (topic)	So I have to ask — 지하철은 뭐가 달라요? What's different about the subway here?
지하철은 아주 조용해요 jihacheol-eunaju joyonghaeyo	The subway is very quiet.	좋은 질문이에요. 지하철은 아주 조용해요. The subway is very quiet — it almost feels like a library on rails.
배려 baeryeo	consideration, thoughtfulness	예절이 중요해요. These manners aren't rules on a sign — they're how we show 배려, consideration for strangers.
노약자석 noyakjaseok	priority seat (for elderly & infirm)	First, look at the seats at each end of the car. 노약자석은 노약자를 위한 자리예요 — the priority seat is for the elderly and the less able.
노약자석은 비어 있어도 않지 않아요 noyakjaseog-eun bieo isseodo anjji anhayo	Even if the priority seat is empty, people don't sit.	노약자석은 비어 있어도 앉지 않아요. Even when it's empty, most people leave it open — just in case someone needs it.
임산부석 imsanbuseok	seat for pregnant women	그리고 임산부석도 있어요. There's also 임산부석 — the pink seat reserved for pregnant riders.
임산부석은 임산부를 위한 자리예요 imsanbuseog-eun imsanbureul wihan jariyeyo	The pregnancy seat is a seat for expectant riders.	임산부석은 임산부를 위한 자리예요. 임신하지 않았으면 앉지 마세요 — if you're not expecting, please leave it open.
자리를 양보하다 jarireul yangbohada	to give up / yield one's seat	Wow, so 자리를 양보해요 — you give up your seat? Even if you sat down first?



Grammar / Structure Notes

지하철은

지하철은 — as for the subway (topic)

지하철 = subway; -은 marks the topic, 'as for ____.'

지하철은 아주 조용해요

지하철은 아주 조용해요 — The subway is very quiet.

조용하다 = to be quiet

배려

배려 — consideration, thoughtfulness

배려하다 = to be considerate of others

노약자석

노약자석 — priority seat (for elderly & infirm)

노약자 = the old and the weak; 석 = seat. On the subway also 교통약자 배려석.

노약자석은 비어 있어도 앉지 않아요

노약자석 + 은 + 비어 + 있어도 + 앉지 + 않아요 — Even if the priority seat is empty, people don't sit.

노약자석은 비어 있어도 앉지 않아요. Even when it's empty, most people leave it open — just in case someone needs it.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
자근 목소리로 마래요	jageun moksoriro malhaeyo
자리 양보할게요	jari yangbohalgeyo
자리 양보할게요	jari yangbohalgeyo
양보할게요	yangbohalgeyo
조용히 해 주세요	joyonghi hae juseyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 대중교통 예절 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
눈치 / 정 / 체면 The Social Concepts Behind Korean Behavior	C1 Culture: compare 눈치 / 정 / 체면 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-CULTURE-ETQ-001
경조사 예절 결혼식·장례식 봉투와 조의금	B2 Culture: compare 경조사 예절 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B2-CULTURE-ETQ-001
고개 숙여 인사 How Koreans Bow and Greet Elders	A1 Culture: compare 고개 숙여 인사 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-CULTURE-ETQ-003
나이 / 띠 / 빠른 년생 Why Koreans Ask Your Age First	A2 Culture: compare 나이 / 띠 / 빠른 년생 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-CULTURE-ETQ-002

My Notes

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