

1 인사

IN THIS UNIT ...

- Basic Insa
- Reading *romanised* Hangeul
- Pronunciation



INSA – SAYING THE RIGHT THING

For Koreans, as for all people, having the right phrase for the right occasion is the hallmark of politeness. Insa (in Hangeul it's written 인사) literally means *people business*, and might loosely be described as the art of greeting and talking casually to people in the proper way. In this first unit of the course, we learn a few basic Insa.

1 Basic Insa

Hello. I'm ...

When we extend a friendly greeting to people we usually say:

An-nyeong-ha-se-yo?
(How are you?)

The standard reply is to give a positive answer, ie ne (yes), and ask the same question: Ne, an-nyeong-ha-se-yo? (Good, how are you?)

Note that an-nyeong-ha- means *to be at peace*. Thus, the literal translation of the exchange would be: *Are you at peace?* and *Yes, and are you at peace?*

To introduce ourselves, we say our name and then either -ye-yo or -i-e-yo

(*I'm ..., it's ...* etc). We use -ye-yo if our name ends in a vowel sound, and -i-e-yo if it ends in a consonant sound. Note that we are talking about *sounds* not *spelling*. See how people in the picture identify themselves.

As you would expect, your name may have to be modified, slightly or dramatically, according to the Korean sound system. This modification may have an impact on the choice between -ye-yo and



-i-e-yo. Here are some notes. First, with names that end in an *r* sound, eg *Barber, Miller, Taylor*, etc, Koreans don't pronounce the final *r*. These names are then seen to end in a vowel sound within the Korean sound system. This is why Kylie Walker in the picture chooses -ye-yo and says: Ka-il-li wo-keo-ye-yo (not Ka-il-li wo-keo-r-i-e-yo).

What happens if your name ends in an *l* sound? You will use -i-e-yo since your name ends in a consonant, but the final *l* sound in your name will be changed to *r*. Suppose your name is Debbie Bell. You will then introduce yourself in Korean: De-bi ber-i-e-yo (not De-bi bel-i-e-yo).

When reading foreign names that end in a consonant sound such as *p, b, t, d, k* and *g* (linguists call them *non-nasal stops*), Koreans generally add a schwa-like vowel sound, represented here as *eu*, to the final consonant. Names such as *Hart* and *Hind* will be pronounced as Ha-teu and Ha-in-deu in Korean, which of course means that they are to be treated as names ending in a vowel. Thus, we say: Ha-teu-ye-yo and Ha-in-deu-ye-yo (not Hat-i-e-yo for instance).

The same goes for names ending in *s, f, th* and their voiced counterparts (linguists call all these *fricative* sounds). If your name is Harris, you will say: Hae-ri-seu-ye-yo.

With names such as *Bush, Dash* and *George* (the final consonant of each is called a *palato-alveolar* sound), Koreans add the vowel *i* at the end. Thus if your name is George, you will say: Jo-ji-ye-yo.

Ask your instructor, if your name is outside these notes.

Pleased to meet you.

When we meet people for the first time, we can also say: Ban-gap-sseum-ni-da (*Pleased to meet you*). The literal meaning is *I'm pleased*. Here the reason why you are pleased (ie *to meet you*) is implied.

The usual reply would be to say *ne* (*yes*) and echo the expression: Ne, ban-gap-sseum-ni-da (*Pleased to meet you, too*), which means *Yes, and I'm pleased too*.



Welcome. Come in.

You're now visiting a Korean family.

Upon arrival, you'll be greeted by the family with an expression such as: Eo-seo o-se-yo (*Welcome*). Here the literal meaning is *Come (in) quickly*. This may sound pushy, but it is an indication that your host and hostess are so happy to see you that they want you to come in without delay.

Another common welcome is: Deur-eo-o-se-yo (*Come in*).



Good-bye. See you again.

When someone is leaving, we say: An-nyeong-hi ga-se-yo (*Good-bye: literally, Please go in peace*).

But if it is we who are leaving, we say: An-nyeong-hi gye-se-yo (*Good-bye: literally, Please stay in peace*) to whoever is staying behind.

We can of course add: Tto man-na-yo (*See you again: literally, We meet again*).



Sorry I'm late.

For minor indiscretions, we usually say:

Mi-an-ham-ni-da (*I'm sorry: literally, I'm upsetting things*).

To respond, we say:

Gwaen-chan-a-yo (*It's OK*).

To show our appreciation, we say: Gam-sa-ham-ni-da or Go-map-sseum-ni-da (*Thank you: literally, I'm grateful*). The two expressions are interchangeable.

It might be useful at this stage to know how to apologise to your teacher for being moderately late to Korean language class. This is not to encourage you to be late! But if you happen to be late, say: Neuj-eo-seo mi-an-ham-ni-da (*Sorry I'm late*). Here, Neuj- means *being late*, and -eo-seo *because*.



In the picture, upon the student's apology, the friendly Korean teacher says *It's OK*, and offers a seat by saying: Anj-eu-se-yo (*Take a seat*). The student then says *Thank you*.

It is part of Western etiquette to acknowledge even minor services, such as the dispensing of tickets or even the giving back of change, with a brief *Thank you* or equivalent. By contrast in Korea, expressions of this type are not used as often. They are usually reserved for acts of individual thoughtfulness, rather than actions performed as part of one's job.

2 Romanisation

As you probably already know, Korean is written in its own very simple, and ingenious, phonetic script called Hangeul. However, as a transitory means, Korean expressions in the first lesson have been written in the English alphabet.

The process of writing Hangeul in the Roman alphabet is known as *romanisation*. There are a few romanisation systems available, but the one that we follow here is ‘The Revised Romanization of Korean’, or RRK, developed in 2000 by the National Academy of the Korean Language in the Republic of Korea. Currently, many street signs in Korea are given not just in Hangeul but also in the Roman Alphabet, and it is the RRK that is predominantly adopted here.

However, you should not take romanisation to be the same as spelling in English. This is because the way words are spelt in English does not reflect the way they are actually pronounced. For example, the *a* in *arm*, *dare*, *dame* and *dam* is pronounced differently in each case. Romanisation is a convention whereby we standardise pronunciation by assigning constant values to each letter. Within RRK, as we explain below in more detail, the letter *a* is consistently used to represent the English *a* sound as in *arm*; it is not used for any other sounds which the letter *a* may represent in English.

Another warning is that, while Hangeul renders the sounds of Korean in a remarkably accurate way, no script can ever fully describe the actual sounds of any given language. For instance, the Hangeul letter ㄷ is pronounced as *d* when it occurs between two voiced sounds, and as *t* elsewhere. RRK romanises the ㄷ letter as *d̄* when it is followed by a vowel, and *t* when it is followed by another consonant or when it forms the final sound of a word. This works well, except when the ㄷ letter occurs sentence-initially and is followed by a vowel. This is a situation where the ㄷ letter is romanised as *d̄* but is pronounced as *t*. Thus, when you say: Ban-gap-sseum-ni-d̄a, you should pronounce the underlined *d̄* as *d*, but when you say: D̄eur-eo-o-se-yo, you should pronounce the underlined *d̄* as *t*.

3 RRK and pronunciation

Generally speaking, the sounds of Korean will be familiar to the English speaker, and thus pronunciation should not be a serious problem. We shall look at pronunciation more closely in subsequent lessons, however please note the following points.

Notes for Consonants

In the list below all the Korean consonants are given in Korean alphabetical order.

All the consonants appearing in RRK are basically the same as in English.

A doubled consonant, that is, *pp*, *tt*, *ss*, *jj* or *kk*, indicates tensed pronunciation. In English tensed consonants do not constitute separate sound categories for distinguishing between words, but tensed consonants do exist. For example, the *p*, *t* and *k* sounds in *s* clusters are tensed consonants – such as *spot*, *stop* and *sky*. Ask your instructor, if you are not clear what tensed pronunciation entails.

By convention, *ss* and *ss* in RRK shall be pronounced respectively as *sh* and ‘tensed’ *sh* (ie *sh* with a stronger hiss) if they are followed by *i* or *y*. Thus, when you read *ssi*, for instance, you should not read it in the same way of naming the English letter *c* but as *she*.

As briefly mentioned above, *b*, *d*, *g* and *j* are pronounced the same as in English, except when they occur sentence-initially. In this case they are pronounced as *p*, *t*, *k* and *ch*, respectively.

Also, note that Korean *ㄹ* is a ‘flap’ *r*. Although replacing *ㄹ* with English *r* does not bring about a meaning change, you should know *ㄹ* is produced by a single, quick flap of the tongue against the alveolar ridge – the inward projection of the gums between the upper teeth and the hard palate. Ask your instructor for a demonstration.

Consonants	
g	
kk	as in <u>sky</u>
n	
d	
tt	as in <u>stop</u>
r/l	
m	
b	
pp	as in <u>spot</u>
s	
ss	
ng	as in <u>sing</u>
j	
jj	
ch	
k	
t	
p	
h	

Vowels	
a	as in <u>part</u>
ae	as in <u>cab</u> le
ya	as in <u>yard</u>
yae	as in <u>yabby</u>
eo	as in <u>pot</u>
e	as in <u>pet</u>
yeo	as in <u>yonder</u>
ye	as in <u>yet</u>
o	as in <u>port</u>
wa	as in <u>wonder</u>
wae	as in <u>wag</u>
oe	as in <u>wet</u>
yo	as in <u>your</u>
u	as in <u>do</u>
wo	as in <u>wobble</u>
we	as in <u>wet</u>
wi	as in <u>weeds</u>
yu	as in <u>few</u>
eu	as in <u>urn</u>
ui	Say <u>Ernie</u> without the <u>n</u> (and without moving the lips)
i	as in <u>feet</u>

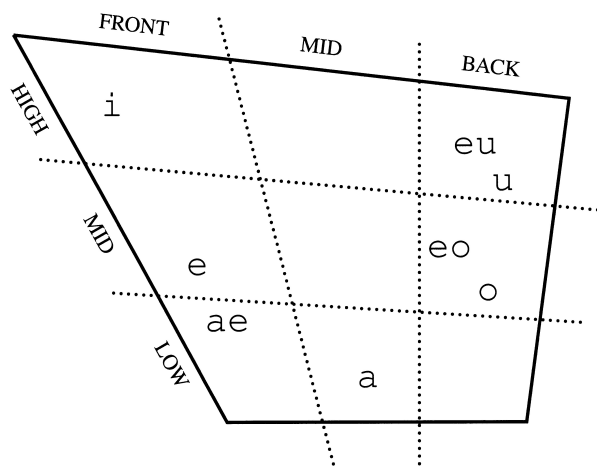
Notes for Vowels

In the list above all the Korean vowels are given with approximate Australian English equivalents. We suggest you treat the equivalents as a preliminary guide only. In order to develop accurate pronunciation, pay close attention to your instructor and to the language tapes or CDs that accompany this course. The list is in Korean alphabetical order.

There are a total of twenty-one different vowel symbols in Hangeul. But note that, in the spoken language, only eight vowel sounds occur. Some of these eight vowel sounds combine with either *w* or *y* (the semi-vowels) to form composite sounds.

Note also that the distinction between *oe* and *we* is not obvious in standard spoken Korean.

Some people find it easier to relate to vowels if they know the approximate point of articulation in the mouth. Next is a common figure used by linguists and language teachers to demonstrate this. It is a cutaway side view of the mouth. The marked zones indicate the relative positions of the highest point of the tongue when a speaker is properly pronouncing the single Korean vowels indicated. For example, when you pronounce *i*, it is a high, front vowel – the point at which articulation occurs is high up and in the front of the mouth. On the other hand, *u* is a high, back vowel.



Note that *u* and *o* are pronounced with the lips rounded

More Notes

The dash symbol, ‘-’, in the romanisation stands for what we loosely call syllable boundary within an independent expression. (Strictly speaking, this is not part of RRK conventions. In RRK the usage of the dash symbol is somewhat arbitrary. It can be inserted, for example, where there is the possibility of confusion in pronunciation.) Broadly stated, the rhythmic structure of a Korean sentence is such that you can take one syllable to have one beat. Thus, when you practise reading, eg An-nyeong-ha-se-yo?, it might be an idea to clap five times while saying the whole sentence.

Koreans use punctuation marks, such as ‘,’, ‘.’, and ‘?’, in very much the same way as you do in English. They also use a space as you do in English after an independent expression, eg a word. All these are reflected in the Romanisation system. (Note that suffixes or particles such as case markers are all attached to the stem or the noun concerned in Korean, that is, no space is given between the stem and suffixes and between the noun and particles. We will study this part of grammar in more detail later in the course.)

4 More expressions

Here are some more Insa expressions and some classroom instructions you may hear your instructor using. They’re not intended for you to learn by heart in this unit (some of them we study more closely in Unit 7), but their use can help to give a more Korean ‘feel’ to classroom procedure.

또 뵙겠습니다.	Hope to see you again.	Tto bwoep-gess-sseum-ni-da.
천만에요.	You’re welcome.	Cheon-man-e-yo.
네./예.	Yes.	Ne./Ye.
아니요.	No.	A-ni-yo.
선생님 ...	Teacher, ...	Seon-saeng-nim ...
... (Your Name) + 씨	Mr/Ms + ssi
잘 들으세요.	Listen closely.	Jal deur-eu-se-yo.
따라 하세요.	Repeat.	Tta-ra ha-se-yo.
읽으세요.	Read.	Ilg-eu-se-yo.
쓰세요.	Write (it).	Sseu-se-yo.
질문 있어요?	Any questions?	Jil-mun iss-eo-yo?
아시겠어요?	Do you get it?	A-si-gess-eo-yo?
네, 알겠어요.	Yes, I get it.	Ne, al-gess-eo-yo.
아니요, 잘 모르겠어요.	No, I don’t get it.	A-ni-yo, jal mo-reu-gess-eo-yo.
해 보세요.	Try (it).	Hae bo-se-yo.
다 같이 ...	All together ...	Da gach-i ...
다시 한번 ...	Once again ..., Once more ...	Da-si han beon ...
잘 하셨습니다.	Well done!	Jal ha-syeoss-eo-yo.
천천히 ...	(Please speak) slowly.	Cheon-cheon-hi ...
잊어버렸어요.	I’ve forgotten.	Ij-eo-beo-ryeoss-eo-yo.