Settle. Seoul

LEARNING KOREAN · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Learn the phrases that remove friction.

Romanisation is only a bridge. Listen to native audio and confirm Hangul spelling before relying on a phrase in a high-stakes situation.

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> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Choose one repeated context and practise the same small language set there.
- Pick a course you can actually attend around work and family.
- Aim first for introductions, numbers, dates, addresses, and transport.

> Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 63, 64, 51.

> Official routes: Korean classes for foreign residents · Free Korean-language education · Seoul Foreign Portal · Talk To Me In Korean (talktomeinkorean.com).

LEARNING KOREAN

Eight phrases for everyday Seoul

Start with the language that keeps ordinary moments moving.

1. **안녕하세요 · Annyeonghaseyo** — Hello. A polite default greeting for shops, offices, colleagues, and neighbours.
2. **주세요 · Juseyo** — Please give me… Combine with pointing or the item name.
3. **얼마예요? · Eolmayeyo?** — How much is it? Useful in markets and small shops.
4. **어디예요? · Eodiyeyo?** — Where is it? Add the place or show the address.
5. **영어 돼요? · Yeongeo dwaeyo?** — Is English possible? Ask early and politely.
6. **다시 말해 주세요 · Dasi malhae juseyo** — Please say it again. Slow the conversation before guessing.
7. **잘 모르겠어요 · Jal moreugesseoyo** — I am not sure / I do not understand well.
8. **도와주세요 · Dowajuseyo** — Please help me. In danger, call the relevant emergency number too.

> **Best method**
> Choose one repeated context — coffee, taxi, work, market, or building management — and practise the same small language set there.

LEARN HANGUL

Read the letters before you memorise phrases

Hangul has 24 basic letters that stack into syllable blocks: 한 = ㅎ h + ㅏ a + ㄴ n. Most learners can sound out simple words within a few short sessions, which makes station names, menus and shop signs readable and lets you check a phrase's real spelling instead of trusting romanisation.

Session 1: vowels

- Learn ㅏ a · ㅓ eo · ㅗ o · ㅜ u · ㅡ eu · ㅣ i.
- Vertical vowels sit to the right of a consonant (가), horizontal ones underneath (고).

Session 2: consonants

- Learn ㄱ g · ㄴ n · ㄷ d · ㄹ r/l · ㅁ m · ㅂ b · ㅅ s · ㅇ (silent / ng) · ㅈ j · ㅎ h.
- ㅇ is silent at the start of a block: 아 is just a.

Session 3: read real signs

- Sound out 서울 Seo-ul, 출구 chul-gu (exit), 화장실 hwa-jang-sil (toilet).
- Then read your own station's name on the platform sign.

Keep going

- The full vowel and consonant chart, combined vowels and a printable bookmark are in our companion guide, A little Korean goes a long way.
- Pair reading with native audio: letters change sound at the end of a syllable.

Why it matters
Romanisation varies from sign to sign and app to app. Hangul does not — once you can read it, every phrase in this guide can be checked against the Korean.

EVERYDAY SITUATIONS

Phrases for the places you go every week

Each phrase shows Hangul first, then romanisation, then meaning. Listen to native audio before relying on any of them.

Convenience store & supermarket

- 봉투 필요하세요? · Bongtu piryohaseyo? — Do you need a bag? (you'll hear this)
- 봉투 주세요 · Bongtu juseyo — A bag, please
- 카드로 할게요 · Kadeuro halgeyo — I'll pay by card
- 영수증 버려 주세요 · Yeongsujeung beoryeo juseyo — Please throw the receipt away

Taxi & transport

- (place) 가 주세요 · (place) ga juseyo — To (place), please
- 여기서 내려 주세요 · Yeogiseo naeryeo juseyo — Please let me off here
- 이 버스 (place) 가요? · I beoseu (place) gayo? — Does this bus go to (place)?
- 몇 번 출구예요? · Myeot beon chulguyeyo? — Which exit number is it?

Café & restaurant

- 포장해 주세요 · Pojanghae juseyo — To take away, please
- 여기서 먹을게요 · Yeogiseo meogeulgeyo — I'll eat here
- 물 좀 주세요 · Mul jom juseyo — Some water, please
- 덜 맵게 해 주세요 · Deol maepge hae juseyo — Less spicy, please

Building, clinic & office

- 택배 왔어요 · Taekbae wasseoyo — A parcel has arrived (you'll hear this)
- 예약했어요 · Yeyakhaesseoyo — I have a reservation / appointment
- 외국인등록증 있어요 · Oegugin deungnokjeung isseoyo — I have an ARC
- 천천히 말씀해 주세요 · Cheoncheonhi malsseumhae juseyo — Please speak slowly

Polite by default
Ending a request with 주세요 (juseyo) or a sentence with 요 (yo) keeps you polite with strangers. Save casual speech for friends who use it with you first.

LEARNING KOREAN

Choose a course you can sustain

The fastest course is not useful if work, commuting, or family life makes regular attendance impossible.

Foreign-resident centres

- Seoul operates practical Korean classes through resident-support centres.
- Courses can range from beginner and daily life to TOPIK preparation.
- Locations, schedules, eligibility, and registration change by term.

University institutes

- Structured intensive programmes with a clear progression.
- Useful for study-focused learners able to commit significant time.
- Compare tuition, schedule, visa implications, and assessment style.

Online public resources

- Online King Sejong and other public platforms support flexible study.
- Combine lessons with real listening and speaking.
- Track a small number of useful patterns rather than collecting apps.

Language exchange

- Agree the time split and learning goal before meeting.
- Choose a public venue and protect personal information.
- A friendly conversation partner is not automatically a trained teacher.

A useful target
Aim first to handle introductions, numbers, dates, addresses, transport, shopping, appointments, and one recurring work conversation.

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