

PETER CONSTANTINE and GENE BAIK,  
revised by LAURA KINGDON  
and CHRIS BACKE

**NEW**  
REVISED AND  
EXPANDED

# MAKING OUT IN KOREAN



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**MAKING OUT IN**  
**KOREAN**

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KOREAN**

**Revised Edition**

by **Peter Constantine**

2nd edition revised by **Gene Baik**

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Tuttle Publishing  
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How do you do?  
Cheo-eum  
boep-kket-sseumnida.



Hello!  
Yeoboseyo!



How are you doing?  
Jal isseosseo?



What's  
new?  
Byeollil  
eop-jjiyo?



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# Introduction

*Making Out in Korean* introduces a colloquial form of spoken Korean, that you would not learn in a formal language course. It gives you an edge when maneuvering through the ins and outs of everyday life in Korean.

Unlike English, Korean has several speech levels that are formally codified. Age, social standing and the degree of intimacy you have with the person being addressed determines the level of politeness you should adopt. The different speech levels are marked by the verb endings placed at the end of sentences. Needless to say, you are required to use the polite form with strangers, your seniors and those of a higher social status. However, as your relationship with them develops, a more relaxed and casual form of the language may be adopted.

*Making Out in Korean* presents the intimate and colloquial speech level of Korean that is often used among very close friends, including couples. This book contains "street-Korean" in addition to derogatory and vulgar expressions to enrich your spoken Korean!

Apart from the *Curses and Insults* section, any words requiring caution are marked and coupled with explanations to avoid misuse. Although most of this phrase book adopts an intimate and colloquial style of speech, selected expressions are presented in the polite (informal) form, when necessary and are marked in brackets. The polite (informal) form of Korean is achieved by attaching **-yo** at the end of intimate speech forms, which usually end in **-a** or **-eo**.

Care should be taken not to jump the gun before a relationship has matured. Using an informal or vulgar speech level in the wrong social context would be considered extremely insulting to a Korean person. To be on the safe side, refrain from adopting such levels of speech until the other party initiates it or both parties have reached a mutual agreement to do so.

## BASIC GRAMMAR

The Korean language follows the word order of Subject-Object-Verb as opposed to the word order (Subject-Verb-Object) of English. Verbs are placed at the end of sentences, a position that reflects its importance in Korean grammar.

**I am going to school.**

**hak-kyo ga.** (Statement)

*hahk-kkyo gah.*

학교 가.

Literally means "School go."

Another salient feature of spoken Korean is that any element of the sentence may be omitted except the verb as long as you can clearly gather from the context what is being talked about. As a result, a single verb can be a complete sentence in Korean as indicated by the third example below.

## Go to school!

**hak-kyo ga!** (Command)

*hahk-kkyo gah!*

학교 가.

Literally means "School go."

## Let's go to school.

**hak-kyo ga.** (Suggestion)

*hahk-kkyo gah.*

학교 가.

Literally means "School go."

## Are you going?

**ga?** (Question)

*gah?*

가?

Literally means "Go?"

## Going to school! (You're joking!)

**hak-kyo ga.** (Exclamation)

*hahk-kyo gah.*

학교 가!

In Korean, the same sentence structure can be used for both sentences and statements. The following examples illustrate that by merely substituting the question word "where" with "school" changes a question into a declarative statement:

## Where are you going?

**erdi ga?** (Question)

*uhdee gah?*

어디 가?

Literally means "Where go?"

## I am going to school.

**hak-kyo ga.** (Statement)



*hahk-kyo gah.*

---

학교 가.

Literally means "School go."

Broadly speaking, expressions in the intimate form of speech can be converted into the polite (informal) form by simply adding **-yo** at the end, which usually end in **-a** or **-eo**:

**hak-kyo ga.** (Intimate level of speech)

*hahk-kyo gah.*

학교 가.

Literally means "School go."

**hak-kyo gayo.** (Informal polite level of speech)

*hahk-kyo gahyo.*

Literally means "School go."

## READING ROMANIZED KOREAN

Two systems are used to show the pronunciation of the Korean phrases in the ordinary English alphabet.

The upper line on the right of the page follows the official Revised Romanization of Korean prepared and authorized by the Korean government in 2000. The letters used in this transcription have to be pronounced in a certain way only: they should not be treated like the letters in English which have different sounds in different words, for example the **a** in "apple," "father," "syllable" and "date."

Because it can at first be quite difficult for English speakers to read romanized Korean correctly, an approximate phonetic equivalent, designed to reflect the closest English equivalent to each Korean sound, is given in a second line underneath the official transcription of each phrase. When necessary, a hyphen (-) is used to mark a syllable boundary so that any confusion in pronunciation is avoided.

Each phrase is also written in Korean script under the Romanized and phonetic phrases on the right of the page, so that if you have difficulty in making yourself understood by following the romanized versions you can show the book to the person you're talking to and they will be able to read what you mean.

## CONSONANTS

(1) Simple consonants

ㄱ **g, k**

ㄴ **n**

ㄷ **d, t**

---

ㄹ **r, l**

ㅁ **m**

ㅂ **b, p**

ㅅ **s**

ㅇ **ng**

ㅈ **j**

ㅊ **ch**

ㅋ **k**

ㅌ **t**

ㅍ **p**

ㅎ **h**

## (2) Double consonants

ㄲ **kk**

ㅌ **tt**

ㅃ **pp**

ㅆ **ss**

ㅉ **jj**

Most of the consonants are pronounced as in English except the tensed (double) consonants.

## Double Consonants

There isn't much difficulty in pronouncing romanized Korean except for the tensed (double) consonants that require a relatively strong muscular effort in the vocal organs without the expulsion of air.

<b>English</b>	<b>Korean</b>	<b>Approximate in English</b>
<b>kk</b>	ㄲ	as in "s <u>k</u> i," "s <u>k</u> y"
<b>tt</b>	ㅌ	as in "s <u>t</u> eam," "s <u>t</u> ing"

<b>pp</b>	ㅍㅍ	as in "s <u>p</u> ea <u>k</u> ," "s <u>p</u> y"
<b>ss</b>	ㅍㅍ	as in "s <u>e</u> a," "s <u>i</u> r"
<b>jj</b>	ㅍㅍ	as in "br <u>i</u> dge," "m <u>i</u> dget" (similar to a tutting sound in an exhaling way)

## VOWELS

### (1) Simple vowels

ㅏ **a**

ㅑ **eo**

ㅓ **o**

ㅕ **u**

ㅗ **eu**

ㅣ **i**

ㅜ **ae**

ㅝ **e**

### (2) Diphthongs

ㅑ **ya**

ㅕ **yeo**

ㅗ **yo**

ㅕ **yu**

ㅜ **yae**

ㅝ **ye**

ㅑ **wa**

ㅕ **wae**

ㅗ **wo**

ㅝ **we**

ㅏ **ui**

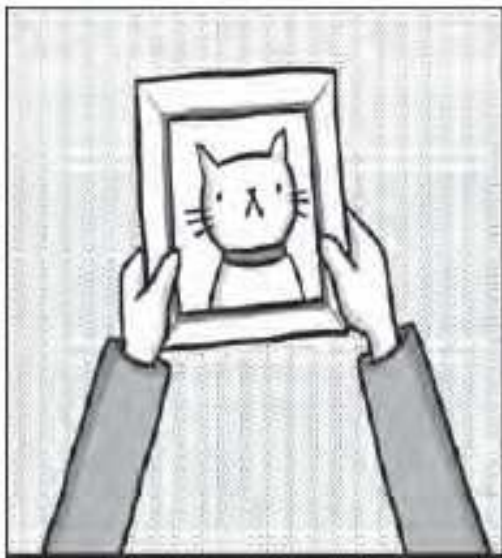
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ㅓ **oe**

ㅗ **wi**

<b>English</b>	<b>Korean</b>	<b>Approximate in English</b>
<b>a</b> ( <i>ah</i> )	ㅏ	as in "f <u>a</u> ther"
<b>eo</b> ( <i>er</i> )	ㅓ	as in "b <u>o</u> x" or "c <u>u</u> t" (halfway between the two)
<b>o</b> ( <i>aw</i> )	ㅗ	as in "f <u>a</u> ll"
<b>u</b> ( <i>oo</i> )	ㅜ	as in "b <u>oo</u> "
<b>eu</b> ( <i>oh</i> )	ㅡ	as in "t <u>a</u> ken"
<b>i</b> ( <i>ee</i> )	ㅣ	as in "s <u>ee</u> "
<b>ae</b> ( <i>a</i> )	ㅐ	as in "t <u>a</u> d" (often becomes more like the <b>ay</b> in "w <u>a</u> y")
<b>e</b> ( <i>e</i> )	ㅔ	as in "b <u>e</u> g"
<b>oe</b> ( <i>we</i> )	ㅓ	as in "w <u>e</u> lcome"
<b>ya</b> ( <i>yah</i> )	ㅑ	as in "y <u>a</u> rn"
<b>yeo</b> ( <i>yaw</i> )	ㅓ	as in "y <u>o</u> nder"
<b>yo</b> ( <i>yo</i> )	ㅜ	as in "y <u>o</u> gurt" (said with a slight pull)
<b>yu</b> ( <i>yu</i> )	ㅠ	as in "y <u>u</u> le" (said with a slight pull)
<b>yaе</b> ( <i>ya</i> )	ㅐ	as in "y <u>a</u> k"
<b>ye</b> ( <i>ye</i> )	ㅔ	as in "y <u>e</u> s"
<b>wa</b> ( <i>wah</i> )	ㅑ	as in "w <u>a</u> tch"
<b>wae</b> ( <i>wa</i> )	ㅐ	as in "w <u>a</u> y"
<b>wo</b> ( <i>wo</i> )	ㅗ	as in "w <u>o</u> nderful"
<b>wi</b> ( <i>wi</i> )	ㅗ	as in the "w <u>e</u> ed"
<b>ui</b> ( <i>ooe</i> )	ㅑ	this is a combination of 2 sounds - <b>u</b> as in "p <u>u</u> ll" followed by <b>ee</b> as in "s <u>ee</u> ." It's kind of like 'oui' in French.

The Korean writing system, Han-geul (한글) demands that any **written** syllable must begin with a consonant. This means that even when a syllable begins with a vowel sound (the syllable contains no spoken consonants) you have to start the syllable with the consonant ㅇ, which has no sound.



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# 1 What's Up?

## POLITE GREETINGS

**How are you?**

**annyeonghaseyo?**

*ahn-nyawng-hah-seyo?*

안녕하세요?

**I'm fine, thanks. And you?**

**ne, annyeonghaseyo?**

*ne, ahn-nyawng-hah-seyo?*

네, 안녕하세요?

**Annyeonghaseyo?** 안녕하세요? is a greeting that asks about the other person's well-being or good health. This expression can be used at any time of the day as "Good morning," "Good afternoon," "Good evening," "Hi," "Hello," or "How's it going?" The common response is simply **ne, annyeonghaseyo?** 네, 안녕하세요?.

**How do you do?**

**cheo-eum boep-kketsseumnida.**

*chuh-um bwep-kke-sseumnee-dah.*

처음 뵙겠습니다.

**What's new?**

**byeollil eop-jjiyo?**

*byulleel up-jyo?*

별일 없지요?

**—Nothing much.**

**geujeo geuraeyo.**

*geu-juh geu-rayo.*

그저 그래요.

**—Things are hard.**

**jom himdeureoyo.**

*chohm him-deul-uhyo.*

---

좀 힘들어요.

—**Things are busy.**

**jom bappayo.**

*chohm bah-ppah-yo.*

좀 바빠요.

**How have you been?**

**yojeum eotteoke jinaeseyo?**

*yo-johm uh-ttoh-kay jeenehsay-yo?*

요즘 어떻게 지내세요?

—**I've been fine, thanks.**

**jal jinaeyo.**

*chahl jeenayo.*

잘 지내요.

## **CASUAL GREETINGS BETWEEN CLOSE FRIENDS**

**How are you doing?**

**jal isseosseo?**

*chahl iss-uss-oh?*

잘 있었어?

**Yo, what's up?**

**ya, jal isseonnya?**

*yah, chahl iss-uht-nyah?*

야, 잘 있었냐?

**Dude, what's up?**

**saekki, jal isseonnya?\***

*sakkee, chahl iss-uht-nyah?*

새끼, 잘 있었냐?

**jasik, jal isseonnya?\***



*jah-sheek, chahl iss-uht-nyah?*

---

자식, 잘 있었냐?

\***Saekki** “baby animal” and **jasik** “human baby” are used in Korean slang the way “asshole” is used in American English. When said to one’s closest friends, they can be expressions of affection—but handle with care.

**How’ve you been?**

**eotteoke jinaesseo?**

*uh-toh-kay jiness-uh?*

어떻게 지냈어?

**—I’m fine.**

**jal isseosseo.**

*chahl jinessuh.*

잘 있었어.

**Have you been doing OK?**

**jal jinaesseo?**

*chahl jinessuh?*

잘 지냈어?

**—Yeah, man!**

**geurae, i jasiga!**

*geurae, i jashigah!*

그래, 이 자식아!

Handle with care.

**Where did you go?**

**eodi gasseosseo?**

*uh-dee gahssuss-uh?*

어디 갔었어?

**It’s been a while.**

**oraenmaniya.**

*awren-mahnee-yah.*

오랜만이야.

—Yeah!

geurae!

*geu-ray!*

그래!

—Yeah, it's been ages.

geurae, oraenmaniya.

*geu-rae, awren-mahnee-yah.*

그래, 오랜만이야.

**How's Peter/Mary?**

Peter/Mary jal isseo?

*Peter/Mary chahl isso?*

피터/메리 잘 있어?

—Yeah, Peter/Mary is fine.

eung, (Peter/Mary) jal isseo.

*eung, (Peter/Mary) chahl isso.*

응, (피터/메리) 잘 있어.

The subject is often omitted when it is clearly understood from the context. 응 (*eung*) is very often used in casual conversation to agree with something the other person has said. It's said a lot like a grunt.

**How are Peter and Mary?**

Peter hago Mary jal isseo?

*Peter hahgo Mary chahl isso?*

피터하고 메리 잘있어?

—Yeah, Peter and Mary are fine.

eung, (Peter hago Mary) jal isseo.

*eung, (Peter hah-gaw Mary) chahl isso.*

응, (피터하고 메리) 잘 있어.

**Anything new with Peter/Mary?**

Peter/Mary byeollil eopseo?

*Peter/Mary byullil upso?*

피터/메리 별일 없어?

---

—Yeah, he/she's doing fine.

eung, byeollil eopseo.

eung, byullil upso.

응, 별일 없어.

—Yeah, he/she's OK.

eung, jal jinae.

eung, chahl jee-nay.

응, 잘 지내.

—Yeah, he/she's doing so-so.

eung, geujeo geurae.

eung, geu-juh geuray.

응, 그저 그래.

**What's wrong, man?**

wae geurae, imma?

wa geu-ray, eem-mah.

왜 그래, 임마?

Handle with care.

Keep in mind as well that 임마 (eem-mah) is a swear word used by men and will sound very coarse and weird coming from a woman.

—Nothing's wrong with me.

amugeot-do aniya.

ahmoogut-toe ahnee-yah.

아무것도 아니야.

**What are you doing here?**

eojjeon iliya?

uh-chun illeeya?

어쩐 일이야?

—Nothing special.

**geunyang.**

*geun-yahng.*

---

그냥.

**Really?**

**jeongmal?**

*chawng-mahl?*

정말?

**Are you serious?**

**jinjja?**

*jeen-jjah?*

진짜?

**Oh, yeah?**

**geurae?**

*geu-ray?*

그래?

**You're lying!**

**geojitmal!**

*guh-jeen-mahl! \**

거짓말!

\*The **t** sound in **geojitmal** becomes an **n** here (*guh-jeen-mahl*) when said in normal speech.

**Are you lying?**

**geojitmaliji?**

*guh-jeen-mahlee-jee?*

거짓말이지?

**Don't lie!**

**geojitmal hajima!**

*guh-jeen-mahl hahjeemah!*

거짓말 하지마!

## **Stop lying!**

**geojitmal geuman hae!**

*guh-jeen-mahl geumahn hay!*

거짓말 하지 마! 그만 해!

## **What?**

**mwo?**

*mwo?*

뭐?

## **Huh?**

**eoh?**

*aw? \**

어?

\*Said nasally, like the French **en**.

## **I don't believe it!**

**mideul su ga eopseo!**

*meed-eul soo gah upsaw!*

믿을 수가 없어!

## **Why?**

**wae?**

*way?*

왜?

## **Why not?**

**wae aniya?**

*way ah-nee-yah?*

왜 아니야?

## **You're joking!**

**nongdamiji!**

*nohng-dahmee-jee!*

농담이지!

---

**You're not joking?**

**nongdam aniji?**

*nohng-dahm ahnee-jee?*

농담 아니지?

**I'm not joking.**

**nongdam aniya.**

*nohng-dahm ahnee-yah.*

농담 아니야.

**He/She's joking!**

**nongdamiget-ji!**

*nohng-dahm-eeget-jjee!*

농담이겠지!

**Are you making fun of me?**

**nollinya?**

*nohllee-nyah?*

놀리냐?

**I guess so.**

**geureoket-ji.**

*geu-roh-get-jjee.*

그렇겠지.

**Maybe.**

**geureol keoya.**

*geurull ggoyah.*

그럴 거야.

**Maybe not.**

**anil keoya.**

*ah-neel kker-yah.*

아닐 거야.

---

**That's impossible!**

**maldo an dwae!**

*mahl-doe ahn dway\*!*

말도 안 돼!

\*Dway or "day"—the **w** is almost not pronounced at all

**You can't do that.**

**geureoken motae.**

*geu-roh-ken moat hay.*

그렇게 못 해.

**I don't care.**

**sang-gwan eopseo.**

*sahng-gwahn upso.*

상관 없어.

**It's got nothing to do with me.**

**narang sang-gwan eopseo.**

*nah-rahng sahng-gwahn upso.*

나랑 상관 없어.

**I'm not interested.**

**gwansim eopseo.**

*gwahn-seem upso.*

관심 없어.

**I think that's it.**

**geugeoya.**

*geu-goyah.*

그거야.

**I think this is it.**

**igeoya.**

*ee-goyah.*

---

이거야.

**You're crazy!**

**neo micheo-sseo!**

*naw mee-chuss-o!*

미쳤어!

**Damn!**

**jegiral!**

*je-gee-rah!*

제기랄!

**That's right.**

**maja.**

*mahj-ah.*

맞아.

**Is this it?**

**igeoya?**

*ee-goyah?*

이거야?

**This is it.**

**igeoya.**

*ee-goyah.*

이거야.

**Sure.**

**geureom.**

*geu-rum.*

그럼.

**It's true.**

**jinjjaya.**

*jeen-jjah-yah.*



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