

Learn Korean Ep. 16: Future Tense

Although it's called "future tense," it's really more of a *probable* future tense than a *definite* future tense –the Korean "future tense" might translate to "will," or it might translate to "would," depending on how it's used. For now, just know that the future tense is used to talk about things that "*probably* will happen," and not things that "*definitely* will happen."

There are two ways to make the future tense, and they're each a little different.

1. verb stem + 겠(다)

Take the verb stem and add "겠," then add "다" (if you want the plain form) or conjugate it any way you'd like. Most often (as the future tense) it is used with the polite "~니다" form.

언제 **하겠습니까?**

"When will you do it?"

"저는 학교에 **가겠습니다.**"

"I will go to school."

2. verb stem + (ㄹ/을) + 것(이다)

Take the verb stem and add "을" if it ends in a consonant, or "ㄹ" if it ends in a vowel. Then add "것" and conjugate "이다" any way you'd like ("것이다" can also become just "거다").

철수는 피자를 **먹을 거예요.**

"Cheolsoo will eat pizza."

그래서 **안 할 거야?**

"So you're not going to do it?"

"~겠다" vs. "ㄹ 것이다" (Form 1 vs. Form 2)

You're probably wondering what the difference is between these two forms.

Form 1 ("~겠습니다") sounds a bit more polite than Form 2 ("ㄹ 것이다"). **I would recommend that you use Form 2 if you're not sure.** Because Form 1 is more polite, it's often used with the "~니다" form when making regular statements ("I will~, " etc); if you choose to use Form 1, be polite when using it. It is also used in other non-polite situations, but I can go over that in another lesson.

The actual difference between Form 1 and Form 2

As this section is in purple, please skip it if this is your first time learning the future tense. For all those who are interested, here is the actual difference between the two forms:

Using **Form 1 puts more emphasis on the verb**, and using **Form 2 puts more emphasis on the subject** of that verb.

내가 하겠다.

This sentence would be similar to saying, "I **will** do it."

내가 할 거다.

This sentence would be similar to saying, "**I** will do it."

The emphasis is not this strong, but I've exaggerated it to illustrate the difference.

Example Sentences

한국은 여름에 정말 **덥**겠습니다.

"Korea will be really hot in the summer."

한국은 겨울에 정말 **추**울 거예요.

"Korea will be really cold in the winter."

Notice that certain Descriptive Verbs (such as those ending in "ㅁ") still retain their special conjugation rules.

어디에서 **놀** 거예요?

"Where will we play at?"

Verbs ending in "ㄹ" used with Form 2 simply drop the "ㄹ" before conjugating.

집에서 뭘 **먹을 거예요?**

"What will you eat at home?"

"뭘" is a shortened form of "무엇을."

내일 우리 할머니 댁에서 **만날 겁니다.**

"Tomorrow we will meet at my grandmother's house."

"댁" is an extra polite way to refer to someone's house (instead of "집").

그가 **심심하지 않겠습니까?**

"Will he not be bored?"

"심심하다" means "to be bored."

Notice how the future tense works in negative sentences as well (see Episode 7 for more information on making negative sentences).

저는 내일 학교에 **안 갈 거예요.**

"I will not go to school tomorrow."

그 사람에게 아무것도 **말하지 않을 거야.**

"I will not say anything to that person."

"아무것도" means "nothing," and is used in negative sentences.

Conclusion

Once again, if you're not sure which form to use in regular conversation, use Form 2 – verb stem + (ㄹ/을) 것(이다) – as it's the most versatile. And practice it as much as possible.

Practice will make these concepts stick. Good luck in your studies!

