

## Learn Korean Ep. 50: Or

The word "or" can be expressed in a few ways, depending on how you're using it. Let's look at the most common ways.

### 아니면

Saying "or" using this is very simple. You can place it between two **nouns**, or between two **sentences**, just like in English.

Using **아니면** means that you are offering more than one **choice** to the listener. It's as if you're saying, "You can choose this, or you can choose that."

저 **아니면** 철수  
"me or Chul-soo"

갈 거예요? **아니면** 안 갈 거예요?  
"Are you going to go or not?"

Notice how **아니면** comes after a complete sentence in the above example. In English, we'd connect the two sentences together (or sometimes with a comma between them), but in Korean it's more common to connect two options in **separate sentences** using **아니면**.

같이 갈래요? **아니면** 집에 있을래요?  
"Do you want to go together, or stay at home?"

아들이예요? **아니면** 딸이에요?  
"Is it a boy, or a girl?"

You could use the above example when asking someone the gender of their new child.

### (이)나

To use this one, take a noun and add **나** if it ends in a **vowel**, or **이나** if it ends in a **consonant**.

But this way is *different* than **아니면**.

First, this way can only be used between **nouns**.

Second, using (이)나 is not for presenting choices. Instead, it is used when saying "or something" or "whether or." Although it translates as "or," it is used whenever the person you are talking to is not required to make a choice. Let's see some examples, then I'll explain further.

**저나** 철수

"me or Chul-soo"

**빵이나** 먹을 거예요.

"I'll eat bread or something."

**과일이나** 야채를 먹고 싶어요.

"I want to eat fruits or vegetables."

Notice in the above sentence, it's not presenting two options that someone needs to choose from. In fact, the speaker would be okay eating either fruits or vegetables, or even both. This is how (이)나 is different than **아니면**.

**과일 아니면** 야채를 먹고 싶어요.

"I want to eat fruits or vegetables."

In the above sentence, the speaker would not want to have both. The speaker is expressing that he or she is choosing between only one of the options. If the speaker were to eat fruits, then he or she would not want to have vegetables, and vice versa.

**옷이나** 사세요.

"Buy some clothes or something."

햄이나 김치를 넣을까?

"Should we put on ham or kimchi or something?"

### Advanced Notes

#### v.s. + 거나

Although (이)나 is exclusively used for connecting *nouns*, 거나 can be used for *verbs*.

Take the verb stem and add 거나. Its usage is the same as (이)나.

공부를 하거나 놀아요.

"Study or play."

학교에 가거나 도서관에 가요.

"I'm going to school or the library."

#### 혹은

혹은 means the same thing as 아니면, but is Sino Korean (it comes from Chinese) and is a bit more formal than 아니면; as such, it is less common than 아니면. However, both are fine to use.

진실 혹은 거짓

"lies or truth"

## Conclusion

If you have any questions, feel free to send me a message through my web site or on YouTube. Good luck in your studies!

