

Learn Korean Ep. 85: Common Korean Contractions

Korean contractions are simple shorter ways of writing grammar and words. There are many of them, and they're common enough that you should learn them.

Note that all of these are optional, but commonly used. Don't feel like you *have* to use them, but be able to understand and recognize them when they come up.

Most of these are fine for beginners to learn, but I'd recommend skipping any of them for which you haven't already learned their basic forms.

Let's get started with a few of the most common contractions in Korean.

저는 → 전

나는 → 난

너는 → 넌

These three might be some of the most commonly found. 저는 becomes 전, 나는 becomes 난, and 너는 becomes 넌. When you're working with the Topic Marker (은/는), sometimes it becomes just a ㄴ if the word it comes after ends in a vowel. Since 저, 나, and 너 all end with a vowel, it became popular to use them in this way. Remember that this is only when you're using these words with the *Topic Marker*.

에는 → 엔

This is a combination of the *Location Marker*, 에, with the *Topic Marker* to become 엔. This contraction is a bit more casual though, so I wouldn't recommend using this one in any formal situation.

저를 → 절

나를 → 날

너를 → 널

Just like with the Topic Marker, when the *Object Marker* comes after a vowel, it's sometimes shortened to just a ㄹ. So in this case, 저를 becomes 절, 나를 becomes 날, and 너를 becomes 널.

뭐를 → 뭘

뭐, "what," can shorten to 뭘 when it's used with the *Object Marker*.

것을 → 걸

것이 → 게

것은 → 건

These three contractions with 것 are also very common.

것, "thing," becomes 걸 when used with the *Object Marker* (을/를).

것 becomes 게 when used with the *Subject Marker* (이/가).

것 becomes 건 when used with the *Topic Marker* (은/는).

것 → 거

것 can sometimes be shortened to 거, but not in every case. Here are a few examples.

이것 → 거

그것 → 그거

저것 → 저거

But 것 can't always shorten to 거. Here are two examples where it can't.

것도 → 것도

것만 → 것만

These two forms will stay the same. I'd only recommend learning 이거, 그거, and 저거 for the time being.

저에게 → 제게

나에게 → 내게

너에게 → 네게

저에게 can become 제게, 나에게 can become 내게, and 너에게 can become 네게.

내게 and 네게 sound very similar, but when used in context a Korean will be able to know which one you mean.

More Intermediate Contractions

From here on in the video, this lesson will get slightly more intermediate, so if you haven't yet learned one of these original forms, feel free to skip over it for now and learn it later.

이 아이 "this guy/gal" → 애

그 아이 "that guy/gal" → 걔

저 아이 "that guy/gal" → 저

These three words are *casual*, so they shouldn't be used in any situation where you want to sound polite, or they'd come across as rude. But they're fairly common.

You can use 애 to mean "this person," and 걔 or 저 to mean "that person." What you're really saying is "this kid" or "that kid," so it's a common slang way to refer to other people.

다고 해(요) → 대(요)

냐고 해(요) → 내(요)

자고 해(요) → 재(요)

라고 해(요) → 래(요)

These forms are commonly used when you're quoting people, or yourself. The first form, **다고** is the form you'd use when making *statements*, **냐고** for *questions*, **자고** for *suggestions*, and **라고** for *commands*. **라고** is also used when making quoted *statements* with the verb 이다.

빨리 오**라고** 했어! → 빨리 오**랬어!**

"I said to come here quickly!"

하게 → 케

하지 → 치

하고 → 코

Note that these *only* apply when you're using the verb 하다. A verb ending in 하게 can be shortened to 케, 하지 to 치, and 하고 to 코.

그걸 원**치**도 않아.

"I don't even want that."

The full version of this would be, 그것을 원**하지**도 않아.

Advanced Notes

Here are some additional notes on more contractions in Korean.

The form (으)려고 하다 can also be shortened to simply (으)려다. This is then conjugated in a sentence depending on the form being used. Here are a few example forms.

(으)려고 하면 → (으)려면

(으)려고 하고 → (으)려고

(으)려고 하는데 → (으)려는데

The form **다고**, **냐고**, **자고**, and **라고** can also be shortened further depending on the grammar used after them. Here are a few example forms.

다고 하는데 → 다는데

다고 한다 → 단다

다고 합니다 → 답니다

다고 하는데 → 다는데

Conclusion

But be careful not to overuse any of these contractions. Although they're commonly seen, using a lot of contractions in a sentence can sound like you're speaking too casually. So be extra careful to avoid them when you're in a situation where you need to be polite.

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

