

LEVEL 1 LESSON 2

After listening to this lesson, when you are asked a YES/NO question, you will be able to answer that question with either YES or NO in Korean.

네 / 아니요

In Korean, “Yes” is 네 [ne] and “No” is 아니요 [aniyo] in 존댓말 [jondaetmal], polite language.

네. [ne] = Yes.

아니요. [aniyo] = No.

But in Korean, when people say “네”, it is not the same as saying “Yes.” in English. The same goes for “아니요” too. This is because the Korean “**네**” expresses your “**agreement**” to what the other person said. And “**아니요**” expresses your “**disagreement**” or “denial” to what the other person said.

For example:

someone asks you “You don’t like coffee?” (커피 안 좋아해요? [keo-pi an jo-a-hae-yo?] in Korean) and if your answer is “No, I don’t like coffee.” you have to say “네.”

Strange?

So it is more accurate to put it this way.

네. [ne] = That’s right. / I agree. / Sounds good. / What you said is correct.

아니요. [aniyo] = That’s not right. / I don’t agree. / What you said is not correct.

Therefore, when you ask “You don’t like coffee?” in Korean, if the person answering like coffee, he/she will say “No.” in English but “네” in Korean. And if the person DOES coffee, he/she will say “Yes.” but “아니요” in Korean.

5 MINUTES KOREAN

커피 좋아해요? [keo-pi jo-a-hae-yo?] = Do you like coffee?

네. 좋아해요. [ne. jo-a-hae-yo] = Yes, I like coffee.

커피 좋아해요? [keo-pi jo-a-hae-yo?] = Do you like coffee?

아니요. 안 좋아해요. [aniyo. an jo-a-hae-yo] = No, I don't like coffee.

커피 안 좋아해요? [keo-pi an jo-a-hae-yo?] = You don't like coffee?

아니요. 좋아해요. [aniyo. jo-a-hae-yo] = Yes, I like coffee.

커피 안 좋아해요? [keo-pi an jo-a-hae-yo?] = You don't like coffee?

네. 안 좋아해요. [ne. an jo-a-hae-yo] = No, I don't like coffee.

You don't have to worry about the other parts of the sample sentences above. Just remember that the Korean system for saying YES and NO is different from the English system.

네 is more than just YES or THAT'S RIGHT.

While 네 [ne] is used to express "Yes" or "That's right", it is also used as a conversation filler. If you listen to two Korean people talking with each other, you will hear them saying 네 quite often, even when it is not intended to mean "Yes".

So two people can have a conversation like this. Imagine it is all in Korean.

A: You know what, I bought this book yesterday,

B: 네. [ne]

A: and I really like it.

B: 네.

A: But it's a bit too expensive.

B: 네.

A: Do you know how much it was?

B: How much was it?

A: It was 100 dollars!

B: 네? [ne?]

A: So I paid the money with my credit card.

B: 네|...

So, as you can see from the dialog above, 네| [ne] is a multi-player. It can be:

Yes. / That's right

but also,

I see. / I got it. / I'm here! (when someone calls you) / I understand. / Ah-ha. / etc...

맞아요.

Because 네| [ne] and 아니요 [aniyo] are focused more on your agreement and disagreement rather than whether something is true or not, and ALSO because 네| can mean "I see." or "Ah-ha." as well, Korean people often add this expression, 맞아요 [ma-ja-yo] after 네| [ne].

네, 맞아요. [ne, ma-ja-yo] = Yes, that's right.

This is in order to express more strongly and clearly that you are saying "You're right." rather than sounding like you are just passively listening, while nodding.

네| again.

네| is amazing. It can be many things already, but it can also be "What did you say?" Suppose someone said something to you but you couldn't hear the person well or you weren't paying much attention. Then you can say "네|?" [ne?] to mean "Pardon me?" "I'm sorry?" "What did you say?" "I didn't hear you well." You can also use "네|?" to show your surprise.

A: I bought a present for you.

B: 네|? [ne?]

A: I said I bought a present for you?

B: 네|?

A: Forget it.

B: 네|?

