

LEVEL 1 LESSON 12

In the previous lesson, we learned how to say “Please give me ...” or “I’d like to have ... please” in Korean. Do you remember the expression?

주세요 [ju-se-yo] = Please give me ... / I’d like to have ...

And you can use this expression (주세요) to order something in a restaurant or to ask for more side dishes while you are eating.

김밥 주세요. [gim-bap ju-se-yo] = Kimbap, please. (when ordering in a restaurant)

불고기 주세요. [bul-go-gi ju-se-yo] = Bulgogi, please. (when ordering in a restaurant)

김치 주세요. [gim-chi ju-se-yo] = Please give us some kimchi here.

(when asking for some (more) side dishes in a restaurant)

In this lesson, let us have a look at how to say “It tastes good.” “It is delicious.” and also how to thank for a meal or food **before** and **after** the meal.

맛 [mat] = taste

맛 [mat] means “taste” in Korean. Now, do you remember how to say “there is” or “I have”?

Yes! **있어요** [i-sseo-yo] is the expression. So by putting 맛 and 있어요 together, you get the expression **맛있어요** [ma-si-sseo-yo] which means “It’s delicious.”

맛있어요 [ma-si-sseo-yo] = It’s tasty. It’s delicious.

Examples

이거 맛있어요. [i-geo ma-si-sseo-yo] = This is delicious.

저 케익 맛있어요. [jeo ke-ik ma-si-sseo-yo] = That cake is delicious.

삼겹살 맛있어요. [sam-gyeop-sal ma-si-sseo-yo] = Samgyupsal (Korean barbecue) is delicious.

뭐가 맛있어요? [mwo-ga ma-si-sseo-yo?] = What’s delicious?

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Now, do you also remember how to say “there isn’t” or “I don’t have” in Korean?

Yes, 없어요 [eop-seo-yo] is the expression. So by putting 맛 and 없어요 together, you get the expression 맛없어요 [ma-deop-seo-yo], which means “It doesn’t taste good.”

맛없어요 [mad-eop-seo-yo] = It’s not tasty. It’s not delicious. It tastes awful.

Note that the pronunciation of the last letter in **맛**, which is **ㅏ**, changes according to the word that follows it. When it is NOT followed by any word, it’s pronounced as [t], ending the word there. When it is followed by **있어요**, it becomes an [S] sound, making **맛있어요** pronounced as [ma-si-sseo-yo]. When it is followed by 없어요, it becomes a [D] sound, making **맛없어요** pronounced as [ma-deop-seo-yo].

Examples

이거 맛없어요? [i-geo ma-deop-seo-yo?] = Does this taste awful?

이 차 맛없어요. [i cha ma-deop-seo-yo] = This tea tastes awful.

Now, you know how to say “It’s delicious.” and “It’s not delicious.” It’s time to learn a phrase that you can say to thank for a meal before and after you eat. This is very important especially if someone is treating you or if you are invited to someone’s house.

잘 먹겠습니다. [jal meok-ge-sseum-ni-da]

잘 먹겠습니다 [jal meok-ge-sseum-ni-da] literally means “I am going to eat well.” or “I will eat well.” (Don’t worry about the grammar that is used here yet. Just learn this as a set phrase for the time being.) And this expression is used very frequently among Koreans when they are about to start eating a meal, usually regardless who’s paying for the meal. But in case someone in particular is paying for the meal for the other(s), the other(s) will say 잘 먹겠습니다 to the person who’s buying.

When you eat with your friends to whom you don’t use polite/formal language, and when you want to joke that your friend should buy you food, you can also say 잘 먹을게!

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[jal meo-geulge!] which implies that you are thanking them because they are going to treat you.

잘 먹었습니다. [jal meo-geo-sseum-ni-da]

Once you have finished a meal, if you want to thank someone for the meal, or just thank for the meal in general, you can use this expression. 잘 먹었습니다 literally means “I have eaten well” (Again, don’t worry about the grammar here.) but it really means “Thank you for the food.”