

LEVEL 3 LESSON 10

In this lesson, we are going to learn how to say "before -ing" in Korean. As with many Korean expressions and prepositions, the order is the opposite from English. In English, the word "before" goes before the clause or the word, but in Korean this part goes after.

The key letter here is 전 [jeon]. The Chinese character for 전 is 前 and it means "before," "front," or "earlier". To this noun, you add the particle -에 [-e] to make it a preposition.

전에 = before (+ noun)

수업 전에 [su-eop jeo-ne] = before class

일요일 전에 [i-ryo-il jeo-ne] = before Sunday

1시 전에 [han-si jeo-ne] = before 1 o'clock

Since 전에 is used after nouns, in order to use it with verbs, like "before going" or "before leaving", you need to change the verbs into nouns.

In our previous lesson, to use verbs before 같다, we changed them into the -ㄴ 것 form, but here, you need to change verbs into the -기 form, the first noun form of verbs that we learned here at TalkToMeInKorean.com.

가다 --> 가기 (going)

사다 --> 사기 (buying)

먹다 --> 먹기 (eating)

+ 전에

--> 가기 전에 = before going

--> 사기 전에 = before buying

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--> 먹기 전에 = before eating

Examples

집에 가다

--> 집에 가기 전에 [ji-be ga-gi jeo-ne]

= before going home, before you go home

공부하다

--> 공부하기 전에 [gong-bu-ha-gi jeo-ne]

= before studying, before you study

돈을 내다

--> 돈을 내기 전에 [do-neul nae-gi jeo-ne]

= before paying money, before you pay money

Sample sentences

1. 여기 오기 전에 뭐 했어요?

[yeo-gi o-gi jeo-ne mwo hae-sseo-yo?]

= What did you do before you came here?

2. 집에 가기 전에 술 마실 거예요.

[ji-be ga-gi jeo-ne sul ma-sil geo-ye-yo.]

= I'm going to drink before I go home.

** 집에 가다 = to go back home

3. 들어오기 전에 노크 하세요.

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[deu-reo-o-gi jeo-ne no-keu ha-se-yo.]

= Knock before you come in.

** 들어오다 = to come in

4. 사기 전에 잘 생각하세요.

[sa-gi jeo-ne jal saeng-ga-ka-se-yo.]

= Think well before you buy it.

** 사다 = to buy

5. 도망가기 전에 잡으세요.

[do-mang-ga-gi jeo-ne ja-beu-se-yo.]

= Catch him before he runs away.

** 도망가다 = to run away