

## LEVEL 4 LESSON 5

In this lesson, we look at the word **당신** [dang-sin]. This word appears in a lot of Korean songs and TV or movie lines, but it needs to be used with caution in real-life conversations.

What does **당신** [dang-sin] mean?

**당신** [dang-sin] basically means **“you”**.

### Why should one use it with caution?

In the dictionary, if you look up the word “you”, you will see “당신” come up first in many dictionaries. But in reality, Korean people rarely use the word “you” in the sentences, especially when they are speaking in 존댓말, formal language.

Then when is it that people DO use the word 당신?

### You can use the word 당신 when:

1. you are angry at someone and you don't mind fighting with that person.
2. you are translating from a foreign language and you must have a word for “you”.
3. you are writing or singing a song.
4. you are addressing your spouse (usually common among middle-aged or older people).
5. (rare case) you are talking about someone (who is not present in the place) in an honorific way and want to say “he” or “she”.

### Then how do you say “you” in Korean?

If you are speaking in 반말, you can say “너”.

너 + 는 [topic marker] = 너는 [neo-neun]

너 + 가 [subject marker] = 네가 [ne-ga] or 니가 [ni-ga]

If you are speaking in 존댓말, you just say the name of the other person and add words like -씨, -님, or a word that describes his or her position or job.

Ex) 현우 씨 지금 시간 있어요? [hyeo-nu ssi ji-geum si-gan i-sseo-yo?]

= (Talking to 현우) Do you have time now?

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Ex) 최경은 선생님, 어디예요? [choe-kyeong-eun seon-saeng-nim eo-di-ye-yo?]

= (Talking to Teacher 최경은) Where are you?

If you are speaking in 존댓말, you can just say the social status of the person.

Ex) 기사님, 여기에서 내려 주세요. [gi-sa-nim yeo-gi-e-seo nae-ryeo ju-se-yo.]

= (Talking to the taxi driver) Let me get off here.

### Some examples:

#### Usage 1

- 당신 뭐야? [dang-sin mwo-ya?] = Who do you think you are? / What are you?

- 당신 뭐가 문제야? [dang-sin mwo-ga mun-je-ya?] = What's your problem?

In this case, you don't mind getting into a quarrel or a fight with the person. Note that you are not speaking in complete 존댓말 any more. Of course, if you are already speaking in 반말, you would say "너".

#### Usage 2 & 3

- 당신의 눈은 참 아름다워요. [dang-si-neu nu-neun cham a-reum-da-wo-yo.]

= Your eyes are so beautiful.

- 당신에게 이 노래를 바칩니다. [dang-si-ne-ge i no-rae-reul ba-chim-ni-da.]

= I dedicate this song to you.

You are forced to use 당신 here because you don't know the name of the other person without context.

#### Usage 4

- 당신 지금 어디예요? [dang-sin ji-geum eo-di-ye-yo?]

= Honey, where are you?

Other words that can replace 당신 in this case to address one's spouse are 여보 [yeo-bo] (most common) and 자기 [ja-gi] (usually common among young couples).

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### Usage 5

This is becoming more and more rare these days. Often times, people just drop the word 당신 even if they want to use it for fear of the other person not understanding them.