

치고는

for a ..., considering

Judges something against what its category would lead you to expect. One syllable apart from **치고**, and the meanings have nothing in common.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

Any noun	치고는	초보치고는
Spoken contraction	치곤	초보치곤
After a clause	-(으)ㄴ/는 것치고는	처음 만든 것치고는
Exceeding expectation	usual case	초보치고는 잘해요
Falling short	also possible	여름치고는 시원해요
Without 는	a different construction	초보치고 ... 없다

WHEN TO USE IT

치고는 attaches to a noun without changing shape, and contracts to **치곤** in speech. To judge a whole clause, nominalise it first: **처음 만든 것치고는**.

The category sets an expectation, and the sentence says the thing departs from it: **초보치고는 잘하네요** — good, given that they're a beginner.

It usually exceeds expectation, which makes it a common form of praise. But it works downward too: **여름치고는 시원해요**.

One caution: because it measures against a low bar, praise with **치고는** is qualified. **잘하시네요** is a compliment; **초보치고는 잘하시네요** reminds the listener that they are a beginner. To someone senior it can land badly.

IN USE

- 초보치고는 정말 잘하시네요.**
You're doing really well, for a beginner.
- 여름치고는 날씨가 시원한 편이에요.**
It's fairly cool, for summer.
- 가격치고는 품질이 훌륭해요.**
The quality is excellent for the price.
- 처음 만든 것치고는 맛있는데요?**
Not bad at all, considering it's your first go.
- 한국에 온 지 얼마 안 된 사람치고는 한국어를 잘해요.**
His Korean is good for someone who's only just arrived.

6 주말치곤 사람이 별로 없네요.

There aren't many people, for a weekend.

COMPARED WITH

치고

The 는 is doing all the work. Without it, the phrase asserts a universal rule and needs a negative; with it, the phrase judges one case against expectation.

초보치고 잘하는 사람 없어요. (no beginner is good) / 초보치고는 잘해요. (good for a beginner)

-에 비해서

에 비해서 compares against a specific benchmark; 치고는 compares against what a category implies. The second carries a note of surprise.

작년에 비해 시원해요. (than last year) / 여름치고는 시원해요. (for a summer)

Qualified praise

Because it names a low bar, this is praise with a condition attached. Dropping the phrase makes the compliment unqualified.

초보치고는 잘하시네요. (for a beginner) / 정말 잘하시네요. (simply well)

WATCH OUT

X 초보치고 잘하시네요. — meaning "good for a beginner"

O 초보치고는 잘하시네요.

Without 는, the phrase belongs to the universal-negative construction and the sentence does not parse as praise.

X 처음 만들었치고는 맛있어요.

O 처음 만든 것치고는 맛있어요.

치고는 attaches to a noun. A clause has to be nominalised with 것 first.

X 부장님, 나이치고는 젊어 보이세요.

O 부장님, 정말 젊어 보이십니다.

Praise measured against a low bar draws attention to the bar. Aimed at a superior it reads as a backhanded compliment.