

-(으)ㄹ지언정

even if it means ..., I will not

Accepts a hardship in order to refuse something else. The first clause names the cost you are willing to bear; the second names the line you will not cross.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

Ends in a vowel	-ㄹ지언정	가다 → 갈지언정
Ends in a consonant	-을지언정	굽다 → 굽을지언정
Ends in ㄹ	nothing added	만들다 → 만들지언정
Second clause	refusal or resolve	... -지는 않겠다
Spacing	joined — one ending	굽을지언정
Neutral concession	-더라도	굽더라도

WHEN TO USE IT

Attachment is the standard rule with the ㄹ short form: 만들다 gives 만들지언정. It is written as a single ending, with no space.

The two clauses are ordered: accepted cost first, refusal or resolve second. 굽을지언정 남에게 손을 벌리지는 않겠다 — I would sooner starve than beg.

The second clause almost always carries -지 않겠다, -지는 않다, or a similar refusal. Without it the construction has nothing to lean against.

The tone is one of principle and dignity, which is why it belongs to declarations, literature, and formal argument.

IN USE

- 1 굽을지언정 남에게 손을 벌리지는 않겠다.
I would sooner starve than hold out my hand to anyone.
- 2 늦을지언정 대충 하지는 않겠습니다.
I may be late, but I will not do it carelessly.
- 3 손해를 볼지언정 원칙은 지키겠다.
I will keep to the principle even at a loss.
- 4 몸은 떠날지언정 마음은 여기 두고 갑니다.
My body may leave, but my heart stays here.
- 5 직접 만들지언정 남의 것을 베끼지는 않는다.
He would make it himself rather than copy anyone else's.

6 가난할지언정 부끄럽게 살지는 않았다.

Poor he may have been, but he never lived shamefully.

COMPARED WITH

-느니

Both choose between two unwelcome options, but -느니 simply prefers the lesser; -(으)ㄴ지언정 makes it a matter of principle.

기다리느니 겠겠다. (practical choice) / 굶을지언정 빌리지 않겠다. (a matter of principle)

-더라도

-더라도 grants a hypothetical and continues; -(으)ㄴ지언정 accepts a real cost in order to refuse something.

힘들더라도 하세요. (do it anyway) / 힘들지언정 포기하지 않겠다. (I accept the cost)

-(으)ㄴ들

The other literary concessive. -(으)ㄴ들 concludes that nothing would change; -(으)ㄴ지언정 declares what you will hold to regardless.

후회한들 소용없다. (futile) / 굶을지언정 빌리지 않겠다. (resolute)

WATCH OUT

X 굶을지언정 밥을 먹겠다.

O 굶을지언정 남에게 손을 벌리지는 않겠다.

The second clause must be a refusal or a resolve. A plain intention leaves the construction without its point.

X 직접 만들을지언정 बे끼지 않는다.

O 직접 만들지언정 बे끼지 않는다.

A stem ending in ㅁ already supplies it, as with 만들 거예요 and 만들 뿐이다.

X 야, 늦을지언정 대충은 안 해.

O 야, 늦더라도 대충은 안 해.

-(으)ㄴ지언정 is a declaration of principle. Among friends it sounds like a speech.