

# -(으)ㄹ 지경이다

at the point of, almost to the extent of

Describes a state pushed to its limit. 지경 means a boundary — you have been driven right up against one, and it is never a pleasant one.

## HOW TO ATTACH IT

|                     |                       |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ends in a vowel     | -ㄹ 지경이다               | 쓰러지다 → 쓰러질 지경이에요            |
| Ends in a consonant | -을 지경이다               | 죽다 → 죽을 지경이에요               |
| Ends in ㄹ           | nothing added         | 만들다 → 만들 지경이에요              |
| As a degree phrase  | -(으)ㄹ 지경으로            | 쓰러질 지경으로 피곤했다               |
| Spacing             | 지경 is a noun          | 쓰러질 지경이다                    |
| Tone                | extreme and unwelcome | pleasant extremes don't fit |

## WHEN TO USE IT

Attachment is the standard rule with the ㄹ short form: 만들다 gives 만들 지경이다. 지경 is a noun and takes a space.

The state described is extreme and unwelcome — exhaustion, hunger, frustration, collapse. A pleasant extreme does not fit: 기뻐서 웃을 지경이에요 sounds wrong.

It exaggerates deliberately. 배가 고파서 쓰러질 지경이에요 does not mean you are actually collapsing; it means you are complaining vividly.

The variant -(으)ㄹ 지경으로 turns it into a degree phrase: 쓰러질 지경으로 피곤했다.

## IN USE

- 너무 배가 고파서 쓰러질 지경이에요.  
I'm so hungry I could collapse.
- 일이 밀려서 정신을 못 차릴 지경입니다.  
The work has piled up to the point where I can't think straight.
- 하도 시끄러워서 미칠 지경이었어요.  
It was so noisy I was going out of my mind.
- 빚이 늘어 집을 팔아야 할 지경에 이르렀다.  
Debts mounted to the point where the house had to be sold.
- 주문이 밀려서 밤새 만들 지경이에요.  
Orders are so backed up we're practically making them all night.

- 6 숨을 쉬기 힘들 지경으로 매웠습니다.  
It was spicy to the point of making breathing difficult.

## COMPARED WITH

### -(으)ㄹ 정도로

정도로 measures any degree, good or bad; 지경이다 is reserved for states you are suffering under.

배가 아플 정도로 웃었어요. (laughed till it hurt) / 쓰러질 지경이에요. (about to keel over)

### -(으)ㄹ 뻔하다

뻔하다 reports a near miss that is over; 지경이다 describes a state you are in right now.

쓰러질 뻔했어요. (I nearly collapsed) / 쓰러질 지경이에요. (I'm on the point of collapse)

### -(으)ㄴ 나머지

나머지 says an extreme state produced a consequence; 지경이다 states the extreme itself as the point.

놀란 나머지 말도 못 했다. (so startled that) / 미칠 지경이었다. (I was going mad)

## WATCH OUT

X 너무 기뻐서 웃을 지경이에요.

O 너무 기뻐서 웃음이 나올 정도예요.

지경이다 describes a state you are suffering. For a pleasant extreme, 정도 is the right word.

X 밤새 만들을 지경이에요.

O 밤새 만들 지경이에요.

A stem ending in ㄹ already supplies it, as with 만들 거예요 and 만들 뿐이에요.

X 배가 고파서 쓰러질지경이에요.

O 배가 고파서 쓰러질 지경이에요.

지경 is a noun and takes a space after the modifier.