

-(으)ㄹ까 하다

be thinking of doing

The loosest of Korean's plan expressions. You are turning an idea over, and nothing is settled — which is exactly what makes it useful.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

Ends in a vowel	-ㄹ까 하다	가다 → 갈까 해요
Ends in a consonant	-을까 하다	먹다 → 먹을까 해요
Ends in ㄹ	-까 하다	만들다 → 만들까 해요
Abandoned idea	-(으)ㄹ까 했는데	갈까 했는데
First person only	not for others	동생이 갈까 해요 is wrong
Also possible	-(으)ㄹ까 싶다 / 생각하다	갈까 생각 중이에요

WHEN TO USE IT

Attachment matches -(으)ㄹ까요? exactly, with the ㄹ short form: 만들다 gives 만들까 해요.

It reports an idea you are considering: 주말에 여행을 갈까 해요. Nothing is booked, and the sentence leaves you free to change your mind.

Because it describes your own inner deliberation, it works only in the first person. You cannot report what someone else is mulling over; for that, Korean adds a guess: 가려고 하는 것 같아요.

In the past it usually means the idea came and went: 갈까 했는데 그냥 집에 있었어요.

IN USE

- 1 주말에 여행을 갈까 해요.
I'm thinking of going on a trip this weekend.
- 2 오늘 저녁은 밖에서 먹을까 해요.
I'm thinking of eating out tonight.
- 3 내년에 한국어 시험을 볼까 해요.
I'm thinking of taking the Korean exam next year.
- 4 김치를 직접 만들까 하는데 어려울까요?
I'm thinking of making kimchi myself — would it be hard?
- 5 어제 갈까 했는데 비가 와서 그만뒀어요.
I was thinking of going yesterday, but it rained so I gave up.
- 6 이사할까 해서 집을 좀 보고 있어요.
I'm thinking of moving, so I've been looking at places.

COMPARED WITH

-(으)려고 하다

-(으)려고 하다 holds an intention; -(으)ㄹ까 하다 is still weighing it up. The second is noticeably less committed.

갈까 해요. (maybe I'll go) / 가려고 해요. (I intend to go)

-기로 하다

At the other end of the scale. -기로 했어요 reports a decision already taken, often with someone else.

갈까 해요. → 가려고 해요. → 가기로 했어요. → 갈 거예요.

-(으)ㄹ까요?

Same modifier, different listener. -(으)ㄹ까요? asks the other person; -(으)ㄹ까 하다 reports what you are asking yourself.

갈까요? (shall we go?) / 갈까 해요. (I'm wondering about going)

WATCH OUT

X 김치를 만들을까 해요.

O 김치를 만들까 해요.

A stem ending in ㄹ takes the short form, as with -(으)ㄹ까요? and -(으)ㄹ게요.

X 동생이 유학을 갈까 해요.

O 동생이 유학을 가려고 하는 것 같아요.

This ending reports your own deliberation. Someone else's thinking has to be reported as a guess.

X 어제 갔을까 해요.

O 어제 갈까 했어요.

Tense goes on 하다, not inside the modifier. 갔을까 해요 would be asking whether someone went.