

-(으)ㄴ 적이 있다/없다

have done / have never done

Reports whether something has ever happened. Built on the past modifier plus **적**, a noun meaning "occasion" — literally: there exists an occasion when I did it.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

Ends in a vowel	-ㄴ 적이 있다	가다 → 간 적이 있어요
Ends in a consonant	-은 적이 있다	먹다 → 먹은 적이 있어요
Ends in ㄹ	ㄹ drops	만들다 → 만든 적이 있어요
Never	-(으)ㄴ 적이 없다	간 적이 없어요
Having tried	-아/어 본 적이 있다	먹어 본 적이 있어요
Not for	specific recent events	어제 간 적이 있어요 is wrong

WHEN TO USE IT

The form uses the past modifier: vowel stems take -ㄴ, consonant stems -은, and ㄹ drops. 만들다 gives 만든 적이 있어요.

It answers "have you ever..." questions about life experience, and it does not sit comfortably with a specific recent date. 한국에 간 적이 있어요 works; 어제 학교에 간 적이 있어요 does not — that is just 갔어요.

The negative 없다 is the natural way to say you have never done something, and it is far more common than 안 with the positive form. Korean also combines this with -아/어 보다 to give -아/어 본 적이 있다, which stresses having tried it.

IN USE

- 1 한국에 간 적이 있어요?
Have you ever been to Korea?
- 2 저는 번지점프를 한 적이 없어요.
I've never been bungee jumping.
- 3 김치를 직접 만든 적이 있어요.
I've made kimchi myself before.
- 4 그 사람을 어디에선가 본 적이 있어요.
I've seen him somewhere before.
- 5 이런 음식은 먹어 본 적이 없어요.
I've never tried food like this.

6 어릴 때 부산에 산 적이 있어요.

I lived in Busan when I was young.

COMPARED WITH

-아/어 보다

-아/어 봤다 emphasises the attempt; -(으)ㄴ 적이 있다 emphasises that the occasion exists. Combining them gives the fullest form, -아/어 본 적이 있다.

먹어 봤어요. (I've tried it) / 먹은 적이 있어요. (I have eaten it before)

-았/었-

The plain past reports one event at one time; this construction reports experience across a lifetime. A time word like 어제 forces the plain past.

어제 갔어요. (I went yesterday) / 간 적이 있어요. (I've been there at some point)

-(으)ㄴ 적이 없다 vs 안

For "never," Korean prefers 없다 over negating the verb. 안 한 적이 있어요 is grammatical but says something odd — that there was an occasion when you didn't do it.

한 적이 없어요. (I've never done it) / 안 한 적이 있어요. (there was a time I didn't)

WATCH OUT

X 김치를 만들은 적이 있어요.

O 김치를 만든 적이 있어요.

Stems ending in ㅁ drop it before the past modifier, as in 만든 후에 and 만든 것.

X 어제 그 식당에 간 적이 있어요.

O 어제 그 식당에 갔어요.

This construction is for experience in general. Once a specific recent time is named, the plain past is required.

X 한국에 가는 적이 있어요.

O 한국에 간 적이 있어요.

적 needs the past modifier -(으)ㄴ. -는 would describe something ongoing, which cannot be an experience you have already had.