

-(으)십시오

let's

Proposes doing something together. Textbooks teach it early, but it carries more authority than English "let's" — enough that it is the wrong choice with anyone senior to you.

How it attaches

Stem type	Form	Example
Ends in a vowel	-십시오	가다 → 갑시다
Ends in a consonant	-읍시다	먹다 → 먹읍시다
Ends in ㄹ	ㄹ drops	만들다 → 만듭시다
Casual	-자	가자
To a superior	-(으)시죠 / -(으)까요?	가시죠 / 갈까요?
Let's not	-지 맙시다	가지 맙시다

Notes

A stem ending in a vowel takes -십시오 and the ㅍ tucks into the syllable: 가 becomes 갑시다. A consonant stem takes -읍시다: 먹 becomes 먹읍시다. Stems ending in ㄹ drop it: 만들다 gives 만듭시다.

The register is the part worth learning carefully. -(으)십시오 suits equals and people junior to you, and it fits meetings and announcements. Said to a teacher or a boss it sounds like an instruction, so Korean substitutes -(으)시죠 or turns it into a question with -(으)까요?

Among close friends the casual form is -자: 같이 가자. And because it proposes an action, it takes action verbs only.

Examples

- 1 이제 시작합니다.
Let's begin.
- 2 다 같이 노력합니다.
Let's all make an effort.
- 3 여기서 좀 쉬시다.
Let's take a break here.
- 4 그 이야기는 나중에 합시다.
Let's talk about that later.
- 5 늦지 맙시다.
Let's not be late.
- 6 조용히 합시다.
Let's keep quiet.

Compared with

-(으)까요?

-(으)십시오 decides; -(으)까요? asks. The question form leaves room for the other person to decline, which makes it the safer opener.

밥 먹읍시다. (we're eating) / 밥 먹을까요? (shall we eat?)

-(으)시죠

The form to use with someone senior. It carries the honorific -(으)시- and softens the proposal into an invitation.

부장님, 이쪽으로 가시죠. / not 부장님, 이쪽으로 갑시다

-자

The casual equivalent, for close friends and people clearly younger. Mixing it with polite endings elsewhere in the sentence sounds odd.

같이 가자. (friends) / 같이 갑시다. (colleagues)

Watch out

✗ 선생님, 같이 점심 먹읍시다.

○ 선생님, 같이 점심 드실까요?

-(으)십시오 sounds like an instruction when aimed upward. With someone senior, ask with -(으)까요? or -(으)시죠.

✗ 저녁을 만들읍시다.

○ 저녁을 만듭시다.

Stems ending in ㄹ drop it, as they do before -ㅂ니다 and -(으)세요.

✗ 오늘은 날씨가 좋읍시다.

○ 오늘은 날씨가 좋으면 좋겠어요.

You can propose an action but not a state. Adjectives cannot take this ending.