

-(으)려고

intending to, in order to

States the intention behind an action. Broader than -(으)러 because any verb may follow — but it comes with its own restriction: no commands.

How it attaches

Stem type	Form	Example
Ends in a vowel	-려고	사다 → 사려고
Ends in a consonant	-으려고	먹다 → 먹으려고
Ends in ㄹ	-려고	만들다 → 만들려고
Plan to, be about to	-(으)려고 하다	자려고 해요
No command after	use -(으)러 or -(으)려면	사러 가세요
No tense before	plain stem only	샀으려고 does not exist

Notes

-(으)려고 names the goal that motivates whatever comes next: 집을 사려고 돈을 모아요 (I'm saving money in order to buy a house). The two clauses must share a subject, and that subject is normally the speaker — you can report your own intentions but not confidently assign them to others.

Attached to 하다 it forms -(으)려고 하다, which means "plan to" or "be about to": 이제 자려고 해요. With weather and other uncontrolled events it drops the intention and just means "about to": 비가 오려고 해요.

The restriction to remember is that no command or suggestion may follow. "Go and buy it" cannot use this ending; that is -(으)러 territory, or -(으)려면. Tense also never appears before it.

Examples

- 1 한국에 가려고 돈을 모아요.
I'm saving money to go to Korea.
- 2 시험을 보려고 열심히 공부했어요.
I studied hard to take the exam.
- 3 내일 일찍 일어나려고 해요.
I'm planning to get up early tomorrow.
- 4 선물하려고 샀어요.
I bought it to give as a present.
- 5 살을 빼려고 운동을 시작했어요.
I started exercising to lose weight.
- 6 그 말을 하려고 했는데 못 했어요.
I meant to say it, but I couldn't.

Compared with

-(으)러

-(으)러 must be followed by a movement verb; -(으)려고 accepts anything. If someone is going somewhere for a purpose, -(으)러 is the natural pick.

빵을 사러 갔어요. (went to buy bread) / 빵을 사려고 일찍 일어났어요. (got up early to buy bread)

-(으)ㄹ 거예요

-(으)려고 하다 describes a plan taking shape or an action on the point of happening; -(으)ㄹ 거예요 states a decision already made.

가려고 해요. (I'm thinking of going) / 갈 거예요. (I'm going)

-(으)려면

Add 면 and the intention becomes a condition: "if you intend to." This is the form that can lead into advice or a command.

사려고 돈을 모아요. (saving to buy) / 사려면 돈을 모으세요. (if you want to buy, save up)

Watch out

✗ 빵을 사려고 가세요.

○ 빵을 사러 가세요.

No command may follow -(으)려고. With a movement verb, -(으)러 is the fix; otherwise use -(으)려면.

✗ 저녁을 만들으려고 일찍 왔어요.

○ 저녁을 만들려고 일찍 왔어요.

A stem ending in ㄹ takes the short form, exactly as with -(으)러.

✗ 동생이 유학 가려고 해요. — asserting someone else's plan

○ 동생이 유학 가려고 하는 것 같아요.

Intentions belong to the person who holds them. Stating another person's plan flatly sounds presumptuous; soften it or report the source.