

-기 때문에

because of, owing to

The written way to give a reason. Heavier than -아서/어서 and, like it, unable to be followed by a command.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

Any verb or adjective	-기 때문에	오다 → 오기 때문에
Past	-았/었기 때문에	왔기 때문에
이다	-이기 때문에	학생이기 때문에
With a noun	noun + 때문에	비 때문에
Sentence-initial	그렇기 때문에	그렇기 때문에 중요합니다
No command after	use -(으)니까	비가 오니까 우산을 가져가세요

WHEN TO USE IT

Attach -기 때문에 to any stem — no vowel rule, = stays. Unlike -기 on its own, this construction does take tense: 비가 왔기 때문에 못 갔어요.

It states a cause with more weight than -아서 and belongs in reports, essays, and formal explanation. In casual conversation it can sound like you are defending yourself.

With a noun, drop the -기: 비 때문에 늦었어요. Careful here — noun + 때문에 usually blames something, so 사람 때문에 means "because of that person" in a negative sense. For a neutral "because he is a student," you need 학생이기 때문에.

Like -아서, it cannot be followed by a request or suggestion. That job belongs to -(으)니까.

IN USE

- 1 비가 왔기 때문에 행사가 취소됐어요.
The event was cancelled because it rained.
- 2 시간이 없기 때문에 자세히 설명할 수 없습니다.
Because there's no time, I can't explain in detail.
- 3 학생이기 때문에 할인을 받을 수 있어요.
You can get a discount because you're a student.
- 4 교통사고 때문에 길이 막혔어요.
The road was blocked because of a traffic accident.
- 5 한국어를 배우고 싶었기 때문에 한국에 왔어요.
I came to Korea because I wanted to learn Korean.

6 그렇기 때문에 이 문제가 중요합니다.

That is why this issue matters.

COMPARED WITH

-아서/어서

Same restriction on commands, different weight. -아서 is the everyday choice; -기 때문에 is formal and can carry tense, which -아서 cannot.

비가 와서 못 갔어요. (speech) / 비가 왔기 때문에 가지 못했습니다. (writing)

-(으)니까

If the second clause tells someone to do something, neither -아서 nor -기 때문에 will work. Only -(으)니까 accepts commands and suggestions.

비가 오기 때문에 우산을 가져가세요. (wrong) / 비가 오니까 우산을 가져가세요. (right)

Noun + 때문에

With a bare noun the phrase tends to assign blame. To state a neutral fact about what something is, keep the 이기.

동생 때문에 늦었어요. (my brother made me late) / 동생이기 때문에 잘 알아요. (because he's my brother, I know him well)

WATCH OUT

X 비가 오기 때문에 우산을 가져가세요.

O 비가 오니까 우산을 가져가세요.

No request or suggestion may follow this ending. The restriction is the same as with -아서/어서.

X 학생 때문에 할인을 받을 수 있어요. — meaning "because I'm a student"

O 학생이기 때문에 할인을 받을 수 있어요.

Bare noun + 때문에 means "because of that person or thing," often negatively. To say what someone is, use 이기 때문에.

X 친구를 만났어서 늦었어요.

O 친구를 만났기 때문에 늦었어요.

-아서 refuses tense, but -기 때문에 accepts it. If you need to mark the past on the reason, this is the ending that allows it.