

-기는 하다

it is, but ...

Grants a point before qualifying it. Even without a following clause, the reservation is audible — which is what makes it useful for polite disagreement.

How it attaches

Situation	Form	Example
Any verb or adjective	-기는 하다	맛있다 → 맛있기는 해요
Tense on 하다	-기는 했따	가기는 했어요
Spoken contraction	-긴 하다	맛있긴 해요
Repetition variant	-기는 + same word	가기는 가요
ㄹ stems keep the ㄹ	-기는 하다	만들기는 했어요
Reservation spelled out	-기는 하지만	맛있기는 하지만 비싸요

Notes

Attach -기는 to any stem and conjugate 하다. The tense goes on 하다: 가기는 했어요, not 갔기는 해요. In speech it contracts to -긴 하다.

The concession is the point. 맛있기는 해요 admits the food is tasty while leaving a reservation hanging, and the listener hears it even if you stop there.

A variant repeats the word itself: 가기는 가요, 좋기는 좋아요. This is common in speech and slightly more emphatic.

Spelling the reservation out gives -기는 하지만. This entry is the same construction with the second half left implied.

Examples

- 1 맛있기는 해요. 좀 비싸지만요.
It is tasty. A bit pricey, though.
- 2 가기는 했는데 아무도 없었어요.
I did go, but there was nobody there.
- 3 읽긴 읽었는데 무슨 말인지 모르겠어요.
I read it, all right, but I've no idea what it means.
- 4 직접 만들기는 했지만 시간이 오래 걸렸어요.
I did make it myself, though it took a long time.
- 5 괜찮기는 한데 조금 아쉬운 부분이 있어요.
It is fine, but there are one or two things I miss.
- 6 알기는 하는데 설명하기가 어렵네요.
I do know it, but it's hard to explain.

Compared with

-기는 하지만

The same concession with the contrast stated. -기는 하다 leaves it implied, which can be more tactful.

맛있기는 해요. (and there's a but) / 맛있기는 하지만 비싸요. (the but, stated)

-지만

-지만 simply contrasts two facts; -기는 하다 first concedes the other person's point, then qualifies it.

맛있지만 비싸요. (tasty but pricey) / 맛있기는 해요. (it is tasty, mind you)

Repetition form

Repeating the word — 가기는 가요, 좋기는 좋아요 — is a spoken variant that stresses the concession before the reservation lands.

가기는 해요. / 가기는 가요.

Watch out

✗ 어제 갔기는 해요.

○ 어제 가기는 했어요.

The tense belongs on 하다. -기 never carries it.

✗ 맛있기는 해요. 정말 훌륭해요.

○ 맛있기는 해요. 좀 비싸지만요.

The construction sets up a reservation. Following it with unqualified praise contradicts the concession.

✗ 가기는 갔기는 했어요.

○ 가기는 갔어요.

In the repetition variant, the second word carries the tense on its own. 하다는 not added as well.