

# -고자

in order to, with the aim of

The formal way to state an intention. It is what -(으)려고 becomes in a speech, a report, or an official letter.

## HOW TO ATTACH IT

|                      |                   |                        |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Action verb          | <b>-고자</b>        | 알리다 → 알리고자             |
| ㄹ stems keep the ㄹ   | <b>-고자</b>        | 만들다 → 만들고자             |
| Announcing an action | <b>-고자 하다</b>     | 말씀드리고자 합니다             |
| Same subject         | <b>required</b>   | the intention is yours |
| Adjectives           | <b>impossible</b> | 행복하고자 does not work    |
| Spoken version       | <b>-(으)려고</b>     | 알리려고                   |

## WHEN TO USE IT

Attach -고자 to an action verb stem — no vowel rule, ㄹ stays, no tense in front. Adjectives are excluded, since an intention has to be an action.

Both clauses share a subject, and the intention is normally the speaker's own: 이 자리를 빌려 감사의 말씀을 드리고자 합니다.

The pattern -고자 하다 is how it appears in formal speech, and it is the polite way to announce what you are about to do: 말씀드리고자 합니다, 여쭙보고자 합니다.

It takes no commands or suggestions. And in casual conversation it sounds ceremonial — there, -(으)려고 is the natural form.

## IN USE

- 이 자리를 빌려 감사의 말씀을 드리고자 합니다.  
I should like to take this opportunity to express my thanks.
- 변경 사항을 알리고자 안내문을 보냅니다.  
We are sending this notice in order to inform you of the changes.
- 문제를 해결하고자 여러 방안을 검토했다.  
We reviewed a number of options with a view to solving the problem.
- 더 나은 제품을 만들고자 노력하고 있습니다.  
We are striving to make a better product.
- 몇 가지 여쭙보고자 연락드렸습니다.  
I am writing to ask a few questions.

6 회사는 사업을 확장하고자 한다.

The company intends to expand its operations.

COMPARED WITH

-(-으)려고

Same meaning, different register. -(-으)려고 is everyday; -고자 marks the sentence as formal or written.

알리려고 연락했어요. (speech) / 알리고자 연락드렸습니다. (formal)

-기 위해서

Both state purpose formally, but 위해서 accepts commands and works with third-party goals. -고자 stays with the speaker's own intention.

건강을 위해서 운동하세요. (advice) / 알리고자 합니다. (my intention)

-고자 하다

The set pattern for announcing what you are about to do. In presentations and formal letters it appears constantly.

말씀드리고자 합니다. / 여쭙보고자 합니다.

WATCH OUT

X 행복하고자 노력합니다.

O 행복해지고자 노력합니다.

An intention has to be an action. An adjective needs -아/어지다 first.

X 알리고자 연락하세요.

O 알리기 위해 연락하시기 바랍니다.

-고자 cannot be followed by a command. It states the speaker's own intention.

X 야, 나 밥 먹고자 나가.

O 야, 나 밥 먹으려고 나가.

-고자 is ceremonial. In casual speech, -(-으)려고 is the natural choice.