

-지 마세요

please don't

The negative of -(으)세요. Korean cannot build a prohibition out of **않다**, so it uses a separate verb, **말다**, for telling someone not to do something.

How it attaches

Situation	Form	Example
Any action verb	-지 마세요	가다 → 가지 마세요
ㄹ stems keep the ㄹ	-지 마세요	만들다 → 만들지 마세요
Casual	-지 마	가지 마
Formal	-지 마십시오	가지 마십시오
Let's not	-지 맙시다	가지 맙시다
Instead of doing	-지 말고	타지 말고 걸어요

Notes

Attach -지 to the plain stem and conjugate **말다**: 여기에서 사진을 찍지 마세요. No vowel rule applies, and the stem itself never changes.

The ㄹ of **말다** disappears in most of its forms, which is why the result is **마세요** rather than **말으세요**. The family runs **마** (casual), **마세요** (polite), **마십시오** (formal), **맙시다** (let's not).

Two limits. It works with action verbs only — you cannot order someone not to be cold. And it is a request, so it never states a fact; for "I don't go," you need -지 않다 or 안. Korean also uses -지 말고 to mean "instead of doing that": 택시 타지 말고 걸어요.

Examples

- 여기에 주차하지 마세요.**
Please don't park here.
- 너무 걱정하지 마세요.**
Please don't worry too much.
- 수업 중에 휴대폰을 보지 마세요.**
Please don't look at your phone during class.
- 잊지 마세요.**
Please don't forget.
- 무리하지 마십시오.**
Please don't overdo it.
- 늦지 말고 오세요.**
Please come on time.

Compared with

-(으)면 안 되다

-지 마세요 asks the listener directly; -(으)면 안 되다 states a rule that applies generally. Signs and regulations often prefer the second.

담배를 피우지 마세요. (I'm asking you) / 여기에서 담배를 피우면 안 돼요. (it's not allowed)

-지 않다

않다 reports; 말다 requests. Only 말다 can form an imperative, which is why the two are not interchangeable.

가지 않아요. (I don't go) / 가지 마세요. (please don't go)

-지 말고

The connective form, used to offer an alternative rather than a flat prohibition. It softens the instruction considerably.

걱정하지 마세요. / 걱정하지 말고 좀 쉬세요.

Watch out

✗ 여기에 앉지 않으세요.

○ 여기에 앉지 마세요.

않다 cannot give an order. Prohibitions are always built on 말다, whatever the politeness level.

✗ 걱정하지 말으세요.

○ 걱정하지 마세요.

The ㄹ of 말다 drops before this ending, giving 마세요. The same happens in 마십시오 and 맙시다.

✗ 춤지 마세요.

○ 감기 걸리지 마세요.

You can ask someone not to do something, but not to be something. Rephrase the adjective as an action verb.