

-느라고

because I was busy doing — and so something failed

A reason ending with a built-in outcome: the first action consumed your time or attention, and the second suffered for it. That negative result is part of the grammar, not just the context.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

Action verb	-느라고	공부하다 → 공부하느라고
Ends in ㄹ	ㄹ drops	만들다 → 만드느라고
Short form	-느라	공부하느라
Result must be	negative	못 잤어요, 늦었어요, 못 갔어요
Adjectives	impossible	아프느라고 does not exist
Never takes tense	plain stem only	공부했느라고 is wrong

WHEN TO USE IT

Attach -느라고 to an action verb stem; ㄹ drops, giving 만드느라고. The short form -느라 is common. No tense goes in front, and the two clauses must share a subject.

Three restrictions make it narrower than -아서/어서. It takes action verbs only — no adjectives, and nothing involuntary like 아프다. It requires the two events to overlap in time, competing for the same hours. And the second clause must be a negative or unwanted outcome.

That last point is where learners slip. 공부하느라고 합격했어요 is wrong, because passing is a good result. 공부하느라고 잠을 못 잤어요 is right.

Like -아서, it cannot be followed by a command or suggestion.

IN USE

- 1 시험 공부하느라고 한숨도 못 잤어요.
I was studying for the exam and didn't sleep a wink.
- 2 전화 받느라고 못 들었어요.
I was on the phone, so I didn't hear it.
- 3 저녁을 만드느라고 시간 가는 줄 몰랐어요.
I was making dinner and lost track of time.
- 4 일하느라고 연락을 못 드렸습니다.
I was tied up with work and couldn't get in touch.
- 5 아이를 돌보느라 정신이 없었어요.
I was looking after the children and completely swamped.

6 발표 준비하느라 주말에도 못 쉬었어요.

I was busy preparing the presentation, so I could not rest even at the weekend.

COMPARED WITH

-아서/어서

-아서 gives any cause; -느라고 specifically says your time went elsewhere. For an involuntary reason like illness, only -아서 works.

아파서 못 갔어요. (I was ill) / 일하느라고 못 갔어요. (I was working)

-기 때문에

-기 때문에 is neutral and formal, and accepts adjectives and tense. -느라고 is narrower but more vivid about what occupied you.

시간이 없었기 때문에 (because there was no time) / 일하느라고 (because I was busy working)

-는 바람에

Also produces a negative result, but from something sudden and outside your control rather than from your own occupation.

공부하느라고 못 갔어요. (I was studying) / 비가 오는 바람에 못 갔어요. (it rained unexpectedly)

WATCH OUT

X 열심히 공부하느라고 시험에 합격했어요.

O 열심히 공부해서 시험에 합격했어요.

-느라고 requires an unwanted outcome. For a good result, use -아서 or -(으)니까.

X 어제 아프느라고 못 갔어요.

O 어제 아파서 못 갔어요.

This ending takes action verbs only. 아프다 is an adjective describing a state you did not choose.

X 저녁을 만들느라고 늦었어요.

O 저녁을 만드느라고 늦었어요.

Stems ending in ㄹ drop it before -느라고, as they do before -는 and -(으)니까.