

Lesson 4: 에

In this lesson, you will learn how to use the particle 에 [ae] to say things like "He/She is at home.", "I am going to the park.", and "I wake up at 6."

KEY INFORMATION

에 [ae] = Location & Time Particle

Usage 1: Place

Usage 2: Destination

Usage 3: Time

에 [ae] is what is sometimes referred to as a 'location marking particle'. It is used to mark a noun as the location where something exists or doesn't exist, the place where you are going to, or the time at which something takes place. To help you understand what we mean, let's take a look at each of these usages one by one.

Usage 1: Place

The particle 에 can be used to mark a noun as the place where someone or something exists or doesn't exist. Let's look at some examples:

집에 있어요. [ji-be i-sseo-yo] = (I/He/She) is at home.

집에 없어요. [ji-be eop-seo-yo] = (I/He/She) is not at home.

책이 가방에 있어요. [chae-gi ga-bang-e i-sseo-yo] = The book is in the bag.

책이 가방에 없어요. [chae-gi ga-bang-e eop-seo-yo] = The book is not in the bag.

베개가 침대에 있어요. [be-gae-ga chim-dae-e i-sseo-yo] = The pillow is on the bed.

베개가 침대에 없어요. [be-gae-ga chim-dae-e eop-seo-yo] = The pillow is not on the bed

In the examples above, 에 is attached to a noun to 'mark' that noun as the location where something or someone exists or doesn't exist. When translated into English, the prepositions 'at', 'in', and 'on' are used, but in Korean these are all realized by the location marking particle 에.

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Usage 2: Destination

The particle 에 can be used to mark a noun as the destination that someone or something is going to. When 에 is used to mark a noun as the destination, it is followed by verbs that indicate movement such as 가다 [ga-da] (to go), 오다 [o-da] (to come), and 다니다 [da-ni-da] (to attend). Let's look at some examples:

공원에 가요. [gong-wo-ne ga-yo] = *I'm going to the park.*

친구가 집에 와요. [chin-gu-ga ji-be wa-yo] = *My friend is coming to my house.*

서울대학교에 다녀요. [seo-ul-dae-hak-gyo-e da-nyeo-yo] = *I go to / attend Seoul University.*

As you can see in these examples, 에 is similar to the English preposition 'to' when used to mark a noun as the destination that someone or something is going to.

Usage 3: Time

The particle 에 can be used to indicate the time when something happens. Let's look at some examples:

6시에 일어나요. [yeo-seot-si-e i-reo-na-yo] = *I get up at 6.*

아침에 운동해요. [a-chi-me un-dong-hae-yo] = *I exercise in the morning.*

주말에 청소해요. [ju-ma-re cheong-so-hae-yo] = *I clean on weekends.*

내년에 미국에 가요. [nae-nyeo-ne mi-gu-ge ga-yo] = *I'm going to America next year.*

*Please note that 에 cannot be used with the following words: 오늘 (today), 어제 (yesterday), 내일 (tomorrow), and 언제 (when). This is a common mistake beginner Korean learners often make.