UNIT 01

The 10 Basic Korean Vowels

Goal: recognize and say the ten vowels, know that ㅇ is silent at the start of a syllable, and read your first four words.

Exercise 1 · Trace and write the vowels

Say the sound out loud. Trace the grey vowel, then write it in the empty boxes.

Vowel	With ㅇ	Romanization · sound	Trace, then write			
ㅏ	아	a · “ah”	ㅏ			
ㅑ	야	ya · “yah”	ㅑ			
ㅓ	어	eo · “uh” (approx.)	ㅓ			
ㅕ	여	yeo · “yuh” (approx.)	ㅕ			
ㅗ	오	o · “oh”	ㅗ			
ㅛ	요	yo · “yo”	ㅛ			
ㅜ	우	u · “oo” as in food	ㅜ			
ㅠ	유	yu · “you”	ㅠ			
ㅡ	으	eu · no exact English match	ㅡ			
ㅣ	이	i · “ee” as in see	ㅣ			

Remember: ㅇ is silent at the beginning of a syllable, so 아 sounds just like ㅏ. For ㅓ/ㅕ and ㅡ, listen closely to the native audio.

Exercise 2 · Make the syllable

At the start of a syllable ㅇ is silent. Put ㅇ together with each vowel and write the syllable.

ㅇ + ㅏ = _____ ㅇ + ㅑ = _____

ㅇ + ㅓ = _____ ㅇ + ㅕ = _____

ㅇ + ㅗ = _____ ㅇ + ㅛ = _____

ㅇ + ㅜ = _____ ㅇ + ㅠ = _____

ㅇ + ㅡ = _____ ㅇ + ㅣ = _____

Exercise 3 · Match the sound

Which vowel makes this sound? Choose from the box and write the vowel on the line.

ㅗ	ㅛ	ㅜ	ㅠ	ㅣ	ㅑ

1. “oh” _____
2. “yo” _____
3. “oo” as in food _____
4. “you” _____
5. “ee” as in see _____
6. “yah” _____

Exercise 4 · Your first Korean words

Read each word out loud. Find the vowels you know. Then match each word to its meaning (write the meaning: **child · cucumber · milk · fox**).

아이	ai	_____	☐ read aloud
오이	oi	_____	☐ read aloud
우유	uyu	_____	☐ read aloud
여우	yeou	_____	☐ read aloud

Exercise 5 · Quick quiz

1. Which vowel sounds like “yo”?

A ㅗ **B** ㅛ **C** ㅠ

2. Which vowel has no exact English equivalent?

A ㅣ **B** ㅡ **C** ㅏ

3. Which one sounds like “oo” in food?

A ㅜ **B** ㅛ **C** ㅓ

4. What do we do with ㅇ at the beginning of a syllable?

A say “ng” **B** it is silent **C** say “o”

Unit 01 Master Check

- ☐ I can read all ten vowels: 아 야 어 여 오 요 우 유 으 이
- ☐ I know that ㅇ is silent at the beginning of a syllable
- ☐ I can read 아이, 오이, 우유 and 여우 without help
- ☐ I know which vowel has no exact English sound (ㅡ)

Answer Key

Check your work. Then read every answer out loud once more.

Exercise 2

ㅇ+ㅏ=아 · ㅇ+ㅑ=야 · ㅇ+ㅓ=어 · ㅇ+ㅕ=여 · ㅇ+ㅗ=오 · ㅇ+ㅛ=요 · ㅇ+ㅜ=우 · ㅇ+ㅠ=유 · ㅇ+ㅡ=으 · ㅇ+ㅣ=이

Exercise 3

1. ㅗ · 2. ㅛ · 3. ㅜ · 4. ㅠ · 5. ㅣ · 6. ㅑ

Exercise 4

아이 = child · 오이 = cucumber · 우유 = milk · 여우 = fox

Exercise 5

1. B (ㅛ) · 2. B (ㅡ) · 3. A (ㅜ) · 4. B (it is silent)

> Some answers depend on your own pronunciation. Compare your voice with the native-speaker audio in the video.