UNIT 04

Reading Your First Korean Words

Goal: read words as blocks in a row with the 3-step method (Split, Decode, Say it smoothly) and read 18 real Korean words.

The 3-step method

1. **Split** the word into blocks. 2. **Decode** each block (consonant first, then vowel). 3. **Say it smoothly** (slow → smooth).

Example: 나무 = 나 + 무.

Read one block at a time. Then say them smoothly together.

These words are for reading practice, not memorizing.

Exercise 1 · Read it, then write it

Read each word out loud (no English!). Then copy it by tracing and writing.

Word	Trace, then write			
나무	나무			
바지	바지			
모자	모자			
고기	고기			
두부	두부			
오리	오리			
우유	우유			
아이	아이			

Exercise 2 · Loanwords: read, then guess the English word

These words come from English. Read each one out loud first, then write the English word. Word bank: **banana** · **coffee** · **juice** · **pizza** · **radio** · **tomato** (in mixed order).

주스	_____	피자	_____
커피	_____	라디오	_____
바나나	_____	토마토	_____

The Korean sound is not exactly the English sound. Listen to the Korean audio and repeat.

Exercise 3 · Count the blocks

How many blocks (syllables) are in each word? Write the number.

나무	바나나	아이	토마토	피자	라디오

Exercise 4 · Split each word into blocks

Step 1 of the method. Write each block.

바나나 = _____ + _____ + _____

라디오 = _____ + _____ + _____

토마토 = _____ + _____ + _____

오리 = _____ + _____

Exercise 5 · Put the blocks together

Step 3: say the blocks smoothly, then write the whole word.

나 + 무 =	_____	피 + 자 =	_____
사 + 자 =	_____	지 + 도 =	_____
여 + 우 =	_____	가 + 수 =	_____

Exercise 6 · Find the silent ㅇ

Silent ㅇ shows up inside real words. Tick the words that **start** with a silent ㅇ.

오리	두부	우유	고기	아이
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
여우	주스	요리	야구	나비
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Exercise 7 · Decode four new words

These four words are not in the video. Use the 3 steps: split each word, then break each block into letters. Then read the word smoothly and match it with its meaning (**spider · baseball · cooking · butterfly**).

Word	Letters in each block	Meaning
거미	_____	_____
야구	_____	_____
요리	_____	_____
나비	_____	_____

Exercise 8 · Mixed reading challenge

The order is mixed up and there is no English. Read each row out loud first, then check with the audio.

Row 1	바나나 모자 우유	☐☐
Row 2	커피 고기 오리	☐☐
Row 3	토마토 바지 두부	☐☐
Row 4	주스 라디오 나무	☐☐
Row 5	피자 아이	☐☐

Exercise 9 · Quick quiz

1. Which word is made of 나 + 무?

A 모자 B 나무 C 바지

2. How many blocks are in 바나나?

A 3 B 2 C 4

3. Which Korean word says “pizza”?

A 주스 B 커피 C 피자

4. Which word starts with a silent ㅇ?

A 두부 B 우유 C 고기

Look ahead

Every word in this unit used two-letter blocks. In real Korean you'll also see blocks with a third letter at the bottom, like 학교 and 한국. We'll learn those bottom letters in Unit 06. You don't need to read them yet.

Unit 04 Master Check

- ☐ I read a Korean word block by block, from left to right
- ☐ I know the 3 steps: split, decode, say it smoothly
- ☐ I can say what 바나나 is made of (바 + 나 + 나, three blocks)
- ☐ I know ㅇ at the start of a block inside a word, like 우유, is silent
- ☐ I know a loanword is a word borrowed from another language, like 커피 (coffee)
- ☐ I can read 나무, 모자, 우유, 주스 and 사자 without romanization

Keep going: Read all the words in this unit out loud today, then read them again tomorrow. Next up is Unit 05: double consonants and sounds with an extra puff of air.

Answer Key

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

Exercise 2

주스 = juice · 피자 = pizza · 커피 = coffee · 라디오 = radio · 바나나 = banana · 토마토 = tomato

Exercise 3

나무 = 2 · 바나나 = 3 · 아이 = 2 · 토마토 = 3 · 피자 = 2 · 라디오 = 3

Exercise 4

바나나 = 바 + 나 + 나 · 라디오 = 라 + 디 + 오 · 토마토 = 토 + 마 + 토 · 오리 = 오 + 리

Exercise 5

나+무 = 나무 · 피+자 = 피자 · 사+자 = 사자 · 지+도 = 지도 · 여+우 = 여우 · 가+수 = 가수

Exercise 6

오리 · 우유 · 아이 · 여우 · 요리 · 야구 (두부, 고기, 주스, 나비 do not start with ㅇ)

Exercise 7

거미 = (ㄱ+ㅓ) + (ㅁ+ㅣ) · spider
야구 = (ㅇ+ㅑ) + (ㄱ+ㅜ) · baseball
요리 = (ㅇ+ㅛ) + (ㄹ+ㅣ) · cooking
나비 = (ㄴ+ㅏ) + (ㅂ+ㅣ) · butterfly

Exercise 9

1. B (나무) · 2. A (3: 바 + 나 + 나) · 3. C (피자) · 4. B (우유: 우 is ㅇ + ㅜ)

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