

South Koreans to become a year or two younger

22nd December 2022



A new law in South Korea means South Koreans will be a year or two younger. The law was passed last Thursday. Before it was passed, there were three different ways that people could tell their age. South Koreans could have

three ages. One was an "international age". This is the same as how most people in the world calculate their age. A baby is zero at birth and becomes one year old a year after it is born. The second was a "Korean age". Under this system, babies are considered a year old on the day they are born, and then a year is added every January the 1st. The third method was a "calendar age". This makes babies zero years old at birth, and a year is added to their age every January the 1st.

The new law simplifies age in South Korea. Lawmakers hope it will end confusion about how old people are. From June 2023, all official documents must use the standard international age. It will be used for the legal ages for drinking, getting married, smoking, and military service. It should help to end legal and social problems caused by the old system. However, many people will continue to use the Korean age in informal situations. A Korean Twitter user was relieved there is a new law to make things simpler. She tweeted: "I'll become two years younger. I'm so happy. I turned two years old two weeks after I was born, as I was born in December. Finally, I'm about to get my real age back."

Sources: koreatimes.co.uk / cnn.com / the-guardian.com

Writing

Our youth is the best time of our lives. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

law / South Korea / age / international / calculate / being born / calendar / birth / lawmakers / confusion / documents / legal ages / military service / happy / December

True / False

- 1) A law in South Korea means people can choose to be a year older. T / F
- 2) It was possible for South Koreans to have three different ages. T / F
- 3) The "Korean age" means adding a year to your age every January 1. T / F
- 4) The "Calendar age" in Japan means you are one year old at birth. T / F
- 5) Official documents will use the calendar age from June 2023. T / F
- 6) The "International age" will be used for military service. T / F
- 7) All Korean people will stop using the "Korean age". T / F
- 8) A woman on Twitter was happy she would be two years younger. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. law | a. believed to be |
| 2. ways | b. lawful |
| 3. calculate | c. easier |
| 4. considered | d. methods |
| 5. babies | e. casual |
| 6. confusion | f. newborns |
| 7. legal | g. rule |
| 8. informal | h. actual |
| 9. simpler | i. uncertainty |
| 10. real | j. work out |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Would you like to be younger or older?
- c) Do you agree that you are as young as you feel?
- d) What should the legal age for getting married be?
- e) What should the legal age for military service be?
- f) Do you like celebrating your birthday?
- g) How old do you want to live?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a young person?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. The law was | a. could tell their age |
| 2. three different ways that people | b. real age back |
| 3. the same as how most people in the | c. age in South Korea |
| 4. babies are considered a year old on the | d. end confusion |
| 5. a year is added to their age | e. for drinking |
| 6. The new law simplifies | f. passed last Thursday |
| 7. Lawmakers hope it will | g. world calculate their age |
| 8. the legal ages | h. situations |
| 9. in informal | i. every January the 1st |
| 10. I'm about to get my | j. day they are born |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of age?
- How happy are you with your age?
- What do you think of the new South Korean law?
- What's the best way to calculate age?
- When you were young, did you want to be older?
- What's the best age to be?
- What are the good things about being older?
- What are the good things about being younger?

Spelling

- The law was desspa last Thursday
- an ntarontnielai age
- people in the world uclalacet their age
- Under this stsmey
- babies are endsdocrine a year old
- a ntheadlr age
- The new law sipmeisfl age
- it will end oicfnstuo
- all foficial documents
- maiyrtili service
- in fmiarlon situations
- vereilde there is a new law

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. j	4. a	5. f
6. i	7. b	8. e	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Five

You think 5 is the best age. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their age. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ages (and why): 25, 65 or 95.

Role B – Twenty-five

You think 25 is the best age. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their age. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ages (and why): 5, 65 or 95.

Role C – Sixty-five

You think 65 is the best age. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their age. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ages (and why): 25, 5 or 95.

Role D – Ninety-five

You think 95 is the best age. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their age. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ages (and why): 25, 65 or 5.

Speaking – The Best Age

Rank these with your partner. Put the best age at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------|-------|
| • 5 | • 45 |
| • 10 | • 65 |
| • 15 | • 85 |
| • 25 | • 105 |

Answers – True False

1 F	2 T	3 T	4 F	5 F	6 T	7 F	8 T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.