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# Alphabetized Listing

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## **Verbs: Indicative Tenses**

Present Tense

Preterite Tense

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## Present Tense

The present tense is used in the following cases:

- To express something that is presently occurring:

Yo **juego** en el partido.

I **play** in the game.

- To translate the English Present Progressive most of the time:

Yo **leo** un libro bueno.

I **am reading** a good book.

- To express something that is accurate for only a short period of time:

Él **vive** en la ciudad en este momento.

He **lives** in the city at this moment.

- To express a sentiment that may extend indefinitely back into the past and forward into the future. This usage is referred to as the "universal present". For example:

Dios **es** misericordioso.

God **is** merciful.

- In conversation to express vivid and immediate experience. It may also be used to show scheduled future events. For example:

Me **llaman** al teléfono. Vuelvo en seguida.

They **are calling** me to the telephone. I'll be right back.

Formation:

The present tense is formed by adding the following endings:

	<b>-AR verbs</b>	<b>-ER verbs</b>	<b>-IR verbs</b>
yo	<b>-o</b>	<b>-o</b>	<b>-o</b>
tú	<b>-as</b>	<b>-es</b>	<b>-es</b>
él, ella, Ud.	<b>-a</b>	<b>-e</b>	<b>-e</b>
nosotros	<b>-amos</b>	<b>-emos</b>	<b>-imos</b>
vosotros	<b>-ais</b>	<b>-eis</b>	<b>-eis</b>
Uds, ellos(as)	<b>-an</b>	<b>-en</b>	<b>-en</b>

See also:

Present Progressive

## Preterite Tense

The preterite tense is the simple past tense. The preterite tense expresses an action that was completed in the past. For example:

Ayer **fui** a la playa.

Yesterday I **went** to the beach.

Alex la **comió** anoche.

Alex **ate** it last night.

The preterite can also be used to define a period of time if the beginning and ending of the period are stated and are both completed in the past.

**Estudié** en la universidad entre 1980 y 1984.

I **studied** in college between 1980 and 1984.

Confusion of the **preterite** with the **imperfect**: The use of the preterite is often confused with the use of the imperfect tense. The preterite contrasts with the imperfect in that the imperfect is used to denote a repeated past action. The preterite, however, usually denotes a one-time action which took place in the past.

Hint: If you can pinpoint an action to a specific time (i.e. **on May 16 at 2.34 p.m.**), the correct tense to use would probably be the preterite.

See also:

[Imperfect Tense](#)

Formation:

The preterite is formed by adding the following endings:

	<b>-AR verbs</b>	<b>-ER verbs</b>	<b>-IR verbs</b>
yo	<b>-é</b>	<b>-í</b>	<b>-í</b>
tú	<b>-aste</b>	<b>-iste</b>	<b>-iste</b>
él, ella, Ud.	<b>-ó</b>	<b>-ió</b>	<b>-ió</b>
nosotros	<b>-amos</b>	<b>-imos</b>	<b>-imos</b>
vosotros	<b>-asteis</b>	<b>-isteis</b>	<b>-isteis</b>
Uds, ellos(as)	<b>-aron</b>	<b>-ieron</b>	<b>-ieron</b>

Please note that there are many irregular preterite stems.

To the irregular stems the following endings are added for all infinitive types:

yo	<b>-e</b>
tú	<b>-iste</b>
él, ella, Ud.	<b>-o</b>
nosotros	<b>-imos</b>
vosotros	<b>-isteis</b>
Uds, ellos(as)	<b>-ieron</b>

Drop the **i** from the **ieron** suffix when adding to a stem which ends in **u** or **j**.

See also:

[Imperfect Tense](#)

[Past Progressive](#)

## Imperfect Tense

The imperfect tense can best be thought of as denoting a repeated or continuous past action or one that took place over a period of time. This tense expresses:

- Two different actions happening in the past at the same time:  
Él **trabajaba** mientras mi primo **dormía**.  
He **was working** while my cousin **was sleeping**.
- An action taking place in the past when another action interrupts:  
Los estudiantes **hablaban** cuando el maestro **llegó**.  
The students **were talking** when the teacher **arrived**.
- A habitual action that takes place in the past:  
Cuando yo estaba en la universidad, **trabajaba** cada fin de semana.  
When I was in college, I **worked** every weekend.  
  
Cuando mi padre era joven, **jugaba** al tenis cada día.  
When my father was young, he **would play (used to play)** tennis every day.
- Mental, emotional, and physical conditions in the past as well as other past conditions such as weather, time, and age:  
Él la **amaba** mucho.  
He **loved** her very much.  
  
**Hacía** mucho calor y **estaba** muy húmedo.  
It **was** very hot and humid.  
  
**Eran** las cuatro de la tarde.  
It **was** four in the afternoon.
- A completed action that preceded another past action. In English this is formed by using "had been" and the present participle. This is an idiomatic use of the imperfect tense of a verb with **hacía**, which is also in the imperfect.  
**Hacía** dos horas que **tocaba** el piano cuando los vecinos llamaron.  
He **had been playing** the piano for two hours when the neighbors called.
- Always use the imperfect when referring to someone's age in the past:  
Ella se fue a la universidad cuando **tenía** 16 años.  
She left for college when she **was** 16 years old.

Formation:

The imperfect tense is formed by adding the following endings:

	<b>-AR verbs</b>	<b>-ER and -IR verbs</b>
yo	<b>-aba</b>	<b>-ía</b>
tu	<b>-abas</b>	<b>-ías</b>
él, ella, Ud.	<b>-aba</b>	<b>-ía</b>
nosotros	<b>-ábamos</b>	<b>-íamos</b>
vosotros	<b>-abais</b>	<b>-íais</b>
Uds., ellos/as	<b>-aban</b>	<b>-ían</b>

The English equivalent is usually **was** or **were** followed by the present participle (**-ing**) or **used to** plus the infinitive.

See also:

[Preterite Tense](#)

## Future Tense

The future tense in Spanish is formed by adding the following endings to the infinitive:

yo	-é	nosotros	-emos
tú	-ás	vosotros	-éis
él, ella, Ud.	-á	Uds., ellos/as	-án

Because the endings are added to the entire infinitive, as opposed to just the stem, they are the same for -AR, -ER, and -IR verbs.

There are three uses for the future tense:

- To express that something will take place at a time future to the present:

La banda **marchará** en el desfile hoy.

The band **will march** in the parade today.

- To express present intent or determination:

**Iré** a verlo hoy.

I **will go** to see him today.

- To express present probability:

Ya **estará** aquí.

He's **probably already** here.

Very often, the conjugated form of **ir + a** is used along with the infinitive to express a future action. This is a colloquial usage which implies the future, but grammatically, it is not considered the future tense.

This usage can be equated to the English "going to" plus the infinitive.

**Voy a cantar** en la misa mañana.

I **am going to sing** at Mass tomorrow.

**Voy a visitar** a mi abuelita el martes.

I **am going to visit** my grandma on Tuesday.

## Present Perfect

The present perfect is formed from the Present Tense of **haber** and the past participle of the main verb. It indicates a past action that has been completed but relates to the present. This relationship is often indicated by the presence of related verbs or adverbs referring to the present time.

Yo **he visitado** a tu madre últimamente.  
I **have visited** your mother recently.

Contrast the simple past (Preterite Tense) to the present perfect:

**Preterite:**

Yo **comí** pollo ayer.  
I **ate** chicken yesterday.

**Present Perfect:**

Yo **he comido** pollo.  
I **have eaten** chicken.

The preterite tense is used to point out that the action was completed in the past. The present perfect is used to refer to a past action without referring to a particular time. The action may continue into the present or the speaker may see the action as related to the present.

## Preterite Perfect

Preterite perfect (or past anterior) tense is formed with the Preterite Tense of **haber** plus the past participle of the main verb. This tense, usually limited to formal writing such as history and literature, is not used much in Spanish. It is normally used after some conjugations of time, i.e.:

después que      luego que  
cuando            en cuanto  
apenas

Using the preterite perfect:

Luego que **hubo** cinco personas, salió.  
Now that there **were** five persons, he left.

## Past Perfect

Past perfect (or pluperfect) is a compound tense which is used to indicate an action or state completed by (rather than occurring in) the past. In Spanish this tense is formed from the Imperfect Tense of **haber** and the past participle of the main verb. It is used to express an action completed in the past:

Era verdad que no nos **había invitado**.

It was true that he **had not invited** us.

Salimos mal en el examen porque no **habíamos estudiado**.

We did poorly on the exam because we **hadn't studied**.

## Future Perfect

Future perfect (or future anterior) is a compound tense formed from the Future Tense of **haber** plus the past participle of the main verb. There are two chief uses of this tense:

To express that an action will have been completed before a determined future time. For example:

Lo **habré terminado** para el viernes.

I **shall have finished** it by Friday.

To express that an action will have been completed before a future action. For example:

Lo **habrá corregido** antes de que el profesor lo lea.

She **will have corrected** it before the teacher reads it.

## Imperative

Imperative (or command) has only one tense, the present. The Present Subjunctive form of the verb is used for all commands except the affirmative second person familiar (**tú** and **vosotros**).

- To form the affirmative **tú** command, use the third person singular of the present indicative.

**Lee** el libro.

**Read** the book.

- To form the **vosotros** affirmative command, replace the final **r** of the infinitive with a **d**.

¡**Venid** acá de inmediato!

**Come** here immediately!

- **Usted** and **Ustedes** commands:

**Hable** más despacio.

**Speak** more slowly.

No **cuenten** el dinero.

Don't **count** the money.

- **Nosotros** commands:

**Comamos** los tacos.

Let's eat the tacos.

- **Tú** and **Vosotros** commands:

¡**Corre** rápido!

**Run** fast!

No **salgas** sin abrigo.

Don't **leave** without a coat.

## Past Progressive

The past progressive tense, used extensively in English in place of the simple past, is limited in Spanish usage and very specific in meaning. It is formed from the Imperfect Tense of the verb Estar and the present participle of the main verb (add **-ando** to the AR verb stem and **-iendo** to the ER and IR verb stem).

To express that something **was right then in the act of happening**:

**Él estaba corriendo.**

He **was** (right at that moment in the act of) **running**.

OR He **was running** (at that very moment).

In the Spanish usage, the above sentence might be in reply to the question: **Why wasn't Pablo here at 2:00?** for example.

See also:

Present Progressive

## Present Progressive

The present progressive tense, used extensively in English in place of the simple present, is very limited in Spanish usage. It is formed from the Present Tense conjugation of the verb **ser** and the past participle of the main verb (add **-ando** to AR verb stems and **-iendo** to ER and IR verb stems. The meaning is very specific.

To express that an action is **right now in the act of taking place**:

Ella **está corriendo**.

She **is running**.

OR She **is running right now**.

Although in English the present progressive is commonly used, as in the above example, the Spanish present progressive is much more specific. Therefore, the second translation conveys the real meaning of what is being said in Spanish.

To contrast the meaning of these two usages, examine the following examples in context:

Mary has lost a lot of weight! How did she do it?

She's running.

This usage does not imply that Mary is running this very moment, but, rather that she runs from time to time. The Spanish usage would be much more time-specific:

We are having a meeting--why isn't Mary here?

**Está corriendo**

She is out running.

See also:

[Present Tense](#)

# Verbs: Subjunctive

Present Subjunctive

Past Subjunctive

Present Perfect Subjunctive

Past Perfect Subjunctive

## Present Subjunctive

The subjunctive mood has all but disappeared from English, but it is used extensively in Spanish. The subjunctive mood indicates a doubt with regard to the action in question. One way to think of the subjunctive is as an action which has not and/or may not necessarily occur, or an action over which the speaker has no control.

The subjunctive is used in the following situations:

- After impersonal expressions which do not imply certitude:  
Es posible que no **venga**.  
It's possible that he's not **coming**.  
  
Es importante que **consideres** las consecuencias.  
It's important that you **consider** the consequences.
- After verbs of doubt or denial:  
Dudo que Ud. **tenga** razón.  
I doubt that you **are** right.
- After negative expressions of believing, knowing, etc.:  
No creo que Ud. **tenga** razón.  
I don't think that you **are** right.
- After verbs of wish, hope, or desire:  
Quiero que no se pierda **este** tesoro.  
I don't want this treasure **to be** lost.
- After verbs of emotion:  
Temo que usted **llegue** tarde.  
I'm afraid you **will arrive** late.
- To express all commands other than **tú** and **vosotros** positive.

See also:

### Imperative

- After verbs of requirement, command, or permission:  
Pido que no **hagas** eso.  
I ask you not **to do** that.  
  
Él siempre le dice que no **escriba** así.  
He always tells her not **to write** like that.
- After conjunctions where there is a change of subject:  
Yo iré con tal de que tú te **quedes**.  
I'll go provided that you **stay** behind.  
  
Quiero hacerlo sin que lo **sepan** ellos.  
I want to do it without their **knowing** it.

When the action of the subjunctive verb, or the tense of the verb which controls the use of the subjunctive, is past or conditional, then the past subjunctive is required.

Formation:

To form the present subjunctive, drop the **o** from the first person singular of the Present Tense (do not use the infinitive stem) and then add the following endings:

	<b>AR verbs</b>	<b>ER and IR verbs</b>
yo	<b>-e</b>	<b>-a</b>
tú	<b>-es</b>	<b>-as</b>

él, ella, Ud.	<b>-e</b>	<b>-a</b>
nosotros	<b>-emos</b>	<b>-amos</b>
vosotros	<b>-éis</b>	<b>-áis</b>
Uds., ellos(as)	<b>-en</b>	<b>-an</b>

See also:

Past Subjunctive

## Past Subjunctive

The past subjunctive is used when the subjunctive is required but either the verb in the main clause or the subjunctive verb itself are in a past or conditional tense. This tense can be compared to the English **would + verb**.

There are two forms of the **Past Subjunctive**:

- One is formed by dropping the **-on** from the third person plural form of the preterite and adding the endings

yo	<b>-a</b>
tú	<b>-as</b>
él, ella, Ud.	<b>-a</b>
nosotros	<b>-amos</b>
vosotros	<b>-ais</b>
Uds., ellos/as	<b>-an</b>

For example:

hablaras	You would talk.
estuviéramos	We would be...
comiera	He/She/It would eat...

- Another is formed by removing the **-ron** from the third person plural of the preterite and adding the endings

yo	<b>-se</b>
tú	<b>-ses</b>
él, ella, Ud.	<b>-se</b>
nosotros	<b>-semos</b>
vosotros	<b>-seis</b>
Uds., ellos/as	<b>-sen</b>

For example:

hablases, estuviésemos, comiese

These two forms are equally correct in all cases, and their use is governed by personal or regional preference only.

See also:

[Present Subjunctive](#)

## Present Perfect Subjunctive

The present perfect subjunctive is formed by using the Present Subjunctive of **haber** as the helping verb plus the past participle of the main verb.

If the verb in the main clause is in the Present Tense, Future Tense, or Present Perfect tense, the present perfect subjunctive must be used in the dependent clause if there is some element which requires the use of the subjunctive.

The Present Subjunctive is used if the action is not in the past. If the action is in the past the present perfect subjunctive is used as follows:

Juana duda que yo le **haya hablado** al chico.

Jane doubts that I **have spoken** to the boy.

Lo siento que tú no **hayas venido** a verme.

I am sorry that you **have not come** to see me.

## Past Perfect Subjunctive

The past perfect subjunctive (or pluperfect subjunctive) tense is formed from the Past Subjunctive of **haber** plus the past participle of the main verb.

If the verb in the main clause is in a past tense, the past perfect subjunctive is used in the dependent clause if there is some element in the dependent clause which requires the use of the subjunctive. See also Present Subjunctive for rules.

Using the past perfect subjunctive:

Lo sentí mucho que no **hubiera venido** Elena.

I was very sorry that Helen **had not come**.

No creía que María **hubiera llegado**.

I did not believe that Mary **had arrived**.

Note that both of these sentences contain elements of doubt indicating the subjunctive. In the first example, an action which was expected to occur did not, whereas in the second example the subject (I) does not know whether an action took place.

# Verbs: Conditional

Conditional

Conditional Perfect

## Conditional

The conditional is formed by adding the following endings to the infinitive to all verbs:

yo	-ía	nosotros	-íamos
tú	-ías	vosotros	-íais
él, ella, Ud.	-ía	Uds., ellos(as)	-ían

Verbs that have an irregular stem in the future tense use the same stem for the formation of the conditional. Irregular Examples:

Infinitive	Future	Conditional
decir	diré	diría
haber	habré	habría
tener	tendré	tendría

The conditional tense has three chief uses:

- To state that an action was future with respect to the past.  
Dijo que **visitaría** pronto.  
She said she **would visit** soon.
- To conclude contrary-to-fact sentences:  
Si yo fuera usted, no lo **haría**.  
If I were you, I **would not do** it.
- To express probability in past time:  
**Sería** Carlo quien lo hizo.  
It **was probably** Carl who did it.

## Conditional Perfect

The conditional perfect is formed by using the Conditional of **haber** and the past participle of the main verb. It has two chief uses:

- To express an action that would have been done if, or on condition that, something else had been possible.

**Si hubiera sido posible, yo habría ayudado.**  
If it had been possible, I **would have helped**.

- To express probability after a past verb:

**Nos parecía que ya se habría ido.**  
We thought that he **had (probably)** already **left**.

# Verbs: Linking Verbs

Ser/Estar

Ser

Estar

## Ser/Estar

Both **ser** and **estar** are translated as **to be** in English, causing confusion for the English speaker. Please remember that these words are never interchangeable; each has a specific set of uses.

It might be helpful to think of **ser** as a permanent condition and **estar** as a temporary condition. Compare the following:

Él **es** viejo.

He **is** old.

Él **está** enfermo.

He **is** sick.

Ella **es** alegre.

She **is** a happy person.

Ella **está** triste.

She **is** sad.

See also:

Ser

Estar

## Ser

The verb **ser** is used primarily to describe permanent characteristics and expressions of time.

Using **ser**:

- Quality or non-momentary characteristics.

Ella **es** alta.

She **is** tall.

Ellos **son** jóvenes.

They **are** young.

Yo **soy** joven.

I **am** (a) young (person).

- Expressions of time:

**Son** las cuatro.

It **is** four o'clock.

**Eran** las siete.

It **was** seven o'clock.

**Ser** can also be used to designate origin or ownership, as well as what material an object is constructed from:

- Origin:

La Sra. Valdivia **es** de Chile.

Mrs. Valdivia **is** from Chile.

El café **es** de Brasil.

The coffee **is** from Brazil.

Ownership or Content:

El coche **es** el mío.

The car **is** mine.

El plato **es** de plata.

The plate **is** (made of) silver.

See also:

Ser/Estar

Estar

## Estar

The verb **estar** is used primarily to describe location or change of condition.

Using **estar**:

- Momentary physical or mental conditions:

Su cara **está** roja.

Her face **is (looks)** red.

**Estoy** cansado.

I **am** tired.

La leche **estaba** fría.

The milk **was** cold.

**Está** enferma.

She **is** sick.

- Location:

José **está** aquí.

Joe **is** here.

Las nubes **están** en el cielo.

The clouds **are** in the sky.

María **está** en Chile.

María **is** in Chile.

- Special uses of **Estar** with the adjectives **muerto** and **contento**:

**Está** muerto.

He **is** dead.

**Está** contenta.

She **is** happy.

See also:

Ser/Estar

Ser

# Verbs: General

Passive Voice

Gustar

## Passive Voice

The passive voice indicates that although an action was performed, the agent, or doer of the action, is **not** the subject of the sentence. That is, in a Passive voice sentence the agent may or may not be stated, but in either case the **action** of the sentence is more important than the **person** (or group) performing the action.

Compare the following:

- Active:** My two sons painted the house.  
**Passive with Agent:** The house was painted by the painters.  
**Passive without Agent:** The house was painted.

The passive voice in Spanish has two forms which correspond to the two forms shown above. One is used when there is an agent and the other is used when there is no agent.

- **Passive with Agent:** This form of the passive is sometimes known as the **ser** form, because it is formed from the Preterite Tense of the verb Ser and the past participle of the main verb.

The past participle is formed by adding **-ado** to the **AR** verb stem and **-ido** to the **ER** and **IR** verb stems. The past participle in this usage is now an adjective and must agree with the modified noun in gender and number.

Examples:

- La canción **fue cantada** por Roberto.  
The song **was sung** by Robert.  
  
Los libros **fueron traídos** por Ramón.  
The books **were brought** by Ramon.

- **Passive without Agent:** When there is no agent, form the passive using se. The verb will agree with its object in both tense and number.

Examples:

- Se habla** Español aquí.  
Spanish **is spoken** here.  
  
**Se pintó** la casa.  
The house **was painted**.

## Gustar

**Gustar and expressing liking:** To express liking for something in Spanish, the verb **gustar** (to please or be pleasing to) must be used with an indirect object pronoun indicating the "liker" or the person being pleased.

A good way to think of the verb **gustar** is to translate it as **is pleasing to**. For example:

- Me gusta.**  
It is pleasing to me.  
OR I like it.
- Te gustan las frutas.**  
The fruit is pleasing to you.  
OR You like the fruit.
- Le gustan los monos.**  
The monkeys are pleasing to her.  
OR She likes the monkeys.
- Nos gustan.**  
They are pleasing to us.  
OR We like them.
- Les gustan los helados.**  
Ice cream is pleasing to them.  
OR They like ice cream.

If the indirect object is referred to by name, the preposition **a** must be placed before it. For example:

- A mi hermana le gustan los carros.**  
Cars are pleasing to my sister.  
OR My sister likes cars.
- La música les gusta a los jóvenes.**  
The music is pleasing to young people.  
OR Young people like the music.

Note: The verb agrees with what is being liked (in this case the subject) and not "the liker", since "the liker" is actually the indirect object rather than the subject. For example:

- Me gusta.**  
It is pleasing to me.  
OR I like it.
- Me gusta el mar.**  
The ocean is pleasing to me.  
OR I like the ocean.
- Me gustan las flores.**  
Flowers are pleasing to me.  
OR I like flowers.

# Articles

Article Inflections

Definite Articles

Indefinite Articles

## Article Inflections

Spanish articles exist in both masculine and feminine, singular and plural, and definite and indefinite forms:

	Masculine		Feminine	
	Definite	Indefinite	Definite	Indefinite
Singular	el	un	la	una
Plural	los	unos	las	unas

Examples:

el hombre  
un libro  
la mujer  
una casa  
los vasos  
unos carros  
las palmas  
unas amigas

The word *a* may also combine with the masculine singular article *el* to form the contraction *al*:

Vamos al cine cada semana.  
We go to the movies every week.

Yo vi al payaso en el circo.  
I saw the clown in the circus.

Unlike English *a*, *an*, the Spanish indefinite articles have regular plural forms which are commonly used to express the idea of "some", "several" or "a few".

Unas niñas jugaban en el jardín.  
Some girls were playing in the garden.

Habían unos libros en la mesa.  
There were several books on the table.

Él se fue después de unos minutos.  
He left after a few minutes.

Similarly, Spanish Assistant may classify as articles some words such as "any" "some", "every" and "few", which are not considered articles in traditional grammar, in order to facilitate the translation of these words between English and Spanish.

## Definite Articles

Closely associated with the noun is an adjective known as the definite article. In English it only has one form, **the**. In Spanish, it has five: **el, la, lo, los, las**. The explanation of this difference is that in Spanish, unlike English, adjectives agree with the noun they modify in two ways, in gender and in number. A Spanish noun is almost never used without an article.

- The masculine singular form:

**El** libro  
**The** book

- The masculine plural form:

**Los** perros  
**The** dogs

- The feminine singular form:

**La** casa  
**The** house

- The feminine plural form:

**Las** muchachas  
**The** girls

- The neuter singular form (It is never used before nouns but has a special use with singular adjectives):

**Lo** malo es...  
**The** bad part is...

**Lo** especial es...  
**The** special thing is...

## Indefinite Articles

In Spanish, the indefinite articles are **un**, **una**, **unos**, and **unas**. Their equivalent translations in English are **a**, **an**, and **some**. Like every other Spanish adjective, the indefinite article must agree with its noun in person and number.

- The masculine singular form:

**un** libro  
**a** book

- The feminine singular form:

**una** mesa  
**a** table

- The masculine and feminine plural forms:

**Masculine:**     **unos** gatos     **some** cats  
**Feminine:**     **unas** canciones   **some** songs

The **Indefinite Articles** are called "indefinite" because they are not specific, or defined (as the Definite Articles are.). Compare the following sentences:

- Using the **Definite Article**:

Él es **el** hombre joven de quien hablé.  
He is **the** young man I spoke of.

- Using the **Indefinite Article**:

Ví **un** hombre joven en el parque.  
I saw **a** young man in the park.

See also:

Definite Articles

# Pronouns

Usted/Tú

Reflexive Pronouns

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive Inflections

Demonstrative Pronouns

Double Object Pronouns

Pronoun Inflections

Personal Pronoun Inflections

## Usted/Tú

There are more pronouns in Spanish for the expression of the subject **you** than in English, because Spanish observes a distinction between styles of direct address that does not now exist in English.

**Tú** and its plurals (**vosotros/vosotras**), used with a second person form of the verb, are employed when the relationship between speaker and person spoken to is intimate or familiar (close friends and family).

**Usted** and its plural **ustedes**, used with a third person verb form, are used when the relationship is more formal.

Because of these rules, a sentence as simple as **How are you?** in English, can be translated in multiple ways in Spanish, depending on whom is being addressed:

### Singular:

<b>Informal</b>	¿Cómo estás (tú)?
<b>Formal</b>	¿Cómo está (Ud.)?

### Plural:

<b>Informal</b>	¿Cómo estais (vosotros)?
<b>Formal</b>	¿Cómo están (Ustedes)?

NOTE: **Ud.** is the abbreviation for **Usted**, and **Uds.** for **Ustedes**.

In general, **tú** is used when a first-name style of address is appropriate; **Usted** is used in all other cases. **Vosotros** is used mostly in European Spanish; in Latin America, **Uds.** is the plural of both **tú** and **Ud.**

## Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are used when the action in the sentence is both executed and received by the subject. If an infinitive ends in **-se**, then all conjugated forms of that verb must include the appropriate reflexive pronoun, even if the verb is not reflexive in English. See [Direct Objects](#) for placement rules.

- 1st Person Singular, using **me**:  
Yo **me** llamo Carmen.  
My name is Carmen.  
(Literally: I call **myself** Carmen.)
- 2nd Person Singular, using **te**:  
**Te** levantas muy temprano.  
You get up very early.  
(Literally: You get **yourself** up very early.)
- 3rd Person Singular, using **se**:  
Ella **se** pone la blusa.  
She puts on the blouse.  
(Literally: She puts the blouse on **herself**.)
- 1st Person Plural, using **nos**:  
**Nos** miramos en el espejo.  
We look at **ourselves** in the mirror.
- 2nd Person Plural, using **os**:  
**Os** habláis todo el tiempo.  
You (plural) talk to **yourselves** all the time.
- 3rd Person Plural, using **se** (plural):  
Ellos **se** creen importantes.  
They think **they** are important.  
(Literally: They believe **themselves** (to be) important.)

A conjugated verb: **sentirse** - to feel (health)

yo	me siento	I feel...
tú	te sientes	You (informal) feel...
él, ella, Ud.	se siente	He, She, You (formal) feels...
nosotros	nos sentimos	We feel...
vosotros	os sentáis	You feel...
ustedes	se sienten	You feel...

Me siento bien  
I feel well.

## Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are used to replace a noun modified by a possessive adjective:

- Nouns modified by a possessive adjective:

Yo tengo mi libro, no **tu** libro.

I have my book, not **your** book.

Carmen tiene su cámara, no **tu** cámara.

Carmen has her camera, not **your** camera.

- Possessive pronoun replacing the above:

Yo tengo mi libro, no **el tuyo**.

I have my book, not **yours**.

Carmen tiene su cámara, no **la tuya**.

Carmen has her camera, not **yours**.

The possessive pronoun must agree with the noun it replaces and be accompanied by the appropriate definite article.

Possessive Adjectives	Possessive Pronouns
mi, mis	el mío, la mía, los míos, las mías
tu, tus	el tuyo, la tuya, los tuyos, las tuyas
su, sus	el suyo, la suya, los suyos, las suyas
nuestro, nuestra	el nuestro, la nuestra
nuestros, nuestras	los nuestros, las nuestras
vuestro, vuestra	el vuestro, la vuestra
vuestros, vuestras	los vuestros, las vuestras
su, sus	el suyo, la suya, los suyos, las suyas

## Possessive Inflections

Possessives are sometimes referred to in traditional grammar as possessive pronouns or possessive adjectives. They convey a sense of ownership or inherent quality, and occur in both simple and emphatic forms corresponding to the personal pronouns.

### Simple Forms

	Singular	Plural
<b>First Person</b>	mi	nuestro, nuestra (our)
<b>Second Person</b>	tu (you)	vuestro, vuestra (your)
<b>Third Person</b>	su (his, her)	su (their)
	su (your)	su (your)

### Emphatic Forms

	Singular	Plural
<b>First Person</b>	mío, mía (mine)	nuestro, nuestra (ours)
<b>Second Person</b>	tuyo, tuya (yours)	vuestro, vuestra (yours)
<b>Third Person</b>	suyo, suya (his, hers)	suyo, suya (theirs)
	suyo, suya (yours)	suyo, suya (yours)

The simple forms precede the "possessed" noun or noun phrase, and agree in number (and, in the case of **nuestro** and **vuestro**, gender):

Me gusta tu carro rojo!  
I like your red car!

Mis libros son muy pesados.  
My books are very heavy.

Nuestras madres trabajan mucho.  
Our mothers work very hard.

The emphatic forms usually follow the noun or noun phrase, and agree in both number and gender. They carry a sense of emphasis, or distinguish one person's ownership from another's. Together with the appropriate article, they may also substitute for the "possessed" noun.

La casa mía es la mejor.  
My house is the best.

Me gusta el nuestro más que el tuyo.  
I like ours better than yours.

Note that the **su** and **suyo** forms can be confusing to learners because of their multiple uses for third person and second personal formal. singular and plural. It is important to remember that their number and gender agreement is determined by the nouns which they modify, while their specific meaning is determined by their usage in context:

Él es mi amigo. Sus padres son amables.  
He is my friend. His parents are nice.

Ellos son mis amigos. Sus padres son amables.  
They are my friends. Their parents are nice.

## Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns are pronouns which take the place of the nouns they refer to. In Spanish, the demonstrative pronouns take an accent mark to distinguish them from the Demonstrative Adjectives.

There are two singular and two plural demonstrative pronouns in English. In Spanish, there are three singular and three plural forms, each with a masculine and a feminine, for a total of twelve.

- When the object is near the speaker:

**Singular:**

éste, ésta	this one
éste	this one (masculine)
ésta	this one (feminine)

**Plural:**

éstos, éstas	these
éstos	these (masculine)
éstas	these (feminine)

Examples contrasting the demonstrative adjective with the demonstrative pronoun:

**Singular:**

Quiero **este** lapiz.  
I want **this** pencil. (adjective)

Quiero **éste**.  
I want **this one**. (pronoun)

Yo leo **esta** revista.  
I read **this** magazine. (adjective)

Yo leo **ésta**.  
I read **this one**. (pronoun)

**Plural:**

Me gustan **estos** discos.  
I like **these** records. (adjective)

Me gustan **éstos**.  
I like **these**. (pronoun)

**Estas** mesas son lindas.  
**These** tables are pretty.

**Éstas** son lindas.  
**These** are pretty.

- Near the person addressed:

**Singular:**

ése, ésa	that one
ése	that one (masculine)
ésa	that one (feminine)

**Plural:**

esos, esas	those
esos	those (masculine)
esas	those (feminine)

- Remote from both speaker and person addressed:

**Singular:**

aquél, aquella	that one
aquél	that one (masculine)
aquella	that one (feminine)
<b>Plural:</b>	
aquéllos,	those
aquellas	
aquéllos	those (masculine)
aquellas	those (feminine)

See also:

[Demonstrative Adjectives](#)

## Double Object Pronouns

In many cases both a direct and an indirect object pronoun may appear in the same sentence. When such occurs, the indirect object pronoun always precedes the direct object pronoun.

- Using **me lo**:

Juan **me lo** dijo.  
John told **it to me**.

- Using **te lo**:

Juan **te lo** dio.  
John gave **it to you**.

- Using **nos los**:

María **nos los** enseñó.  
Mary showed **them to us**.

When the indirect and direct object pronouns both begin with the same letter, the indirect object pronoun becomes **se**.

Juan **se lo** explicó.  
John explained **it to him**.  
(**not** Juan **le lo** explicó.)

See also:

[Direct Objects](#) for placement rules.

[Indirect Objects](#) for clarification procedures.

## Pronoun Inflections

There are three non-personal or "neuter" pronouns in Spanish: **esto** (this), **eso** (that) and **aquello** (that).

The pronouns are used to refer to indefinite things and intangible concepts:

¿Quién ha dicho esto?

Who has said this?

Eso me complace mucho.

I am very satisfied with that.

No quiero pensar en todo aquello.

I don't want to think about all this.

When the reference is to a definite noun, the demonstrative pronoun is usually preferable:

Este es un asunto importante.

This is an important matter.

Esa es la locura de la política.

That is the madness of politics.

See also:

[Demonstrative Pronouns](#)

## Personal Pronoun Inflections

Like their English counterparts, Spanish personal pronouns exist in singular and plural forms for the first, second, and third persons. Unlike English, Spanish personal pronouns

- distinguish gender in the first and second person plural forms;
- include both formal and informal forms of the second person pronouns;
- have three object forms, in addition to a subject form and reflexive form.

Subject forms

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
<b>First Person</b>	yo (I)	nosotros, nosotras (we)
<b>Second Person</b>	tú (you)	vosotros, vosotras (you)
<b>Third Person</b>	él, ella, ello (he, she)	ellos, ellas (they)
	usted (you)	ustedes (you)

Direct object forms

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
<b>First Person</b>	me (me)	nos (us)
<b>Second Person</b>	tu (you)	os (you)
<b>Third Person</b>	lo/le, la, lo (him, her)	los/les, las, los (them)
	usted (you)	ustedes (you)

Indirect object forms

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
<b>First Person</b>	me (me)	nos (us)
<b>Second Person</b>	tu (you)	os (you)
<b>Third Person</b>	le (him, her, it)	les (they)
	le (you)	les (you)

Reflexive forms

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
<b>First Person</b>	me (myself)	nos (ourselves)
<b>Second Person</b>	te (yourself)	os (yourselves)
<b>Third Person</b>	se (himself, herself, itself)	se (themselves)
	se (yourself)	se (yourselves)

As do many European languages, Spanish distinguishes between a formal (**usted**) and informal (**tú**) second person pronoun. The use of one or the other is determined by the social relations between the speakers as well as regional and customary usage.

**Usted** and **ustedes** are often abbreviated to **Vd.** and **Vds.** or **Ud.** and **Uds.** in both formal and informal written speech.

The use and acceptability of the second person plural forms (**vosotros**) vary widely throughout the Spanish-speaking world. In many areas **ustedes** is the preferred form for both formal and informal use, while in others **vosotros** may substitute for **ustedes** (as well as **vos** for **usted**).

Similarly, the choice of **lo** or **le** as the third person masculine singular direct object form is largely determined by regional variations in usage.

In written Spanish, care should be taken to distinguish the accented personal pronoun **él** (**he**) from the unaccented masculine article **el**.

# Nouns

Indirect Objects

Gender

Diminutive Nouns

Direct Objects

Noun Inflections

## Indirect Objects

An indirect object is the recipient of the action in a sentence. It may be recognized by a stated or understood **to**, or **for** preceding the object.

In Spanish, the direct object pronouns are as follows:

### Singular:

1st Person	<b>me</b>	(to or for me)
2nd Person	<b>te</b>	(to or for you)
3rd Person	<b>le</b>	(to or for him, her, or it)

### Plural:

1st Person	<b>nos</b>	(to or for us)
2nd Person	<b>os</b>	(to or for you all)
3rd Person	<b>les</b>	(to or for them)

Examples:

Juan **me** da un regalo.

John gives (to) **me** a gift.

Elena **le** hizo un favor.

Elena did **him** a favor.

OR Elena did a favor **for him**.

Since the third person pronoun forms **le** and **les** have multiple meanings, they may be clarified using the preposition **a** followed by the desired person. For example:

Julio **les** ve **a Uds**.

Julio sees **you all**.

Juan **le** habló **a ella**.

John spoke **to her**.

The same technique may be used for emphasis, whether or not clarification is needed. For example:

**Me** invitó **a mí**.

He invited **me** (not you).

See also:

Direct Objects for rules of placement in the sentence.

## Gender

In Spanish all nouns have gender. A noun is either masculine or feminine. For the most part, the classification of nouns according to gender is purely a grammatical matter, with the exception of some nouns designating human beings and certain animals.

There are some rules which can be used to determine what gender a noun will take. All nouns ending in **-ción, -sión, -tad, -dad**, are feminine, as are most nouns ending in **-a**. Most nouns ending in **-o** or anything else are masculine. (Note: exceptions occur and must be memorized.)

- A few masculine nouns:

libro	book
sillón	arm chair
hombre	man

- A few feminine nouns:

casa	house
libertad	freedom
acción	action

Because nouns have genders in Spanish, their articles must "agree" with them. That is, the articles must have the same gender as the nouns they modify. The masculine article is **el**, and the feminine article is **la**.

Using the same list as before, we would then encounter:

- Masculine:

el libro	the book
el sillón	the couch
el hombre	the man

- Feminine:

la casa	the house
la libertad	the freedom
la acción	the action

Some Exceptions:

la mano	the hand
el artista	the artist
el problema	the problem

Note: Although articles are often omitted in English, they are almost always included in Spanish sentences.

## Diminutive Nouns

The most common diminutive endings in Spanish are:

Masculine	Feminine
-ito	-ita
-cito	-cita

The rules governing the use of these endings with particular nouns are not strict, and may vary according to the pronunciation of the word, as well as the region, customary usage, and personality of the speaker.

Nouns which end in a vowel may add **-cita**, or may drop the vowel and add **-ita**:

la casa	la casita
el libro	el librito
la mamá	la mamacita
el papá	el papacito

Nouns ending in **-n** or **-r** generally use **-cito**:

el salon	el saloncito
el amor	el amorcito

Words of one syllable usually add **-e-** before the diminutive ending:

la flor	la florecita
el pez	el pececito

The diminutive form is more commonly used in spoken than in written Spanish, and may indicate either small physical size or an affectionate attitude on the part of the speaker:

el librito de gramática  
the little (small) grammar book

la casita linda  
the nice little house

mi mamacita  
my dear mother

## Direct Objects

The direct object of a sentence is the object upon which the verb acts. Thus, it receives the direct action of the verb. In Spanish the direct object pronouns are:

me	me	nos	us
te	you	os	you all
lo	him,it	los	them, you all
la	her,it	las	them, you all

The pronoun will always agree in gender and number with the noun it replaces. There are four correct locations for object pronouns in Spanish, whether they are direct, indirect, or reflexive.

- Directly before the conjugated verb:

José no lee **el libro**.  
Joe doesn't read **the book**.

José no **lo** lee.  
Joe doesn't read **it**.

Inés ha visto **las flores**.  
Ines has seen **the flowers**.

Inés **las** ha visto.  
Ines has seen **them**.

- Attached to the infinitive:

Ana quiere vender **el oro**.  
Ana wants to sell **the gold**.

Ana quiere vender**lo**.  
Ana wants to sell **it**.

- Attached to the present participle (note need for accent):

Pepe está oyendo **la voz**.  
Pepe is hearing **the voice**.

Pepe está oyénd**ola**.  
Pepe is hearing **it**.

- Attached to a positive (but never to a negative) command (accent if result is more than two syllables):

Coma **el pan**.  
Eat **the bread**.

Cóm**alo**.  
Eat **it**.

BUT No **lo** coma.  
Don't eat **it**.

## Noun Inflections

Spanish nouns have both singular and plural forms. Masculine and feminine nouns share the same set of plural endings, which are usually determined by the pronunciation of the final sound of a word:

Unstressed vowel: -s

el libro            los libros

la regla            las reglas

Stressed vowel: -s or -es

la mamá            las mamás

el café            los cafés

el rubí            los rubíes

Consonant (other than s): -es

el señor            los señores

la tempestad    las tempestades

Consonant (s): -es or no change

el inglés            los ingleses

el lunes            los lunes

Consonant (z): -z changes to -ces

el cicatriz            los cicatrices

la actriz            las actrices

Many words of two or more syllables may change their written accent in the plural form, in order to preserve the basic pronunciation:

la nación            las naciones

el joven            los jóvenes

Most English loan-words in Spanish preserve their original plural forms, except for some English words which have a long history of common usage in Spanish and which form normal plurals:

el poster            los posters

el comic            los comics

el club            los clubes

Note that nouns with "natural" gender, usually referring to people or animate objects, use the masculine noun to form a plural indicating both genders:

los padres            the parents

los reyes            the monarchs

# Adjectives

Adjectives

Adjective Inflections

Intensified Adjectives

Comparative Adjectives

Superlative Adjectives

Demonstrative Adjectives

## Adjectives

Adjectives in Spanish agree with their nouns in gender and number, and are almost always placed after the noun. For example:

un muchacho alto	a tall boy
una niña alta	a tall girl
muchachos altos	tall boys
niñas altas	tall girls

In general, adjectives end in **-o**, **-os**, **-a**, **-as** depending on the gender and number of the noun being modified. Adjectives ending in any other letter are considered both masculine and feminine, but still become plural with their nouns.

The same rules apply if the adjective appears in the predicate clause:

Juan es **flaco**.

John is **thin**.

Las flores son **rojas**.

The flowers are **red**.

When immediately preceding a singular, masculine noun, **bueno**, **malo**, **alguno**, **ninguno**, **primero**, and **tercero** all drop their final **-o**:

el **primer** día

the **first** day

BUT la **primera** noche

the **first** night

## Adjective Inflections

Most Spanish adjectives are regularly formed, and follow the model of **alto** (tall):

	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<b>Singular</b>	alto	alta
<b>Plural</b>	altos	altas

Other common models are:

Adjectives ending in **-e** (masculine and feminine forms the same)

	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<b>Singular</b>	verde	verde
<b>Plural</b>	verdes	verdes

Adjectives ending in accented **-és**

	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<b>Singular</b>	inglés	inglesa
<b>Plural</b>	ingleses	inglesas

Adjectives ending in **-ista** (masculine and feminine forms the same)

	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<b>Singular</b>	comunista	comunista
<b>Plural</b>	comunistas	comunistas

Most adjectives regularly form their comparatives with **más**, and their superlatives with the appropriate article and **más**:

Este edificio es alto.  
This building is tall.  
Este edificio es más alto que el otro.  
This building is taller than the other.

Este edificio es el más alto.  
This building is the tallest.

Some very common adjectives have irregular comparative and superlative forms. These include:

bueno - mejor - el/la mejor - los/las mejores

malo - peor - el/la peor - los/las peores

Unlike English, Spanish adjectives usually follow the noun or noun phrase which they modify. A few adjectives, commonly bueno, malo, and grande, may also occur before the noun or noun phrase, often with a slight change of emphasis or meaning, and with a special short form for the masculine singular:

El estudiante leyó un buen libro.  
The student read a good book.  
Ella es una buena mujer.  
She is a good (kind) woman  
Me miró con mala intención.  
He looked at me with evil intent.  
El presidente es un gran señor.  
The president is a great gentleman.

The substitution of an adjective for a noun referring to a person or object with a particular quality is more widespread in Spanish than in English.

La vieja vivía en una residencia palacial.

The old (woman) lived in a palatial residence.  
Los condenados marcharon a la prisión.  
The condemned (men) marched to the prison.

## Intensified Adjectives

Many adjectives have, in addition to their normal forms, intensified forms in **-ísimo** which add emphasis and convey a sense of "very" or "extremely":

Un edificio **altísimo**.

A **very tall building**.

Las nubes **blanquísimas**.

The **snow-white clouds**.

The intensified adjective endings follow the regular model of normal adjectives such as **alto**.

## Comparative Adjectives

When an adjective is used in an expression of comparison of superiority or inferiority, it is preceded by **más** (more), or **menos** (less). The English word **than**, in such places, is **que** in Spanish:

- Comparing two nouns:

Juan es **alto**.

John is **tall**.

Juan es **más alto que** yo.

John is **taller than** I.

Juan es **menos alto que** yo.

John is **less tall than** I.

## Superlative Adjectives

When an adjective is used in an expression of comparison of superiority or inferiority, it is preceded by **más**, (**more**), or **menos**, (**less**).

In English, the superlative can take two forms:

**the most + adjective**

OR **adjective + -est.**

- The superlative is a way of comparing nouns:

Juan es **alto**.

John is **tall**.

Juan es **el** muchacho **más alto** de la clase.

John is **the tallest** boy in the class.

Juan es **el más alto** de la clase.

John is **the tallest** (boy) in the class.

María es **inteligente**, pero Sandra es **la más inteligente**.

Mary is **intelligent**, but Sandra is **the most intelligent**.

See also:

[Comparative Adjectives](#)

## Demonstrative Adjectives

In contrast to the Demonstrative Pronouns, demonstrative adjectives are never used alone. That is, they always precede the noun they modify. They also never take accents. Demonstrative adjectives specify the noun.

There are two singular and two plural demonstrative adjectives in English. In Spanish, there are three singular and three plural forms, each with a masculine and feminine, for a total of twelve. Demonstrative Adjectives, unlike most other adjectives, precede the noun.

- When the object or person is near the speaker:

**Singular:**

este, esta            this  
este hombre        this man (masculine)  
esta dama            this woman (feminine)

**Plural:**

estos, estas        these  
estos libros        these books (masculine)  
estas historias     these stories (feminine)

- Examples contrasting the Demonstrative Adjective with the Demonstrative Pronoun:

**Singular:**

Masculine:

Me gusta **este** libro.  
I like **this** book. (adjective)

Me gusta **éste**.  
I like **this one**. (pronoun)

Feminine:

**Esta** pila no sirve.  
**This** battery's no good.

**Ésta** no sirve.  
**This one's** no good.

**Plural:**

**Estos** viajes son caros.  
**These** trips are expensive.

**Éstos** son caros.  
**These** are expensive.

- Use of both demonstrative adjective and pronoun in the same sentence. Often use of the demonstrative adjective and the demonstrative pronoun occur in the same sentence and are used to contrast the noun(s) in question:

Estoy casada con **este** hombre, no **ése**.  
I am married to **this** (adjective) man, not **that one** (pronoun).

- When the object or person is near the person addressed:

**Singular:**

ese, esa            that  
ese muchacho     that boy (masculine)  
esa muchacha     that girl (feminine)

**Plural:**

esos, esas        those  
esos chicos        those boys (masculine)

esas chicas      those girls (feminine)

- Remote from both speaker and person addressed:

**Singular:**

aquel, aquella      that

aquel señor      that man (masculine)

aquella señora      that woman (feminine)

**Plural:**

aquellos, aquellas      those

aquellos señores      those men (masculine)

aquellas señoras      those women (feminine)

See also:

Demonstrative Pronouns

# Quantifiers

Quantifier Inflections

Cardinal Numbers

Ordinal Numbers

General Quantifiers

## **Quantifier Inflections**

In Spanish, as in English, there are three major types of quantifiers: Cardinal Numbers, Ordinal Numbers, and General Quantifiers. Please refer to the above sections for inflection information.

## Cardinal Numbers

Cardinal or counting numbers (**uno**, **dos**, **tres**, etc.) may either stand alone or before a following noun or noun phrase:

**Tres y cuatro son siete.**

**Three and four are seven.**

**Hay tres palmas en la playa.**

**There are three trees on the beach.**

They are invariable in form with several exceptions:

Compound numbers with **uno** (**one**) agree in gender with the noun modified:

**Veintiuna personas subieron del autobús.**

**Twenty-one people got off the bus.**

Compound numbers with **ciento** (**hundred**) agree in number and gender with the noun modified:

**El estudiante leyó doscientos libros.**

**The student read two hundred books.**

Both **uno** and **ciento** have corresponding short forms **un** and **cien** used before nouns, adjectives and nouns, or **mil**:

**Octubre tiene treinta y un días.**

**October has thirty-one days.**

**Cien años de soledad.**

**One hundred years of solitude.**

Note that **one hundred** in Spanish is **ciento** or **cien**, never **un ciento** or **un cien**.

## Ordinal Numbers

Ordinal or ordering numbers (*primero*, *segundo*, *tercero*, etc.) stand before a following noun or noun phrase, and agree in both gender and number:

*Vive en el cuarto piso.*

*He lives on the fourth floor.*

*La segunda muchacha se llama María.*

*The second girl is named Mary.*

The short forms *primer* (*first*) and *tercer* (*third*) are used before a masculine singular noun or noun phrase:

*Enero es el primer mes del año.*

*January is the first month of the year.*

*Roma floreció durante el tercer siglo.*

*Rome flourished in the third century.*

## General Quantifiers

Spanish Assistant may classify as general quantifiers words such as [all](#), [some](#), [first](#), and [last](#), which carry a counting or ordering meaning.

# General

Para

Por

For

That

Que

Demonstrative Inflections

Questions

Interrogative Inflections

Negative Words

Negatives

Stress/Accents

Syllables

Non-Inflecting

## Para

Since both **por** and **para** can be translated as **for** in English, it is difficult to recognize when to use one or the other in a sentence without memorizing all the rules. Distinguishing between the two usually becomes more natural as one becomes more familiar with the language. The following are examples of usages for **para**:

- To express a purpose or a destination:  
Una flor **para** ella.  
A flower **for** her.  
  
Me lo dio **para** comprar la comida.  
He gave it to me (**in order**) **to** buy the food.
- To specify a point of time in the future:  
Las ropas estarán listas **para** el lunes.  
The clothes will be ready **by** Monday.
- To express a comparison of inequality:  
**Para** un principiante, habla usted muy bien.  
**For** a beginner, you speak very well.
- To express **for the purpose of**:  
Estudien **para** sacarse una buena nota.  
Study **in order to** get a good grade.
- To express **in the employ of**:  
Él trabaja **para** el gobierno.  
He works **for** the government.

See also:

Por

## Por

Since both **por** and **para** can be translated as **for** in English, it is difficult to recognize when to use one or the other in a sentence without memorizing all the rules. Distinguishing between the two usually becomes more natural as one becomes more familiar with the language. The following are examples of usages for **por**:

- To express the reason or cause for an action:  
No fui **por** falta de dinero.  
I didn't go **for** (**because of**) lack of money.
- To translate **through** or **along**:  
Entré **por** la puerta.  
I entered **through** the door.  
  
Ella corría **por** la calle.  
She ran **along** the street.
- To indicate an exchange:  
Les di diez dólares **por** la bicicleta.  
I gave them ten dollars **for** the bicycle.
- To express the duration of time:  
Yo fui al colegio **por** cuatro años.  
I went to college **for** four years.
- To indicate the means by which something was done:  
Conducía al niño **por** la mano.  
He was leading the child **by** the hand.
- To indicate a unit of measurement (per):  
Ellos venden galletas **por** la docena.  
They sell cookies **by** the dozen.  
  
El nada a veinte millas **por** hora.  
He swims 20 miles an hour.
- To indicate time of day when the hour is not precise:  
Me gusta ir a la playa **por** la tarde.  
I like to go to the beach in the afternoon.
- To indicate **for the sake of**:  
Él murió **por** su patria.  
He died **for** his country.
- To indicate **instead of, in the place of**:  
Luisa trabajó **por** Ana.  
Luisa worked **in** Ana's **place**.

See also:

Para

## For

As a preposition, **for** can be translated as either **Por** or **Para**. Generally, use **por** when explaining the cause or reason for doing something, and **para** when designating the destination of something (in this case, either a place or person). Note the difference in meaning:

I did it for you.

Lo hice **por** Usted.  
(I did it **instead of** you.)

Lo hice **para** Usted.  
(I did it **to give to** you.)

He bought milk for his mother.

Él compró leche **por** su mamá.  
(He bought the milk, **because for some reason** his mother **wasn't able to**.)

Él compró leche **para** su mamá.  
(He bought the milk **to give to/destined for** his mother.)

As in the above example, if you can substitute the phrase **to give to** for **for**, use **para**.

Additional examples:

Using **por**:

Decidí no ir **por** dos razones.  
I decided not to go **for** two reasons.

!Lucha **para** el honor!  
Fight **for** honor!

Using **para**:

Tengo una carta **para** Ud.  
I have a letter **for** you.

Trabajé dos años **para** él.  
I worked two years **for** him.

See also:

Por  
Para

As a conjunction, **for** also has two possible translations: **porque** and **pues**. In this usage, **for** generally conveys the same meaning as **because**, for which **porque** is the most common translation. Just as in English, **for** is used less commonly than **because**, and therefore seems somewhat awkward, as does **pues** in Spanish. In Mexico, however, **pues** seems to be used more often.

Debes irte, **porque** la clase empezará luego.  
You should go **for** the class will start soon.

Deberías haber sabido, **pues** te dije.  
You should have known, **for** I told you.

**For** can also be found in the phrases used below:

**En cuanto a** tu trabajo, hazlo bien.  
**As for** your job, do it well.

¿Lo hizo? ¿**Para** qué?  
She did it? What **for**?

## That

- As an adjective:

I know **that** boy.

Yo conozco **ese** niño.

**That** car is old.

**Ese** auto es viejo.

See also:

Demonstrative Adjectives.

- As a pronoun:

**That** is my book.

**Ése** es mi libro.

**That** is mine.

**Éso** es mio.

(**Éso** is the masculine pronoun for **el libro**.)

**That** is mine.

**Ésa** es mia.

[Here **ésa** is used to refer to a feminine pronoun such as **la cartera** (the purse).]

See also:

Demonstrative Pronouns.

- As a conjunction:

I know **that** she teaches Spanish.

Yo sé **que** ella enseña el (idioma) Español.

I'm sure **that** she can do it.

Estoy seguro **que** ella lo puede hacer.

## Que

Although the conjunction **that** is often omitted from English sentences, **que** must be used in Spanish to separate any two clauses (two conjugated verbs) or after an adverbial expression which introduces a new subject.

- To separate two clauses:

Ella dijo **que** Juan es muy guapo.

She said (**that**) John is very handsome.

Yo supe **que** él había venido.

I knew (**that**) he had come.

- After an adverbial expression which introduces a new subject:

Vino antes de **que** hubiéramos terminado.

He came before we had finished.

## Demonstrative Inflections

The Spanish demonstratives are *este* (this), *ese* (that), and *aquel* (that), with the following inflections for number and gender:

	<b>Masculine</b>	Feminine
<b>Singular</b>	<i>este</i>	<i>esta</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<i>estos</i>	<i>estas</i>
	<b>Masculine</b>	Feminine
<b>Singular</b>	<i>ese</i>	<i>esa</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<i>esos</i>	<i>esas</i>
	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<b>Singular</b>	<i>aquel</i>	<i>aquella</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<i>aquellos</i>	<i>aquellas</i>

Demonstratives may stand alone (demonstrative pronouns), or modify a following noun or noun phrase (demonstrative adjectives), and agree in both number and gender with the noun to which they refer. Traditionally, a written accent on the normally accented syllable of the word has been used to distinguish its use as a pronoun, although this usage may vary considerably in contemporary Spanish:

*¡Este libro es muy interesante!*  
This book is very interesting!

*¡Éste es un libro interesante!*  
This is an interesting book!

*Esa muchacha me queda bien.*  
I like that girl.

*Ésa no me queda bien.*  
I don't like that one.

*Aquellos son los soldados héroes.*  
Those are the heroic soldiers.

When the noun referred to is an indefinite concept or thing, the neuter pronouns *esto*, *eso*, and *aquello* should be used in preference to the demonstratives:

*Ése es muy importante.*  
That (man) is very important.

*Eso es muy importante.*  
That (idea) is very important.

## Questions

**Question Formation:** To correctly form a question in Spanish, follow this formula:

**Question word** (if there is one) + **complete verb** + **complete subject** + **rest of predicate**.

Be sure to place an **¿** before the question (this may not necessarily be the beginning of the entire sentence).

- Using **Quién**:

¿**Quién** habla?

**Who** is speaking?

¿**Quién** fue?

**Who** was it? (**Who** did it?)

- Using **Qué**:

¿**Qué** quiere beber Juan?

**What** does John want to drink?

¿**Qué** significa eso?

**What** does that mean?

- Using **Cuál**:

¿**Cuál** de las dos pinturas es de Renoir?

**Which** of the two paintings is by Renoir?

¿**Cuál** es el problema?

**What** is the problem?

- Using **Por qué**:

¿**Por qué** no han venido tus hermanas?

**Why** haven't your sisters come?

¿**Por qué** estás enojada?

**Why** are you (f.) mad?

- Using **Cómo**:

¿**Cómo** está Ud.?

**How** are you?

¿**Cómo** se llama?

**How** are you called? (What is your name?)

- Using **Dónde**:

¿**Dónde** está el mar?

**Where** is the ocean?

¿**Dónde** queda el baño?

**Where** is the bathroom (located)?

- Using **Adónde**:

¿**Adónde** van los alumnos de la primaria hoy?

(**To**) **where** are the elementary school students going today?

- Using **Cuándo**:

¿**Cuándo** es la fiesta?

**When** is the party?

¿**Cuándo** llegan?

**When** are they arriving?

- Using **Cuánto(s)**:

¿**Cuánto** cuestan los juguetes?

**How much** do the toys cost?

¿**Cuántas** hamburguesas comió el perro?

**How many** hamburgers did the dog eat?

- Questions without question words:

¿Ayudó Juan a su mamá?

Did John help his mother?

La muchacha es muy bonita, ¿no lo crees?

The girl is very pretty, don't you think?

¿Es bastante?

Is that enough?

## Interrogative Inflections

Many Spanish interrogative words are uninflected for gender and number:

¿Qué es eso?  
What is that?

¿Porqué no le gusta las manzanas?  
Why don't you like apples?

¿Cómo puedo llegar a la ciudad?  
How can I get to the city?

¿Cuándo viene su hermano?  
When is your brother coming?

**Quién** and **cuál** have both singular and plural forms. **Cuál** may stand alone, or modify a following noun or noun phrase:

¿Quién le espera en la esquina?  
Who is waiting for you on the corner?

¿Quiénes son las maestras de inglés?  
Who are the English teachers?

¿Cuál es su película favorita?  
Which is your favorite movie?

¿Cuáles son los asuntos más importantes?  
Which are the most important issues?

**Cuánto** uses regular adjective endings. Like **cuál**, it may stand alone or modify a following noun or noun phrase, and agrees in both number and gender with the noun referred to

¿Cuánto cuesta el ordenador?  
How much does the computer cost?

¿Cuántos años tiene él?  
How old is she?

¿Cuántas personas asistieron a la clase?  
How many people attended the class?

Note that the accents of the interrogatives are necessary to distinguish them from their corresponding relative pronouns:

¿Cuándo va a llegar?  
When will he arrive?

Trabajaban cuando él llegó.  
They were working when he arrived.

## Negative Words

The most common negative words are:

nadie	no one
nada	nothing
nunca	never
ni...ni	neither...nor
ninguno(a)	no (as an adjective)

Negative words are called so, because they "negate" or contradict something "positive":

Queda mucho para comer?  
Is there a lot left over to eat?

**No, no queda nada.\***  
**No, there is nothing left.**

Here are some more examples:

- Using **nadie**:

**Affirmative:**

**Alguien** está aquí.  
**Someone** is here.

**Negative:**

**Nadie** está aquí.  
**No one** is here.

- Using **nada**:

**Affirmative:**

Tengo **algo**.  
I have **something**.

**Negative:**

No tengo nada.  
I have **nothing**.

- Using **nunca**:

**Affirmative:**

Él **siempre** va.  
He **always** goes.

**Negative**

Él **nunca** va.  
He **never** goes.

- Using **ni...ni**:

**Affirmative:**

¿Tienes una novela **o** un diccionario?  
Have you got a novel **or** a dictionary?

**Negative:**

¿No tienes **ni** novela **ni** diccionario?  
You have **neither** a novel **nor** a dictionary?

- Using **ninguno, ninguna**:

**Affirmative:**

Tiene **alguna** esperanza.  
He has **some** hope.

**Negative:**

No tiene **ninguna** esperanza.\*

He has **no** hope.

See also:

Negatives

## Negatives

The most common way to make a sentence negative in Spanish is to place the word **no** before the verbal expression.

- Inserting **no** before the verb:

Juan **conoce** a María.  
John **knows** Mary.

Juan **no** **conoce** a María.  
John **doesn't** know Mary.

He **terminado**.  
I **have finished**.

**No** he **terminado**.  
I **haven't** finished.

- If an object pronoun precedes the verb, the negative word **no** precedes the object pronoun:

Lo **conozco**.  
I **know** him.

**No** lo **conozco**.  
I **don't** know him.

La he **visto**.  
I **have seen** her.

**No** la he **visto**.  
I **haven't** seen her.

Lo he **probado**.  
I **have tasted** it.

**No** lo he **probado**.  
I **haven't** tasted it.

- Here are some examples of using **no** in responding to a question: (Note that these sentences follow the same rules as above.)

Has **visto** a Ricardo?  
Have you **seen** Richard?

**No**, **no** lo he **visto**.  
**No**, I **haven't** seen him.

Es buen alumno Tomás?  
Is Thomas a **good student**?

**No**, él **no** es un buen alumno.  
**No**, he is **not** a good student.

See also:

[Negative Words](#)

## Stress/Accents

In Spanish, the natural stress falls on the second to last syllable in all words ending in a vowel, **-n**, or **-s**. In words ending in any other letter, the natural stress falls on the last syllable. Words not following the normal rules must indicate the stress with a written accent mark.

Examples of all three kinds of words (capitals indicate stress):

- Words ending in vowel, **-n**, or **-s** with the stress on the next-to-last syllable:

esposa	es PO sa	wife
joven	JO ven	young man
salimos	sa LI mos	(we) go out

- Words ending in other than vowel, **-n**, or **-s** with the stress on the last syllable:

azul	a ZUL	blue
corregir	co rre GIR	to correct

- Words which are not pronounced according to the stress rules and therefore require written accent:

caimán	cai MAN	alligator
lápiz	LA piz	pencil

See also:

Syllables

## Syllables

In Spanish, syllables are divided so that the syllable begins with a consonant and ends with a vowel whenever possible. In the following examples, capitals indicate stress.

The vowels **a**, **e**, and **o** are strong vowels, and therefore stand alone as separate syllables:

mareo	ma RE o - three syllables	mah-reh-oh
traer	TRA er - two syllables	trah-ehr

The vowels **u** and **i** are weak vowels which cannot stand as a separate syllable next to a strong vowel; in the case of a weak-strong or a strong-weak combination, a diphthong is formed with the stress on the strong vowel.

veinte	VEIN te - two syllables	bayn-te
Jamaica	Ja MAI ca - three syllables	hah-may-ka

Should pronunciation require breaking the diphthong (creating two syllables instead of the one), make the weak vowel strong with a written accent.

rió	RIO - one syllable	RYO
río	ri o - two syllables	REE- oh
baul	BAUL - one syllable	BOW+I
baúl	ba UI - two syllables	bah-OOL

When **u** and **i** fall together, they form a diphthong (one syllable) with the stress on the second of the two.

viuda	viU da - two syllables	view-the
huída	hul da - two syllables	hoo-ee-the

See also:

[Stress/Accents](#)

## **Non-Inflecting**

The following parts of speech have no inflectional models:

- Conjunction
- Intensifier
- Non-Grammatical
- Note
- Preposition
- Prefix
- Relative
- Slot Phrase
- Suffix
- Title

# Glossary of Terms

conjunction

## **conjunction**

A word functioning as a connector between words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. For example: [and](#), [because](#), [but](#), [however](#).

The passive voice is used much less frequently in Spanish than in English.

This formation is identical to the reflexive.

Note the positioning of the question mark right before the actual question part of the sentence.

Although in English double negatives should be avoided, there is no such rule in Spanish. In fact, it is common to use multiple negatives in a single sentence:

**¡No me molestes nunca!**

Don't ever bother me!

**Nunca me han dado nada.**

They have never given me anything.

Accents are always placed above the vowel in a syllable, never above consonants.

