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Articles

Articles are words used before nouns, or before words that function as nouns, to indicate their gender and number. They also indicate whether the noun is known to the reader or the listener (definite article) or if it is unknown (indefinite article). In Spanish there is also a neuter article, lo, which refers to abstract nouns and does not point to gender or number.

Definite Article Forms

The English definite article the has four equivalent forms in Spanish: el, la, los, and las.

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Article-Noun Agreement

A. The definite article agrees in gender and number with the noun to which it refers:

Los autos japoneses son muy populares.
Japanese cars are very popular.

Quiero visitar las ruinas de Machu Picchu.
I want to visit the ruins of Machu Picchu.

However, there are some exceptions when the noun is singular but has a plural form:

el paraguas  los paraguas  the umbrella
el botones  los botones  the bellboy
the umbrellas  the bellboys
B. The definite article does not agree in gender with singular feminine nouns that begin with a stressed *a* or *ha*, for the sake of euphony:

- *el águila* eagle
- *el alma* soul
- *el agua* water
- *el arpa* harp
- *el hambre* hunger
- *el aula* classroom

If the *a* or *ha* is unstressed, the feminine definite article must be used:

- *la araña* spider
- *la amapola* poppy
- *la aduana* customs

**NOTES:**

1. This apparent masculine article is actually a modification of the old form of the feminine definite article, *ela*, blending the pronunciation of the letter *a* with the first vowel of the noun.

2. The adjectives that modify the preceding nouns follow the normal rules of agreement. Since the noun is feminine, the adjective needs to be in the feminine form:

   - *El arpa vieja estaba guardada en el sótano.*  
   - *Los niños ocuparon el aula grande y espaciosa.*

3. The apparent gender change does not affect the plural form of the definite article:

   - *las águilas*  
   - *las almas*  
   - *las arpas*  
   - *las hambres*  
   - *las aguas*  
   - *las aulas*

4. To name the letters *a* and *h*, the feminine definite article is still used, although the *a* sound is stressed:

   - *La “a” es la primera letra del abecedario.*  
   - *La “hache” no se pronuncia en español, a menos que esté precedida de “c”.*

5. If an adjective beginning with stressed *a* is placed between the definite article and the noun, the feminine form of the definite article is maintained:

   - *la ácida manzana* the sour apple
   - *la amplia habitación* the spacious room

6. In a familiar style, the feminine definite article is also used before a feminine name that begins with stressed *a*:

   - *la Ana*  
   - *la Águeda*  
   - *la Ángela*
Uses of the Definite Article

A. The definite article with geographical names

1. The definite article agrees with the noun in gender and number:

   - el Mediterráneo la Antártida
   - el Peñón de Gibraltar la América Latina
   - el Río de la Plata la Patagonia
   - el lago Titicaca la Isla de Pascua

2. Before names of countries and large areas or regions, the definite article is usually omitted, although it is frequently used in cases such as the following:

   - el África la China el Paraguay
   - la Argentina el Ecuador el Perú
   - el Asia los Estados Unidos la Siberia
   - el Brasil el Japón el Uruguay

3. The definite article is used when the names of cities and countries are modified by a complement:

   - el México moderno la España de Franco
   - la Roma de los Césares la Rusia de los Zares

4. Naturally, the definite article is used when it is part of the name:

   - Las Vegas La Habana La Paz

B. The definite article with names of streets, avenues, and parks

The definite article is used when the word *calle* (street), *avenida* (avenue), or *parque* (park) appears as part of the address:

   - la Avenida 9 de Julio el Parque Centenario
   - la Quinta Avenida el Parque Central
   - la Calle 14 el Parque Lezama

Otherwise, it is not used:

   - Vivo en Larrea 120.
   - Corrientes corta la Avenida 9 de Julio.

   I live at 120 Larrea Street.
   Corrientes Street intersects July 9th Avenue.
C. The definite article with names of people

1. The definite article is used when a name is preceded by a title:

- *la señora Juana*  
- *el doctor Fernández*
- *el profesor Pérez*  
- *la abogada García*
- *el Papa Pablo VI*  
- *el general Franco*

*El señor García es muy bueno.*  
Mr. García is very nice.

The definite article is used in indirect speech, when talking about a person:

*Vi a la profesora Gómez ayer.*  
I saw Professor Gómez yesterday.

NOTES:

However, the definite article is not used:

(1) in direct address:

*Buenas tardes, profesor Pérez.*  
Good afternoon, Professor Pérez.

*Doctor Fernández, escribalo, por favor.*  
Dr. Fernández, write it, please.

(2) with *doña* or *don*, as in *doña Juana* or *don Carlos*. (The feminine *la doña*, used without the name of the person, as in *Juan vio a la doña*, has a contemptuous or humorous connotation.)

(3) with religious titles such as *San Antonio*, *Santa Catalina*, *Fray Luis de León*, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, *Santo Tomás*.

(4) with titles that include either a cardinal or an ordinal number, such as *Pío Doce* (Pius XII) or *Felipe Segundo* (Philip II).

2. The definite article is used when a name is preceded by an adjective:

- *el pobre Sancho* (poor Sancho)  
- *la vieja Celestina* (old Celestina)

3. The definite article is used when a name represents the title of a book, a play, or an opera:

- *el Hamlet*  
- *la Aída*  
- *el Martín Fierro*

NOTES:

The definite article is not used, however, if

(1) The title does not include the name of a person, as in

*Me gustó mucho Rebelde sin causa.*  
I liked *Rebel Without a Cause* very much.
(2) The title already has a definite article:

Leímos un comentario sobre El hablador. We read a commentary on El hablador.

4. The definite article is used when a name denotes someone’s character:

Su amigo se creía el Lorca del club literario. His friend considered himself the Lorca of the literary club.

5. The definite article is used when a name is followed by an epithet:

Juana la Loca Juana the Mad
Lorenzo el Magnífico Lawrence the Magnificent

6. The definite article is used when a feminine name is part of a sentence written in familiar or figurative speech:

Miguel se lo dio a la Dora. Michael gave it to Dora.
¿Oíste el discurso de la Hillary? Did you hear Hillary’s speech?
Tuve una clase con la Tortello. I had a class with Mrs. Tortello.

7. The definite article is used when a feminine name is used in legal or journalistic style:

La Fernández declaró no haberlo conocido. Fernández declared that she had not met him.
La Serrano probó que ya había salido del trabajo. Serrano proved that she had already left work.

8. The definite article is used in the masculine plural with a family name. The definite article is used in the masculine plural form with the family name (last name) to refer to a married couple or to a family including all its members:

Los García no han llegado todavía. The Garcías have not arrived yet.
Los Morales están en la sala. The Morales are in the living room.

9. The definite article is not generally used with names of relatives.

(a) In direct or indirect speech, the name never follows papá or mamá, and the definite article is omitted:

Papá, aquí está el café. Dad, here’s the coffee.
Mamá, acompañame a la tienda. Mom, come with me to the store.
Dile a papá que venga. Tell Dad to come.
(b) Sometimes a father-in-law or mother-in-law is addressed as *papá* or *mamá*, with the name added for clarification. Although this is not generally done in English, a literal translation follows:

*Dáselo a Papá Esteban.*

*Give it to Dad Esteban.*

*Le escribió una carta a mamá María.*

*He wrote a letter to Mom María.*

(c) If the relative is *tío(a)*, the definite article is omitted in direct speech but may be used in indirect speech:

*Tía Carmen, ven pronto.*

*Aunt Carmen, come soon.*

*Le dije a la tía Carmen que viniera pronto.*

*I told Aunt Carmen to come soon.*

(d) If the relative is *abuelo(a)*, the definite article is omitted in direct speech but is generally used in indirect speech:

*Abuela Ana, tráeme los anteojos.*

*Grandma Ana, bring me the glasses.*

*Dale los anteojos a la abuela Ana.*

*Give the glasses to Grandma Ana.*

### D. The definite article in the masculine form with a phrase or a sentence that functions as a noun:

*No me importa el qué dirán.*

*I don’t care about their opinion.*

*Le satisface el que le hayamos dicho la verdad.*

*It satisfies him that we have told him the truth.*

*El que lo haya dicho, no indica que sepa lo que está pasando.*

*The fact that he has said it does not indicate that he knows what is going on.*

### NOTES:

1. When there is an adjective that functions as a noun, the definite article agrees with the adjective:

*Los interesados vinieron a la reunión.*

*The interested (parties) came to the meeting.*

*La elegida era muy bonita.*

*The chosen one was very pretty.*

2. If a noun is left out, the definite article agrees with the gender and number of the implied noun (second example sentence below).

*La señora de enfrente es rusa.*

*The lady across the street is Russian.*

*La de enfrente es rusa.*

*The one across the street is Russian.*

### E. The definite article in the masculine form with infinitives that function as nouns

When the infinitive functions as a noun and is in the position of the subject, it is preceded by the masculine singular form of the definite article:
**El ir y venir de la gente era insoportable.**
The coming and going of the people was unbearable.

**El comer tarde no es bueno para la salud.**
Eating late is not good for one's health.

**El no contestar mis cartas me dice que ella no está interesada.**
Her not answering (The fact that she doesn't answer) my letters tells me that she is not interested.

---

**F. The definite article with parts of the body**

The definite article is used in Spanish with parts of the body instead of the possessive adjective:

- **Me lastimé la muñeca.**
  - I hurt my wrist.

- **Juan se ha golpeado el codo.**
  - Juan has hurt his elbow.

- **Tiene los pies hinchados.**
  - She has swollen feet.

**NOTE:**
However, in order to emphasize a particular part of the body or to avoid ambiguity, the possessive adjective is generally used.

- **Todavía recuerdo los matices de su pelo.**
  - I still remember the shades of her hair.

- **Mis manos temblaban.**
  - My hands were trembling.

---

**G. The definite article with a noun used in apposition with another noun to give emphasis or for clarification:**

- **Juan, el hijo de Carlos, terminó sus estudios.**
  - Juan, Carlos's son, finished his studies.

- **Ana, la maestra de secundaria, no gana mucho.**
  - Ana, the high school teacher, does not make much money.

**NOTE:**
In some cases, the use of the definite article indicates individuality:

- **Carlos, electricista de la firma, es mi hermano.**
  - Carlos, an electrician in the firm, is my brother. (Carlos is not necessarily the only electrician there.)

- **Carlos, el electricista de la firma, es mi hermano.**
  - Carlos, the electrician of the firm, is my brother. (Carlos is the only electrician in the company.)
H. The definite article with a noun used after the conjunction o (or) to indicate an alternative:

Quiero comprar la falda o la blusa. I want to buy the skirt or the blouse.

NOTE:
However, it is omitted when the noun after o is used as a clarification of the noun before it:

El inspector o encargado de la investigación dio una explicación sobre el material desaparecido. The inspector, or head of the investigation, explained about the material that had disappeared.

I. The definite article with superlative forms:

La jirafa, el animal más alto, come hojas. The giraffe, the tallest animal, eats leaves.

J. The definite article with pieces of clothing

In Spanish, the definite article is used when the possessive adjective would be used in English:

Delia se puso el vestido nuevo para la fiesta. Delia put on her new dress for the party.

Tienes los zapatos bien lustrados. Your shoes are well polished.

K. The definite article with days of the week

1. The masculine form of the definite article is used with days of the week. Also, the definite article is used in Spanish when the preposition on would be used in English:

Llegaremos el lunes. We will arrive on Monday.

Tengo clases los martes. I have classes on Tuesdays.

El jueves es un buen día para mí. Thursday is a good day for me.

2. The definite article is used after hasta and para:

¡Hasta el martes! See you on Tuesday!

Esto es para el sábado. This is for Saturday.
3. The definite article follows the word *todos* (every):

   *Visita a su madre todos los martes.*
   He visits his mother every Tuesday.

4. The definite article is omitted when the day of the week follows the verb *ser* to identify the day:

   *Hoy es viernes.*
   Today is Friday.

   *Ayer fue lunes.*
   Yesterday was Monday.

5. The definite article is omitted with the expression *de ... a* to indicate *from ... to:*

   *Juan trabaja de miércoles a domingo.*
   Juan works from Wednesday to Sunday.

**L. The feminine definite article with the hours of the day:**

   *Es la una y media de la tarde.*
   It is 1:30 P.M.

   *Son las cuatro y veinte.*
   It is 4:20.

   *Son las veintiuna en punto.*
   It is exactly nine o'clock P.M.

**M. The definite article with meals**

1. The definite article is used when the noun describes a specific meal:

   *El desayuno es a las ocho.*
   Breakfast is at eight.

   *Reservamos una mesa para el almuerzo.*
   We reserved a table for lunch.

   *Ellos vendrán para el té.*
   They will come for five o'clock tea.

   *Los chicos toman la merienda a las cinco.*
   The kids have a snack at five.

   *Hay muchos invitados para la cena.*
   There are many guests for supper.

2. The definite article is generally used after *para* (for):

   *No hay nada para el desayuno.*
   There's nothing for breakfast.

   *Para el almuerzo tenemos pollo.*
   For lunch we have chicken.

   *Para la cena hay arroz y también verduras.*
   For supper there is rice and also vegetables.

   *Para la merienda tenemos queso y jamón.*
   For a snack we have cheese and ham.

   **NOTE:**

   The definite article always follows *para* when referring to teatime.

   *No hay mermelada para el té.*
   There's no marmalade for teatime.
3. The definite article always follows hasta (until):

\begin{align*}
\text{Esperaremos hasta la cena.} & \quad \text{We'll wait until supper.} \\
\text{Trabajé hasta el almuerzo.} & \quad \text{I worked until lunch.}
\end{align*}

4. The definite article is omitted after de:

\begin{align*}
\text{No hay nada de desayuno.} & \quad \text{There's nothing for breakfast.} \\
\text{De cena tenemos arroz y verduras.} & \quad \text{We have rice and vegetables for supper.} \\
\text{De merienda tenemos queso y jamón.} & \quad \text{We have cheese and ham for a snack.} \\
\text{De almuerzo tenemos pollo.} & \quad \text{We have chicken for lunch.}
\end{align*}

\textbf{NOTE:}

This construction is not used with teatime; para el té is used instead:

\begin{align*}
\text{Para el té tenemos torta.} & \quad \text{We have cake for teatime.}
\end{align*}

\textbf{N.} The definite article with madrugada, mañana, tarde, and noche as expressions of specific times of the day

1. The definite article is not used after de:

\begin{align*}
\text{Vino de madrugada.} & \quad \text{He came at dawn.} \\
\text{Llegamos de tarde.} & \quad \text{We arrived in the afternoon.}
\end{align*}

\textbf{NOTE:}

However, it is used after de to indicate a specific hour:

\begin{align*}
\text{Llamaste a las ocho de la noche.} & \quad \text{You called at 8:00 P.M.} \\
\text{Me desperté a las cuatro de la madrugada.} & \quad \text{I woke up at 4:00 A.M.}
\end{align*}

2. The definite article is used after a:

\begin{align*}
\text{Vino a la mañana.} & \quad \text{She came in the morning.} \\
\text{Llegamos a la noche.} & \quad \text{We arrived at night.}
\end{align*}

\textbf{O.} The definite article (optional) with mediodía and medianoche

The definite article may be omitted after a, antes de, and después de:

\begin{align*}
\text{Estudiamos a(l) mediodía.} & \quad \text{We studied at noon.} \\
\text{Comió antes de(l) mediodía.} & \quad \text{He ate before noon.} \\
\text{Llamó por teléfono después de (la) medianoche.} & \quad \text{She called on the phone after midnight.}
\end{align*}
Salió a (la) medianoche.  
He left at midnight.

Después de (la) medianoche saldremos de viaje.  
We’ll leave on a trip after midnight.

P. The definite article with numbers used to indicate at a certain age:

Vino a los Estados Unidos a los veinte años.  
He came to the United States when he was twenty years old.

Escribió su última novela a los ochenta.  
He wrote his last novel when he was eighty.

Q. The definite article with seasons of the year

The definite article is used when the seasons are the subject of the sentence, including constructions with the verbs gustar and preferir:

El verano es muy caluroso en Florida.  
Summer is very hot in Florida.

Me gusta la primavera.  
I like spring.

Preferimos el otoño porque no hace frío.  
We prefer the fall because it is not cold.

NOTE:
The definite article may be dropped in other cases:

Me gusta nadar en primavera (en la primavera).  
I like to swim in the spring.

Vamos a esquiar en invierno (en el invierno).  
We go skiing in the winter.

R. The masculine definite article with dates:

Vinieron el 25 de diciembre.  
They came on December 25th.

Me llamó el 7 de mayo.  
She called me on May 7th.

Llega el primero de junio.  
He arrives on June 1st.

NOTES:
However, the definite article is omitted:

(1) When dating a letter:

Nueva York, 25 de mayo de 1962

2 de enero de 2005

(2) After the expression estamos a ... (another form of indicating today’s date):

Estamos a 17 de agosto.  
Today is August 17. (Literally: We are at . . .)
The definite article with months of the year

The definite article is used only if the name of the month is modified:

- **Octubre es uno de los meses más lindos del año.**
  - October is one of the nicest months of the year.
- **El cálido octubre invitaba a hacer caminatas.**
  - The warm October was an invitation for long walks.

The definite article with names of languages

1. The masculine form of the definite article is used with names of languages:
   - **El inglés se habla en casi todo el mundo.**
     - English is spoken in almost the whole world.
   - **El ruso es un idioma muy difícil.**
     - Russian is a very difficult language.

2. The definite article is not used after the prepositions **en** and **de**:
   - **Las instrucciones están escritas en italiano.**
     - The instructions are written in Italian.
   - **Vamos a la clase de español.**
     - We are going to the Spanish class.

   Note that, when nationality rather than language is being expressed, the definite article is used after **de**:
   - **El libro del español es mejor.**
     - The book by the Spanish writer is better.

3. The use of the definite article is optional after verbs such as **aprender, comprender, conocer, enseñar, entender, escribir, estudiar, hablar, leer, and saber**:
   - **Queremos aprender (el) japonés.**
     - We want to learn Japanese.
   - **Todos los paraguayos saben (el) guaraní.**
     - Every Paraguayan knows Guarani.
   - **Me gustaría hablar (el) portugués.**
     - I would like to speak Portuguese.

   **NOTE:**
   If an adverb is placed between the verb and the name of the language, the definite article must be used:
   - **Queremos aprender bien el japonés.**
     - We want to learn Japanese well.

The definite article with expressions of possession

1. The definite article may be omitted with possessive pronouns:
Esta cartera es (la) mía. This purse is mine.
Los libros que están aquí son (los) nuestros. The books that are here are ours.

NOTE:
The use of the definite article may imply an identification, more than merely possession.

Esta cartera es la mía. This purse (and not the other one) is mine.

2. The definite article is used when possession is indicated with de, with or without the noun:
Los libros de Carlos están sobre la mesa. Carlos's books are on the table.
Los de Fernando están sobre el sofá. Fernando's are on the sofa.

V. No definite article in exclamations or in the vocative case (when calling someone):
¡Madre mía! Good heavens!
¡Dios mío! Dear Lord!
¡Estudiantes! Students!

W. The definite article with a noun used in a general sense

1. With a noun used in a general sense, the definite article is used in the singular or plural form, as needed:
   El gato tiene uñas largas. Cats (in general) have long nails.
   Los aviones han influenciado el progreso. Planes (all planes) have influenced progress.

   NOTE:
   This usage can also indicate specific nouns, as in:
   El gato de Juan tiene uñas largas. Juan's cat has long nails.
   Los aviones alemanes han influenciado el progreso. German planes have influenced progress.

2. If a limiting adjective modifies a noun used in a general sense, the definite article is omitted:
   Juan come comidas grasosas. Juan eats fatty meals.
   Tengo poco dinero en mi cuenta. I have little money in my account.
NOTE:
To identify the noun, the definite article is used:

Juan come las comidas grasosas que hace su mamá.
En mi cuenta tengo el poco dinero que me diste.

Juan eats the fatty meals made by his mother.
In my account I have the little money that you gave me.

X. The definite article with abstract ideas:

La sinceridad es algo que lo caracteriza.

Sincerity is something that makes him stand out.

El amor es la más sublime de todas las cualidades humanas.

Love is the most sublime of all human qualities.

Y. The definite article with the words todo/a, todos/as

1. To indicate a class as a whole, the definite article is used:

Toda la leche se vende a los mercados.
Todo el centro está recargado de tránsito.
Todos los estudiantes toman un examen de ingreso.
Todas las valijas son revisadas en la aduana.

All milk is sold to the markets.
All downtown is heavy with traffic.
All students take an entrance examination.
All bags are checked at the customs office.

2. To indicate each one or every one in the group, the definite article is omitted:

Toda leche debe ser pasteurizada.
Toda valija que llega a la aduana será abierta.
Todo barrio es parte vital de las ciudades.
Todo estudiante deberá tomar un examen.

Every milk bottle must be pasteurized.
Every bag that arrives at customs will be opened.
Every neighborhood is a vital part of the cities.
Every student will have to take an exam.

Z. No definite article when referring to a part of a whole concept

Whenever some or any is used in English, the definite article is omitted in Spanish:

Me dio aceite y vinagre para la ensalada.
Hay que ponerle pimienta a la salsa.

She gave me some oil and vinegar for the salad.
We need to put some pepper in the sauce.
AA. The definite article with units of weight, units of measure, or rates

When English uses *per*, *the*, or *an* to establish a unit of weight, measure, or a rate, the definite article is used in Spanish:

- Las bananas están a un dólar el medio kilo.  
  Bananas cost a dollar per pound.
- La alfombra cuesta diez pesos el metro.  
  The carpet costs ten dollars the yard.
- Las frutillas están a dos pesos la caja.  
  The strawberries are at two dollars a box.
- Mi hermano gana seis pesos la hora.  
  (or por hora) My brother makes six dollars an hour.

BB. The definite article to indicate a unit of time

When English uses *next* (*próximo*) or *last* (*pasado*) to indicate a unit of time, the definite article is used in Spanish:

- Vamos a Orlando el próximo jueves.  
  We go to Orlando next Thursday.
- El año pasado terminé los cursos de la universidad.  
  Last year I finished the university courses.

CC. The definite article with idiomatic expressions, set expressions, and proverbs

The definite article may or may not be used with idiomatic expressions and proverbs. Since many of these expressions do not have an exact equivalent in English, it will be necessary to consult a list of the most common expressions in order to use them properly. Some examples are:

- Más largo que esperanza de pobre.  
  (Regarding distance:) As unreachable as the hopes of a poor person.
- Sin duda Alberto vendrá mañana.  
  Without a doubt (No doubt) Alberto will come tomorrow.
- No creo en la renguera del perro ni en lágrimas de mujer.  
  Literally: I don’t believe in a dog’s limping nor in a woman’s tears. (I don’t believe what you are saying).
- La paciencia es la madre de la ciencia.  
  Literally: Patience is the mother of science (wisdom).

DD. No definite article with nouns used to establish a relationship:

- Pelean como perro y gato.  
  They fight like cats and dogs.
- Los declaro marido y mujer.  
  I pronounce you husband and wife.
- Juana e Isabel son carne y uña.  
  Juana and Isabel are very close friends.  
  (Literally: flesh and nail).
EE. The definite article with the prepositions *a, de, and en*

1. When the masculine singular definite article *el* follows the preposition *a* or *de*, it is contracted (losing the *e*):

   *Iremos* [a + el] teatro para ver una ópera.  
   We'll go to the theater to see an opera.  
   *Iremos al* teatro para ver una ópera.

   *Éste es el libro* [de + el] profesor.  
   This is the professor's book.  
   *Éste es el libro del* profesor.

   **NOTES:**
   The contraction of definite article and preposition does not take place in the following cases:

   (1) With masculine plural or with feminine forms:

   *El jefe lee el informe a los empleados.*  
   The boss reads the report to the employees.  
   *Este libro es de los estudiantes.*  
   This book belongs to the students.  
   *El estudiante entrega el cuaderno a la(s) maestra(s).*  
   The student turns in the notebook to the teacher(s).  
   *Los lápices son de la(s) niña(s).*  
   The pencils belong to the girl(s).

   (2) When the definite article is part of a title:

   *Ya leí la mitad de El sombrero de tres picos.*  
   I've already read half of *El sombrero de tres picos.*

2. After the prepositions *a, de, and en* in expressions with *casa*, when *casa* means *home*, the definite article is not used:

   *Juan viene a casa todos los jueves.*  
   Juan comes home every Thursday.  
   *Lucía salió de casa a las ocho.*  
   Lucía left home at eight.  
   *Los niños se quedaron en casa.*  
   The children stayed home.  
   **But:** *Los niños se quedaron en la casa* (not necessarily their home).

3. The use of the definite article is optional after *a*, *de*, and *en* with *clase* (*class*) and *misa* (*Catholic mass*):

   *Vamos a (la) clase de 8 a 10.*  
   We go to class from 8:00 to 10:00.  
   *Salimos de (la) clase a las 11.*  
   We leave class at 11:00.  
   *Los alumnos están en (la) clase.*  
   The students are in class.
Aída acostumbra ir a (la) misa los domingos. Aída usually goes to mass on Sundays.
Lo veo cuando regresa de (la) misa. I see him when he returns from mass.
Está serio como si estuviera en (la) misa. He is as quiet as if he were at mass. (popular proverb)

**FF. The definite article in phrases that replace proper names and common nouns:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>la ciudad eterna</th>
<th>Rome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la ciudad santa</td>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la reina del Plata</td>
<td>Buenos Aires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el Mártir del Gólgota</td>
<td>Jesus Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el astro rey</td>
<td>the sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la casa de Dios</td>
<td>the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la última morada</td>
<td>the cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el manco de Lepanto</td>
<td>Miguel de Cervantes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el rey de los animales</td>
<td>the lion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la ciudad de la música</td>
<td>Nashville, TN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GG. The definite article with nouns in a series**

1. If the nouns are closely related, the definite article precedes only the first one:

Recuerdo las tristezas y desilusiones de mi niñez. I remember the sad moments and disillusions of my childhood.
Se refirió al gobierno y control de los súbditos. He referred to the government and control of the subjects.

**NOTE:**
In the following exceptions, either each noun must be preceded by the definite article, or else each noun must stand by itself:

El padre y la hija de Juan viven en la misma ciudad. Juan's father and daughter live in the same city.
Madre e hijo se llevan bien. Mother and son get along fine.

2. The definite article is used only once when more than one noun refers to the same individual:

La secretaria y encargada de las compras gana poco. The secretary and purchasing clerk doesn't make much money. (same person)
Compare the following example, where there is more than one individual:

La secretaria y la encargada de las compras no han recibido el informe.  
The secretary and the purchasing clerk have not received the report. (two different people)

Other examples include:

la maestra de inglés y física  
the teacher of English and physics (one person)

la maestra de inglés y la de física  
the English teacher and the physics teacher (two people)

el décimo y último día de vacaciones  
the tenth and last vacation day (same day)

el décimo y el último día de vacaciones  
the tenth and the last vacation days (two days)

**HH. The definite article with subjects of study**

The following rules apply:

1. When referring to a subject in general, the definite article is usually omitted:

Mi hermana estudia geografía y matemáticas.  
My sister studies geography and mathematics.

(La) física es un tema que me interesa.  
Physics is a subject that interests me.

2. The definite article must be used if there is a modifier:

La física del siglo XX produjo resultados esperados.  
Twentieth-century physics produced expected results.

**II. No definite article to indicate material or contents**

The definite article is not used with a noun that indicates either the material of which an item is made or the contents of an item.

una pulsera de plata  
a silver bracelet

el tenedor de plástico  
the plastic fork

la casa de madera  
the wooden house

una taza de té  
a cup of tea

la botella de vino  
the bottle of wine

la caja de aspirinas  
the box of aspirin
Indefinite Article Forms

The English articles *a*, *an*, and the plural form *some* (*several, a few*) have four equivalent forms in Spanish: *un*, *una*, *unos*, and *unas*.

**Singular**

- masculine: *un niño*  a boy
- feminine: *una camisa*  a shirt

**Plural**

- masculine: *unos niños*  some boys
- feminine: *unas camisas*  some shirts

### Article-Noun Agreement

**A.** The indefinite article agrees in gender and number with the noun to which it refers:

- *Un árbol* adorna la entrada del jardín.  
  A tree decorates the entrance to the garden.
- *Unas niñas* venían corriendo por la calle.  
  Some girls came running down the street.

**B.** The indefinite article with singular feminine nouns beginning with stressed *a* or *ha*

The indefinite article does not agree in gender with singular feminine nouns that begin with stressed *a* or *ha*, although forms such as *una águila*, *una ánfora*, and *una habla* are not considered incorrect, but are very seldom used.

- *un águila*  eagle
- *un alma*  soul
- *un arpa*  harp
- *un agua*  water
- *un hambre*  hunger
- *un aula*  classroom

**NOTE:**

The adjectives that follow these nouns maintain the normal rules of agreement (i.e., feminine adjective for a feminine noun):

- *Corría un agua cristalina y pura sobre las rocas.*  
  A crystalline and pure water was flowing over the rocks.
- *Enseño en un aula amplia en la esquina del edificio.*  
  I teach in a big classroom in the corner of the building.

**C.** The indefinite article before an adjective beginning with a stressed *a*

If an adjective beginning with a stressed *a* is placed between the article and the noun, the feminine article is maintained:

- *Estudiamos en una amplia aula que da al jardín.*  
  We study in a big classroom that overlooks the garden.
Uses of the Indefinite Article

A. The indefinite article used to refer to nouns that are not specified:

*Tengo un libro de gramática española.*

I have a Spanish grammar book.

In this sentence, the article refers to any Spanish grammar book, without specifying which one. In order to indicate a book that is well known to both the speaker and the reader, the definite article *el* should be used:

*Tengo el libro de gramática española.*

I have the Spanish grammar book.

B. The indefinite article as a numeral

The singular forms of the article (*un/una*) are used to indicate the number *one*, which also has a feminine form in Spanish. If necessary, meaning may be clarified in context or by pronouncing the particular word more emphatically when it refers to the numeral.

*Hay un caballo en el establo.*

There is a horse in the stable.

*Hay un caballo en el establo.*

There is one horse in the stable.

*Tengo una lámpara en la cocina.*

I have a lamp in the kitchen.

*Tengo una lámpara en la cocina.*

I have one lamp in the kitchen.

C. The indefinite article used to show availability, existence, or lack of something

When there is no indication of number, especially after verbs such as *buscar, encontrar, haber, llevar, querer, tener,* and *usar,* and also in negative sentences, the following rules apply:

1. The indefinite article is omitted before plural nouns:

*Tienen hijos e hijas.*

They have sons and daughters.

*No tienen hijos.*

They do not have children.

*Hay barrios residenciales en esta ciudad.*

There are residential areas in this city.

2. The indefinite article may be omitted before singular nouns:

*Quieren (una) casa con terreno.*

They want a house with a yard.

*No quieren (una) casa con terreno.*

They don’t want a house with a yard.

*Busco (una) secretaria que venga de lunes a viernes.*

I’m looking for a secretary who will work Monday through Friday.
Buscan (un) plomero con experiencia. They're looking for a plumber with experience.
Encontramos (un) lápiz y (un) papel. We found pencil and paper.
Tenía (una) bufanda. He had a scarf on.

NOTES:

(1) If number or emphasis is required, the indefinite article must be used.

Se durmió sin una queja. She fell asleep without a complaint.
Tenía una bufanda preciosa. She had a beautiful scarf.
¡Tiene una gracia para bailar! He has such grace in dancing! (He is such a graceful dancer!)
Tiene un miedo horrible. She is terribly afraid.

(2) In negative sentences with tener, the indefinite article is not used.

No tienen perro. They do not have a dog.
No tenía dolor de muelas. He did not have a toothache.

3. The indefinite article is generally omitted with llevar, usar, and other verbs that indicate customary action:

Las chicas de esa escuela usan zapatos negros como parte del uniforme. The girls in that school wear black shoes as part of their uniform.
Siempre lleva sombrero cuando llueve. He always wears a hat when it rains.
Escribe cartas a sus amigos. She writes letters to her friends.

4. With forms of haber (there is/there are), the following rules apply.

(a) If un (una) acts as an indefinite article (and not the number one), it is not used after haber in negative sentences:

No hay pánico. There is no panic.
No había respeto. There was no respect.
Dijo que no hay problemas. She said there are no problems.

(b) If the noun is modified in such a sentence, however, the indefinite article may be used:

No hay un pánico aparente. There is no apparent panic.
No había un respeto incondicional hacia las autoridades. There was no unconditional respect for the authorities.
D. The indefinite article used to indicate nationality, professions, or affiliation

1. The indefinite article is normally omitted with nationality, professions, or affiliation:

   Carlos es boliviano. Carlos is (a) Bolivian.
   Mi padre es médico. My father is a doctor.
   Él es demócrata. He is a Democrat.
   Juana es metodista. Juana is (a) Methodist.

2. The indefinite article is needed, however, when an adjective is added:

   Jaime es un buen venezolano. Jaime is a good Venezuelan.
   Mi padre es un excelente médico. My father is an excellent doctor.
   Él es un demócrata empedernido. He is a fanatical Democrat.
   Juana es una metodista devota. Juana is a devout Methodist.

   **NOTE:**

   The indefinite article may be omitted when the noun and the corresponding adjective are widely used together:

   Jaime es cantante famoso. Jaime is a famous singer.
   Mi padre es excelente médico. My father is an excellent doctor.
   Su esposa es buena compañía. His wife is a good companion.
   Pedro es buen alumno. Pedro is a good student.

3. The indefinite article is used with some set expressions:

   ¡Jaime es un bandido! Jaime is a rascal!
   ¡Pedro es un nene de mamá! Pedro is a Mama’s boy!
   Julia es una cosita linda. Julia is a cute little thing.

E. The indefinite article with prepositions and como

1. After the preposition **con**, when **con** only expresses existence or availability, the indefinite article is not used.

   Se vino con sombrero. He came with a hat. / He had a hat on.
   Haré el trabajo con cuidado. I’ll do the job carefully.
NOTE:

If number or emphasis needs to be indicated, the indefinite article is used:

*Se vino con un sombrero viejo.*  
He came with an old hat.

*Haré el trabajo con un cuidado tremendo.*  
I will do the job with extreme care.

2. After *como*, when showing a comparison, the following rules apply:

(a) The indefinite article is omitted in some popular sayings:

*Salió como escupida de músico.*  
She left as fast as the spitting of a musician.

*Se fue como alma que lleva el diablo.*  
He left like a soul being carried off by the devil.

(b) In other cases of comparison after *como*, especially in idiomatic expressions, the indefinite article may be omitted:

*Es flaco como (una) rata de iglesia.*  
He’s as skinny as a church rat.

*Estaba triste como (una) tarde de domingo.*  
She was as sad as a Sunday afternoon.

(c) The indefinite article is also omitted when *como* is used in other combinations that require the indefinite article in English, such as the following:

*como medida preventiva*  
as a preventive measure

*como resultado de*  
as a result of

*como consecuencia de*  
as a consequence of

*como corolario*  
as a corollary

*Como profesor, él es...*  
As a professor, he is . . .

*Sirvió como medio para...*  
It served as a means to . . .

3. After the preposition *de*, the indefinite article is omitted whenever *de* has the meaning of *as* in English:

*Trabajaron de enfermeras.*  
They worked as nurses.

*Tiene un puesto de asistente.*  
He works as an assistant.

4. After the preposition *para*, the indefinite article is not omitted when *para* means *for* in English:

*Para un principiante, Juan es muy habilidoso.*  
For a beginner, Juan is very skillful.

*Para una madre soltera, Pepa se da maña para sobrevivir.*  
For a single mother, Pepa is managing to survive.
5. After the preposition *sin*, whenever *sin* expresses the lack of an item or nonexistence, the indefinite article is omitted:

*Me fui a trabajar sin dinero.* I went to work without money.
*Lo dijo sin remordimientos.* She said it without remorse.

**NOTE:**
If number or emphasis needs to be indicated, the indefinite article is used. If the noun is plural, it must be changed to singular after the indefinite article.

*Me fui a trabajar sin (siquiera) una moneda.* I went to work without (even) a quarter.
*Lo dijo sin un remordimiento.* She said it without (any) remorse.

**F. The indefinite article with two nouns in apposition**

1. The indefinite article is omitted if no adjective is used:

*Viven con Luis, chico adoptado por sus padres.* They live with Luis, a boy adopted by their parents.

2. The indefinite article is used if the noun is modified:

*Viven con Luis, un buen chico adoptado por sus padres.* They live with Luis, a good boy adopted by their parents.

**G. The indefinite article with words such as cien, ciento (hundred); cierto/a (certain); medio/a (half); mil (thousand); otro/a (other); ¡Qué ...! (What ...!); tal (such); and semejante (such):**

1. The indefinite article is omitted when *cien(to)* expresses an exact amount:

*Gano cien dólares por semana.* I earn a hundred dollars a week.
*Miguel puso ciento veinte pesos en su cuenta de ahorros.* Miguel put a hundred and twenty pesos into his savings account.

**NOTES:**
(1) If *ciento* (rather than *cien*) is used to indicate exactly one hundred, it must be preceded by the indefinite article and followed by *de*:

*Había un ciento de personas en la plaza.* There were one hundred people in the public square.
2. The indefinite article is omitted when *cierto* or *cierta* does not refer to anything specific:

- **Cierto día se vino con su familia.** On a certain day, she came with her family.
- **Tenemos que reunirnos a *cierta* hora.** We need to get together at a certain time.

**NOTE:**
To indicate a more specific event or item, the indefinite article is used:

- **Un cierto día llegó a visitarnos.** On a certain day, he came to visit us.
- **Debemos reunirnos a una cierta hora todos los días.** We need to get together at a certain time every day.

3. The indefinite article is omitted when *medio* or *media* indicates *half*:

- **Quiero comer medio durazno.** I want to eat half a peach.
- **Me dio media manzana.** He gave me half an apple.
- **Se quedó media hora.** She stayed half an hour.

**NOTE:**
The indefinite article is used to indicate *approximately, about*:

- **Quiero comer un medio durazno.** I want to eat about half a peach.
- **Se quedó por una media hora.** She stayed for about half an hour.

4. The indefinite article is omitted when *mil* (*thousand*) is intended to express an exact amount:

- **Tiene mil dólares en el banco.** He has a thousand dollars in the bank.
NOTES:
(1) To indicate an indefinite large amount, the plural form *miles* (*thousands*) and the preposition *de* are used:

La tía le dejó *miles de dólares.*  
His aunt left him thousands of dollars.  
(many dollars)

(2) However, a more limiting idea may be indicated by using the indefinite article in the plural form:

La tía le dejó *unos miles de dólares.*  
His aunt left him a few thousand. (not as many)

5. The indefinite article is omitted before *otro*:

*Quiero ver otro vestido.*  
I want to see another dress.  
*Quiero ver otro.*  
I want to see another one.  
*Me gustaría vivir en otra casa.*  
I would like to live in another house.  
*Me gustaría vivir en otra.*  
I would like to live in another one.

NOTE:  
A similar construction uses the word *algún/a,* with the same meaning of *another one* in English:

*Quiero ver algún otro vestido.*  
I want to see another dress.  
*Quiero ver algún otro.*  
I want to see another one.  
*Me gustaría vivir en alguna otra casa.*  
I would like to live in another house.  
*Me gustaría vivir en alguna otra.*  
I would like to live in another one.

6. The indefinite article is omitted after *¡Qué ...!* (What...!):  

*¡Qué lugar maravilloso!*  
What a wonderful place!  
*¡Qué hombre más inteligente!*  
What an intelligent man he is!

7. The indefinite article is omitted after *tal* when it means *such a:*

*Nunca había estado en tal lugar.*  
I had never been in such a place.  
*No quiero hablar con tal persona.*  
I don’t want to talk to such a person.

NOTES:  
(1) When *tal* indicates an unknown person, the indefinite article is used. This expression has a pejorative connotation, however. The word *fulana* or *fulano* is also used instead of *tal* in this case.
Ayer lo vi con una tal en el parque. Yesterday I saw him with some woman in the park.

Ayer la vi con un fulano* en el aeropuerto. Yesterday I saw her with some guy at the airport.

(2) When tal refers to a person who is unknown, even though identified by name, the indefinite article is used:

Ayer te llamó un tal Pérez. (or, una tal Luisa) Someone by the name of Pérez (or Luisa) called you yesterday.

(3) When semejante means such a (and not similar), it can be used in two ways:

- No indefinite article is used and semejante precedes the noun:
  No sabía que vivían en semejante casa. I didn’t know that they lived in such a house.

- The indefinite article is used and semejante follows the noun:
  No sabía que vivían en una casa semejante. I didn’t know that they lived in such a house.

The Neuter Article lo

This article refers to abstract ideas and has only one form, lo, which does not indicate gender or number. An equivalent form in English is used with adjectives or adverbs used as nouns. In Spanish, lo always precedes the masculine singular form of the adjective or adverb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lo bueno es eso, claro.</td>
<td>The good (thing) is that, of course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo justo vencerá.</td>
<td>The just (side) will overcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me sorprende lo bonita que es.</td>
<td>It surprises me how beautiful she is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se comportó lo mejor que pudo.</td>
<td>He behaved the best he could.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No me asusta lo difícil.</td>
<td>I am not scared by difficult things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo malo de este auto son los frenos.</td>
<td>The bad thing about this car is the brakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es interesante lo rápido que se supo la noticia.</td>
<td>It’s interesting how fast the news was known.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* When a person’s name is not known or one does not want to say it, there are four made-up names in Spanish, equivalents to John Doe (each of which has corresponding feminine forms as well): Fulano, Mengano, Zutano, and Peren-gano. The fictitious name Fulano de Tal is used instead of the name of a person on a sample form, application, etc.
Expressions with *lo*

Expressions with *lo* have different meanings in Spanish.

**A. Lo que...**

This expression is equivalent to *that which, which, what, or as far as*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo que</em> importa es llegar a tiempo.</td>
<td>What is important is to arrive on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo que</em> me preocupa es su ausencia.</td>
<td>What worries me is his absence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llegaron tarde, <em>lo que</em> molestó a mis padres.</td>
<td>They arrived late, which bothered my parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo que</em> es yo, pienso viajar.</td>
<td>As far as I am concerned, I intend to travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo que</em> es eso, no voy a agregarlo en el informe.</td>
<td>As far as that is concerned, I will not add it to the report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. Lo... que (how, how much)**

When an adjective or an adverb is placed between *lo* and *que*, the expression is equivalent to *how* followed by an adjective or an adverb in English. Observe how the adjectives agree with the nouns in gender and number in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me extraña <em>lo generoso que</em> es tu hermano.</td>
<td>It surprises me how generous your brother is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es impresionante <em>lo mucho que</em> bebe.</td>
<td>It’s amazing how much he drinks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es agradable ver <em>lo buenas que</em> son sus hijas.</td>
<td>It’s nice to see how good her daughters are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me comentó <em>lo difícil que</em> era el examen.</td>
<td>She told me how difficult the exam was.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**C. Lo de...**

Equivalent expressions in English are *the matter of, the subject of, what concerns, what belongs to,* and others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo de</em> Pedro no es nada serio.</td>
<td>What concerns Pedro is not serious at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queremos ver <em>lo de</em> Pamela primero.</td>
<td>We want to see Pamela's (what she has or what concerns her) first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Me ha sorprendido</em> <em>lo de</em> su empleo.</td>
<td>The subject of his job has surprised me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**

*Lo de* is also a foreign phrase used to indicate somebody's house:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuimos a <em>lo de</em> Roberto para repasar las notas.</td>
<td>We went to Roberto's house to review our notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Está en <em>lo de</em> la tía de ella.</td>
<td>She is at her aunt's.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. De lo...

This expression functions as a superlative when it is followed by más (more), menos (less) mejor (better), or peor (worse):

Leí un libro de lo más interesante. I read a very interesting (most interesting) book.

Ese color fue de lo menos usado en la última temporada. That color was the least worn during the last season.

Este médico es de lo mejor que hay en el hospital. This doctor is the best there is in the hospital.

Esta película es de lo más aburrida. This film is very boring.

Esta moda es de lo peor que apareció. This fashion is the worst that appeared.

E. A lo... (in the style of . . . )

In English, a similar construction is rendered by as a or in the style of:

Se viste a lo pobre. He dresses as a poor person.

Me peiné a lo Marilyn. I wore a Marilyn-style hairdo.

Adornó la casa a lo italiano. She decorated the house Italian style.

F. Lo in idiomatic expressions

Some of the most common uses of lo in idiomatic expressions include:

A lo lejos se veía una casa blanca. Far away one could see a white house.

A lo más debes incluir capítulo 4. At the most, you should include Chapter 4.

A lo mejor ellos vienen esta noche. Most likely they will come tonight.

A lo menos quiero comprar este libro. At least I want to buy this book.

A lo sumo Pedro debe tener copia. At the most, Pedro must have a copy.

Lo menos quiero visitarlo. At least, I want to visit him.

Por lo común él pasa el verano allá. Usually, he spends the summer over there.

Por lo general está en su oficina. Normally, she is in her office.

Por lo menos Pepe vendrá a la fiesta. At least, Pepe will come to the party.

Por lo pronto los llamaremos. For the moment, we will call them.

Por lo tanto te veremos mañana. Therefore, we will see you tomorrow.

Por lo visto ya han llegado. Evidently, they have already arrived.
Nouns

A noun (sustantivo in Spanish) is a word that represents people, animals, things, actions, feelings, or qualities. There are two types of nouns: concrete and abstract.

Concrete nouns are those that represent beings we perceive as existing on their own, even if that happens in our imagination. In Spanish, concrete nouns are divided into proper nouns (propios) and common nouns (comunes). A proper noun refers to an individual that is distinguished from others belonging to the same category (e.g., Carmen, Italia, Rocinante, Amazonas, Platero). A common noun defines all members of the same group or species (e.g., maestro, oveja, lago, casa).

Abstract nouns, on the other hand, refer to qualities, feelings, and actions that do not exist by themselves but are, rather, embodied in persons and things. Abstract nouns include youth (la juventud), generosity (la generosidad), wealth (la riqueza), and happiness (la felicidad).

Gender of Nouns

In Spanish, nouns are masculine, feminine, or neuter. Nouns that apply to males are usually masculine, while those that refer to females are usually feminine. However, gender classification is done only for grammatical purposes, since there are few nouns that are inherently masculine or feminine.

Although gender is usually determined by the ending of the noun (la casa, el toro), there are many exceptions to the rules, in which cases the article in front of the noun indicates the proper gender.

In general, Spanish dictionaries indicate the gender of a noun by showing (m.) for masculine or (f.) for feminine, immediately after the entry. Note these examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>compás</td>
<td>compass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luz</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>señal</td>
<td>signal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporal</td>
<td>storm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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MASCULINE NOUNS

Usually, the following rules will help you to determine which nouns are masculine.

A. **Nouns with the following endings are masculine:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ending</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-o</td>
<td>estío</td>
<td>summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teatro</td>
<td>theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>templo</td>
<td>temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ente</td>
<td>escribiente</td>
<td>clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>poniente</td>
<td>west</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coeficiente</td>
<td>coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-aje</td>
<td>maquillaje</td>
<td>makeup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paje</td>
<td>page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ultraje</td>
<td>outrage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-or</td>
<td>picaflor</td>
<td>humming bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rumor</td>
<td>rumor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candor</td>
<td>candor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ante</td>
<td>estante</td>
<td>shelf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>almirante</td>
<td>admiral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pescante</td>
<td>jib of a crane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>programa</td>
<td>program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>drama</td>
<td>drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dilemma</td>
<td>dilemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-e</td>
<td>bronce</td>
<td>bronze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roce</td>
<td>friction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>goce</td>
<td>enjoyment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**

There are exceptions to this rule, especially in nouns that end in -e. Some common feminine words that constitute exceptions to the above rule include: *la mano* (**hand**), *la flor* (**flower**), *la señal* (**signal**), *la creciente* (**swell**), *la lente* (**lens**), *la variante* (**variant**), and *la pose* (**posture**).

B. **Nouns that designate someone of obvious male gender are masculine:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el hijo</td>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el padre</td>
<td>father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el rector</td>
<td>rector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el muchacho</td>
<td>young man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el hombre</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el monje</td>
<td>monk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el tío</td>
<td>uncle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el joven</td>
<td>young man</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**

Some masculine nouns in this category that end in -o or in a consonant have corresponding feminine forms ending in -a (instead of the -o or after the consonant):

*la muchacha* | *la tía* | *la rectora*
C. Names of days, months, boats, and geographical terms for such features as rivers, lakes, oceans, deserts, volcanoes, and gulfs are masculine:

- el viernes
- el Titicaca
- el febrero caluroso
- el Reina Isabel
- el Amazonas
- el Sahara
- el Santa Elena

D. Cardinal numbers are masculine:

- el cinco (5)
- el setenta y dos (72)
- el cuatro (4)
- el veinte (20)

E. Names of languages are masculine:

- el español
- el griego
- el alemán
- el italiano

F. Names of colors are masculine:

- el verde
- el amarillo
- el rosado
- el blanco

NOTE:
Some masculine color names have feminine endings. (See Chapter 4, Adjectives, for more information on colors.)

- el rosa
- el lila
- el violeta
- el grana

G. Infinitives that function as nouns are masculine:

- el Cantar de Mío Cid
- el poder del tirano

the Poem of the Cid
the power of the tyrant

H. Nouns that end in a consonant and represent professions or occupations are masculine.

Note that the corresponding feminine noun is usually formed by adding -a:

- el pintor ➤ la pintora
- el patrón ➤ la patrona

the painter, the artist
the boss
I. Some masculine nouns that end in -e, -ante, or -ista have the same form in the feminine:

- el (la) estudiante  student
- el (la) debutante  debutant(e)
- el (la) protestante  Protestant
- el (la) recepcionista  receptionist
- el (la) ascensorista  elevator operator
- el (la) ciclista  cyclist

Feminine Nouns

Usually, the following rules will help you to determine which nouns are feminine.

A. Nouns with the following endings are feminine:

- **-a**
  - comarca  region
  - pila  pile
  - rosa  rose
  - serie  series
  - especie  species

- **-d**
  - nerviosidad  nervousness
  - salud  health
  - virtud  virtue
  - lumbre  fire
  - costumbre  custom

- **-ión**
  - irritación  irritation
  - confusión  confusion
  - religión  religion
  - crisis  crisis
  - sinopsis  synopsis

- **-ie**
  - interperie  unsheltered area
  - virtud  virtue
  - costumbre  custom

- **-umbre**
  - techumbre  roof
  - sinopsis  synopsis

- **-sís**
  - -sís  crisis
  - -sís  crisis

- **-z**
  - nariz  nose
  - paz  peace
  - codorniz  quail

NOTES:

(1) Some masculine nouns that constitute exceptions to the above rule include the following: *el mapa* (map), *el alud* (avalanche), *el envión* (push), *el alumbre* (alum), *el oasis* (oasis), *el lápiz* (pencil).

(2) Special Cases: Feminine nouns that begin with a stressed *a* or *ha* take a masculine article when they are in the singular form. However, they keep the feminine article in the plural:

- el águila  ➤ las águilas  eagles
- el ama  ➤ las amas  housekeepers
- el arca  ➤ las arcas  arks
Adjectives that modify these nouns agree with the noun in gender and number:

- el águila negra ➔ las águilas negras: the black eagles
- el haba seca ➔ las habas secas: the dried beans

B. Nouns that designate someone of obvious female gender are feminine:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la hija</td>
<td>daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la muchacha</td>
<td>young woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la madre</td>
<td>mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la tía</td>
<td>aunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la mujer</td>
<td>woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la joven</td>
<td>young woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la monja</td>
<td>nun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la señora</td>
<td>lady</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. The letters of the alphabet are feminine:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la pe</td>
<td>(p)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la eme</td>
<td>(m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la hache</td>
<td>(h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la jota</td>
<td>(j)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. The names of the sciences, arts, professions, and virtues are feminine:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la biología</td>
<td>biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la ingeniería</td>
<td>engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la escultura</td>
<td>sculpture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la pureza</td>
<td>purity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Neuter Nouns

Neuter nouns are preceded by the article lo and are usually derived from adjectives. The following nouns, for example, denote the quality of being blue, large, sad, or good.

- **lo azul**
  
  *Lo azul de su vestido me atrajo al instante.*  
  The blue (shade) of her dress attracted my attention.

- **lo grande**
  
  *Nos maravilló lo grande de la casa.*  
  We marveled at the largeness of the house.

- **lo triste**
  
  *Lo triste de su rostro delataba la pena.*  
  The sadness in her face revealed her grief.
lo bueno
Le agradecí lo bueno de su gesto.
I thanked him for the goodness of his gesture.

Nouns of Double Gender

In some cases, the same noun can be both feminine and masculine. The article plays an important role in indicating the gender of such nouns.

A. Nouns that change meaning depending on the article

Several nouns change meaning depending on their gender, indicated by the article that precedes them:

el policía policeman
la policía police, policewoman
el capital money, capital
la capital capital city
el parte communication
la parte part
el cura priest
la cura healing
el orden order
la orden command
el mañana future
la mañana morning

B. Nouns with male and female versions

Some nouns that have the same form for both masculine or feminine use an article (and any adjectives) that agrees with the gender of the person:

el (la) criminal criminal
el (la) modelo model
el (la) mártir martyr
el (la) testigo witness
el (la) masajista masseur, masseuse
el (la) homicida murderer

C. Nouns that stay the same whether they refer to males or females

Some nouns that have the same form for both masculine or feminine use an article (and any adjectives) that agrees with the noun rather than the gender of the person being referred to:

El pobre hombre fue una víctima desgraciada de la sociedad.
The poor man was an unfortunate victim of society.

Ella fue una triste víctima de sus acciones.
She was a sad victim of her actions.

La mujer parecía un monstruo por las cicatrices de las quemaduras.
The woman looked like a monster because of the scars from the burns (she had suffered).
Number of Nouns

Regular Plural Forms

In order to make a singular noun plural, the following rules apply.

A. When a singular noun ends in an unstressed vowel or in a stressed -e, add -s to make the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular Noun</th>
<th>Plural Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la pera</td>
<td>las peras</td>
<td>pears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el bote</td>
<td>los botes</td>
<td>boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el yanqui</td>
<td>los yanquis</td>
<td>Yankees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la tribu</td>
<td>las tribus</td>
<td>tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el café</td>
<td>los cafés</td>
<td>coffee shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el hincapié</td>
<td>los hincapiés</td>
<td>emphases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
The name of the letter e, which becomes las ees, is an exception to this rule.

B. In the following cases, add -es to the singular noun to make the plural.

1. When the singular noun ends in a consonant, add -es to make the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular Noun</th>
<th>Plural Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el mástil</td>
<td>los mástiles</td>
<td>masts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el examen</td>
<td>los exámenes</td>
<td>exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la canción</td>
<td>las canciones</td>
<td>songs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. When the singular noun ends in -y, add -es to make the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular Noun</th>
<th>Plural Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el rey</td>
<td>los reyes</td>
<td>kings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la ley</td>
<td>las leyes</td>
<td>laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el buey</td>
<td>los bueyes</td>
<td>oxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la grey</td>
<td>las greyes</td>
<td>congregations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. When the singular noun ends in a stressed -a, -i, or -o, add -es to make the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el majá</td>
<td>los majaes</td>
<td>snakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el chajá</td>
<td>los chajaes</td>
<td>birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el rajá</td>
<td>los rajaes</td>
<td>rajas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el maní</td>
<td>los maníes</td>
<td>peanuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el ají</td>
<td>los ajíes</td>
<td>peppers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el bongó</td>
<td>los bongoes</td>
<td>drums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el ñandú</td>
<td>los ñandúes</td>
<td>ostriches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el caracú</td>
<td>los caracúes</td>
<td>marrows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

(1) Some exceptions are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la mamá</td>
<td>las mamás</td>
<td>mothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el papá</td>
<td>los papás</td>
<td>fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el sofá</td>
<td>los sofás</td>
<td>sofas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el bisturí</td>
<td>los bisturís</td>
<td>scalpels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) For nouns ending in a stressed -e, see previous rule A.

(3) Certain words take a variety of plural forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maravedí</td>
<td>maravedís, maravedíes, maravedises</td>
<td>coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tabú</td>
<td>tabús, tabúes</td>
<td>taboos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esquí</td>
<td>esquis, esquies</td>
<td>skis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marroquí</td>
<td>marroquis, marroquíes</td>
<td>Moroccans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Irregular Plural Forms**

Specific rules apply in the formation of irregular plural forms.

**A.** When the singular noun ends in -z, change the z to a c and then add -es to make the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la paz</td>
<td>las paces</td>
<td>reconciliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la raíz</td>
<td>las raíces</td>
<td>roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el pez</td>
<td>los peces</td>
<td>fish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE:
Surnames ending in -z, with an unstressed last syllable, do not change: los Álvarez, los Martínez, los Fernández.

The plural of Ruiz, therefore, is los Ruices.

B. Singular nouns ending in -s or -x, with an unstressed last syllable, do not change in the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el análisis</td>
<td>los análisis</td>
<td>analyses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el brindis</td>
<td>los brindis</td>
<td>toasts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la crisis</td>
<td>las crisis</td>
<td>crises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el oasis</td>
<td>los oasis</td>
<td>oases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la hipótesis</td>
<td>las hipótesis</td>
<td>hypotheses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el jueves</td>
<td>los jueves</td>
<td>Thursdays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el paréntesis</td>
<td>los paréntesis</td>
<td>parenthesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el tórax</td>
<td>los tórax</td>
<td>thoraxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el fénix</td>
<td>los fénix</td>
<td>phoenixes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Foreign singular nouns, including those derived from Latin, may add -s or -es to make the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el álbum</td>
<td>los álbumes</td>
<td>albums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el memorándum</td>
<td>los memorándums</td>
<td>memorandums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el gol</td>
<td>los gols, goles</td>
<td>goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el club</td>
<td>los clubs, clubes</td>
<td>clubs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
In some words, the last letter is dropped and then -es is added:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el lord</td>
<td>los lores</td>
<td>lords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el chalet</td>
<td>los chalés</td>
<td>chalets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. Singular nouns ending in -c change to -qu, while names ending in -g change to -gu, in the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el frac</td>
<td>los fraques</td>
<td>tails (dress coat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el coñac</td>
<td>los coñaques</td>
<td>cognacs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el zigzag</td>
<td>los zigzagues</td>
<td>zigzags</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nouns with No Plural Form

The following noun categories do not take a plural form, unless the nouns are modified:

A.  Proper names:
   el Nilo         Napoleón         el Aconcagua

B.  Professions, sciences, and arts:
   la ingeniería   la medicina     la química   la pintura   la arquitectura

C.  Metals:
   la plata       el oro          el cobre    el bronce

D.  Vices and virtues:
   la codicia     la generosidad  la pulcritud

E.  Religions and ideologies:
   el cristianismo el budismo   el comunismo el islamismo

Examples of modified nouns from the previous categories, which do take plural forms, are as follows:

El Paraguay y el Uruguay son los Niles de la Argentina.
The Paraguay and the Uruguay rivers are the Niles of Argentina.

Las diferentes arquitecturas europeas florecieron en aquella época.
The different European architectural expressions bloomed in those times.

Los oros seductores de las Américas despertaron interés.
The seductive gold of the Americas awoke interest.

Las codicias de los países ricos se han puesto en evidencia a través de la historia.
The greed of the rich countries has been demonstrated throughout history.

Los cristianismos alterados de las sociedades mixtas son parte de su cultura.
The altered forms of Christianity in mixed societies are part of their culture.
**Nouns Considered as a Whole (Mass Nouns)**

**A. Some nouns, called mass nouns, take the singular form when used in a general way:**

Me gusta caminar sobre la arena.  
I like to walk on the sand.

El café cuesta mucho.  
Coffee costs a lot.

**B. Sometimes these mass nouns are used in the plural form if there is a modifier:**

Las arenas de África son cansadoras para el viajero.  
The sand in Africa is tiresome for the traveler.

Los cafés de Brasil son excelentes.  
The coffee from Brazil is excellent.

**C. Adding a quantitative expression before the mass noun**

The concept of wholeness may be changed into the idea of parts by the introduction of a quantitative expression before the mass noun:

Se usaron dos toneladas de arena para el proyecto.  
Two tons of sand were used for the project.

Se necesitan dos kilos de café para el licor.  
Two kilograms of coffee are needed to prepare the liqueur.

**NOTE:**

Some examples of words that are considered whole nouns in English and may be correctly separated into parts in Spanish are:

- casa de muebles (furniture store) ➤ un mueble (one piece of furniture)
- consejos (advice) ➤ un consejo (one piece of advice)
- las noticias (the news) ➤ una noticia (a piece of news)
- algodón (cotton) ➤ tres algodones (three cotton balls)
- peces de agua salada (saltwater fish) ➤ cinco peces (five fish)
- calor (heat) ➤ los calores del sur (Southern heat)
- jabón (soap) ➤ dos jabones (two bars of soap)
- papel (paper) ➤ cuatro papeles (four pieces of paper)
- pan (bread) ➤ un pan (one loaf of bread)
- joyas (jewelry) ➤ una joya (one piece of jewelry)
- medicinas (medicine) ➤ dos medicinas (two types of medicine)
Nouns with No Singular Form

Nouns that are expressed only in the plural form include:

A. Mountain ranges:
   - Los Alpes
   - Los Andes
   - Los Himalayas

B. Names of countries or cities:
   - Honduras
   - Buenos Aires
   - Caracas

C. Miscellaneous words:
   - Gafas, anteojos (eyeglasses)
     * Mis gafas (anteojos) se rompieron. My glasses broke.
   - Nupcias (wedding)
     * Sus padres piensan venir para las nupcias. His parents plan to come to the wedding.
   - Exequias (funeral rites)
     * Las exequias serán el viernes. The funeral rites will be on Friday.
   - Preces (prayers)
     * Ahora ella se siente mejor gracias a las preces de su familia. Now she feels better thanks to the prayers of her family.
   - Viveres (food, provisions)
     * La Cruz Roja envió víveres a la región. The Red Cross sent food to the region.
   - Alrededores (surrounding area)
     * Los alrededores son bonitos. The surrounding area is pretty.
   - Comicios (primaries)
     * Los comicios fueron el martes. The primaries were on Tuesday.

NOTE:
The singular forms *boda* and *casamiento* are more commonly used than *nupcias*. In the case of *preces*, the plural *oraciones* is heard in everyday Spanish, while the singular *oración* is also used. *Funeral* and *funerales* may be used instead of *exequias*. 
Vinieron para la boda de su sobrina. They came for their niece's wedding.
Les agradecí sus oraciones. I thanked them for their prayers.
Necesito que reces una oración por mí. I need you to say a prayer for me.
El funeral de la princesa fue muy emotivo. The princess's funeral was very emotional.

Nouns Used in the Plural Form

Ganas is usually used in the plural form, especially with the verbs tener and dar:

ganas (desire)
Tengo ganas de comer allí. I feel like eating there.
Le dieron ganas de llamarlo. She felt like calling him.

However, ganas can also be used in the singular form, as in:

Lo hice de mala gana. I did it reluctantly.
No le da la gana. She doesn't feel like it.

In this last context, gana is not used in the plural:

Incorrect: No trabaja porque no le dan las ganas.

Vacaciones is used in the plural when it appears in the phrase de vacaciones, meaning on vacation:

vacaciones (vacation)
Nos vamos de vacaciones. We are going on vacation.

Not: Nos vamos de vacación.

Elecciones is used primarily in the plural:

elecciones (elections)
Las elecciones presidenciales serán el año próximo. The presidential elections will be next year.

NOTE:
There are other nouns that are used in the plural, although their singular forms are also accepted. Included in this category are objects that have two parts, such as las tijeras (scissors), las tenazas (pliers), and los pantalones (pants).
Nouns with Different Meanings in the Plural Form

Some nouns have two plural forms: one that is the plural of the singular noun, and another one that is inherently plural, that is, it is not used in the singular. Observe the following examples:

A. Regular plural of a singular noun:

- el grillo ➤ los grillos crickets
- la esposa ➤ las esposas wives

B. An inherently plural form:

- los grillos fetters
- las esposas handcuffs

Compound Nouns

Compound nouns are those formed by two words that act together as a single noun:

- el altibajo ➤ los altibajos ups and downs
- el avemaría ➤ los avemarías Hail Marys
- el mapamundi ➤ los mapamundis world maps
- el semicírculo ➤ los semicírculos semicircles

The Plural Forms of Compound Nouns

Many compound nouns make their plural form according to the rules already stated. Other nouns, however, follow different rules.

A. Both words in the compound noun take the plural form.

Notice that these words are combinations of two nouns or one noun and one adjective:

- la ricadueña ➤ las ricasdueñas ladies; daughters of a noble person
- el ricohombre ➤ los ricoshombres grandee; nobility
B. Only the first word is pluralized:

- *el hijodalgo* ➔ *los hijosdalgo* noblemen

**NOTE:**
The word *hijodalgo* originated in the expression *hijo de algo*. The forms *hidalgo* and *hidalgos* are more commonly used.

C. No change in the form of the compound noun

To pH change the form of the compound noun from singular to plural in the following cases.

1. When the second word of the compound noun is already in the plural:
   - *el paraguas* ➔ *los paraguas* umbrellas
   - *el sacapuntas* ➔ *los sacapuntas* pencil sharpeners
   - *el parabrisas* ➔ *los parabrisas* windshields
   - *el sacacorchos* ➔ *los sacacorchos* corkscrews
   - *el parabrisas* ➔ *los parabrisas* windshields
   - *el sacapuntas* ➔ *los sacapuntas* pencil sharpeners
   - *el paragolpes* ➔ *los paragolpes* windshields
   - *el escarbadientes* ➔ *los escarbadientes* toothpicks
   - *el lustrabotas* ➔ *los lustrabotas* shoeshine boys
   - *el quitamanchas* ➔ *los quitamanchas* stain removers

   **NOTE:**
The preceding nouns are formed from a verb and a noun, as in *parar aguas, sacar punta*, and *parar brisas*.

2. When the compound noun ends in a verb or in a word that does not change:
   - *el hazmerreír* ➔ *los hazmerreír* laughingstocks
   - *el ir y venir* ➔ *los ir y venir* comings and goings
NOTE:
There are exceptions to this rule, such as *el vaivén*, which makes the plural *los vaivenes* (see following note E).

D. When two nouns are united by a preposition, only the first word takes the plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Noun</th>
<th>Plural Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el ojo de buey</td>
<td>los ojos de buey</td>
<td>portholes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la bomba de hidrógeno</td>
<td>las bombas de hidrógeno</td>
<td>hydrogen bombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el alma en pena</td>
<td>las almas en pena</td>
<td>distressed souls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un alma de Dios*</td>
<td>unas almas de Dios</td>
<td>pious persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el reloj de arena</td>
<td>los relojes de arena</td>
<td>hourglasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el arma de fuego</td>
<td>las armas de fuego</td>
<td>firearms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la cuchara de sopa</td>
<td>las cucharas de sopa</td>
<td>soupspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el guante de goma</td>
<td>los guantes de goma</td>
<td>rubber gloves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
The second noun may already be in the plural form, as in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Noun</th>
<th>Plural Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>caja de ahorros</td>
<td>cajas de ahorros</td>
<td>savings accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collar de cuentas</td>
<td>collares de cuentas</td>
<td>bead necklaces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E. Most singular compound nouns in certain categories form the plural by adding -es.

In most of the compound nouns formed by combinations of two verbs, a verb and a noun, two nouns, an adjective and a noun, a noun and an adjective, or a preposition and a noun, the plural is made by adding -s if the word ends in a vowel, and -es if it ends in a consonant. (Compare the Note following the preceding Section C. 2.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Noun</th>
<th>Plural Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el vaivén</td>
<td>los vaivenes</td>
<td>swings (i.e. of fortune)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el girasol</td>
<td>los girasoles</td>
<td>sunflowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el puntapié</td>
<td>los puntapiés</td>
<td>kicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el altavoz</td>
<td>los altavoces</td>
<td>loudspeakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la Nochebuena</td>
<td>las Nochebuenas</td>
<td>Christmas Eves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la sobrefalda</td>
<td>las sobrefaldas</td>
<td>overskirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un sinvergüenza</td>
<td>unos sinvergüenzas</td>
<td>rascals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* An indefinite article must be used with this expression; otherwise, it would mean *God's soul.*
Collective Nouns

Collective nouns represent groups of people, animals, or things.

*la rosalada*  
*el colmenar*  
*el arenal*  
*el paraisal*  
*el ejército*  
*la marina*  
*la fuerza aérea*  
*la gente*  
*el rebaño*  
*la caballada*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collective Noun</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>la rosalada</em></td>
<td>group of rosebushes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el colmenar</em></td>
<td>group of beehives (apiary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el arenal</em></td>
<td>extension of sand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el paraisal</em></td>
<td>group of paraisos (South American trees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el ejército</em></td>
<td>the army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>la marina</em></td>
<td>the navy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>la fuerza aérea</em></td>
<td>the air force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>la gente</em></td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el rebaño</em></td>
<td>group of sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>la caballada</em></td>
<td>group of horses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many collective nouns derive from other nouns, e.g., *rosalada* from *rosal* (*rosebush*), *colmenar* from *colmena* (*beehive*), *arenal* from *arena* (*sand*), and *paraisal* from *paraisos*. Others, such as *ejército* (*army*), *gente* (*people*), *grey* (*flock*), *piara* (*herd*), *rebaño* (*herd*), and many others, are counted among the collective nouns that are not derivative.

The Plural Forms of Collective Nouns

Collective nouns follow the general rules already specified for making the plural form, that is, an *-s* is added to words that end in a vowel, and *-es* is added to those that end in a consonant.

*Esta rosalada es preciosa.*  
*Esas rosaladas son lindas.*  
*El colmenar está en el valle.*  
*Sus colmenares son famosos.*

This group of rosebushes is beautiful.  
Those groups of rosebushes are pretty.  
The apiary is in the valley.  
Their apiaries are famous.

Uses of Nouns

Nouns perform different functions in the sentence.

A. A noun as the main element of the subject:

*El perro negro está ladrando.*  
*Jaime estudia matemáticas.*

The black dog is barking.  
Jaime studies mathematics.
B. A noun as an adjective:

El hombre rana descubrió el barco. The diver (frogman) discovered the boat.

1. Sometimes the noun being used as an adjective is preceded by a preposition. Note the following examples where a preposition is needed in Spanish but not in English:

Llevaré una blusa de seda. I will wear a silk blouse.
La silla de ruedas está rota. The wheelchair is broken.

2. If there is an adjective in Spanish that corresponds to a prepositional phrase, the adjective is preferred:

un examen de fin de año
un examen final

la casa de los curas
la casa cural

una carrera de éxito
una carrera exitosa

el programa del domingo
el programa dominical

un reglamento del estado
un reglamento estatal

C. A noun as an interjection or exclamation:

¡Madre! ¡Cielos! ¡Niño! ¡Jesús! ¡Caracoles!

D. A noun as an adverb (preceded by a preposition):

A fin de mayo terminan las clases. Classes end at the end of May.
Haré el pedido por teléfono. I will place the order by phone.
La maestra trazó las líneas con mucho cuidado. The teacher drew the lines very carefully.
La tormenta se vino de golpe. The storm came suddenly.
E. A noun as a predicate nominative:

*Ella es una mujer inolvidable.*
She is an unforgettable woman.

*Tomás es el director de la escuela.*
Tomás is the school principal.

F. A noun as a direct object:

*Compré cinco libros ayer.*
I bought five books yesterday.

*Queremos una casa grande.*
We want a large house.

*Romeo ama a Julieta.*
Romeo loves Juliet.

G. A noun as an indirect object:

*Traje los libros para María.*
I brought the books for María.

*Le compró comida al perro.*
She bought food for her dog.

H. Nouns in apposition (a noun identifying another noun or pronoun that immediately precedes it):

*Buenos Aires, capital de Argentina,*
Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina, is a cosmopolitan city.

*Juan Carlos I, rey de España, desciende de los Borbones.*
Juan Carlos I, the king of Spain, is descended from the Bourbons.

*Su padre, decano de la universidad,*
His father, dean of the university, comes every month.

*viene todos los meses.*

Words That Function as Nouns

A. A pronoun as a noun:

*No quiero ese vaso. Éste es el mío.*
I don't want that glass. This one is mine.

*Prefiere mi programa. No le gusta el suyo.*
She prefers my program. She does not like hers.

B. An infinitive as a noun, with or without the article:

*Fumar es dañino para la salud.*
Smoking is harmful to one's health.

*El beber mucha agua es bueno para las células.*
Drinking plenty of water is good for the cells.
C. An adjective as a noun:

1. Any adjective preceded by the neuter article lo becomes an abstract noun:

   Lo bueno es que ganó la beca. The good thing is that he got the scholarship.
   Lo triste de esta situación ya ha sido expuesto. The sad part about this situation has already been exposed.

2. An adjective functions as a noun by omission of the noun:

   La señora canosa es mi abuela y la delgada es mi tía. The gray-haired lady is my grandmother and the thin one is my aunt.
   El gato grande es mío y el pequeño es de mi hermano. The big cat is mine and the small one is my brother's.

D. A clause as a noun:

   El hombre que trajo la carta ya se fue. The man who brought the letter has already left.
   El que trajo la carta ya se fue. The one who brought the letter has already left.

E. An adverb as a noun:

   El sí de las niñas es una obra de Moratín. El sí de las niñas is a play by Moratín.
   Debemos ahorrar para el mañana. You must save for the future.
   Lo bien que avanza en los estudios me sorprende. It surprises me how well she is progressing in her studies.

Agreement of Nouns

A. Agreement of nouns and articles

1. The article agrees with the noun in gender and number.

   la casa the house
   las ruedas the wheels
   el camino the road
   los árboles the trees
Some exceptions to this rule follow where there is not an agreement in gender between the noun and the article. Notice that the gender of the adjectives—feminine or masculine—agrees with the article:

- *la mano* pequeña (f.)
  - the small hand
  - las manos pequeñas (f.)
  - the small hands
- *un mapa* moderno (m.)
  - a modern map
  - unos mapas modernos (m.)
  - some modern maps
- *una foto* clara (f.)
  - a clear photo
  - unas fotos claras (f.)
  - some clear photos
- *el drama* inglés (m.)
  - the English drama
  - los dramas ingleses (m.)
  - the English dramas

**NOTE:**
See Note 2 in Section A under Feminine Nouns where in expressions such as *el alma generosa* (the generous soul) the noun does not agree with the article, but the adjective agrees with the noun.

2. If several nouns are preceded by one article, the article must agree with the first noun:

La casa, árboles y jardines daban una atmósfera de paz.
- The house, the trees, and the gardens formed a peaceful environment.
Los bienes, perseverancia y suerte los ayudaron a progresar en la vida.
- Possessions, perseverance, and luck helped them to progress in life.

**B. Agreement of nouns and adjectives**

1. Adjectives agree in gender and number with the main noun in the sentence.

- *un libro* rojo
  - a red book
- *los lápices* cortos
  - the short pencils
- *una mujer* buena
  - a good woman
- *las toallas* gruesas
  - the thick towels
- **Rocinante era un caballo alto y huesudo.**
  - Rocinante was a tall and bony horse.
- **Romeo y Julieta son personajes famosos.**
  - Romeo and Juliet are famous characters.

2. If one or more adjectives follow two or more nouns, either all masculine or masculine and feminine combined, the adjective or adjectives must be used in the masculine plural form.
Me compré zapatos, un cinturón y guantes **negros y elegantes**.
Tiene un cuadro y una estatua **importados** de Italia.

I bought elegant black shoes, a belt, and gloves.
She has a painting and a statue imported from Italy.

3. When all the nouns are feminine, the feminine plural form of the adjective must be used.

Las manos, las mejillas y la frente **arrugadas** le daban un aire de sabiduría.
La pulsera y la hebilla **plateadas** son **españolas**.

Her wrinkled hands, cheeks, and forehead gave her an air of wisdom.
The silver-plated bracelet and buckle are from Spain.

4. When the adjective is placed before the nouns, it usually agrees with the first noun and is understood for all the others:

Tengo **muchas** naranjas y melones en casa.
No quiere recibir **tantos** regalos y **flores**.

I have many oranges and melons at home.
She doesn’t want to receive so many presents and flowers.

5. If the adjective consists of a prepositional phrase with **de**, agreement varies depending on the word order.

**Rocinante no era un caballo ancho de ancas.** Rocinante did not have a wide rump.

The expression **ancho de ancas** refers to **horse** and acts as a unit, therefore **ancho** qualifies **caballo** and is masculine. A literal translation would be **a horse [that is] wide in the rump**.

**Rocinante no era un caballo de ancas anchas.** (Literally) Rocinante was not a horse with a wide rump.

In this case, **anchas** refers solely to **ancas** (rump), a feminine noun, and is therefore feminine.

C. Agreement of nouns and pronouns

An introduction to pronouns is presented in this section to demonstrate how pronouns agree in gender and number with the nouns they represent. Consult Chapter 16, Pronouns, for further information.
1. Personal pronouns

Some of the personal pronouns are obviously masculine or feminine:

- él  
  he
- ella  
  she
- nosotros  
  we (masculine)
- nosotras  
  we (feminine)
- vosotros  
  you (masculine plural, used mostly in Spain)
- vosotras  
  you (feminine plural, used mostly in Spain)
- ellos  
  they (masculine)
- ellas  
  they (feminine)

The other personal pronouns can indicate either masculine or feminine gender:

- yo  
  I
- tú  
  you (informal)
- usted (Ud.)  
  you (formal, singular)
- ustedes (Uds.)  
  you (formal and informal plural, mostly used in Latin America)

In the following examples of such pronouns, the gender of the pronoun is made obvious by the gender of the adjective that agrees with it:

- Yo (Lucía) soy trabajadora.  
  I am a hard worker.
- Tú (Juan) eres bueno.  
  You are good.
- Ud. (Señora) es una buena directora.  
  You are a good principal.
- Ud. (Señor) está loco.  
  You are crazy.
- Uds. (chicas) están contentas.  
  You are happy.

NOTES:

*Ellos* and *Uds.* may need clarification when they occur out of context.

(1) *Ellos* may refer to masculine nouns only or to a combination of masculine and feminine:

- Ellos (Juan y María) son buenos estudiantes.  
  They (Juan and María) are good students.
- Ellos (Juan y Pedro) son buenos estudiantes.  
  They (Juan and Pedro) are good students.

(2) *Uds.* can refer to females only, but can also refer to males only or to a combination of males and females:

- Uds. son buenas.  
  (Luisa and Sara)
- Uds. están cansados.  
  (Miguel and Carlos)
2. Demonstrative pronouns

As opposed to English, Spanish has three different categories for demonstrative pronouns. The pronouns in each of these categories agree in gender and number with the nouns they represent. The third category, which indicates something that is further away in location or time, is expressed in English as *that one over there*, *those down the hill*, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>éste (león)</td>
<td>this (lion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>éstos (leones)</td>
<td>these (lions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ésta (mentira)</td>
<td>this (lie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>éstas (mentiras)</td>
<td>these (lies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ése (amigo)</td>
<td>that (friend)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>éses (amigos)</td>
<td>those (friends)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ésa (colmena)</td>
<td>that (beehive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ésas (colmenas)</td>
<td>those (beehives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aquél (privilegio)</td>
<td>that (privilege)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aquéllos (privilegios)</td>
<td>those (privileges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aquélla (planta)</td>
<td>that (plant) over there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aquéllas (plantas)</td>
<td>those (plants) over there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ése es el más cómico de todos.** (amigo) That one is the funniest of all. (male friend)

**Aquéllos están vacías. (casas)** Those over there are empty. (houses)

**NOTES:**

(1) The use of the accent is now optional for demonstrative pronouns.

(2) The neuter demonstrative pronouns *esto*, *eso*, and *aquello*, which refer to abstract or undefined nouns, are always expressed in the singular form and take masculine singular adjectives.

- **Esto es bueno.** This is good.
- **Eso será ridículo.** That will be ridiculous.
- **Aquello era obvio.** That was obvious.
3. Possessive pronouns

(a) The possessive pronouns agree in gender and number with the item or thing that is possessed.

- **la mía** (mi casa) — mine (my house)
- **las mías** (mis casas) — (my houses)
- **el mío** (mi auto) — (my car)
- **los míos** (mis autos) — (my cars)
- **Las mías son más grandes (casas).** — Mine are bigger (houses).

- **la tuya** (tu fiesta) — yours, informal (your party)
- **las tuyas** (tus fiestas) — (your parties)
- **el tuyo** (tu soneto) — (your sonnet)
- **los tuyos** (tus sonetos) — (your sonnets)
- **El tuyo no tiene la rima correcta. (soneto)** — Yours doesn’t have the correct rhyme.

- **la suya** (su idea) — yours/hers/his/theirs (your/her/his/their idea)
- **las suyas** (sus ideas) — yours/hers/his/theirs (your/her/his/their ideas)
- **el suyo** (su perro) — yours/hers/his/theirs (your/her/his/their dog)
- **los suyos** (sus perros) — yours/hers/his/theirs (your/her/his/their dogs)

**NOTE:**

The pronouns **suya, suyas, suyo, and suyos** are equivalent to the English **yours** (formal form in Spanish), and also to **his, hers, and theirs**, which in English are used to refer to both singular and plural nouns.

- **El suyo tiene pelo negro. (perro)** — Yours (his, hers, theirs) has black hair. (dog)
- **Las suyas son excelentes. (ideas)** — Yours (his, hers, theirs) are excellent. (ideas)

- **la nuestra** (nuestra mesa) — ours (our table)
- **las nuestras** (nuestras mesas) — (our tables)
- **el nuestro** (nuestro cuadro) — (our painting)
- **los nuestros** (nuestros cuadros) — (our paintings)
- **El nuestro es importado de Japón. (cuadro)** — Ours is imported from Japan. (painting)

- **la vuestra** (vuestra lámpara) — yours (your lamp)
- **las vuestras** (vuestras lámparas) — (your lamps)
**Nouns**

*el vuestro (vuestro país)*
(your country)

*los vuestros (vuestros países)*
(your countries)

**NOTE:**

_Yours_, informal plural, used in Spain, indicates one or more things owned by two or more persons.

*El vuestro tiene aire acondicionado. (auto)*
Yours has air-conditioning. (car)

*Las vuestras están en la sala. (maletas)*
Yours are in the living room. (suitcases)

(b) The neuter possessive pronouns _lo mío_, _lo tuyo_, _lo suyo_, _lo nuestro_, and _lo vuestro_, which refer to abstract or undefined nouns, are always expressed in the singular form and take masculine singular adjectives.

*Lo mío es secreto.*
What I have is secret.

*Lo tuyo será expuesto.*
What you (informal) have will be exposed.

*Lo suyo es muy serio.*
What he (or she) has is very serious.
What they have is very serious.

*Lo nuestro es placentero.*
What we have is pleasant.

*Lo vuestro es interesante.*
What you have is interesting.

4. **Relative pronouns**

Relative pronouns replace nouns or other words that refer to nouns and that occur in the same sentence. There are four basic relative pronouns: _que_ (that, who, whom, what), _quien_ (who, whom), _cual_ (which), and _cuyo_ (whose).

(a) _Que_ (that, who, whom, what) is invariable:

_La cartera que me regalaron es de la China._
The purse they gave me is from China.

_Las personas que vinieron van a la conferencia._
The people who came are going to the conference.

When _que_ is preceded by _el, la, los_, or _las_, these words agree in gender and number with the noun that is being referred to by _que._

_La que está aquí es mi pluma._
The one here is my pen.

_El artista, del que conseguí un autógrafo, es mi favorito._
The actor, from whom I got an autograph, is my favorite.

_Tus cuadernos son los que trajo Oscar._
Your notebooks are those that Oscar brought.
The neuter article *lo* sometimes precedes *que*. The expression *lo que* has different meanings:

- **Llegó a tiempo,** *lo que* causó una buena impresión.  
  He arrived on time, **which** caused a good impression.
- **Yo sé** *lo que* cuesta viajar.  
  I know **how much** it costs to travel.
- **Es tan bueno ver** *lo que* le agra da recibir visitas.  
  It's so good to see **how much** he enjoys having people over.
- **Trajeron** *lo que* les habíamos pedido.  
  They brought **what** we had asked them to bring.

(b) *Quien* has the plural form *quienes*, but does not vary by gender. This pronoun does not use a preceding article, but may follow a preposition. It is used to replace persons only. *Quien* can be replaced by *cual*, preceded by *el, la, los*, or *las*.

- **Carlos, quien** (el cual) se ha ido al Perú, es profesor.  
  Carlos, who has gone to Peru, is a professor.
- **Mi madre, quien** (la cual) sabía tocar el piano, era muy paciente.  
  My mother, who knew how to play the piano, was very patient.
- **Los niños, con quienes** (con los cuales) iremos mañana, se portan bien.  
  The children, with whom we'll go tomorrow, are well-behaved.

(c) *Cual* has the plural form *cuales*, and is always preceded by the article *el, la, los*, or *las*, which indicates the gender. It may replace persons or things.

- **Las rosas rojas, las cuales** están en la sala, son de mi jardín.  
  The red roses, which are in the living room, are from my garden.
- **El perrito negro, el cual** está ladrando afuera, tiene trece años.  
  The little black dog, who is barking outside, is thirteen years old.
- **Esa niña, la cual** tiene un vestido verde, es mi sobrina.  
  That girl, who has a green dress on, is my niece.

If two or more nouns form the antecedent, *cual* agrees in gender and number:

- **Las rosas y los claveles, los cuales** están en la sala, son de mi jardín.  
  The roses and the carnations, which are in the living room, are from my garden.
- **La blusa verde y la blanca, las cuales** son de seda, son de mi talla.  
  The green blouse and the white one, which are made of silk, are my size.

(d) *Cuyo* is used to refer to people or things. As opposed to *que, quien, and cual*, it agrees in gender and number with the noun that follows it. It is never preceded by the article *el, la, los*, or *las*. 
**D. Agreement of nouns and verbs**

The agreement of nouns and verbs in Spanish varies in three different areas.

1. Agreement of the verb with two or more nouns functioning as the subject

   (a) When the nouns that form the subject are related to each other as a unit, the verb may be in the singular or in the plural form.

   *Nuestra atención y dedicación nos ayudó a pasar el curso.*
   
   Our attention and dedication helped us to pass the course.

   *Su piedad y generosidad le dieron muchas satisfacciones.*
   
   His piety and generosity gave him great satisfaction.

   However, the plural form of the verb must be used when the nouns are viewed as separate items.

   *Los lápices, las llaves y el paraguas estaban sobre el escritorio.*
   
   The pencils, the keys, and the umbrella were on the desk.

   *Sus abuelos, su tío y su tía llegaron por la mañana.*
   
   Her grandparents, her uncle, and her aunt arrived in the morning.

   (b) When the two nouns that form the subject are joined by *como (as)* or *con (with)*, the verb must be in the plural form:

   *Tanto el perro como el gato estaban comiendo.*
   
   Both the dog and the cat were eating.

   *El presidente con los secretarios vinieron a la conferencia.*
   
   The president, with the secretaries, came to the conference.

   However, notice what happens when the phrase beginning with *con* is placed after the verb:

   *El presidente vino con los secretarios a la conferencia.*
   
   The president came with the secretaries to the conference.

   *El presidente vino a la conferencia con los secretarios.*
   
   The president came to the conference with the secretaries.
(c) When the two or more nouns that form the subject are joined by *ni* (nor) or *o* (or), the verb may either be in the plural form, if the subject is considered as a whole, or it can agree with the closest noun:

### ni

- **Ni la madre ni el padre le permitieron faltar a la escuela.** Neither his mother nor his father let him miss school.
- **Ni el rojo ni el verde me llama la atención.** Neither red nor green attracts my attention.
- **Ni los viajes ni el descanso lo ayudó a recuperarse.** Neither traveling nor rest helped him to recover.
- **Ni el descanso ni los viajes lo ayudaron a recuperarse.** Neither rest nor traveling helped him to recover.

### o

- **La madre o el padre le permitieron faltar a la escuela.** Either the mother or the father let him miss school.
- **A mí me llama la atención el rojo o el verde.** Either red or green attracts my attention.
- **Los viajes o el descanso lo ayudó a recuperarse.** Either traveling or rest helped him to recover.
- **El descanso o los viajes lo ayudaron a recuperarse.** Either rest or traveling helped him to recover.

(d) When the verb precedes two or more nouns that function as the subject, it usually agrees with the first noun.

**Siempre le preocupa la violencia y la pobreza.** He is always worried about violence and poverty.

### NOTES:

1. The plural form of the verb may also be used:

   - **Siempre le preocupan la violencia y la pobreza.** He is always worried about violence and poverty.

2. If the first noun is plural, the plural form of the verb must be used:

   - **Siempre le preocupan los crímenes y la pobreza.** He is always worried about crime and poverty.

   **Vendrán los hijos, la madre y la abuela.** The children, the mother, and the grandmother will come.

(e) When two or more noun phrases beginning with *que* or *el que* form the subject, the verb must be in the singular form:
Que lo diga y que lo haga me sorprende. That she says it and does it, surprises me.
El que vengan y el que se quedan me tiene sin cuidado. The fact that they will come and stay, doesn’t bother me.

(f) When the subject is formed by two or more of the neuter demonstratives esto, eso, aquello, and lo que, the verb must be in the singular form:

Aquello y esto que dijo ahora no tiene explicación. That, and what he now said, doesn’t have an explanation.
Eso y lo que sugiere María tiene sentido. That, and what María suggests, makes sense.

(g) When the subject is formed by two or more noun phrases that begin with an interrogative such as quién, cómo, cuándo, or dónde, the verb must be in the singular form:

Quién escriba la carta y cómo lo haga será cuestión de decidir. Who writes the letter, and how, will have to be decided.
Dónde encuentre trabajo y cuándo empiece no me preocupa. Where I’ll find a job and when I’ll begin don’t worry me.

2. Agreement of the verb with collective nouns

(a) A singular collective noun requires a verb to agree with it in the singular form; likewise, any adjectives will agree with the noun in gender and number (singular):

La familia está feliz. The family is happy.
El ejército italiano se preparó para el ataque. The Italian army got ready for the attack.

NOTE:
A singular collective noun may require the verb and the adjective to agree with it in the plural form if the following two conditions are met.

(1) The noun represents an undetermined type of people or things, such as gente (people), multitud (crowd), or masa (mass).

(2) The verb and any plural adjective(s) are not next to the noun:

La multitud se sentó en la iglesia y en cuanto entró el féretro se pusieron a llorar. The crowd sat in the church, and as soon as the coffin was brought in, they started to cry.
La gente no aceptaba las condiciones del jefe y por eso estaban tristes y amargados. The people did not accept the conditions imposed by the boss, and therefore they were sad and bitter.
(b) When a collective expression that indicates quantity such as *la mitad* (half), *una parte* (a part), and *un millar* (a thousand) is followed by a plural noun, the verb is usually in the plural:

*La mitad de los pasteles fueron hechos en el horno.*  
Half of the pies were made in the oven. 

*Parte de los paquetes llegaron.*  
Part of the packages arrived.

**NOTES:**

(1) If the collective expression is followed by a singular noun, the verb is in the singular:

*La mitad del colegio se mudó a las afueras.*  
Half of the school moved to the outskirts.

(2) If the collective expression is preceded by the verb, the verb is in the singular.

*Llegó parte del pedido.*  
Part of the order arrived. 

*Entró una decena de chicos.*  
Ten children came in.

(c) If the collective noun is part of an expression with *de*, the adjective and the verb may be used in the plural form. Any adjectives used would also have to be in the plural form:

*La sala estaba decorada con un juego de cuadros que habían sido colocados a cada lado de la chimenea.*  
The room was decorated with a set of paintings that had been placed on each side of the fireplace. 

*Mi padre tiene un par de herramientas importadas que son muy fáciles de usar.*  
My father has a couple of imported tools that are very easy to use.

(d) When the collective noun is in the plural form, representing more than one group, the verb and any adjective(s) must also be in the plural:

*Las comunidades democráticas se adhirieron a la fiesta.*  
The democratic communities joined in the celebration. 

*Sus familias estuvieron presentes.*  
Their families were present.

(e) Some collective nouns take a verb in the singular form in Spanish where in English a plural form would be used:

*La gente de Estados Unidos es muy educada.*  
People in the United States are well educated. 

*La policía latinoamericana está informada del problema.*  
The Latin American police are informed about the problem.

(f) Other collective nouns in Spanish take a verb in the plural form, whereas in English the verb would be in the singular:
Dijo que las noticias **fueron** inesperadas. He said the news **was** unexpected.

Los muebles **son** estilo Mediterráneo. The furniture **is** Mediterranean style.

3. Agreement of the verb *ser* (to be) when it is between subject and predicate

When the verb *ser* appears between two nouns, one being the subject of the sentence and the other the predicate, the verb *ser* usually agrees with the subject:

- *Hijos y nietos** son la razón para seguir viviendo.*
- *Los aztecas** eran una civilización progresista.*

**NOTES:**

(1) The verb may agree with the predicate if emphasis is desired.

- *Hijos y nietos es la razón para seguir viviendo.*
- *Los aztecas era una civilización progresista.*
- *(Literally) The Aztecs was a progressive civilization.*
- *El barco que vi eran sólo imágenes.*
- *(Literally) The boat I saw were only images.*

(2) If the adjective *todo(a)* is modified by the verb, *todo(a)* agrees with the subject.

- *La religión de los aztecas era toda sacrificios y muertes.*
- *El informe de Norma es todo correcciones y marcas.*
- The religion of the Aztecs was all sacrifices and deaths.
- Norma’s report is all corrections and marks.
The Present Indicative

The infinitive of a verb (expressed in English as *to walk, to read, to write*) can have one of three possible endings in Spanish: -ar (*caminar*), -er (*leer*), or -ir (*escribir*). Based on these endings, verbs are said to belong to the first conjugation (-ar verbs), to the second conjugation (-er verbs), or to the third conjugation (-ir verbs). All other verb forms are derived from the infinitive.

In order to conjugate a verb in the present tense, that is, to assign a form for each subject pronoun such as *I am*, *you are*, *he is*, *she is*, etc., the first step is to eliminate the infinitive ending (*terminación*). The beginning of the verb, or the stem (*raíz*), takes new endings according to the subject pronoun that performs the action denoted by the verb.

Regular Verbs in the Present Tense

Verbs that do not change their stem are called regular verbs, while those that undergo changes in the stem are classified as irregular verbs. As for the endings, regular verbs and most irregular verbs take the same endings in the present tense, while a few verbs show some spelling differences.

The Present Tense of -ar Verbs

The endings for -ar verbs are: -o, -as, -a, -amos, -áis, and -an. Notice that *él, ella,* and *Ud. (usted)* share the same verb form in the singular, and *ellos, ellas,* and *Uds. (ustedes)* share the same verb form in the plural.

*hablar (to speak)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>hablo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>hablas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>habla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella</td>
<td>habla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>habla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>nosotras / nos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros</td>
<td>vosotras / vos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>hablan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>hablan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uds.</td>
<td>hablan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you speak</td>
<td>you speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he speaks</td>
<td>they speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she speaks</td>
<td>they speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you speak</td>
<td>you speak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES:

(1) *tú* is the informal *you* that is used to address a child, a young adult, a friend, a relative, or a pet.

(2) *Ud.* is the abbreviation of *usted*, and is used to address a person formally, that is, someone who is older, a person whom the speaker does not know, a boss, a teacher, or a professional such as a medical doctor or a dentist. In some regions, the *Ud.* (*usted*) form is also heard between parents and children. The abbreviation *Ud.* is generally used in writing and is always capitalized. When speaking or reading, *Ud.* must be pronounced as the whole word *usted*. The word *usted* is only capitalized when it is the first word in the sentence. The abbreviations *Vd.* and *Vds.* are no longer in use; however, these forms are found in older literary texts and manuscripts.

(3) *Uds.* or *ustedes* is the plural form of *Ud.*, and is used in Latin America to address two or more people formally or informally. In Spain, however, *ustedes* is used formally, while *vosotros/as* is used to address two or more people informally.

(4) *nosotros* and *vosotros* also have feminine forms: *nosotras* and *vosotras*, respectively.

(5) *ellos*, *nosotros*, and *vosotros* may refer to a group of males or to a group of both males and females, while *ellas*, *nosotras*, and *vosotras* refer only to females.

(6) The *vosotros/as* forms carry an accent in the present tense.

(7) For grammatical purposes, the subject (or personal) pronouns are classified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Pronoun</th>
<th>Suffixes</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>yo</em></td>
<td><em>nosotros</em> or <em>nosotras</em></td>
<td>first person plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tú</em></td>
<td><em>vosotros</em> or <em>vosotras</em></td>
<td>second person plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>él</em></td>
<td><em>ellos</em></td>
<td>third person plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ella</em></td>
<td><em>ellas</em></td>
<td>third person plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ud.</em></td>
<td><em>Uds.</em></td>
<td>third person plural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(8) Since some subject pronouns share the same endings, *ella*, *Ud.*, *nosotras*, *vosotras*, *ellas*, and *Uds.* will not be included in future conjugations for practical reasons. However, in the examples that illustrate the material being covered, as well as in the exercises in the CD-ROM, these subject pronouns will be varied at random.
The Present Tense of -er Verbs

These verbs take the endings -o, -es, -e, -emos, -éis, and -en.

comer (to eat)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>como</td>
<td>I eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>comes</td>
<td>you eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>he eats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>comemos</td>
<td>we eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros</td>
<td>coméis</td>
<td>you eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>comen</td>
<td>they eat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Present Tense of -ir Verbs

These verbs take the endings -o, -es, -e, -imos, -ís, and -en.

vivir (to live)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>vivo</td>
<td>I live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>vives</td>
<td>you live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>vive</td>
<td>he lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>vivimos</td>
<td>we live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros</td>
<td>vivís</td>
<td>you live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>viven</td>
<td>they live</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that -ir verbs have the same endings as -er verbs, with the exception of the nosotros/as and vosotros/as forms: comemos as opposed to vivimos, and coméis as opposed to vivís.

Summary of verb endings in the present tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Endings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amar (to love)</td>
<td>am- o, as, a, amos, áis, an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beber (to drink)</td>
<td>beb- o, es, e, emos, éis, en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>escribir (to write)</td>
<td>escrib- o, es, e, imos, ís, en</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:

(1) Since Spanish verb endings indicate who or what the subject of the sentence is, it is not necessary to include the personal (or subject) pronouns. When clarification is needed, as for example él or ella, ellos or ellas, nosotros or nosotras, the subject is used.

(2) The third persons él, ella, and Ud., which are singular forms, always share the same endings. This rule also applies to the third persons ellos, ellas, and Uds., which are plural forms.

(3) The verb form must always agree with the subject, even when the subject is left out.
(4) The subject may be

- a pronoun
  - Tú hablas español muy bien. You speak Spanish very well.
  - Dr. Juarez lives in California.
  - Roberto maneja rápido. Roberto drives fast.

- a noun
  - El doctor Juárez vive en California.
  - Juan y yo tomamos mucho café. (nosotros) Juan and I drink a lot of coffee.
  - María y tú beben agua. (ustedes) María and you drink water.
  - Carlos y Ud. comen pollo. (ustedes) Carlos and you eat chicken.

- a noun and a pronoun
  - Juan y yo tomamos mucho café. (nosotros) Juan and I drink a lot of coffee.
  - María y tú beben agua. (ustedes) María and you drink water.

- excluded
  - Recibimos muchas cartas. (nosotros/as) We receive many letters.

(5) When there are two verbs back to back, as in *Jane wants to rest*, the following rules must be taken into consideration:

- If the second verb in English is an infinitive, as in *to rest*, it is also written in Spanish as an infinitive:
  - Jane wants to rest. Jane quiere *descansar.*
  - I need to work on the project. (Yo) Necesito *trabajar en el proyecto.*

- If the second verb is a gerund in English, as in *waiting*, it is also written in Spanish as a gerund. See more information in Chapter 9, *The Present Participle*.
  - I am waiting for the mailman. (Yo) Estoy *esperando* al cartero.
  - We are listening. (Nosotras) Estamos *escuchando.*

- If the second part of a compound verb in English is a past participle, such as *walked, done, or written*, a past participle is also used in Spanish. This is covered in Chapter 11, *The Present Perfect Indicative*.
  - I have finished the homework. Yo he *terminado* la tarea.
  - You have come early. Tú has *venido* temprano.
Irregular Verbs in the Present Tense

Verbs considered irregular in Spanish fit into one of the following categories:

A. Verbs that change a vowel into another vowel or a diphthong in the present tense

These verbs are also known as stem-changing verbs. There are three main groups. For the first conjugation shown below—the conjugation of *pedir* (to ask for) as an example of verbs that change *e* to *i*—we show all the personal pronouns. Notice that *ella* and *Ud.* (*usted*) share the *él* form, and *ellas* and *Uds.* (*ustedes*) share the *ellos* form. Also, *nosotras* and *vosotras* have the same form as the masculine *nosotros* and *vosotros*, respectively.

1. Verbs that change *e* to *i* in the present tense:

   - **pedir** (to ask)
     - yo pido
     - tú pides
     - él pide
     - ella pide
     - Ud. pide
   - **pido, pides, pide, pedimos, pedís, piden**
   - nosotros/nosotras pedimos
   - vosotros/vosotras pedís
   - ellos piden
   - ellas piden
   - Uds. piden

**NOTES:**

(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include *concebir, corregir, elegir, medir, reír, seguir, sonreír, teñir, vestir*, as well as other verbs that contain some of these verbs, such as *conseguir, desmedirse, desteñir, desvestirse, impedir, reeleger*, etc.

(2) The first vowel of the *nosotros/as* and *vosotros/as* forms does not change.

(3) When the stem has two *es*, the second *e* is the one that undergoes the change:

   - **repetir** (to repeat)
     - repito, repites, repite, repetimos, repetís, repiten

   There are no changes in the stem for *nosotros/as* and *vosotros/as*.

(4) For practical purposes, only the forms for *yo, tú, él, nosotros, vosotros*, and *ellos* will be given in subsequent examples.

2. Verbs that change *e* to *ie* in the present tense:

   - **pensar** (to think)
     - pienso, piensas, piensa, pensamos, pensáis, piensan
   - **preferir** (to prefer)
     - prefiero, prefieres, prefiere, preferimos, preferís, prefieren
NOTES:
(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include *comenzar, despertar, divertirse, empezar, encender, entender, mentir, perder, querer, sentir*, as well as other verbs that contain some of these verbs, such as *desmentir, resentir*, etc.

(2) *adquirir* (to acquire) is an exceptional verb that changes *i* to *ie* in all persons with the exclusion of *nosotros/as* and *vosotros/as*, which maintain the *i* of the infinitive:

*adquiero, adquieres, adquiere, adquirimos, adquirís, adquieren*

3. Verbs that change *o* to *ue* in the present tense:

*poder* (can, to be able) 

*puedo, puedes, puede, podemos, podéis, pueden*

NOTES:
(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include *acordarse, contar, dormir, encontrar, morir, mostrar, recordar, resolver*, as well as others that might contain some of these verbs, such as *demostrar, desencontrar, recontar*, etc.

(2) *Oler* (to smell) is a particular verb that changes *o* to *hue* for all persons but *nosotros/as* and *vosotros/as*: *buelo, hueles, huele, olemos, oléis, huelen*

(3) *jugar* (to play a sport or a game) is an exceptional verb that changes *u* to *ue*:

*juego, juegas, juega, jugamos, jugáis, juegan*

The Spanish verb for *to play an instrument*, however, is *tocar*, which also means *to touch*.

B. Verbs that undergo a change in the first person singular of the present tense

These verbs are also known as first-person irregular verbs. While the first person is the only one to undergo the specific change indicated in this section, some verbs also show additional irregularities in the other persons. For example, *venir* (*to come*) picks up a *g* in the *yo* form and the other persons, aside from *nosotros/as* and *vosotros/as*, change *e* to *ie*, as outlined in the preceding section A: *vengo, vienes, viene, venimos, venís, vienen*. Other verbs, such as *poner* (*to put*), pick up a *g* in the first person, but the rest of the verb conjugation behaves like a regular verb, with no changes in the stem: *pongo, pones, pone, ponemos, ponéis, ponen*. In some cases the spelling change is made in order to preserve the pronunciation of the infinitive form.
1. Verbs that add \textit{-g} in the first person singular of the present tense:

\textit{tener} (to have) \hspace{2cm} \textit{tengo, tienes, tiene, tenemos, tenéis, tienen}

\textbf{NOTES:}

(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include \textit{asir, decir, hacer, oír, salir, valer}, as well as other verbs that contain some of these forms, such as \textit{abstenerse, convenir, deshacer, desoír, disponer, reponer, suponer}, etc.

(2) For other irregularities of \textit{oír}, consult Section C, Other irregular forms in the present tense, that follows.

(3) \textit{Tener} is a peculiar verb since it has specific functions, which need to be clarified:

- It indicates possession and is equivalent to the English verb \textit{to have} in that sense, as in:

  \textit{Tengo un perro.} \hspace{2cm} \text{I have a dog.}

- When the infinitive appears as \textit{tener que}, however, this verb is equivalent to the English \textit{to have to} as in:

  \textit{Tengo que comprar un perro.} \hspace{2cm} \text{I have to buy a dog.}

In this case, the irregularities are the same: \textit{tengo que, tienes que, tiene que, tenemos que, tenéis que, tienen que}; these forms are then followed by an infinitive: \textit{tengo que comprar, tienes que venir, tiene que hablar}, etc.

- \textit{Tener} is used in expressions where English uses the verb \textit{to be}:

  \begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Tengo frío.} \hspace{2cm} \text{I am cold.}
  \item \textit{Usted tiene calor.} \hspace{2cm} \text{You are hot.}
  \item \textit{Tenemos sed.} \hspace{2cm} \text{We are thirsty.}
  \item \textit{Tenéis miedo.} \hspace{2cm} \text{You are afraid.}
  \end{itemize}

- \textit{Tener} is also used in expressions which are equivalent to the English \textit{to feel like}:

  \textit{Tengo ganas de escribir una carta.} \hspace{2cm} \text{I feel like writing a letter.}

Notice that a gerund (\textit{writing}) is used in English, while the infinitive (\textit{escribir}) is used in Spanish. The infinitive of the Spanish verb is \textit{tener}, but the expression \textit{ganas de} must follow the conjugated form of \textit{tener}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{tienes ganas de escribir, tenemos ganas de beber, tenéis ganas de hablar...} \hspace{2cm} \text{you (informal) feel like writing, we feel like drinking, you (vosotros) feel like speaking . . .}
\end{itemize}
2. Verbs that add \(-ig\) in the first person singular of the present tense:

\(traer\) (to bring) \(\rightarrow traigo, traes, trae, traemos, traéis, traen\)

**NOTE:**

Some of the other common verbs in this category include \(caer\) and other verbs that contain \(caer\) or \(traer\), such as \(abstraer, atraer, contraer, distraer, recaer, sustraer\), etc.

3. Verbs that change \(c\) to \(g\) in the first person singular of the present tense:

\(hacer\) (to do) \(\rightarrow hago, haces, hace, hacemos, hacéis, hacen\)

**NOTES:**

(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include \(satisfacer\) and \(decir\), as well as other verbs that contain some of these verbs, such as \(contradecir, desdecir, deshacer, maldicir\), etc.

(2) \(decir\) and its derivatives, such as \(desdecir\), have the additional change of \(e\) to \(i\) for all persons except \(nosotros/as\) and \(vosotros/as\):

\(contradecir\) \(\rightarrow\) \(contradigo, contradices, contradice, contradecimos, contradecís, contradicen\)

4. Verbs that change \(g\) to \(j\) in the first person singular of the present tense:

\(recoger\) (to collect) \(\rightarrow recojo, recoges, recoge, recogemos, recogís, recogen\)

**NOTES:**

(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include \(coger, dirigir, elegir, exigir, proteger\), as well as other verbs that contain these verbs, such as \(acojo, escoger, recoger, reelegir\), etc.

(2) This change in the first person preserves the pronunciation of the infinitive: \(yo recojo\) instead of \(yo recogo\).

(3) \(elegir\) and other similar verbs also have a change from \(e\) to \(i\) in all persons except \(nosotros/as\) and \(vosotros/as\):

\(elegir\) \(\rightarrow\) \(elijo, eliges, elige, elegimos, elegís, eligen\)

5. Verbs that change \(gu\) to \(g\) in the first person singular of the present tense:

\(seguir\) (to follow) \(\rightarrow sigo, sigues, sigue, seguimos, seguís, siguen\)
NOTES:
(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include *distinguir* and *extinguir*, as well as other verbs that contain these verbs, such as *conseguir, perseguir, proseguir*, etc.

(2) *seguir* and other similar verbs also have a change from *e* to *i* in all persons except *nosotros/as* and *vosotros/as*:

*consigo, consigues, consigue, conseguimos, conseguís, consiguen*

(3) The change preserves the pronunciation of the infinitive: *yo sigo* instead of *yo siguo*.

6. Verbs that change *c* to *z* in the first person singular of the present tense:

*vencer* (to win, to defeat)  
*vengo, vences, vence, vencemos, vencéis, vencen*

NOTES:
(1) Some of the other common verbs in this category include *ejercer, mecer, torcer*, as well as other verbs that contain these verbs, such as *convencer* and *retorcer*.

(2) *torcer* also changes from *o* to *ue* in all persons, except the *nosotros/as* and the *vosotros/as* forms:

*tuezo, tuerces, tuerce, torcemos, torcéis, tuercen*

(3) The change from *c* to *z* is not meant to preserve the sound, and this applies to both Peninsular and Latin American Spanish. In Spain, the *z* is pronounced like the English *th* in *think*. The combinations *c + e* and *c + i* are also pronounced the same way. Therefore, all the forms in the present tense of *vencer* are pronounced with the English *th* sound in Spain, regardless of the orthographical change. In Latin America, the *z*, as well as the combinations *c + e* and *c + i*, are pronounced like the English *s* in *same*. Therefore, all the forms of the present tense of *vencer* are pronounced with the *s* sound, regardless of the orthographical change.

7. Verbs that change *c* to *zc* in the first person singular of the present tense:

*conocer* (to know)  
*conozco, conoces, conoce, conocemos, conocéis, conocen*

NOTE:
Some of the other common verbs in this category include *agradecer, aparecer, complacer, crecer, deducir, establecer, introducir, merecer, obedecer, producir, reducir, rejuvenecer, traducir*, as well as other verbs that contain these verbs, such as *desagradecer, desconocer, reaparecer, reconocer, restablecer*, etc.
C. Other irregular forms in the present tense:

There are verbs that show other irregularities that do not fit into any of the previous categories. A list with examples follows.

1. Changes in the stem of the first person singular in the present tense:

   - *caber* (to fit)  
     - **cab** ➔ **quep**  
     - quepo, cabes, cabe,  
       cabemos, cabéis, caben

   - *delinquir* (to commit a crime)  
     - **qu** ➔ **c**  
     - delinco, delinques, delinque,  
       delinquimos, delinquís, delinquen

2. Changes in the endings of the first person singular in the present tense:

   - *dar* (to give)  
     - doy, das, da, damos, dais, dan

   - *estar* (to be)  
     - estoy, estás, está, estamos, estáis, están

   - *saber* (to know)  
     - sé, sabes, sabe, sabemos, sabéis, saben

   - *ver* (to see)  
     - veo, ves, ve, vemos, veis, ven

3. Irregular forms in all persons in the present tense:

   - *ir* (to go)  
     - voy, vas, va, vamos, vais, van

   - *ser* (to be)  
     - soy, eres, es, somos, sois, son

   - *haber* (to have)  
     - he, has, ha, hemos, habéis, han

4. Some verbs add -y in the present tense:

   - *oír* (to hear)  
     - oigo, oyes, oye, oímos, oís, oyen

   - *huir* (to flee)  
     - huyo, huyes, huye, huimos, huís, huyen

   **NOTE:**

   Some of the other common verbs in this category include *concluir, construir, incluir, restituir, as well as other verbs that contain these verbs, such as reconstruir.*

5. Some verbs add an accent on the *i* or *u* in the present tense:

   - *esquiar* (to ski)  
     - esquío, esquías, esquía,  
       esquiamos, esquiáis, esquían

   - *continuar* (to continue)  
     - continuo, continuas, continúa,  
       continuamos, continuáis, continúan
Reflexive Verbs

Reflexive verbs have the suffix *se* attached to the infinitive. These verbs are conjugated like all other verbs, aside from the suffix, which changes according to the subject (*yo, tú, etc.*) and is placed before the conjugated verb. If a verb is made reflexive with the addition of *se*, all the usual irregularities will also appear in the present tense. The verb *dormirse*, for example, shows all the irregularities of *dormir*, which is a verb that changes *o* to *ue* in the stem. Reflexive verbs are covered in the section on Reflexive Pronouns in Chapter 16, Pronouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflexive Verb</th>
<th>Subject Pronoun</th>
<th>Object Pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>dormirse</em> (to fall asleep)</td>
<td>yo <em>me duermo</em></td>
<td>nosotros/as <em>nos dormimos</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tú <em>te duermes</em></td>
<td>vosotros/as <em>os dormís</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>él <em>se duerme</em></td>
<td>ellos <em>se duermen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ella <em>se duerme</em></td>
<td>ellas <em>se duermen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud. <em>se duerme</em></td>
<td>Uds. <em>se duermen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>caerse</em> (to fall down)</td>
<td>yo <em>me caigo</em></td>
<td>nosotros/as <em>nos caemos</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tú <em>te caes</em></td>
<td>vosotros/as <em>os caéis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>él <em>se cae</em></td>
<td>ellos <em>se caen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ella <em>se cae</em></td>
<td>ellas <em>se caen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud. <em>se cae</em></td>
<td>Uds. <em>se caen</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbs like *gustar*

Besides reflexive verbs, there are certain other verbs in Spanish that are also used with a pronoun. *Gustar* (to like) is one of them. The uses of such verbs are covered in the section on Constructions with *se* in Chapter 16, Pronouns. As a preview, notice the following sentences in which *gustar* has only two forms in the present: *gusta*, which is used when the verb is followed by a singular noun or by one or more verbs in the infinitive, and the plural form *gustan*, followed by plural nouns.

> A mí *me gusta* el flan.
> A los chicos *les gustan* los programas.
> **Nos gusta** escuchar música clásica.
> ¿A ti *te gusta* leer y escribir poemas?

The subject pronouns *yo, tú, él, ella*, etc. are not used with *gustar*; they are replaced by indirect object pronouns:

> Me *gusta* la música. (yo)
> Te *gusta* hablar español. (tú)
> **Nos gusta** la primavera. (nosotros/as)
> Os *gustan* las empanadas. (vosotros/as)
Le gusta el café. (él)
Le gusta venir a clase. (ella)
Le gustan las frutas. (Ud.)

Les gustan las vacaciones. (ellos)
Les gusta viajar y comprar cosas. (ellos)
Les gusta mi auto nuevo. (Uds.)

Uses of the Present Indicative

The present indicative is used in the following situations.

A. Actions that take place at the time of speaking:
   
   *Enrique dice que va a venir mañana.*
   
   Enrique says he is going to come tomorrow.

B. Actions in progress:
   
   *Hablo por teléfono ahora.*
   
   I am talking on the phone now.

(Note, however, that in this case it is better to use the present progressive in Spanish: *Estoy hablando ahora.*)

C. Habitual actions:
   
   *María escribe poemas.*
   
   María writes poems.

D. Actions that have no limits in time or that represent well-known facts:
   
   *El sol da vida al universo.*
   
   The sun gives life to the universe.

   *Para cocinar langosta no se quita la caparazón.*
   
   In order to cook lobster, it is not necessary to remove the shell.

E. Future events in a statement or question:
   
   *Sale esta noche.*
   
   He is leaving tonight.

   *Va a salir esta noche.*
   
   He is going to leave tonight. / He will leave tonight.

   *¿Cuándo vamos al cine?*
   
   When are we going to the movies?
F. Events that are very likely to take place in the future, when *si* has the meaning of *if*:

*Si nieva* no voy. If it snows, I will not go.

**NOTE:**
The future is used when *if* means *whether*:

*No me dijo si vendrá mañana.* (future tense) He didn’t tell me if/whether he would come tomorrow.

G. A request or a command:

*Y Ud. la llama por teléfono después de la reunión, por favor.* And you, call her on the phone after the meeting, please.

*Tú se lo das cuando venga mañana.* You give it to him when he comes tomorrow.

H. Actions that began in the past and are still going on in the present:

*Los países sufren la consecuencia de tener gobiernos débiles.* The countries suffer the consequences of having weak governments.

*Estudia en la universidad.* She studies at the university.

I. The present indicative is used with *desde* (or *desde hace*) + a time expression:

*Estudio música desde el verano.* I have studied music since the summer.

*Practico natación desde hace dos años.* I have practiced swimming for two years.

J. The present indicative is used with the expression *hace* + a time expression + *que*:

*Hace dos años que estudio música.* I have been studying music for two years.

K. The present indicative is used with *cuando* to indicate a routine situation:

*Nunca salgo cuando llueve.* I never go out when it rains.

L. The present indicative is used for a narration of past, literary, or historical events to make them more vivid:

*Estaba estudiando y de repente lo veo entrar.* I was studying and all of a sudden I see him come in.

*La mujer se levanta y cierra la puerta.* The woman gets up and closes the door.

*Colón llega en 1492.* Columbus arrives in 1492.
The present indicative is used to express an action in progress with the present progressive tense:

1. With the verb *estar*:

   - **Está** *tomando* la sopa.  
     He is having soup.

2. With other verbs, the continuity of the action is emphasized:

   - **Ella continua/** *sigue* estudiando.  
     She continues studying.
   - **Ella anda** trabajando mucho estos días.  
     She has been working a lot these days.
   - **Voy aprendiendo** despacio.  
     I have been gradually learning.

The present indicative is used to express a temporary or permanent state or condition using *ser* or *estar*:

- **Jim está** preocupado.  
  Jim is worried.
- **Marte está** cerca de la luna.  
  Mars is near the Moon.
- **María es** muy inteligente.  
  María is very intelligent.
- **Todos somos** humanos.  
  Everybody is human.

The present indicative is used to express an action that has just been completed, using *acabar de* + infinitive:

- **Acabo de** comer.  
  I have just finished eating.
- **Acaban de** recibirlo.  
  They have just received it.

The present indicative is used to express an action that was almost completed in the past:

- **Casi lo echaban** del trabajo.  
  They almost fired him.
- **Por poco me caigo**.  
  I almost fell.

The Verbs *ser* and *estar*

The verbs *ser* and *estar* in Spanish are two versions of the English verb *to be*. The conjugation of these verbs is presented here only in the present tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ser</th>
<th>estar</th>
<th>to be</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo soy</td>
<td>yo estoy</td>
<td>I am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú eres</td>
<td>tú estás</td>
<td>you are (singular, informal)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differences Between and Uses of *ser* and *estar*

Some of the most common uses of *ser* and *estar* follow.

A. The verb *ser* is used in the following circumstances.

1. The verb *ser* is used to indicate a permanent or inherent characteristic of the noun:

   *El terciopelo es suave.*
   *Soy feliz. Tengo una linda familia.*
   *Mi abuelo es muy generoso.*
   *El flan es muy rico.*

   **NOTE:**
   *“Ser o no ser.”*  
   *“To be or not to be.”*

2. The verb *ser* is used to give information about the location of an event:

   *La carrera es en el autódromo de Daytona.*

3. The verb *ser* is used to identify a noun:

   *Esos son los jugadores del equipo.*
   *Esta es la habitación de los huéspedes.*

4. The verb *ser* is used to give information about a profession:

   *Sara es dentista.*
   *Esos hombres son electricistas.*

   Sara is a dentist.
   Those men are electricians.
Also:

Yo soy estudiante de primer año. I am a freshman.

5. The verb *ser* is used to provide the date:

- Hoy es el 14 de abril. Today is April 14th.
- La independencia es el 4 de julio. Independence Day is on July 4th.
- La inauguración del edificio es mañana. The inauguration of the building is tomorrow.

6. The verb *ser* is used to mention day and time and to ask about the time:

- Hoy es sábado. Today is Saturday.
- ¿Qué hora es ahora? What time is it now?
- Es la una de la tarde. It is one p.m.
- Son las 5 y media de la mañana. It is 5:30 in the morning.

7. The verb *ser* is used to express the passive voice:

- Los exámenes fueron corregidos por el maestro, no por el ayudante. The exams were corrected by the teacher, not by his assistant.
- El francés es hablado en Haití. French is spoken in Haiti.

8. The verb *ser* is used with an adverb of time:

- Es temprano para comer ahora. It’s early for eating now.
- “Nunca es tarde cuando la dicha es buena.” It’s never late when things are going well. (popular proverb)
- Es hora de recibir un aumento. It’s time to get a raise.

9. The verb *ser* is used to explain what something is made of:

- Los escalones son de madera dura. The steps are made of hard wood.
- La cacerola es de acero inoxidable. The pot is made of stainless steel.

10. The verb *ser* is used followed by *de* to express nationality or the origin of a noun:

- Mi padre es de España. My father is from Spain.
- El florero es de Tánger. The flower vase is from Tangier.
- La rosa amarilla que me dio el florista es de Holanda. The yellow rose that the florist gave me is from Holland.
11. The verb *ser* is used to indicate possession:

   *La valija negra es de mi hermano.*  
   The black bag is my brother's.

   *Estos lápices son míos.*  
   These pencils are mine.

   *Estas plantas son las de Maggie.*  
   These are Maggie's plants.

12. The verb *ser* is used to name the seasons:

   *Ahora es verano en Inglaterra.*  
   Now it's summer in England.

   *Cuando en Estados Unidos es otoño es primavera en Sudamérica.*  
   When it's fall in the United States, it's spring in South America.

13. The verb *ser* is used with impersonal expressions:

   *Es increíble que duermas tanto.*  
   It's incredible that you sleep so much.

   *Fue bueno que ella alquilara la casa.*  
   It was good that she rented the house.

   **But:**

   *Está mal que ella no responda.*  
   It's bad that she is not answering.

   *Está bien que vosotros hayáis venido.*  
   It's good that you have come.

14. The verb *ser* is used to ask for the total amount of a purchase:

   ¿*Cuánto es?* or ¿*Cuánto es todo?*  
   How much is it?

15. The verb *ser* is used to indicate religious preference and political affiliation:

   *La reina Isabel de España era católica.*  
   Queen Elizabeth of Spain was Catholic.

   *Note: Esta tortilla no *está* muy católica.*  
   This omelet is not very good.

   *Su familia es presbiteriana.*  
   Her family is Presbyterian.

   *El asistente de María es republicano.*  
   María's assistant is a Republican.

   *No sé si Jorge es republicano o liberal.*  
   I don't know if Jorge is a Republican or a liberal.

**B. The verb *estar* is used in the following circumstances.**

1. The verb *estar* is used to indicate a temporary or transitional characteristic of a noun:

   *Las noches están más frescas ahora.*  
   The evenings are cooler now.

   *La tenista está cansada.*  
   The tennis player is tired.

   *Estoy feliz. Vamos a viajar pronto.*  
   I am happy. We are going to travel soon.
Mi abuelo está generoso hoy: acaba de darme dinero para mis libros. 
El postre está rico. No tiene mucho azúcar. 

My grandfather is generous today: he just gave me money for my books. 
The dessert is good. It doesn't have too much sugar.

2. The verb **estar** is used to give the location of a noun:

- Nuestra escuela está cerca del centro. 
- Nashville está en Tennessee. 
- Marta está en casa. 
- El perro está en la casucha. 

- Our school is near the downtown area. 
- Nashville is in Tennessee. 
- Marta is at home. 
- The dog is in the doghouse.

3. The verb **estar** is used in the present progressive tense to express an action in progress:

- ¿Vosotros estáis esperando a los niños? 

- Are you waiting for the children?

4. The verb **estar** is used to indicate the result of an action:

- Los exámenes ya están corregidos. 

- The exams are already corrected.

5. The verb **estar** is used to denote specific, temporary situations:

- Mis vecinos están de fiesta. 
- Martín está de vacaciones. 
- La novia estaba de blanco. 
- Estoy a dieta. Quiero adelgazar. 
- La familia está de luto. 
- Los panaderos están de huelga. 
- Ya estoy de vuelta. 
- “Cuando ella va, yo ya estoy de vuelta.” 
- Estamos de parabienes; nuestra hija acaba de tener un bebé. 

- My neighbors have a party going on. 
- Martin is on vacation. 
- The bride had a white gown on. 
- I’m on a diet. I want to lose weight. 
- The family is in mourning. 
- The bakers are on strike. 
- I just came back. 
- I am smarter than she is. (popular proverb) 
- We feel lucky; our daughter just had a baby.

6. The verb **estar** is used to describe an ailment:

- Raúl está con jaqueca. 
- Hilda está con un resfrío bárbaro. 
- Estoy con dolor de estómago. 
- Estaba congestionada. 
- Mi hermano está engripado. 

- Raúl has a migraine. 
- Hilda has a bad cold. 
- I have a stomachache. 
- I was congested. 
- My brother has the flu.
7. The verb *estar* is used to indicate a condition related to time:

*Estoy adelantado con el pago.*  I am early with the payment.
*Estamos atrasados. Perdón.*  We are late. Excuse us.

8. The verb *estar* is used to show the immediacy of an action:

*Estaba por llamarte cuando viniste.*  I was about to call you when you came.
*La aerolínea estaba por cerrar.*  The airline was about to close down.
*La secretaria estaba a punto de venir.*  The secretary was about to come.

9. The verb *estar* is used to express a condition contrary to what is expected:

*La sopa está fría.*  The soup is cold.
*Los fideos están duros.*  The noodles are hard.
*Su hijo está más maduro. ¡Qué bien!*  Their son is (has become) more mature. That's good!
*¡Qué verde está el pasto!*  How green the grass is!

10. The verb *estar* is used to describe a position of the body:

*Estamos sentados.*  We are seated.
*El gobernador está de pie.*  The governor is standing.
*Nadie está parado.*  Nobody is standing.
*La enferma está recostada.*  The patient is lying down.
*Juancito está acostado.*  Juancito is in bed.
*Papá ya está levantado.*  Dad is already up.
*La monja está de rodillas.*  The nun is kneeling.

11. The verb *estar* is used to indicate a job or position occupied at a particular time:

*Mi prima está de cajera en esa tienda.*  My cousin works as a cashier in that store.
*Laura está de maestra suplente del primer grado.*  Laura is working as a substitute first grade teacher.

12. The verb *estar* is used to talk about the weather:

*Hoy está nublado.*  Today it's cloudy.
*Hoy está ventoso.*  Today it's windy.
*Hoy está precioso.*  It's beautiful today.
*Hoy está caluroso. / Hace calor.*  It's hot.
*Está un poco frío. / Hace un poco de frío.*  It's a little bit cold.
13. The verb *estar* is used to ask about a price:

¿A cuánto están las rosas?  How much are the roses?

14. The verb *estar* is used to say whether someone is alive or dead:

¿Sus abuelos están vivos?  Are your grandparents alive?

_Teat_ de Martín está muerto.  Martin’s father is dead.

**Cases in Which Either *ser* or *estar* Is Used**

**A. In indicating marital status, either *ser* or *estar* can be used, depending on the context:**

_Jorge es casado._  Jorge is married.

Jorge está casado ahora.  Jorge is married now.

_Está casado con Luisa._  He is married to Luisa.

_Su hijo es soltero._  Their son is single.

_Su hijo está soltero todavía._  Their son is still single.

- To refer to a married couple:

_Carlos y Sara están divorciados._  Carlos and Sara are divorced.

_Pepa y Juan están separados._  Pepa and Juan are separated.

**NOTE:**

The reflexive verbs *divorciarse* and *separarse* are also very common:

_Carlos y Sara se divorciaron._  Carlos and Sara got divorced.

_Pepa y Juan se separaron._  Pepa and Juan separated.

- To refer to individuals not related to each other:

_Tony y Marta son divorciados._  Tony and Marta are divorced.

_Manuel, Catalina y Pedro son separados._  Manuel, Catalina, and Pedro are separated.

¿Tu mamá es viuda?  Is your mom a widow?

¿Cuánto tiempo hace que ella está viuda?  How long has she been a widow?

_El es divorciado._  He is divorced.
Ella es separada.
Eugenia es solterona.
Reinaldo es solterón.

She is separated.
Eugenia is an old maid.
Reinaldo is a confirmed bachelor.

NOTE:

to stay single
Juan se quedó soltero.
Ruth se quedó soltera. Su novio murió.

B. To describe status related to work, both *ser* and *estar* can be used:

Mi hermano es jubilado.

My brother is retired.

But:

Mi hermano no trabaja ahora porque está jubilado.
El Dr. Pérez es médico pero está retirado; va a dedicarse a escribir.

My brother doesn't work now because he is retired.
Dr. Pérez is a medical doctor, but he is retired; he will spend his time writing.

Different Meanings of Adjectives Depending on the Use of *ser* or *estar*

*El dueño de la tienda es rico.*
The store owner is wealthy.
*Esta salsa está rica.*
This sauce is delicious.
*Raimundo es listo.*
Raimundo is smart.
*Raimundo está listo.*
Raimundo is ready.
*Es una chica muy viva.*
She is a vivacious child.
*Su abuela está viva.*
Their grandmother is alive.
*Su esposo es ciego.*
Her husband is blind.
*Su esposo está ciego.*
Her husband doesn't realize what's going on.
*Mi primo es sordo.*
My cousin is deaf.
*Mi primo está sordo.*
My cousin doesn't want to hear.
*Esteban es maduro.*
Esteban is mature.
*Las peras están maduras.*
The pears are ripe.
*La espinaca es verde.*
Spinach is green.
*Las peras están verdes.*
The pears are not ripe.
*Es tarde.*
It's late.
*Estoy atrasado.*
I'm late.
NOTE:

*Es temprano.*
*It's early.*

*Llegué temprano.*
*I’m early.*

*Juana es muy interesada. Siempre quiere favorecerse con todo.*
*Juana is very self-interested. She always tries to benefit from everything.*

*Juana está interesada en las noticias que le di.*
*Juana is interested in the news I gave her.*

*Mabel es/está consciente de sus deberes como madre.*
*Mabel is aware of her duties as a mother.*

*El paciente está consciente después de la operación.*
*The patient is conscious after the surgery.*

*Esa presentación fue muy aburrida.*
*That presentation was very boring.*

*Todos los chicos estaban aburridos.*
*All the children were bored.*

*Carlos es muy orgulloso. No acepta ninguna crítica constructiva.*
*Carlos is very proud. He doesn’t accept any constructive criticism.*

*Javier está orgulloso. Fue ascendido a gerente.*
*Javier is very proud. He was promoted to work as a manager.*
Adjectives

Adjectives are used to modify a noun, either by giving a description of that particular noun in order to distinguish it from others of its class, or by indicating its location, ownership, or the exact or vague quantity of the noun. Adjectives are also used to ask questions and to express feelings. Besides single words, phrases or sentences may also function as adjectives, as in these examples:

- el jarrón chino
- muchos jarrones con figuras chinas
- ese jarrón que tiene figuras chinas

the Chinese vase
many vases with Chinese figures
that vase that has Chinese figures

Classification of Adjectives

Adjectives in Spanish are classified into two main groups:

A. Descriptive adjectives (adjetivos calificativos) show a quality of the noun, as in río extenso (long river), casa chica (small house), or niño inteligente (intelligent child).

B. Determinative adjectives (adjetivos determinativos) give specific information regarding the noun. These adjectives are classified according to what they specify:

- Demonstrative adjectives (demostrativos): location
- Possessive adjectives (posesivos): ownership
- Numeral adjectives (numerales): exact quantity
- Indefinite adjectives (indefinidos): vague quantity
- Interrogative adjectives (interrogativos): questions
- Exclamatory adjectives (admirativos): exclamations
Descriptive Adjectives

Descriptive adjectives have ending variations that correspond to the gender and number of the nouns to which they refer.

Endings

A. Adjectives ending in o

Adjectives that end in o have four different endings to agree with masculine and feminine nouns, both singular and plural:

- o
- os
- a
- as

The feminine is formed by changing the final o into a. For the plural, an s is added to both masculine and feminine forms:

- el bosque oscuro: the dark forest
- los bosques oscuros: the dark forests
- la calle oscura: the dark street
- las calles oscuras: the dark streets

B. Adjectives ending in a (or ista)

Adjectives ending in a (or ista) have the same form for masculine and feminine. For the plural, an s is added to the singular form:

- a (or ista) and s
  - el comentario realista: realistic comments
  - la muchacha realista: realistic girl
  - los asuntos realistas: realistic subjects
  - las resoluciones realistas: realistic resolutions
  - el hombre alerta: the alert man
  - los hombres alertas: the alert men
  - la mujer alerta: the alert woman
  - las mujeres alertas: the alert women
C. Adjectives ending in e

Adjectives ending in e have the same form for masculine and feminine. For the plural, an s is added to the singular form:

- **e and s**
  - *el banco fuerte*  
  - *los bancos fuertes*  
  - *la mesa fuerte*  
  - *las mesas fuertes*  
  
  the strong bench  
  the strong benches  
  the strong table  
  the strong tables

D. Adjectives ending in i

There are not many adjectives ending in i, and they take the following forms:

1. If the stress is on the next to last syllable (*penúltima sílaba*), they have the same form for masculine and feminine. For the plural, an s is added to the singular form:

   - **i and s**
     - *el hombre parsi*  
     - *los hombres parsis*  
     - *la dama parsi*  
     - *las damas parsis*  
     - *la palabra cursi*  
     - *las palabras cursis*  
     - *la mujer yanqui*  
     - *las mujeres yanquis*  
     
     the Parsic man  
     the Parsic men  
     the Parsic lady  
     the Parsic ladies  
     the affected word  
     the affected words  
     the Yankee woman  
     the Yankee women

2. If the stress is on the last syllable, the plural is formed by adding *es* and placing an accent mark on the *i*:

   - **i and es**
     - *bengali, bengalíes*  
     - *guarani, guaraníes*  
     - *iraní, iraníes*  
     - *iraquí, iraquíes*  
     - *sefardí, sefardíes*  
     - *carmesí, carmesíes*  
     
     Bengali  
     Guarani  
     Iranian  
     Iraqi  
     Sephardi  
     red (color)
E. Adjectives ending in \textit{u}

Adjectives ending in \textit{u} have one form for both genders, and usually form the plural by adding \textit{es}. Since the stress is on the last syllable, the \textit{u} carries an accent mark:

\textit{u} and \textit{es}

- \textit{la chica zulú} \quad \text{Zulu girl}
- \textit{los cantos zulúes} \quad \text{Zulu songs}
- \textit{la túnica hindú} \quad \text{Hindu tunic}
- \textit{las túnicas hindúes} \quad \text{Hindu tunics}

F. Adjectives that end in a consonant change according to the following rules.

1. When masculine and feminine have the same form, \textit{es} is added to form the plural:

- \textit{consonant and es}
  - \textit{el ejercicio útil} \quad \text{the useful exercise}
  - \textit{los ejercicios útiles} \quad \text{the useful exercises}
  - \textit{la regla útil} \quad \text{the useful rule}
  - \textit{las reglas útiles} \quad \text{the useful rules}

\textbf{NOTE:}

Other adjectives that fall under this rule are those that end in \textit{s}, \textit{un}, and \textit{z}, as in \textit{cortés/corteses} (courteous), \textit{común/comunes} (common), and \textit{audaz/audaces} (audacious). Note that in adjectives that end in \textit{-z}, the \textit{z} is changed to a \textit{c}, and then \textit{es} is added to the word.

2. When the feminine is formed by adding an \textit{a} to the masculine, as in \textit{cantor/cantora} (singer), \textit{s} is added for the feminine plural and \textit{es} for the masculine plural.

- \textbf{masculine} \quad \text{feminine}
  - singular: ends in consonant \quad singular: ends in consonant + \textit{a}
    - \textit{el profesor} \quad \textit{la profesora}
  - plural: ends in consonant + \textit{es} \quad plural: ends in consonant + \textit{as}
    - \textit{los profesores} \quad \textit{las profesoras}
Adjectives that follow this rule are:

(a) Some adjectives of nationality or origin:

- *el diario español* the Spanish newspaper
- *los diarios españoles* the Spanish newspapers
- *la revista española* the Spanish magazine
- *las revistas españolas* the Spanish magazines

Some other examples are: *alemán, irlandés, portugués, and vienés.*

(b) Adjectives ending in *on, an, or or*:

- *el niño llorón* the crying boy
- *los niños llorones* the crying children / boys
- *la niña llorona* the crying girl
- *las niñas lloronas* the crying girls

Some other examples are: *haragán (lazy); mandón (bossy); narrador (narrator).*

However, there are other adjectives that end in *or and have only two possible forms: singular and plural. These adjectives form the plural by adding *es:*

- *el patio exterior* outside patio
- *los patios exteriores* outside patios
- *la pared exterior* outside wall
- *las paredes exteriores* outside walls

Other examples include *anterior, inferior, interior, posterior, and superior.*

**NOTE:**
The noun *superior* has the feminine form *superiora,* which defines a nun in charge of a religious community. This noun usually follows *madre,* as in *madre superiora.*

*El superior presidió la reunión.* The superior presided over the meeting.
*La (madre) superiora habló con las monjas.* The mother superior talked to the nuns.

(c) Adjectives ending in *in:*

- *Juan es un bailarín profesional.* Juan is a professional dancer.
- *Ellos son bailarines.* They are dancers.
- *María es bailarina.* María is a dancer.
- *Ellas son bailarinas.* They are dancers.
A few other examples include *chiquitín, pequeñín* (small); *saltarín* (a person who jumps, not necessarily a parachutist, which is called *paracaidista*); *pillín* (rascal); *chiquilín* (small child).

**NOTE:**
An exception to this rule is *ruin* (mean), which has the same form for the feminine. Both masculine and feminine plural forms take *es*:

- *el hombre ruin* mean man
- *los hombres ruines* mean men
- *la mujer ruin* mean woman
- *las mujeres ruines* mean women

### G. Invariable ending

Some adjectives have a unique form that does not change for gender or number. Some examples are:

- **animals**
  - *una hiena macho* a male hyena
  - *un avestruz hembra* a female ostrich
  - *una niña prodigio* a wonder girl

- **colors**
  - *pantalones color vino* wine-colored pants
  - *labios coral* coral-shaded lips
  - *sandalias limón* lemon-colored sandals

**Agreement Between Descriptive Adjectives and Nouns**

Although descriptive adjectives usually agree with nouns in gender and number, agreement varies depending on the following conditions.

- The position of the adjectives (after or before the noun or nouns)
- The gender and number of the nouns involved
- Whether the adjectives qualify equally all the nouns involved
- Whether different adjectives qualify different nouns in the sentence
Agreement When Descriptive Adjectives Follow the Noun

A. Agreement between one adjective and one noun

If only one adjective qualifies a noun (singular or plural), the adjective takes the ending that corresponds to that noun:

- *la calle larga*  
  the long street
- *los niños torpes*  
  the clumsy children

B. Agreement between one adjective and two nouns

If only one adjective qualifies two nouns (singular or plural), the adjective takes the following endings:

1. Feminine nouns ➔ feminine plural ending for the adjective:

   - *una puerta y una ventana estrechas*  
     a narrow door and a narrow window
   - *la puerta y las ventanas estrechas*  
     the narrow door and the narrow windows
   - *las ventanas y la puerta estrechas*  
     the narrow windows and the narrow door

2. Masculine nouns ➔ masculine plural ending for the adjective:

   - *el lápiz y el cuaderno rojos*  
     the red pencil and the red notebook
   - *los lápices y los cuadernos rojos*  
     the red pencils and the red notebooks

3. Mixed-gender nouns ➔ masculine plural ending for the adjective:

   - *la calle y el barrio sencillos*  
     the plain street and the plain neighborhood
   - *las calles y los barrios sencillos*  
     the plain streets and the plain neighborhoods
   - *la niña y los niños extranjeros*  
     the foreign girl and the foreign boys
   - *hombres y mujeres extranjeros*  
     foreign men and foreign women

NOTES:

1. Sometimes the speaker considers the nouns as a whole idea rather than isolated entities. In these cases, the adjective that modifies the nouns may agree in gender and number with the closest noun:

   - *pavor y angustia repentina*  
     sudden fear and anguish
   - *ojos y pelo negro*  
     black eyes and black hair
(2) When the nouns are joined by either *o* (*or*) or *ni* (*nor*), the adjective that qualifies both nouns takes the plural form according to the rule of agreement:

- *Quiero un pastel o una tortilla frescos.*  
  I want a fresh pie or a fresh omelet.
- *No pediré ni un pastel ni una ensalada mexicanos.*  
  I will order neither a Mexican pie nor a Mexican salad.

**C. Agreement between one adjective and more than two nouns**

If only one adjective qualifies more than two different nouns (singular or plural), the adjective takes the following endings:

1. **Feminine nouns** ➔ feminine plural endings for the adjective:
   - *las ventanas, la puerta y la galería estrechas*  
   the narrow windows, the narrow door, and the narrow gallery

2. **Masculine nouns** ➔ masculine plural endings for the adjective:
   - *el león, los tigres y los caballos domesticados*  
   the tamed lion, the tamed tigers, and the tamed horses

3. **Mixed-gender nouns** ➔ masculine plural endings
   - *el vestido, los zapatos y la blusa blancos*  
   the white dress, the white shoes, and the white blouse

**NOTE:**

The *y* is not preceded by a comma as *and* would be in English in a series of nouns.

**D. Agreement between two adjectives and one singular noun**

If two adjectives qualify a singular noun, the adjectives are connected by *y* and each one takes the ending that corresponds to that noun:

- *La casa estaba cerrada y silenciosa.*  
  The house was closed and silent.
E. Agreement between two adjectives and one plural noun

There are two cases.

1. If two adjectives qualify a plural noun and the noun is considered as a whole concept, each adjective takes the ending that corresponds to that noun:

   - los ojos profundos y tristes  the deep, sad eyes
   - las manos blancas y suaves  the smooth, white hands
   - las casas pequeñas y pobres  the small, poor houses

   Here, both eyes, both hands, and all the houses are equally modified by the adjectives.

2. If two adjectives qualify a plural noun, and the noun cannot be considered as a whole concept but as being formed by two different entities (two nouns different from each other), one adjective must agree with one of the items, and the other adjective should function as a noun.

   **Reference made to two novels:**
   Incorrect: Prefiero las novelas corta y larga. (Literally) I prefer the novels short and long.
   Correct: Prefiero la novela corta y la larga. I prefer the short novel and the long one.

   **Reference made to two dogs:**
   Incorrect: Prefiero los perros blanco y negro. (Literally) I prefer the dogs white and black.
   Correct: Prefiero el perro blanco y el negro. I prefer the white dog and the black one.

   **Reference to two wines:**
   Incorrect: Trajo los vinos tinto y blanco. (Literally) He brought the wines red and white.
   Correct: Trajo el vino tinto y el blanco. He brought the red wine and the white one.

F. Agreement between two adjectives and two nouns

If two adjectives qualify equally two nouns (singular or plural), they are connected by *y* and take the following endings:

1. Feminine nouns ➤ feminine plural endings for the adjectives:

   - *la blusa y la falda rojas y cortas*  the short, red blouse and skirt
     (both singular nouns)
   - *las blusas y las faldas rojas y cortas*  the short, red blouses and skirts
     (both plural nouns)
**ADJECTIVES**

la blusa y las sandalias blancas y modernas  
the modern, white blouse and sandals  
(singular/plural nouns)

2. **Masculine nouns** ➤ masculine plural endings for the adjectives:

- el pantalón y el cinturón negros y elegantes  
the elegant, black pair of pants and belt  
(both singular nouns)
- los pantalones y los zapatos negros y elegantes  
the elegant, black pants and shoes  
(both plural nouns)
- los pantalones y el cinturón negros y elegantes  
the elegant, black pants and belt  
(plural/singular nouns)

3. **Mixed-gender nouns** ➤ masculine plural endings for the adjectives:

- la corbata y el pantalón negros y elegantes  
the elegant, black tie and pants  
(both singular nouns)
- el suéter y las medias viejos y sucios  
the old, dirty sweater and socks  
(singular/plural nouns)

G. **Agreement between two adjectives and more than two nouns**

If two adjectives qualify more than two nouns, the adjectives are connected by **y** and take the following endings.

1. **Feminine nouns** ➤ feminine plural endings for the adjectives:

- la blusa, la falda y la cartera blancas y modernas  
the modern, white blouse, skirt, and purse  
- las medias, la falda y la cartera blancas y modernas  
the modern, white socks, skirt, and purse

2. **Masculine nouns** ➤ masculine plural endings for the adjectives:

- el baño, el comedor y el patio amplios y limpios  
the spacious, clean bathroom, dining room, and patio
- el niño, el padre, el tío y el abuelo cansados y aburridos  
the tired and bored boy, father, uncle, and grandfather

3. **Mixed-gender nouns** ➤ masculine plural endings for the adjectives:

- la madre, el padre y los niños entusiastas y divertidos  
the enthusiastic and fun mother, father, and children
- la mesa, las sillas y el sillón importados y caros  
the expensive, imported table, chairs, and sofa
NOTE:
The y before the last noun is not preceded by a comma as and would be in English in a series of nouns.

H. Agreement between more than two adjectives and one noun

If more than two adjectives qualify one noun (singular or plural), the adjectives take the endings that correspond to that noun. No commas are placed before the y:

- receta corta, fácil y buena
  - short, easy, and good recipe
- recetas cortas, fáciles y buenas
  - short, easy, and good recipes
- día lluvioso, oscuro y triste
  - rainy, dark, and sad-looking day
- días lluviosos, oscuros y tristes
  - rainy, dark, and sad-looking days

NOTE:
It is also possible to place one of the adjectives in front of the noun to indicate emphasis:

- algunos tristes días lluviosos y oscuros
  - some sad-looking days, rainy and dark
- una buena receta corta y fácil
  - a good recipe, short and easy

I. Agreement between more than two adjectives and two nouns

If more than two adjectives qualify equally two nouns (singular or plural), the adjectives take the following endings.

1. Feminine nouns ➤ feminine plural endings for the adjectives:
   - las palabras y las frases cortas, buenas
     y exactas
   - la funda y las sábanas blancas, limpias
     y suaves
   - the short, good, and exact words and phrases
   - the clean, smooth, and white pillowcase and sheets

2. Masculine nouns ➤ masculine plural endings for the adjectives:
   - un perro y un gato hambrientos,
     somnolientos y cansados
   - unos perros y un gato negros, viejos y
     hambrientos
   - a hungry, sleepy, and tired dog and cat
   - some black, old, and hungry dogs and a cat
3. mixed gender nouns ➤ masculine plural endings

el tío y la tía generosos, buenos y amables  the good, generous, and amiable uncle and aunt
las tías y los abuelos buenos, generosos y simpáticos  the good, generous, and nice aunts and grandparents

NOTE: The y that connects the last two adjectives is not preceded by a comma.

J. Agreement between more than two adjectives and more than two nouns

In the case of multiple adjectives that qualify equally more than two nouns (singular or plural), the adjectives take the following endings.

1. Feminine nouns ➤ feminine plural endings for the adjectives:

la pluma, la tiza y la carpeta blancas, pequeñas y nuevas  the small, new, and white pen, chalk, and folder

2. Masculine nouns ➤ masculine plural endings for the adjectives:

el lápiz, el marcador y el borrador negros, viejos y gastados  the old, worn out, and black pencil, marker, and eraser

3. Mixed-gender nouns ➤ masculine plural endings for the adjectives:

el lápiz, las lapiceras y el borrador nuevos, baratos y buenos  the new, cheap, and good pencil, pens, and eraser

NOTE: The y is not preceded by a comma as and would be in English in a series of nouns.

Agreement When Descriptive Adjectives Precede the Noun

Sometimes adjectives are placed before nouns to produce a form that is more poetic, or simply to intensify the quality of the noun. The following rules apply.
A. Agreement between one adjective and one noun (singular or plural)

If only one adjective qualifies a noun, the adjective agrees in gender and number with the noun:

- un caluroso día  
  a hot day
- los atractivos platos  
  the attractive dishes

B. Agreement between one adjective and two singular nouns

If the nouns are singular, the adjective agrees in gender and number with the closest noun. In the following examples, the (f.) stands for feminine and the (m.) for masculine.

- Pude notar su profundo candor y fe (f.)  
  or ... profundo candor y fervor (m.)
  I noticed her deep candor and her faith.
  But: Pude notar su candor y fe profundos.

- Tenía excesiva angustia y dolor (m.)  
  or ... excesiva angustia y pena (f.)
  She felt excessive anguish and grief.
  But: Tenía angustia y dolor excesivos.

C. Agreement between one or two adjectives and a combination of singular and plural nouns

If one adjective (or more than one) qualifies a combination of singular and plural nouns, the idea is better expressed when the adjectives follow the nouns instead of preceding them:

- los campos y la colina fértiles  
  the fertile fields and hill
- los campos y la colina frescos y fértiles  
  the cool, fertile fields and hill

Another possibility is for one adjective to precede one of the nouns and for related adjectives to be placed before the other nouns:

- los fértiles campos y la fecunda colina  
  the fertile fields and the fruitful hill
- (or) los fértiles campos y la fecunda y verde colina  
  the fertile fields and the fruitful, green hill

D. Agreement between one or more adjectives and two or more plural nouns

If the nouns are plural, the adjectives agree in gender and number with the closest noun. Agreement with the other noun or nouns is implied.
las anchas avenidas y parques
los verdes y frescos valles y colinas
los verdes y frescos valles, colinas y campos
las blancas, suaves y pequeñas ovejas y corderos

Notice that the order of the adjectives in Spanish does not correspond to the order of the adjectives in English.

NOTES:
(1) The y that connects the last two nouns is not preceded by a comma.
(2) Two adjectives must be joined by a y.
(3) When there are more than two adjectives, the y that joins the last two adjectives is not preceded by a comma.

When Different Adjectives Qualify Different Nouns

A distinction must be made in the sentence when the adjective or adjectives agree with certain nouns only, regardless of whether the adjectives precede or follow the nouns.

las anchas avenidas y los pequeños parques
los fértiles y frescos valles y las aldeas antiguas

Notice that the order of the adjectives in Spanish does not correspond to the order of the adjectives in English.

When Descriptive Adjectives Precede and Follow the Noun

Sometimes adjectives are placed before and after the noun, either to give emphasis to a quality or qualities of the noun or to agree with specific positional rules. Agreement with the noun will follow the general rules of agreement. (See the section on Position of Descriptive Adjectives that follows). Observe the following examples of multiple adjectives that qualify a noun:

hermosas rosas otoñales
elegantes pantalones veraniegos
una ancha playa solitaria y tranquila
espesas y frescas arboledas provincianas

a wide, quiet, and solitary beach
thick and cool provincial groves

Agreement Between Nouns and Adjectives of Color

When colors are used as nouns they take the masculine form:

*El gris es un color triste.*  
Gray is a sad color.

*El verde es mi color preferido.*  
Green is my favorite color.

*Los rojos de este cuadro son vivos.*  
The reds (red tones) in this painting are vivid.

*El violeta está de moda este invierno.*  
Violet is in fashion this winter.

As adjectives, colors follow specific rules for gender and number agreement according to their endings, as shown below. The word *color* or the expression *de color* may also precede a specific color, in which case all colors appear in the masculine singular form (*color rojo, de color rojo*). Some of the most common colors are used in the following examples.

**A.** Colors ending in *o* have four different forms: *o, a, os, as:*

- **amarillo** ➞ **zapatos amarillos**  
yellow shoes
- **anaranjado** ➞ **blusa anaranjada**  
orange blouse
- **blanco** ➞ **nubes blancas**  
white clouds
- **morado** ➞ **uva morada**  
dark violet grape
- **negro** ➞ **sombrero negro**  
black hat
- **rojo** ➞ **labios rojos**  
red lips

**B.** Colors that end in *a* follow specific rules:

- **crema**  
zapatos crema  
cream-colored shoes
- **paredes color crema**  
cream-colored walls
- **uñas de color crema**  
cream-colored nails

- **lila**  
vestido lila  
lilac dress
flores lilas  
lilac flowers
*tarjeta de color lila*  
lilac card
*guantes color lila*  
lilac gloves
**naranja**
- blusa color naranja
- pantalones naranja
- auto de color naranja

**rosa**
- blusa de color rosa
- sombrero color rosa
- guantes color de rosa
- la vida color de rosa
- labios rosa

**violeta**
- blusa violeta
- ojos violeta
- paredes violetas
- papel color violeta
- sábana de color violeta

**púrpura**
- mangas púrpura
- capa color púrpura
- collares de color púrpura

**malva**
- abrigo malva
- uñas malva

---

**C. Colors ending in e follow specific rules:**

**beige***
- autos beige
- bolsas de color beige
- crema color beige

**café**
- platos café
- medias de color café
- zapatos color café

---

* A widely used French word. The *g* is pronounced like the *g* in generous or large.
NOTE:
In many countries *marrón* is used for *brown*.

**celeste**
- cintas celestes
- lápiz celeste
- ojos de color celeste
- bandera color celeste

**verde**
- ojos verdes
- casa verde
- anteojos de color verde
- caja color verde

**NOTE:**

Colors ending in *i* have forms which are affected by the stress of the word:

**caqui or kaki**
- uniformes caqui
- gorra color caqui
- camisa de color caqui

**carmesí**
- pañuelo carmesí
- labios carmesíes

**NOTE:**

The singular form is also sometimes used for the plural:

*labios carmesí* or *labios color carmesí*

**E. Colors ending in a consonant vary only by number**

Colors ending in a consonant have one form for both genders (*caja azul*, *auto azul*) and add *es* for the plural (*casas azules*, *autos azules*). The forms *color azul* and *de color azul* are also used.

**azul**
- cajas de color azul
- cajas color azul

**NOTE:**

*blue boxes*
Other examples such as the following will also show the three possibilities:

- **gris**
  - cabellos grises: gray hair
  - cabellos de color gris
  - cabellos color gris

- **marrón**
  - pantalones marrones: brown pants
  - pantalones de color marrón
  - pantalones color marrón

### Other Variations of Adjectives of Color

Sometimes certain words or expressions are used as modifiers. When colors are modified, they do not change for gender and number. A modified color may apply to singular or plural nouns.

A. **Adjectives to specify intensity of color**

Some of the adjectives that may be added to any color to specify its intensity are:

- **claro** (light)
  - ojos azul claro: light blue eyes
- **oscuro** (dark)
  - suéter verde oscuro: dark green sweater
- **pálido** (pale)
  - blusa rosa pálido: pale pink blouse
- **vivo** (vivid)
  - rosas rojo vivo: vivid red roses

The expressions *color (verde)* and *de color (verde)* may also be used when the color is modified, as follows:

- **(de) color verde claro**
  - silla color verde claro: light green chair
  - sillas color verde claro: light green chairs

- **(de) color marrón oscuro**
  - zapatos color marrón oscuro: dark brown shoes
  - zapatos de color marrón oscuro: dark brown shoes

- **(de) color rojo vivo**
  - cinta rojo vivo: vivid red ribbon
  - sombrero de color rojo vivo: vivid red hat
B. Nouns or adjectives to suggest a specific color shade

Nouns or adjectives may be added to suggest a specific color shade:

- pared verde agua  
  light green wall
- vestido azul cielo  
  sky-blue dress
- suéter color cereza  
  cherry-colored sweater
- blusa limón  
  light yellow blouse
- verde militar  
  army green
- azul marino  
  navy blue
- azul eléctrico  
  electric blue
- adorno color cobre  
  copper-colored ornament
- rojo furioso (colloquial)  
  bright red
- rosa viejo  
  dusty rose

**NOTE:**
Whenever a noun is used to describe a color, such as *cielo* (sky), *vino* (wine), *limón* (lemon), etc., the modifying noun is invariable:

- ojos cielo  
  sky-colored eyes
- una camisa vino  
  a wine-colored shirt
- pantalones limón  
  lemon-colored pants

C. Adjectives derived from colors

Adjectives derived from colors have four endings: *o, a, os, as*. Some examples are:

- *amarillo*  
  ➤ *amarillento* (*a, os, as*)  
  yellowish
- *azul*  
  ➤ *azulado, azulino*  
  bluish
- *blanco*  
  ➤ *blancuzco, blanquecino*  
  whitish
- *gris*  
  ➤ *grisácceo*  
  grayish
- *lila*  
  ➤ *liláceo*  
  lilac-ish
- *púrpura*  
  ➤ *purpúreo, purpurino*  
  purplish
- *rojo*  
  ➤ *rojizo*  
  reddish
- *rosa*  
  ➤ *rosado, rosáceo*  
  pinkish
- *verde*  
  ➤ *verdoso*  
  greenish
- *violeta*  
  ➤ *violáceo*  
  violet-ish
D. Colors used with certain nouns

Some color words are used specifically with certain nouns:

- cabello castaño (not marrón) — brown hair
- ojos pardos (not marrones) — brown eyes
- cabello canoso (also gris) — gray hair
- cabello rubio — blonde hair
- mujer pelirroja (not pelo rojo) — red-haired woman
- mujer morena — dark-skinned woman
- mujer negra — black woman
- hombre blanco — Caucasian man

Agreement of Compound Adjectives

Compound adjectives formed by two words agree with the noun in gender and number. Notice that the first adjective appears in the masculine singular form:

- los problemas socioeconómicos — socioeconomic problems
- las obras grecolatinas — Greco-Latin works
- la asociación hispanohablante — Hispanic-American association
- los temas religiosoculturales — religious and cultural subjects
- las obras teóricoprácticas — theoretical and practical works
- los tratados francoespañoles — Franco-Spanish treaties

Agreement Between Adjectives and Collective Nouns

The adjective agrees with the preceding noun:

- un grupo de hombres enfurecidos — a group of infuriated men
- un grupo enfurecido de hombres — an infuriated group of men
- una comunidad de familias religiosas — a community of religious families
- una comunidad religiosa de familias — a religious community of families
Agreement of Adjectival Expressions That Are Preceded by *de*

When a noun is modified by another noun preceded by *de*, as in *lapicera de plástico* (pen made of plastic), and there is an adjective in the sentence, the adjective must agree with the noun it is modifying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>la lapicera de plástico rojo</em></td>
<td>the pen made of red plastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>la lapicera roja de plástico</em></td>
<td>the red pen made of plastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>una caja de plástico barato</em></td>
<td>a box made of cheap plastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>una caja barata de plástico</em></td>
<td>a cheap box made of plastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>una casa de ladrillos vieja y fea</em></td>
<td>an old, ugly brick house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>una casa vieja de ladrillos</em></td>
<td>an old brick house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>una casa de ladrillos viejos</em></td>
<td>a house made of old bricks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Position of Descriptive Adjectives**

Descriptive adjectives are placed before or after the noun according to their specific role in the sentence. Check the section immediately preceding this one, Agreement Between Descriptive Adjectives and Nouns, for information on gender and number variations for single and multiple adjectives that follow or precede the noun or nouns.

**Descriptive Adjectives Placed After the Noun**

In general, descriptive adjectives that add more information about the noun, with the idea—intentional or not—of distinguishing the noun from others of its kind, are placed after the noun:

- *El pueblo está al final de un camino largo.* The town is at the end of a long road. (There are also short roads).
- *El sol se veía por debajo de las nubes bajas.* The sun could be seen below the low clouds. (There were also clouds at other altitudes).
- *Dos ratas enormes se escapan al vernos.* Two huge rats ran away when they saw us. (There were also rats of other sizes.)
NOTE:
If more than one descriptive adjective is used, the speaker will give subjective priority to the adjectives based on their position:

- El pueblo está al final de un camino largo y polvoriento. (The length is more significant than the condition [dusty] of the road).
- El sol se veía por debajo de las nubes finas y bajas. (The thinness of the clouds is more significant than the position of the clouds in the sky).

Other Categories of Descriptive Adjectives Placed After the Noun

A. Colors placed after the noun

- Apareció una sonrisa entre sus labios rojos. A smile appeared upon her red lips.
- But: Sus rojos labios insinuaron una leve sonrisa. Her red lips suggested a quick smile.

If other descriptive adjectives are added to the color to modify the noun, the adjective of color must be close to the noun.

1. One adjective + the color:

- Se compró una cartera verde hermosa. (information)
- Se compró una hermosa cartera verde. (emphasis)

- She bought a beautiful green bag.

2. Two or more adjectives + the color:

- Tenía un pantalón negro, viejo y arrugado. She had on a black, old, and wrinkled pair of pants.

**Negro** gives information about the color of the pants. The fact of being old is more important to the speaker than the condition of the pants. Changing the order of the adjectives to **arrugado y viejo** would emphasize the appearance as being more important in the mind of the speaker:

- Tenía un pantalón negro, arrugado y viejo.
B. Nationalities placed after the noun

Adjectives of nationality represent essential information that is not subjective or emphatic and must be placed after the noun.

- las costumbres españolas
  - Spanish customs
- los barcos ingleses
  - English boats
- la secretaria alemana
  - German secretary

**NOTE:**

- Adjectives of nationality are not capitalized in Spanish.

If other descriptive adjectives are used to modify the noun, the adjective of nationality must be close to the noun. Notice that the adjective that is most closely associated with the noun is the first one in the series:

- las costumbres españolas antiquísimas
  - ancient Spanish customs
- los barcos ingleses usados y reparados
  - used and repaired English boats
- la secretaria alemana joven, inteligente y simpática
  - nice, young, intelligent German secretary

Notice that the order of the adjectives in English does not correspond to the order of the adjectives in Spanish.

**NOTE:**

- In the previous example, *secretaria alemana* forms a single unit of thought; therefore, there is no comma placed after *alemana*. The adjectives *joven*, *inteligente*, and *simpática* qualify the unit of thought. If, instead, *alemana* were considered by the speaker as just another characteristic or qualification of the secretary, a comma should be placed:

  - secretaria alemana, joven, inteligente y simpática
  - a secretary who is German, young, intelligent, and nice

C. Conditions placed after the noun

Most adjectives and other adjectival expressions that indicate a condition resulting from an action follow the noun:

- las manos sucias
  - dirty hands
- las latas recicladas
  - recycled cans
- el sombrero mojado
  - wet hat
- huevos revueltos
  - scrambled eggs
D. Scientific or technical adjectives placed after the noun

Adjectives that supply essential information of a scientific or technical nature are placed after the noun:

- el ejercicio gramatical: grammatical exercise
- el misterio arqueológico: archeological mystery
- la agencia meteorológica: meteorological agency
- la presión sanguínea: blood pressure
- la zona geográfica: geographical zone

E. Forms or shapes placed after the noun

Adjectives that give information as to the form or shape of a noun are placed after the noun:

- la figura octogonal: octogonal figure
- el organismo unicelular: unicellular organism
- la caja cuadrada: square box
- la oficina oval: oval office
- los caballeros de la mesa redonda: knights of the round table

F. Adjectives formed by de + noun

Modifiers can be created by adding the preposition de before a noun.

1. de + noun to indicate the materials nouns are made of:

- la reja de hierro: iron grill
- el piso de baldosas: tile floor
- la silla de madera: wooden chair
- las medias de seda: silk stockings
- la pulsera de oro: gold bracelet

2. de + noun to indicate a specific category of the noun:

- el reloj de arena: hourglass
- la lluvia de verano: summer rain
- la lata de sardinas: sardine can
- la tarjeta de cumpleaños: birthday card
- la ensalada de camarones: shrimp salad
Adjectives Placed Before the Noun

Descriptive adjectives are normally placed before the noun in the following cases:

A. Adjective before noun to enhance a specific quality of the noun

Descriptive adjectives are placed before the noun to enhance a specific quality of the noun without comparing it to others of its kind:

*El generoso profesor le dio el dinero para el libro.*

The generous professor gave him the money for the book.

But: *El profesor generoso fue el único que lo ayudó.*

The generous professor was the only one who helped him. (a distinction is implied: no other professors helped him)

*Sus ojos estaban fijos en las tranquilas aguas del lago.*

His eyes were fixed on the quiet waters of the lake.

But: *Después de la tormenta, el bote se movía suavemente en las aguas tranquilas.*

After the storm, the boat moved smoothly on the quiet waters. (a distinction between stormy and smooth waters is implied)

B. Adjective before noun to produce a poetic effect

Descriptive adjectives are placed before the noun to produce a poetic effect, mainly in literary pieces:

*El pueblo está al final de un largo camino.*

The town is at the end of a long road.

*El sol sonreía por debajo de las grises nubes.*

The sun smiled under the gray clouds.

*Los hambrientos ratones se convirtieron en elegantes caballos antes de la medianoche.*

The hungry mice became elegant horses before midnight.

C. Adjective before noun to emphasize a subjective appraisal

Descriptive adjectives are placed before the noun to emphasize a quality or characteristic of the noun as an indication of a subjective appraisal done by the speaker, not necessarily meaning an intrinsic quality of the noun:

*Ayer la visité en su hermosa casa de campo.*

I visited her yesterday in her beautiful country house.

*Su esposo le regaló una elegante cartera negra de cuero.*

Her husband gave her an elegant black leather bag.
However, note the following examples where the adjectives represent widely known facts, not only the opinion of the speaker:

*Cervantes es un renombrado escritor español.*

*No pudieron soportar las heladas noches del polo.*

**D. Adjective before noun to express an inherent characteristic of the noun**

Descriptive adjectives that express an inherent characteristic of the noun are called *epítetos* (*epithets*) and can be removed without altering the meaning of the sentence:

*El furioso tornado aplastó las casas.*

*Su cabeza golpeó contra la dura roca.*

*Escondió la carta bajo el suave terciopelo del vestido.*

**Adjectives Placed Before and After the Noun**

**A. Position of adjectives when a noun is modified by more than one descriptive adjective**

When a noun is modified by more than one descriptive adjective, the position of the adjectives before and after the noun must follow the specific rules outlined previously for each category:

*extraordinarios hechos históricos* (emphasis; essential)  
*conocido poeta cubano* (inherent; nationality)  
*preciosos zapatos rojos* (subjective; color)

*extraordinary historical facts*  
*well-known Cuban poet*  
*beautiful red shoes*

**B. Position of adjectives to indicate relative priority**

The position of descriptive adjectives before or after the noun may also indicate the priority of the adjectives in the mind of the speaker. This modality also renders the language more poetic. Notice the following sentence, where the length of the road is more important to the speaker than its condition:

*El pueblo está al final de un largo camino polvoriento.*

*The town is at the end of a long, dusty road.*
In the following sentence, both the length and the condition are important:

*El pueblo está al final de un **largo** y **polvoriento** camino.***

However, notice the next two sentences as well. In the first one, the condition is emphasized; in the second one, both the condition and the length are important to the speaker:

*El pueblo está al final de un **polvoriento** camino.***

*El pueblo está al final de un **polvoriento** y **largo** camino.***

Notice that the order of the adjectives in English does not correspond to the order of the adjectives in Spanish.

**Shortened Forms**

Some adjectives adopt a shortened form when they are placed before masculine singular nouns. This form is called *apócope* in Spanish (English *apocope*).

- *malo* ➔ *un mal momento* a bad moment
- *bueno* ➔ *un buen rato* a good time
- *alguno* ➔ *algún chico* a child
- *ninguno* ➔ *ningún libro* no book
- *primero* ➔ *primer amor* first love
- *tercero* ➔ *tercer examen* third exam
- *postrero* ➔ *postrer pedido* last request
- *uno* ➔ *un maletín* one briefcase
- *cualquiera* ➔ *cualquier partido* any game

**NOTES:**

(1) The short forms *algún* and *ningún* carry a written accent.

(2) The adjective *santo*, capitalized, takes the short form *San* before saints’ names: *San Antonio, San Juan, San Carlos*, etc., with exceptions such as *Santo Tomás* and *Santo Domingo*. In other cases, the whole word *santo* is used before and after the noun:

- *un santo hombre* or *un hombre santo* a holy man
- *el santo rosario* the holy rosary
- *el Santo Padre* the Holy Father / the Pope
(3) *grande* takes the shortened form *gran* in front of a masculine or feminine singular noun. However, there is a change in meaning from *large* to *grand* or *great* if used in this position:

La boda tuvo lugar en un **gran** patio cubierto. The wedding took place in a grand, covered patio.

La boda tuvo lugar en una **gran** mansión. The wedding took place in a grand mansion.

(4) When another adjective follows the apocope, the short form is usually maintained:

Fue el **primer** increíble relato que le escuché contar. It was the first incredible story that I heard him tell.

However, when the adjectives are linked by the conjunction *y* or *e*—both meaning *and*—the long form is used:

Fue el **primero** y **último** relato que le escuché contar. It was the first and last story that I heard him tell.

Other examples:

*Es el **tercer** excelente concierto que presentaron.* It is the third excellent concert they have presented.

*Es el **tercero** y **último** concierto al que pienso asistir.* It is the third and last concert I plan to attend.

(5) The short form *cien* is used before plural nouns, and also before *mil* (one thousand) and *millones* (millions). *Ciento* is used to count from *ciento uno* (101) to *ciento noventa y nueve* (199).

- cien libros one hundred books
- cien mil pesos one hundred thousand pesos
- cien millones de habitantes one hundred million inhabitants

Please note that 100% is widely read *cien por ciento* instead of *ciento por ciento*.

(6) The masculine plural form stays the same in most cases:

- *malo* → *malos momentos* bad moments
- *bueno* → *buenos ratos* good times
- *alguno* → *algunos chicos* some children
- *primero* → *primeros calores* first hot days
Please note that:

- **Ninguno** is not used in the plural form:

  *No hay ningún libro.* There are no books.

- **Tercero** is used in the plural form as a noun. The noun can be left out:

  *Los primeros exámenes del semestre fueron buenos, los segundos, mejores, y los terceros, excelentes.*

  The first exams of the semester were good; the second ones were better; and the third ones were excellent.

(7) The feminine singular form does not change in front of a noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mala</td>
<td>una mala acción</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buena</td>
<td>una buena cosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alguna</td>
<td>alguna mujer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ninguna</td>
<td>ninguna casa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primera</td>
<td>primera carta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tercera</td>
<td>tercera apuesta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(8) The feminine plural form stays the same in most cases when placed in front of a noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>malas acciones</td>
<td>bad deeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buenas cosas</td>
<td>good things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>algunas mujeres</td>
<td>some women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primeras cartas</td>
<td>first letters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that **ninguna** is not used in the plural form:

*No hay ninguna mujer.* There are no women.

**Adjectives That Change Meaning Depending on Placement**

Some adjectives change their meaning depending on whether they are placed before or after the noun. Notice that some adjectives are invariable and are used with masculine or feminine nouns:

- **algún(o, a)**

  ¿Tienes algún libro? 
  *Do you have any books?*

  No tengo libro alguno.
  *I don’t have any.*

  ¿Quieres alguna galleta?
  *Do you want any cookies?*

  No, no quiero galleta alguna.
  *No, I don’t want any.*
**alto(a)**
*Es un alto ejecutivo.*
*Ella es una alta dama.*

He is a top official.
She is a high-class lady.

*Es un hombre alto.*
*Ella es una mujer alta.*

He is a tall man.
She is a tall woman.

**antiguo(a)**
*Fue la antigua capital.*
*Es su antiguo jefe.*

It was the former capital.
He is her former boss.

*Es una capital antigua.*
*Es un documento antiguo.*

It’s an ancient capital.
It is an ancient document.

**bueno(a)**
*Es un buen hombre.*
*Es un hombre bueno.*

He is a simple man.
He is a good man.

*Es una buena maestra.*
*Es una maestra buena.*

She is a good teacher.
She is a gentle/generous teacher.

*Tuvo una buena sorpresa.*
*Fue una sorpresa buena.*

He had a big surprise.
It was a good surprise.

*Recibió una buena cantidad.*
*Es una cantidad buena.*

He received a large amount.
It is a sufficient amount.

**cierto(a)**
*Oyó ciertas historias.*
*Son historias ciertas.*

She heard certain stories.
They are true stories.

*Vino un cierto día.*
*Vino el día cierto.*

He came on a certain day.
He came on the right day.

**cualquier(a)**
*Quiero cualquier perro.*
*Quiero un perro cualquiera.*

I want any dog (of the ones you have).
I want just any dog (the breed is not important).

*Me gustaría cualquier marca.*
*Me gustaría una marca cualquiera.*

I would like any brand (of the ones you have).
I would like just any brand.
**dulce**
¡Dulces sueños!
*Sweet dreams!*

galletas dulces
*sweet cookies*

**grande**
*Es un gran coche.*
*It’s a great car.*

*Es un coche grande.*
*It’s a large car.*

**mismo(a)**
*Vi al mismo chico.*
*I saw the same child.*

*Vi al chico mismo.*
*I saw the child himself.*

*Saludé a la misma chica.*
*I greeted the same girl.*

*Saludé a la chica misma.*
*I greeted the girl herself.*

**nuevo(a)**
*Recibió un nuevo libro.*
*She received another book.*

*Recibió un libro nuevo.*
*She received a new book.*

*Me dio una nueva receta.*
*She gave me another recipe.*

*Me dio una receta nueva.*
*She gave me a new recipe.*

**pobre**
*La pobre señora se murió.*
*The unfortunate lady died.*

*La señora pobre se murió.*
*The poor (not rich) lady died.*

**propio(a)**
*Vino con su propio auto.*
*He came with his own car.*

*Es un regalo propio para él.*
*It’s a gift especially for him.*

*Hizo su propia casa.*
*He built his own house.*

*Hizo una casa propia para él.*
*He built a house according to his taste.*

*Italia es un nombre propio.*
*Italy is a proper name.*

**puro(a)**
*Eran puros cuentos.*
*They were sheer stories.*

*Eran cuentos puros.*
*They were pure (decent) stories.*

*Son puras historias.*
*They are sheer stories.*

*Son historias puras.*
*They are pure (decent) stories.*
**raro(a)**

*Es un raro evento.*
*It is a rare event.*

*Tienen costumbres raras.*
*They have strange customs.*

*Es una rara ocasión.*
*It is a rare occasion.*

*Es una ocasión rara.*
*It is a strange occasion.*

**NOTE:**

In the expression *raras veces* (*seldom*), the adjective is always placed before the noun:

*Raras veces asistía a los conciertos.*
*She very seldom attended the concerts.*

**simple**

*Fue un simple pedido.*
*It was a mere request.*

*Fue un pedido simple.*
*It was a simple request.*

**triste**

*Me dio una triste tarjeta.*
*She only gave me a card.*

*Me dio una tarjeta triste.*
*She gave me a sad card.*

**único(a)**

*Es la única caja.*
*It’s the only box.*

*Es una caja única.*
*It’s a unique box.*

*Él es el único hijo que tienen.*
*He is the only son they have.*

*Él es un hijo único.*
*He is a unique son.*

**varios(as)**

*Usó varios colores.*
*He used several colors.*

*Usó colores varios.*
*He used different colors.*

*Había varias tortas.*
*There were several cakes.*

*Había tortas varias.*
*There were different cakes (types).*

**viejo(a)**

*Esa es su vieja casa.*
*That’s his former house.*

*Esa es su casa vieja.*
*That is his old house.*

*Él es un viejo amigo.*
*He is an old friend (of long standing).*

*Él es un amigo viejo.*
*He is an aged friend.*
Comparative and Superlative Forms

Any adjective is in a comparative degree when it possesses its inherent quality to a degree that is higher than, lower than, or equal to that of the adjectives to which it is compared. In English, the ending -er is usually added in the comparative form to adjectives that have one or two syllables. With adjectives that have more than two syllables, the word more or the formula more + adjective + than is generally used. A lower degree, however, is indicated by the word less or a combination of less + adjective + than. To compare adjectives that possess the same degree of a specific quality, the word as is placed before and after the adjective.

My room is large. Your room is larger.
This report is explicit. The other report is more explicit.
That report is more explicit than Bill’s.
This lesson is less difficult.
This movie is less interesting than the previous one.
His explanation is as clear as hers.

When an adjective has the highest degree of a particular characteristic, the ending -est is added to the adjective. Notice also the addition of the article the before the superlative adjective.

My room is large, your room is larger, but Mary’s is the largest.
Mary’s room is the largest of all.

If the adjective represents the lowest degree of a specific quality, the word least is used in English. The article is also added before the adjective.

My car is expensive, your car is less expensive, and Peter’s is the least expensive.
Peter’s car is the least expensive of the three.

There are a few adjectives in English that have irregular forms when used to make comparisons. Some of those are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Comparative Form</th>
<th>Superlative Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>better</td>
<td>the best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td>worse</td>
<td>the worst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>the least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>far</td>
<td>farther/further</td>
<td>the farthest/furthest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Spanish, as in English, there are also three levels of comparison: comparison of inequality (more/less than), comparison of equality (as . . . as), and the superlative degree (the most/least).
Comparison of Inequality—Adjectives

To compare two nouns, singular or plural, the expressions mas ... que (more ... than) and menos ... que (less ... than) are used around the adjective. The comparatives involved in these sentences are called in Spanish comparativos de superioridad and comparativos de inferioridad, respectively:

- El clavel es mas perfumado que la rosa. 
  - The carnation is more scented than the rose.
- Tus libros son mas caros que mi diccionario. 
  - Your books are more expensive than my dictionary.
- Mi auto gris es menos rapido que tu auto nuevo. 
  - My gray car is less fast than your new car.
- Noviembre y diciembre son menos calurosos que enero y febrero en el Cono Sur. 
  - November and December are less hot than January and February in the Southern Cone.

When the second element of a comparison is a pronoun, the same expressions are used:

- Mi clavel es mas perfumado que el tuyo. 
  - My carnation is more scented than yours.
- Soy menos inteligente que tú. 
  - I am less intelligent than you.
- Estos relojes son mas baratos que aquellos. 
  - These watches are cheaper than those.

**NOTE:**

The meanings of the preceding sentences can be maintained with other formulations as well.

(1) By inverting the word order and changing the comparative expression:

- Tu clavel es menos perfumado que el mío. 
  - Your carnation is less scented than mine.
- Tú eres mas inteligente que yo. 
  - You are more intelligent than I.
- Aquellos relojes son menos baratos que éstos. 
  - Those watches are less cheap than these.

(2) By changing the sentences to the negative, using the formula no + verb + tan + adjective + como:

- Tu clavel no es tan perfumado como el mío. 
  - Your carnation is not as scented as mine.
- Yo no soy tan inteligente como tú. 
  - I am not as intelligent as you.
- Aquellos relojes no son tan baratos como éstos. 
  - Those watches are not as cheap as these.
Adjectives with Irregular Forms

Just as in English, there are a few adjectives in Spanish that have irregular forms when used in a comparative degree:

- **bueno** (good)  \( \rightarrow \) **mejor** (better)  \( \rightarrow \) **el mejor** (the best)
- **malo** (bad)  \( \rightarrow \) **peor** (worse)  \( \rightarrow \) **el peor** (the worst)
- **grande** (large)  \( \rightarrow \) **mayor** (larger)  \( \rightarrow \) **el mayor** (the largest)
- **pequeño** (small)  \( \rightarrow \) **menor** (smaller)  \( \rightarrow \) **el menor** (the smallest)

\[Esta\ lacicera\ roja\ es\ mejor\ que\ la\ azul.\]  
This red pen is better than the blue one.

\[Esa\ solución\ es\ peor\ que\ la\ que\ sugieres.\]  
That solution is worse than the one you suggest.

\[Esta\ caja\ es\ mayor\ que\ aquéllas.\]  
This box is larger than those.

\[Estos\ guantes\ son\ menores\ que\ los\ de\ cuero.\]  
These gloves are smaller than the leather ones.

NOTES:

1. The adjectives **bueno**, **malo**, and **pequeño** agree with the noun in gender and number.
2. The adjective **grande** agrees with the noun only in number.
3. The comparatives **mayor** and **menor** agree with the noun in number and are also used in the following situations:

   - With reference to age, as in:
     - **Mi hermano es mayor que yo.** My brother is older than I.
     - **Miguel es mi hermano mayor.** Miguel is my older brother.
     - **Mi hermana es menor que yo.** My sister is younger than I.
     - **Maggie es mi hermana menor.** Maggie is my younger sister.
     - **Greta es una persona mayor.** Greta is almost a senior citizen.
     - **Respetan a los mayores.** They respect their elders.
     - **No apta para menores.** Not suitable for underage persons.
     - **Hay que ser mayor de edad.** You must be of age.
     - **Vengan con un mayor.** Come with an adult.

   - **Mayor** and **menor** are usually replaced by **más grande** and **más chico(a)** when referring to things, both in their singular and plural forms:

     - **Nuestra casa es más grande que la casa del vecino.** Our house is larger than the neighbor’s house.
     - **Estos vasos son más chicos que los otros.** These glasses are smaller than the others.
With reference to people, the expressions *más grande* and *más chico(a)* are used to indicate the size of the person:

*Julio es más grande que tú.*  
*Carlitos es más chico que su hermano.*

- **Mayor** is the equivalent of *greatest* in:

  *El premio que recibió fue el mayor homenaje a su patriotismo.*  
  *The award he received was the greatest homage paid to his patriotism.

- **Menor** is the equivalent of *least* in:

  *Quiero que lo haga con el menor esfuerzo posible.*  
  *I want you to do it with the least effort possible.

### Comparison of Inequality—Nouns

To make a comparison of inequality involving nouns, the formula *más* or *menos* + noun + *que* is used.

*Roy recibió más regalos que su hermano.*  
*Roy received more gifts than his brother.*

*Hoy tengo menos trabajo que Lola.*  
*Today I have less work than Lola.*

#### NOTE:

The meanings of the preceding sentences can also be preserved with other formulations:

1. By inverting the order of each sentence and changing the comparative expression:

   *Su hermano recibió menos regalos que Roy.*  
   *His brother received fewer gifts than Roy.*

   *Hoy Lola tiene más trabajo que yo.*  
   *Today Lola has more work than I.*

2. By changing the sentences to the negative using this formula: *no* + verb + *tantos/as* + noun + *como*:

   *Su hermano no recibió tantos regalos como Roy.*  
   *His brother didn’t receive as many gifts as Roy.*

   *Hoy no tengo tanto trabajo como Lola.*  
   *Today I don’t have as much work as Lola.*

For comparisons of inequality using verbs and other adverbs, see Chapter 18, Adverbs.
Comparison of Equality—Adjectives

To compare two adjectives, singular or plural, which share equally a specific characteristic, the expression tan + adjective + como is used. In Spanish these forms are called comparativos de igualdad.

Tu camisa es tan elegante como la de Martín. Your shirt is as elegant as Martín's.
Molly es tan aplicada como su hermano Johnny. Molly is as diligent as her brother Johnny.
Los leones son tan salvajes como los tigres. Lions are as wild as tigers.

NOTES:
(1) The meaning of the preceding sentences can be preserved while inverting the word order:

La camisa de Martín es tan elegante como la tuya. Martín's shirt is as elegant as yours.
Su hermano Johnny es tan aplicado como Molly. Her brother Johnny is as diligent as Molly.

(2) To negate these sentences, the word no is placed in front of the verb, in which case the sentence becomes a comparison of inequality:

Tu camisa no es tan elegante como la de Martín. Your shirt is not as elegant as Martín's.

Comparison of Equality—Nouns

Comparisons of equality using nouns are made with the following formula: tanto/a/os/ as + noun + como. Notice that tanto agrees in gender and number with the noun:

Tiene tanto miedo como yo. He is as afraid as I am.
Demuestra tanta paciencia como su padre. She shows as much patience as her father.
Recibió tantas felicitaciones como se merecía. He received as many congratulations as he deserved.
La compañía tiene tantos problemas como su competidora. The company has as many problems as its competitor.
NOTES:

(1) The meaning of these sentences can be preserved while inverting the word order:

*Tengo tanto miedo como él.* I am as afraid as he is.

*Su padre demuestra tanta paciencia como ella.* Her father shows as much patience as she does.

(2) To negate these sentences, the word *no* is placed in front of the verb, in which case the sentence becomes a comparison of inequality:

*No tengo tanto miedo como él.* I am not as afraid as he is.

*Su padre no demuestra tanta paciencia como ella.* Her father doesn’t show as much patience as she does.

For comparisons of equality using verbs and other adverbs, see Chapter 18, Adverbs.

Superlatives

An adjective is classified as superlative when it shows the highest or lowest degree of its inherent characteristic.

There are several ways of forming the superlative in Spanish:

A. **Using the expression el/la/los/las más or menos + adjective + de or entre to form the superlative:**

*El Parque Central es el más extenso de la ciudad de Nueva York.* Central Park is the largest in New York City.

*Entre todas las empleadas, Estela es la persona más responsable.* Among all the employees, Estela is the most responsible person.

*Esos cuadros son los menos coloridos de la exposición.* Those paintings are the least colorful in the art show.

B. **Adding the ending -ísimo or -ísima, or their plural forms, to the adjective to form the superlative:**

*Este libro es buenísimo.* This book is very, very good.

*Estaba encantadísima.* She was extremely delighted.
NOTES:

(1) The difference between A. and B. is that the sentences in A. identify the subjects within a specific group: the city of New York, an undefined office, and a particular art show. Outside of these limits, there might be other parks, employees, or paintings that enjoy a higher (or lower) degree of the characteristics addressed here.

In the sentences in B., there is no comparison with other subjects. The qualities mentioned (goodness and extreme happiness) are absolute, not being compared with the same type of qualities that might be possessed by other subjects.

(2) In order to add -ísimo or -ísima to an adjective, some basic spelling changes occur, although there are exceptions.

■ The last vowel is dropped before adding -ísimo or -ísima:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>New Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chico cansadó</td>
<td>cansadísimo</td>
<td>very tired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vajilla rota</td>
<td>rotísima</td>
<td>badly broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bandera verde</td>
<td>verdísima</td>
<td>deep green</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

■ The ending -c plus a vowel changes to -qu to preserve pronunciation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>New Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pato blanco</td>
<td>blanquísimo</td>
<td>very white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mañana fresca</td>
<td>fresquísima</td>
<td>very cool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

■ The ending -g plus a vowel changes to -gu to preserve pronunciation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>New Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>avenida larga</td>
<td>larguísima</td>
<td>very long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trago amargo</td>
<td>amarguísimo</td>
<td>very bitter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

■ The ending -gu plus a vowel changes to -qu:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>New Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>documento antiguo</td>
<td>antiquísimo</td>
<td>very old</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

■ The ending -ble changes to -bil:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>New Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>momento agradable</td>
<td>agradabilísimo</td>
<td>extremely nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persona afable</td>
<td>afabilísima</td>
<td>very nice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

■ The ending -z changes to -c:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>New Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hombre andaluz</td>
<td>andalucísimo</td>
<td>very Andalusian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matrimonio feliz</td>
<td>felicísimo</td>
<td>very happy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An existing accent is dropped:

- campo fértil ➔ fertilísimo very fertile
- caja útil ➔ utilísimo very useful

The ending -iente changes to -ente:

- café caliente ➔ calentísimo very hot
- soldado valiente ➔ valentísimo very valiant

(3) Not all adjectives can take the superlative -ísimo, -ísima, or their plural forms. Examples of some of the categories are given here:

- Augmentatives (casona), diminutives (mujercita), adjectives with many syllables (incomprensible), adjectives that do not accept degrees because of their intrinsic qualities (eterno), and numerals (octavo), among others, do not take the superlative form -ísimo. Comparatives are another category of adjectives that do not take the -ísimo form or its variations since they have their own specific superlative structures, as shown here:

  - bueno ➔ mejor ➔ óptimo
  - malo ➔ peor ➔ pésimo
  - pequeño ➔ menor ➔ mínimo
  - grande ➔ mayor ➔ máximo
  - alto ➔ superior ➔ supremo
  - bajo ➔ inferior ➔ ínfimo

- Adjectives that end in -í (carmesí) do not take the superlative form -ísimo or its variations.

- Adjectives that carry a written accent in the antepenultimate syllable and end in -eo (momentáneo); -imo (legítimo); -ico (estático); or -fero (mortífero), do not take the superlative form -ísimo or its variations.

- A few adjectives take the ending -érrimo instead ofísimo, including:

  - pobre ➔ paupérrimo
  - célebre ➔ celebérremo
  - mísero ➔ misérrimo
  - salubre ➔ salubérremo

C. Adding words or expressions such as:

Muy (very), sumamente (exceedingly), extremadamente (extremely), inmensamente (immensely), bien (with the meaning of very, very), and others. All of these forms are invariable.
sumamente triste
muy fatigadas
extremadamente pálido
inmensamente feliz
bien alegre

very, very sad
very tired
extremely pale
very, very happy
very, very happy, content

D. Plurals of superlative adjectives

The plurals of superlative adjectives that end in -ísimo and -ísima are formed according to the rules used for basic adjectives:

Los novios estaban felicísimos.
The bride and the groom were very, very happy.

Las madres estaban ocupadísimas.
The mothers were extremely busy.

Other forms, such as those mentioned previously, are invariable.

For the use of superlatives with verbs and other adverbs, see Chapter 18, Adverbs.

Demonstrative Adjectives

Demonstrative adjectives (adjetivos demostrativos) refer to the noun and give an idea of its distance from the speaker, either in space or in time. There are three categories of demonstrative adjectives in Spanish, which correspond to the English forms this, these, that, and those. As with other adjectives, demonstrative adjectives agree in gender and number with the noun they modify.

Categories of Demonstrative Adjectives

A. Near the speaker (this, these):

este pueblo
está señora

(this town)
(this lady)

estos libros
estas flores

B. Near the person spoken to or both the speaker and the listener (that, those):

ese pueblo
esa señora

(that town)
(that lady)

esos libros
esas flores
C. Far from both speaker and listener (that, those over there):

aquel pueblo (that town over there)
aquella señora (that lady in the corner)
aquellos libros (those books in the basement)
aquellas flores (those flowers in the back yard)

NOTES:
(1) The preceding forms become pronouns when they are used without a noun. As pronouns, they may or may not carry a written accent since this practice is now optional. In some cases the written accent helps to clarify the situation:

Estas flores son lindas. These flowers are pretty.
Éstas son lindas. These ones are pretty.
Estas flores son rojas y éas amarillas. These flowers are red and those are yellow.

(2) The forms esto, eso, and aquello are pronouns and never carry a written accent. They do not have feminine or plural forms, and are used to refer to non-specific things or ideas:

Eso es muy serio. That (situation) is very serious.
No me gustó aquello. I didn’t like that.

(3) The pronouns estotro (este otro) and esotro (ese otro) and their feminine and plural forms are no longer used. They appear in older manuscripts and literary works, such as La Celestina and Don Quijote de la Mancha.

Position of Demonstrative Adjectives

Demonstrative adjectives are usually placed before the noun:

Estos libros son buenos. These books are good.

Sometimes they are placed after the noun, mainly to express contempt or to refer to a noun previously mentioned:

No me gustan los libros estos. I don’t like these books.
Es muy chica la casa esa. That house is very small.
Uses of Demonstrative Adjectives

A. If more than one noun is modified by demonstrative adjectives, the adjectives must be repeated:

Esta cartera y estos guantes son importados.  This bag and these gloves are imported.
Esta blusa y esta falda me gustan.  I like this blouse and this skirt.

B. When the nouns represent the same person or object, however, only one demonstrative is used:

Esa buena madre y enfermera pasó la noche cuidándolo.  That good mother and nurse spent all night taking care of him.
Ese local y biblioteca está muy bien diseñado.  That site and library is very well designed.

C. When a demonstrative adjective precedes the noun, no article is used before that noun:

Ese hombre salió rápido.  That man left quickly.
(Not: Ese el hombre salió rápido.)

D. When a demonstrative adjective follows the noun, the article must be used:

Salió rápido el hombre ese.  That man left quickly.

E. Demonstratives used to cover a pause

In spoken Spanish, and sometimes even in informal writing, the demonstratives este and esto can be used to express hesitation in the sentence:

Me lo dio... este... pero no dijo nada.  She gave it to me... uh... but didn’t say anything.
Bueno... esto... dije que no quiero que vengas.  Well... uh... I said I don’t want you to come.

F. Tal and tales to replace ese and aquel

The words tal and tales sometimes replace ese and aquel, their plural forms esos and aquellos, and the feminine forms esa(s) and aquella(s):

¡No me gustó tal (esa) sorpresa!  I didn’t like a surprise like that.
Tales (Esos) problemas eran cosa de todos los días.  Problems like those were an everyday thing.
G. *Ese* and *aquel* to indicate past time

*Ese* and *aquel* and their feminine and plural forms are used to indicate a period of time in the past. *Aquel* gives the idea of further back in time, or of something that no longer exists:

- **Ese**: En *ese* tiempo vivíamos en Quilmes.  
  En *esa* época todo estaba bien.  
  *En aquellos* años yo era muy chica.

- **Aquel**: Aquellas veces yo me quedaba en su casa.  
  En *aquella* casa que estaba en la esquina.  
  Vivían en *aquella* casa que estaba en la esquina.

H. Forms of *aquel* in idiomatic expressions

*Aquel*, or one of its variations, is used exclusively in some idiomatic expressions:

- ¡Qué bailes *aquellos*! Ya no existen fi estas así.  
- ¡Qué muchacho *aquel*! Nunca llegaba a *tiempo*.

Possessive Adjectives

Possessive adjectives (*adjetivos posesivos*) indicate which person is the possessor of the item expressed by the noun. In *My chair is brown*, it is obvious that the chair belongs to me. These adjectives are usually placed before the noun in Spanish, although they may be placed after the noun for emphasis, in which case they have a different form.

Prenominal Position (Before the Noun) of Possessive Adjectives

A. Singular possessor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Single Item</th>
<th>Plural Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>my</td>
<td><em>mi</em> jardín</td>
<td><em>mis</em> jardines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>mi</em> lapicera</td>
<td><em>mis</em> lapiceras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your (informal)</td>
<td><em>tu</em> gato</td>
<td><em>tus</em> gatos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>tu</em> casa</td>
<td><em>tus</em> casas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his, her,</td>
<td><em>su</em> pie</td>
<td><em>sus</em> pies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>its, your (formal)</td>
<td><em>su</em> cama</td>
<td><em>sus</em> camas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. Plural possessor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Item</th>
<th>Plural Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>our</td>
<td>nuestro perro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nuestra casa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your (informal, Spain)</td>
<td>vuestro coche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vuestra loma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your (formal)</td>
<td>su maleta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>su papel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their</td>
<td>su regalo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>su tía</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>su gato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>su cama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

1. *Nuestro/a/os/as (our)* and *vuestro/a/os/as (your, plural)* agree with the noun in gender and number; all other forms agree only in number (*mi/mis, tu/tus, su/sus*).

2. *Vuestro* and its variations are used in Spain. Latin American speakers use *su* and *sus* in prenominal position (before the noun). Notice the following two versions of a question to a couple about their car:

   - ¿*Vuestro* coche es nuevo? Is your car new?
   - ¿*Su* coche es rojo? Is your car red?

3. The article (*el, la, los, las*) is omitted before the noun when the possessive adjective is in prenominal position (before the noun):

   - Tu resumen es bueno. Your summary is good.
     (Not: *Tu el* resumen es bueno.)
   - Llegaron nuestros amigos. Our friends arrived.
     (Not: *Llegaron nuestros los* amigos.)

### Postnominal Position (After the Noun) of Possessive Adjectives

#### A. Singular possessor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Item</th>
<th>Plural Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>my</td>
<td>jardín mío</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gorra mía</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
your (informal)  
*gato tuyo*  
*ca* _tuya*  
*gatos tuyos*  
*cats*

his, her, its,  
your (informal)  
*coche vuestro*  
*loma vuestra*  
*gato suyo*  
*pie suyo*  
*camas suyas*  
*feet*

your (formal)  
*cama suya*  
*pie suyo*  
*camas suyas*  
*beds*

NOTES:
(1) All postnominal possessives (i.e., those positioned after the noun) agree with the noun in gender and number.

(2) *Vuestro* and its variations (*vuestra/os/as*) are used in Spain. Latin American speakers use *suyo/a/os/as*:

¿*Este es el libro vuestro?* Is this your book?
¿*El auto suyo es nuevo?* Is your car new?

The form *de ustedes* is also widely used in Latin America:

¿*Los autos de ustedes son importados?* Are your cars imported?

(3) The article must precede the noun when the possessive adjective comes after the noun:

*El resumen tuyo es bueno.* Your summary is good.
*Llegaron los amigos nuestros.* Our friends arrived.
*Traigan los discos de ustedes.* Bring your CDs.
**Uses of Possessive Adjectives**

**A. Possessive adjectives used with more than one noun**

When the nouns are considered independently, a possessive adjective is used with every noun:

> Su abrigo y su bastón estaban en la sala. His coat and his cane were in the living room.

However, only one adjective may be used in the following cases.

1. **When the nouns are considered together as a whole concept:**

   > Nuestra paz y prosperidad dependen del pueblo. Our peace and prosperity depend on our people.

2. **When the nouns refer to the same person or object:**

   > Ella es mi hermana y confidente. She is my sister and confidante.

**B. Possessive adjectives used (or not) with parts of the body**

Possessives are not used with parts of the body unless the sentence is ambiguous:

> Puse los pies en agua tibia. I put my feet in warm water.

(Not: Puse mis pies en agua tibia.)

> Tiene los pies cansados. Her feet are tired.

(Not: Tiene sus pies cansados.)

**NOTES:**

1. If the body part is the subject of the verb, the possessive is used instead of the article to avoid ambiguity:

   > Sus dientes eran blancos. Her teeth were white.

   **But:** Los dientes eran blancos. The teeth were white. (It is not clear whose teeth the speaker is referring to.)

   > Mi cabeza daba vueltas. My head was turning around.

   **But:** La cabeza daba vueltas. The head was turning around. (It is not clear whose head the speaker is referring to.)

2. Possessives are not used when the verb is reflexive:

   > Me duele la cabeza. My head hurts.

   (Not: Me duele mi cabeza.)
Se lavó las manos. She washed her hands.
(Not: Se lavó sus manos.)
Me seco la cara. I dry my face.
(Not: Me seco mi cara.)

C. Possessive adjectives used with family members

A possessive adjective must be used if the member of the family (hermana, padres, hija) belongs to a subject of the verb indicated by the personal pronoun yo, tú, Ud. (usted), nosotros/as, vosotros/as or Uds. (ustedes):

(yo) Fui al cine con mi hermana a ver “Cautivos de amor”. my sister
(tú) ¿Hablaste con tus padres anoche? your parents
¿Ud. almorzó con su cuñado? your brother-in-law
(nosotros) Iremos con nuestras hijas. our daughters
(vosotros) Iréis con vuestra madre. your mother
Uds. verán a sus hijos. your sons

However, with the third persons, both singular and plural, indicated by él, ella, ellos, or ellas, either the possessive adjective or the article may be used:

El salió con su (el) hermano. his brother
Maria vio a sus (las) primas ayer. her cousins

D. Possessive adjectives used with persons other than relatives

To indicate relationships with persons other than members of the family, the use of the possessive adjective is optional with all the pronouns:

Lo vi a mi (al) jefe. my/the boss
Hablaste con tu (el) empleado. your/the employee
Uds. verán a su (al) médico. your/the doctor
Carlos vino con su (el) amigo. his friend

E. Possessive adjectives used with personal items, particularly items of clothing

The use of the possessive adjective is optional when there is no question about the owner:

Llevé mi (el) bolso azul. I took my blue bag.
But: Llevé mi bolso azul porque no encontré el tuyo. I took my blue bag because I couldn’t find yours.
NOTES:
(1) When the verb is reflexive, the possessive is not necessary, unless the meaning is ambiguous:

Se puso el (su) abrigo negro.  
She put on her black coat.

Me senté en la (mi) silla.  
I sat on my chair.

However:

Se puso su abrigo viejo porque el de María no le quedaba bien.  
She put on her old coat because María’s coat did not fit her very well.

(2) When the owner of the item is indicated by an indirect object, the possessive adjective is not used:

Nos dejó las camas sin hacer.  
She left our beds unmade.

Not: Nos dejó nuestras camas sin hacer.  
He always returns my books when he borrows them.

Siempre me devuelve los libros cuando me los pide prestados.  
He always returns my books when he borrows them.

Not: Siempre me devuelve mis libros.

(3) If the item possessed is the subject of the verb, the possessive is used instead of the article to avoid ambiguity:

Mi cama estaba sin hacer.  
My bed was unmade.

But: La cama estaba sin hacer.  
The bed was unmade. (It could be anybody’s bed.)

F. Possessive Adjectives Used After the Verb Ser

When the possessive adjective is in *prenominal* position (before the noun) following the verb *ser*, there is a mere indication of possession, and the article is not used:

*Esa es nuestra carta.*  
That one is our letter.

*¿Estos son tus zapatos?*  
Are these your shoes?

When the possessive adjective is in *postnominal* position (after the verb) following the noun, there is a distinction implied, and the article must be used:

*Esa es la casa nuestra; la de al lado es la de Ester.*  
That one is our house; the one next door is Ester’s.

*¿Estos son los zapatos tuyos o los de Juan?*  
Are these your shoes or Juan’s?
G. **Possessive adjectives used with definite or indefinite articles**

The meaning of the sentence using a possessive adjective changes in Spanish depending on whether the article is present or absent and on the type of article that is used.

1. **Possessive adjective used with no article:**

   \[ \text{Elena es amiga mía.} \]

   Elena is my friend.

   Here the possessive article merely gives information on the relationship.

2. **Possessive adjective used with an indefinite article:**

   \[ \text{Elena es una amiga mía.} \]

   Elena is a friend of mine.

   Here the possessive article identifies Helen as one of the speaker’s friends and suggests the possibility that the speaker has other friends besides Helen.

3. **Possessive adjectives used with a definite article:**

   \[ \text{Elena es la amiga que yo tengo.} \]

   Elena is the friend I have.

   \[ \text{Elena es la amiga mía que siempre está lista para ayudarme.} \]

   Elena is the friend of mine who is always ready to help me out.

   \[ \text{Elena es la amiga mía; Juana es la amiga de Clara.} \]

   Elena is my friend; Juana is Clara's friend.

   In the first sentence above, there is an indication that the speaker has only one friend. In the second sentence there is a clear distinction made among the speaker’s friends. In the third sentence, there is a possibility that the speaker has other friends but is specifically referring to one person.

H. **Ambiguous third person forms (singular and plural) of possessive adjectives**

The Spanish forms \textit{su} and \textit{sus}, as well as \textit{suyo} and its variations \textit{suya}, \textit{suyos}, and \textit{suyas}, may lead to confusions regarding the possessor when used out of context. A practical way of clarifying the utterance is to use the preposition \textit{de} and a \textit{personal pronoun} (third person singular or plural, as in \textit{de él, de ellos}, covered in the section Practical Uses of Possessive Adjectives that follows). The following examples show the multiple possible meanings of these:

1. **Prenominal \textit{su}, \textit{sus} (his, her, its, your, their)**

   \[ \text{Me gusta su paciencia.} \]

   I like his/her/its/your/their patience.

   \[ \text{Hay algo en sus ojos tristes.} \]

   There is something in his/her/its/your/their sad eyes.
2. Postnominal *suyo/a/os/as* (*his, her, its, your, their*)

*Me gusta la paciencia suya.*

I like his/her/its/your/their patience.

*Hay algo en los tristes ojos suyos.*

There is something in his/her/its/your/their sad eyes.

**Practical Uses of Possessive Adjectives**

In order to clarify the identity of the possessor or to avoid redundancy of the possessive adjective or pronoun, a form of *de* plus a *personal pronoun* is used instead of the prenominal or postnominal possessive in the following cases:

**A. De plus a pronoun with persons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessive adjective</th>
<th>Personal pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>la familia</em> de él</td>
<td>his family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>los hijos</em> de ella</td>
<td>her children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el artículo</em> de Ud.</td>
<td>your article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el perro</em> de ellos</td>
<td>their dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>las latas</em> de ellas</td>
<td>their cans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>el examen</em> de Uds.</td>
<td>your exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare the following sets of sentences using *de* plus a *personal pronoun*, the possessive adjective or pronoun, or a possessive expression with the article plus *de*, as in *el de*, *la de*, etc., that functions as a possessive adjective or pronoun.

*Prefiero el lápiz suyo.*

I prefer his/her/your/their pencil.

*Prefiero su lápiz.*

I prefer his/her/your/their pencil.

*Prefiero el lápiz de él.*

I prefer his pencil.

*Prefiero el (lápiz) de él.*

I prefer his (pencil).

*Prefiero el (lápiz) de María.*

I prefer María's (pencil).

*Prefiero su (adj.) lápiz porque el suyo (pron.) no escribe bien.*

I prefer his/her/your/their pencil because his/hers/yours/their does not write well.

*Prefiero el lápiz suyo (adj.) porque el suyo (pron.) no escribe bien.*

I prefer his/her/your/their pencil because his/hers/yours/their does not write well.

*Prefiero el lápiz de ella (adj.) porque el suyo (pron.) no escribe bien.*

I prefer her pencil because his/hers/yours/their does not write well.
Prefiero su (adj.) lápiz porque el de (pron.) Juan no escribe bien.  
Prefiero el lápiz de ella (adj.) porque el de Ud. (pron.) no escribe bien.  
I prefer his/her/your/their pencil because John’s does not write well.  
I prefer her pencil because yours does not write well.

B. De with inanimate nouns

In order to avoid ambiguity, the possessive adjective may be left out with inanimate nouns. Neither the expression de + personal pronoun (él, ella, ellos, ellas) nor the postnominal possessives are used:

El precio del coche es bueno.  
The price of the car is good.

Not clear:
Su precio es bueno.  
Its/his/her/your price is good.

El precio de él es bueno.  
Its/his price is good.

El precio suyo es bueno.  
Its/his/her/your/their price is good.

Las ventanas de los cuartos son grandes.  
The windows of the rooms are large.

Not clear:
Sus ventanas son grandes.  
Their/its/her/his/your windows are large.

Las ventanas de ellos son grandes.  
Their (could refer to the rooms or to people) windows are large.

Las ventanas suyas son grandes.  
Its/her/his/your/their windows are large.

C. Possessive adjectives used with nonhuman animate nouns

In order to avoid ambiguity, the possessive adjective may be left out. Neither the expression de + personal pronoun (él, ella, ellos, ellas) nor the postnominal possessives are used:

Los dientes de los leones son afilados.  
Lions’ teeth are sharp.

Not clear:
Sus dientes son afilados.  
Their/its/her/his/your teeth are sharp.

Los dientes de ellos son afilados.  
Their (could refer to the lions or to people) teeth are sharp.

Los dientes suyos son afilados.  
Their/its/his/her/your teeth are sharp.
More Uses of Possessive Adjectives

Possessive adjectives are also used in the following situations:

A. Possessive adjectives used to address a person in written or spoken language

1. The postnominal form is used. The article is left out:

   Estimados señores **nuestros**: Dear Sirs:
   Muy señores **míos**: Gentlemen:
   **Hija mía**: My daughter,

2. If other words are added to modify the nouns, either the prenominal or the postnominal form may be used. The article is left out:

   **Mi** estimada señora: (My) dear Madam:
   **Estimada señora mía**:
   **Nuestros** recordados colegas: (Our) well-remembered colleagues:
   **Recordados colegas nuestros**:

B. The use of **nuestro** instead of **mi**

**Nuestro** is used in place of **mi**, particularly in formal writing, in order to avoid the use of the first person **yo** (implied) as the subject of the sentence, indicated by the possessive **mi**. This is normally done in English to make the writing less subjective: Our intention is, rather than My intention is.

   **Nuestra** intención es presentar el documento mañana.
   Not: **Mi** intención es...

   **Nuestros** datos indican que hay una diferencia.
   Not: **Mis** datos indican...

C. Idiomatic expressions with possessive adjectives

The following are some examples of idiomatic expressions that use possessive adjectives:
1. Expressions with prepositions (postnominal possessive adjective):

   - a instancia nuestra      at our request
   - a costa suya             at his expense
   - a pesar nuestro          in spite of us
   - de parte mía              on my behalf
   - por causa suya           because of her
   - por culpa mía             because of me

2. Expressions without prepositions (postnominal possessive adjective):

   - No tenemos carta tuya.  We haven't received a letter from you.
   - No hubo comunicación suya. There was no communication from him.
   - Han recibido autorización nuestra. They have received our authorization.
   - Pediré referencias suyas. I will request references about him.

D. Possession expressed by a prepositional phrase with de

Possession may be expressed in three different ways: by a possessive in prenominal position, a possessive in postnominal position, or by de + a personal pronoun:

   - Esta es nuestra casa.       This is our house.
   - Esta es nuestra casa.       This is our house.
   - Esta es la nuestra casa.   This is our house.
   - Esta es la casa de nosotros.

   - Me gusta su traje.           I like his suit.
   - Me gusta el traje suyo.      I like his suit.
   - Me gusta el traje de él.     I like his suit.

The third form listed above (de + personal pronoun) may be used with all the personal pronouns, with the exception of the first and second persons singular yo and tú.

   - Esta es mi casa.            This is my house.
   - Esta es la casa mía.        This is my house.
   - Esta es la casa mía.        This is my house.
   - Esta es la casa de yo (or de mí).

   - Me gusta tu cartera.        I like your purse.
   - Me gusta la cartera tuya.   I like your purse.
   - Me gusta la cartera tuya.   I like your purse.
   - Not:                        Not:
   - Me gusta la cartera de tú (or de ti).
E. Possession expressed by the verb *pertenecer* (to belong)

Possession may be indicated using the verb *pertenecer* and an indirect object pronoun (*me, te, le, nos, os, les*). This verb is conjugated like *gustar*. The indirect object may also be used, for emphasis:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Estos libros } & \text{me pertenecen (a mí).} & \text{These books belong to me.} \\
\text{El sombrero } & \text{le pertenece (a él).} & \text{The hat belongs to him.}
\end{align*}
\]

**NOTE:**
Without an indirect object pronoun, *pertenecer* means *to be part* of something. It is conjugated in all the forms.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(Yo) pertenezco al grupo de competidores.} & \quad \text{I am part of the group of competitors.} \\
\text{Nosotros pertenecemos a esta sociedad.} & \quad \text{We are members of this society.}
\end{align*}
\]

### Numerals

Numerals are adjectives that refer to a noun and indicate the amount or the order in which the units appear. There are six categories of numerals:

A. **Cardinal numerals (cardinales):**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dos plantas} & \quad \text{two plants}
\end{align*}
\]

B. **Ordinal numerals (ordinales):**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{la tercera carta} & \quad \text{the third letter}
\end{align*}
\]

C. **Partitive numerals (partitivos):**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{la octava parte} & \quad \text{the eighth part}
\end{align*}
\]

D. **Multiple or proportional numerals (múltiples o proporcionales):**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{el doble} & \quad \text{double}
\end{align*}
\]

E. **Distributive numerals (distributivos):**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sendos/as} & \quad \text{to one another, each other}
\end{align*}
\]
F. collective numerals (colectivos):

un centenar de caballos  
one hundred horses

**Cardinal Numerals**

These numeral adjectives point to the noun and specify its number. They answer the question *How many?*

¿Cuántos amigos? Tres.  
How many friends? Three.

¿Cuántas tiendas? Cinco.  
How many stores? Five.

**Gender of Cardinal Numerals**

Numbers in Spanish are masculine because *número* is a masculine noun (*el número dos, el número cuarenta)*:

*El tres es número de suerte.*  
Three is a lucky number.

*Llegaremos el ocho de marzo.*  
We'll arrive on March 8th.

*Hay un ejercicio en la página (número) doscientos cinco.*  
There is an exercise on page 205.

**NOTE:**

Numbers do not change gender before a feminine noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine Noun</th>
<th>Feminine Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cinco lápices (masculine noun)</td>
<td>five pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinco camas (masculine noun)</td>
<td>five beds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>veinte platos</td>
<td>twenty plates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>veinte almohadas</td>
<td>twenty pillows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, exceptions to this rule are the number one (*uno > una*), as well as all the combinations with *cientos*, from *doscientos* to *novecientos* (including five hundred, *quinientos*), each of which has a feminine form: *doscientas, quinientas*. See the following section titled Uses and Changes in Form for each set of numbers.
Numbers from 0 to 30

0 cero

Zero is an arithmetical sign. It has no numerical value by itself, but when placed to the right of a number it multiplies the value of that number by ten: 0, 20, 200.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 uno</th>
<th>11 once</th>
<th>21 veintiuno</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 dos</td>
<td>12 doce</td>
<td>22 veintidós</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 tres</td>
<td>13 trece</td>
<td>23 veintitrés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 cuatro</td>
<td>14 catorce</td>
<td>24 veinticuatro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 cinco</td>
<td>15 quince</td>
<td>25 veinticinco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 seis</td>
<td>16 diecisésis</td>
<td>26 veintiséis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 siete</td>
<td>17 diecisiete</td>
<td>27 veintisiete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 ocho</td>
<td>18 dieciocho</td>
<td>28 veintiocho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 nueve</td>
<td>19 diecinueve</td>
<td>29 veintinueve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 diez</td>
<td>20 veinte</td>
<td>30 treinta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uses and Changes in Form of Numbers from 0 to 30

A. Uno becomes un before masculine singular nouns

*Uno* takes the short form *un* before masculine singular nouns, even when the noun is preceded by another adjective:

Tengo *uno*.  
I have one.

But:

Tengo *un* amigo.  
I have one friend.

Tengo solamente *un* fiel amigo.  
I have only one faithful friend.

B. All numerals that end in uno take the shortened form un before masculine nouns:

*Hay veintiún chicos.*  
There are twenty-one boys.

*ciento un hombres*  
one hundred men

**NOTE:**

This rule also applies when the cardinal precedes *mil (thousand), millón (million), billón (billion), trillón (trillion), etc.:

veintiún mil dólares  
21,000 dollars

treinta y *un* millones  
31 million

cincuenta y *un* billones  
51 billion
C. *Uno* becomes *una* before a feminine singular noun

*Uno* changes to *una* before a feminine singular noun even when the noun is preceded by another adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Tengo una.</em></td>
<td>I have one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tengo una amiga.</em></td>
<td>I have one friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tengo solamente una fiel amiga.</em></td>
<td>I have only one faithful friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Me quedé con una copia.</em></td>
<td>I was left with one copy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

1. Expressions such as *un amigo* and *una copia* (*one friend, one copy*) can also just mean *a friend or a copy*, depending on context, since the numeral has the same form as the indefinite article:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Compré un lápiz azul y dos rojos.</em></td>
<td>I bought one (a) blue pencil and two red ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tengo un buen lápiz para corregir los ejercicios.</em></td>
<td>I have one (a) good pencil for correcting the exercises.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The number *one* (*uno, una*) never has a plural form. If it appears in the plural, it is an indefinite article:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Vi un árbol allí.</em> (adj./art.)</td>
<td>I saw one (a) tree there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vi unos árboles allí.</em> (art.)</td>
<td>I saw some trees there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vi solamente una planta, no tres, como dices.</em> (adj.)</td>
<td>I saw only one plant, not three as you say.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hay unas plantas.</em> (art.)</td>
<td>There are some plants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. *Una* becomes *un* before a stressed *a*

When a feminine singular noun begins with a stressed *a, una* becomes *un* for phonetic purposes. The form *una* is also accepted, although it is used less frequently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Noé construyó un arca.</em></td>
<td>Noah built an (one) ark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Noé construyó un arca enorme.</em></td>
<td>Noah built a huge ark.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, if another adjective is placed before the noun to show emphasis, the complete form *una* is used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Noé construyó una enorme arca, no dos.</em></td>
<td>Noah built one huge ark, not two.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E. *Una* and *un* before feminine plural nouns

All numerals that end in *uno* take the ending *una* before a feminine plural noun, and *un* before a feminine plural noun that begins with stressed *a*:

- *Hay veintiuna chicas aquí.* There are twenty-one girls here.
- *Encontraron veintiún arcas en la excavación.* They found twenty-one arks in the excavation.

**NOTE:** If the feminine cardinal precedes *mil* (*thousand*), *millón* (*million*), *billón* (*billion*), etc., the shortened form *un* is always used:

- *veintiún mil especies* 21,000 species
- *treinta y un millones de estrellas* 31 million stars
- *cuarenta y un mil maestras* 41,000 teachers

F. Numbers from *dieciséis* to *diecinueve* (16-19) and from *veintiuno* to *veintinueve* (21-29)

Numbers from *dieciséis* to *diecinueve* (16-19) and from *veintiuno* to *veintinueve* (21-29) are usually written as one word. They may also be written as three words (*diez y ocho*, *veinte y tres*), although these forms are becoming obsolete. Even when written in the long form, numbers between twenty-one and twenty-nine are pronounced as one word.

G. Plural form of numerals

Although numerals greater than one are necessarily plural and do not change form (*cinco lápices*, *five pencils*), they have a plural form when used as a noun:

- *Quiero los ocho pedazos.* I want the eight pieces. (There are eight in all.)
- *But:* *No me gusta este ocho. Es muy grande.* I don't like this number eight. It's too large.
- *No me gustan estos ochos; píntalos de rojo.* I don't like these eights; paint them red.

H. Numerals that designate the hours are feminine

Numerals from one to twelve that are used to designate the hours are feminine because the noun *hora* (*hour*) is feminine:

- *la una* one o'clock
- *las dos* two o'clock
- *las doce* twelve o'clock
The verb *ser* (*to be*) agrees in number with the hour specified:

- *Es la una.* It is one o'clock.
- *Es la una en punto.* It is one o'clock sharp.
- *Son las tres.* It is three o'clock.
- *Son las once.* It is eleven o'clock.

To indicate what time it is, *a la* (*at*) is used with *one o'clock*, and *a las* with the hours between two and twelve:

- *a la una* at one o'clock
- *a las ocho* at eight o'clock

The time is usually spelled out:

- *Llegaron a las cuatro y media.* They arrived at four thirty.

**NOTE:**

In schedules, such as departures and arrivals, military time is used:

- *18:30, 22:00, etc.*
- *18:30 may be read as dieciocho y treinta* (formal) or *seis y media* (informal).

### I. Writing out numbers

When numbers appear in letters, notes, etc., it is better to write them out, beginning with one, although figures are accepted up to nine:

- *Trajeron una botella.* They brought one bottle.
- *Me dio ocho botellas.* She gave me eight bottles.

However, if exact figures are given, as in specific amounts of items, figures are used:

- *Esperan vender 475 cajas de herramientas.* They expect to sell 475 tool boxes.

If the amount is approximate, words are used:

- *Creen que venderán unas cuatrocientas cajas.* They think that they will sell about four hundred boxes.

### Numbers from 30 to 199

- *30 treinta*
- *40 cuarenta*
- *31 treinta y uno*
- *44 cuarenta y cuatro*
Uses and Changes in Form of Numbers from 30 to 199

A. Compound numbers between thirty-one and ninety-nine

Compound numbers between thirty-one and ninety-nine are written and pronounced using three words each (cincuenta y dos, treinta y cuatro), although the pronunciation cincuentidós, treinticuarto is widely heard. Notice the use of y (and) in the Spanish numerals:

- cuarenta y tres, forty-three
- setenta y nueve, seventy-nine

B. Un, the shortened form of uno (one), is not used before the numbers cien and ciento:

- cien gallinas, one hundred hens
- ciento un pollos, one hundred and one chickens

C. Beyond 100, there is no y (and) right after the hundreds, as there would be in English:

- ciento uno, one hundred and one
- doscientos tres, two hundred and three
- cuatrocientos cincuenta, four hundred and fifty
- trescientos cuarenta y dos, three hundred and forty-two

*NOTE:* It is ciento uno (101) (not: un ciento uno).

D. Spelling changes

There are slight changes in the spelling of the original single digit when it becomes part of a larger number:
E. **Cien**

*Cien* is a shortened form for *ciento* (*a hundred*), and is invariable. It is used in the following contexts.

1. *Cien* is used before a noun, preceded or not by a modifying word:

   - *cien maestros*  
   - *cien lámparas*  
   - *cien hermosas chicas*

   - one hundred teachers  
   - one hundred lamps  
   - one hundred pretty girls

2. *Cien* is used before nominalized adjectives:

   - *Salieron cien valientes.*  
   - *Elijieron a las cien más bonitas.*

   - One hundred valiant (men) came out.  
   - They chose the prettiest one hundred (girls).

3. *Cien* is used when the number stands by itself:

   - *Quiero cien. No me des más.*  
   - *Sólo tengo cien.*

   - I want one hundred (of them). Don't give me more.  
   - I only have one hundred.

   **NOTE:**

   The use of *ciento* is becoming obsolete in this case, although it was previously considered the correct form.

4. *Cien* is used before *mil* (*thousand*), *millón* (*million*), *billón* (*billion*), etc.:

   - *cien mil años*  
   - *cien millones de dólares*

   - one hundred thousand years  
   - one hundred million dollars

   **NOTES:**

   (1) *Mil* has a plural form only when it functions as a collective noun:

   - *Hay miles de estrellas.*

   - There are thousands of stars.

   (2) *Un billón* is *a thousand millions*, as in English.
(3) If a number from one to ninety-nine is added to one hundred, *cien* becomes *ciento*, even before *mil, millones, billones*, etc.:

- ciento dos mil pesos 102,000 pesos
- ciento cincuenta millones 150,000,000

But:
- cien mil pesos 100,000 pesos

**F. Ciento is used in the following contexts:**

1. *Ciento* is used when a number from one to ninety-nine is added to one hundred:
   - ciento un maestros 101 teachers
   - ciento una lámparas 101 lamps
   - ciento cincuenta libros 150 books
   - ciento noventa y nueve días 199 days
   - ciento treinta y cuatro mil habitantes 134,000 inhabitants

2. *Ciento* is used to indicate a percentage:
   
   Tuvieron un cien (ciento)* por ciento de ganancias. They made a hundred-percent profit.
   
   Los resultados fueron buenos en el cuatro por ciento de los estudiantes. The results were good for four percent of the students.

**Numbers from 200 to 999**

- 200 doscientos
- 300 trescientos
- 400 cuatrocientos
- 500 quinientos
- 600 seiscientos
- 700 setecientos
- 800 ochocientos
- 900 novecientos
- 201 doscientos uno
- 322 trescientos veintidós
- 433 cuatrocientos treinta y tres
- 555 quinientos cincuenta y cinco
- 666 seiscientos sesenta y seis
- 777 setecientos setenta y siete
- 888 ochocientos ochenta y ocho
- 999 novecientos noventa y nueve

* Although *ciento por ciento* (100%) has been considered the correct form, the expression *cien por ciento* is widely used.
Uses and Changes in Form of Numbers from 200 to 999

A. **Doscientos** and **trescientos** are also spelled **docientos** and **trecientos**.

B. **Cientos (hundreds)**

*Cientos (hundreds)* is part of every number from *two hundred (doscientos)* to *nine hundred (novecientos)*. It has a feminine ending, which is used before feminine nouns:

- trescientos soldados: three hundred soldiers
- setecientos años: seven hundred years
- seiscientas páginas: six hundred pages
- doscientas ovejas: two hundred sheep
- cuatrocientas vacas: four hundred cows

C. **Cientos** by itself is a collective noun that means *hundreds* and is always masculine:

- Tiraron cientos de botellas.: They threw out hundreds of bottles.
- Había cientos de soldados muertos.: There were hundreds of dead soldiers.
- Hay cientos de páginas para leer.: There are hundreds of pages to read.

D. **Quinientos**

*Quinientos* has a different form from all other numbers in the sequence from *doscientos* to *novecientos*. It also has a feminine ending, which is used before feminine nouns:

- Había quinientas armas en el granero.: There were five hundred guns in the silo.
- La biblioteca recibió quinientos libros.: The library received five hundred books.

---

**NOTE:**

*Las mil y quinientas* takes the meaning of *very late* in a popular saying:

- Se fueron a las mil y quinientas esa noche.: They left very late that night.

E. **Y (and)** in cardinal numbers

Notice that *y (and)* is not used right after the hundreds, as would be done in English, but it is used after the tens:

- doscientos cuarenta: two hundred and forty
- quinientos treinta y seis: five hundred and thirty-six
Numbers 1000 and Beyond

There are several uses and changes in form for these numbers.

A. Mil (one thousand)

1. *Un*, the shortened form of *uno* (one) is not used before *mil*:

   - mil viajes  one thousand trips
   - mil leguas  one thousand leagues
   - mil gracias  many, many thanks

   However, *un* is used when the multiple of *mil* (i.e., the number of thousands) ends in *uno*:

   - 500,000 (English: 500,000)  quinientos mil
     - But:
     - 501,000 (English: 501,000)  quinientos un mil

2. *Mil* has the plural form *miles*, followed by *de*, only when used as a collective noun meaning *thousands*.

   - mil hojas  one thousand leaves
   - miles de hojas  thousands of leaves

   *Miles* does not have a feminine form:

   - unos miles de hormigas  a few thousand ants
     - (Not: unas miles de hormigas)

   **NOTE:**
   *Millar* is a group of one thousand units. The plural form, *millares*, is used to indicate a large number of items. It does not have a feminine form, either:

   - Había un millar de estrellas.  There were a thousand stars.
   - Había millares de estrellas.  There were thousands of stars.

3. In order to write a multiple of *mil*, numbers from 2 to 999 are placed in front of *mil*:

   - mil  one thousand
   - dos mil  two thousand

cincuenta mil  
trescientos mil  
novecientos noventa y nueve mil

NOTES:

(1) In Spanish, a period is used to indicate the thousands instead of a comma:
3.500 7.221 10.422

(2) A comma is used to indicate decimals:
0,25 3,14 1.300,75

(3) The thousands cannot be expressed as hundreds, as is sometimes done in English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>twelve hundred</td>
<td>mil doscientos (one thousand two hundred)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fourteen ninety-two</td>
<td>mil cuatrocientos noventa y dos (one thousand four hundred and ninety-two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nineteen ninety-nine</td>
<td>mil novecientos noventa y nueve (one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Numbers from 1 to 999 are added to the thousands to make all possible combinations up to one million:

23.877 veintitrés mil ochocientos setenta y siete
999.999 novecientos noventa y nueve mil novecientos noventa y nueve
1.005 mil cinco (one thousand and five)

NOTES:

(1) In Spanish, y (and) is not used after the thousands or hundreds, but it is used after the tens, as in 2.348:
5.007 cinco mil siete
3.220 tres mil doscientos veinte
2.348 dos mil trescientos cuarenta y ocho

(2) The expression las mil y una, as in the popular saying Me hizo las mil y una (She treated me very badly), does not mean literally one thousand and one, but many, many times plus one more time.
B. Millón, billón, trillón, etc.

These words have the following characteristics:

1. They are collective nouns and have a plural form (millones, billones):
   
   - un millón de pesos  
   - dos millones de dólares
   
   one million pesos  
   two million dollars

2. They do not have a feminine form:
   
   - un millón de tarjetas  
   - un millón de gracias  
   - dos millones de monedas
   
   one million cards  
   one million thanks  
   two million coins

3. They represent, respectively, the following numbers:
   
   - 1.000.000  
   - 1.000.000.000  
   - 1.000.000.000.000
   
   un millón  
   un billón  
   un trillón
   
   one million  
   one billion  
   one trillion

4. As nouns, they may be preceded by articles (art.), adjectives (adj.), or numerals (num.), as clarified below. They can also be implied after a pronoun (pro.).
   
   - un millón de cepillos (num.)
   - el millón de libros pedidos (art.)
   - El millón de dólares lo estaba esperando. (art.)
   - tres millones de latas (num.)
   - Ese (millón) desapareció. (pro.)
   - El succulento millón desapareció. (adj.)
   
   one million brushes
   the million books ordered
   The million dollars were waiting for him.
   three million cans
   That one disappeared.
   The succulent million disappeared.

5. They are followed by the preposition de if no other numerals are added: (See point 6 that follows.)
   
   - tres millones de entradas
   - dos billones de pesos
   
   three million tickets
   two billion pesos

   However, in context, de and the noun may be left out:
   
   - Pidieron un billón de dólares.
   - Recibieron un millón.
   - But:
   - Recibieron el billón que habían pedido.
   
   They asked for a billion dollars.
   They received one million.
   They received the billion that they had asked for.
6. If numerals are added to the basic units *un millón, un billón*, etc., the indefinite article is kept, and the whole expression is written without the preposition *de*.

- *un millón quinientas mil estrellas* 1,500,000 stars
- *un billón doscientos mil pesos* 1,000,200,000 pesos

7. The multiples of *un millón, un billón*, etc., are expressed in the plural form:

- *tres millones de monedas* 3 million coins
- *tres millones cincuenta mil monedas* 3,050,000 coins
- *dos billones de euros* 2 billion euros
- *dos billones trescientos dos puntos* 2,000,000,302 dots

8. Some more numbers that follow *billón* (*billion*) are: *trillón, cuatrillón*, and *quintillón*.

### Position of Cardinal Numerals

Cardinal numerals are placed before the noun in most cases:

- *tres ratones* three mice
- *mil años* a thousand years

**NOTES:**

(1) Sometimes a cardinal numeral functions as an ordinal numeral, and, therefore, it does not answer the question *How many?* but rather *Which one?* In these cases, the adjective follows the noun:

- *Juan XXIII (Juan veintitrés)* John XXIII
- *capítulo cuarenta y dos* Chapter 42
- *siglo XIX (siglo diecinueve)* 19th century
- *el día trece de junio* June 13th

(2) With days of the month, as in *el trece de junio*, cardinal numerals are used for all the days with the exception of the first day of the month, which takes the ordinal *primero* (*first*), as in English. It is placed before the month: *el primero de agosto* (*August 1st*). The numeral is followed by *de*, and then the month:

- *el 1º (primero) de agosto* August 1st
- *el 2 (dos) de julio* July 2nd
- *el 15 (quince) de febrero* February 15th
When writing out dates, the following rules apply:

- The month is not capitalized unless it is the first word in a sentence, mainly when dating a letter:
  
  * Agosto 4, 2005
  * 4 de agosto, 2005
  * 4 de agosto de 2005

  
  * Vamos a ir en septiembre.
  * We are going in September.

  * Septiembre ha sido un mes caluroso.
  * September has been a hot month.

- In a four-digit year, the thousands are not separated by a period: 1999 and not 1,999.

- The definite article, rather than the preposition *en* (*on*), is used to express a date:

  * iremos el 28 de enero.
  * We will go on January 28th.

- When writing dates with figures, the day comes first:

  * 7/6/94 (siete de junio de 1994) = June 7, 1994 (6/7/94)

(3) Cardinal numerals are generally used to refer to pages and chapters. They are placed after the noun:

  * página uno (page 1)
  * capítulo once (chapter 11)

  * página trece (page 13)
  * capítulo veinticinco (chapter 25)

  
  Ordinal numerals may also be used to refer to pages and chapters, mainly for the numbers from 1 to 10. They are usually placed before *página* (*primera página, segunda página*), and before or after *capítulo*:

  * tercer* capítulo or capítulo tercer
  * cuarto capítulo or capítulo cuarto
  * octavo capítulo or capítulo octavo

(4) To designate centuries, cardinal numerals are placed after the word *siglo*.

  * el siglo XII (doce)
  * 12th century

  * el siglo XX (veinte)
  * 20th century

  * el siglo XXI (veintiuno)
  * 21st century

(5) When cardinal and ordinal numerals appear together, the cardinals may be placed before or after the ordinals:

* *Primer* and *tercer* become *primer* and *tercer* before a masculine singular noun.
Ordinal Numerals

Ordinal numerals point to nouns and indicate the order in which those nouns appear. They answer the question *Which one?*

*Esta es la *primera* vez.*
*Ha sido el *segundo* atentado.*

Gender and Number of Ordinal Numbers

Spanish ordinal numerals agree in gender and number with the noun they modify:

*la cuarta vez*  
*los primeros libros*  
*la vigesimoprimera edición*

Ordinal Numerals from *First to Nineteenth (1st to 19th)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>primero</em></td>
<td>first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>segundo</em></td>
<td>second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tercero</em></td>
<td>third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>cuarto</em></td>
<td>fourth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>quinto</em></td>
<td>fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sexto</em></td>
<td>sixth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>séptimo</em></td>
<td>seventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>octavo</em></td>
<td>eighth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>noveno</em></td>
<td>ninth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>décimo</em></td>
<td>tenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>undécimo</em></td>
<td>eleventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>duodécimo</em></td>
<td>twelfth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>decimotercero</em> or <em>decimotercio</em></td>
<td>thirteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>decimocuarto</em></td>
<td>fourteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>decimoquinto</em></td>
<td>fifteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>decimosexta</em></td>
<td>sixteenth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
decimoséptimo or decimoséptimo  seventeenth
decimooctavo                  eighteenth
decimonoveno or decimonono   nineteenth

NOTES:

(1) Primero, tercero, and noveno each have an alternate form: primo, tercio, and nono, respectively:

materias primas (primeras) raw materials
una tercia parte          one third
Pío Nono (IX)             Pius IX

(2) Primero and tercero become primer and tercer before a masculine singular noun:

el primer hombre the first man
el tercer salario    the third salary
But: los primeros hombres the first men
la primera mujer      the first woman

(3) The form primer before a feminine noun is used occasionally in cases such as la primer página and la primer entrevista.

(4) All combinations of ordinals that end in the word primero or tercero also drop the o before a masculine singular noun: vigesimoprimero corredor (see following).

(5) All combinations of ordinals that include the word décimo, such as undecimoprimero or decimoquinto, form the feminine form by changing only the final o to a, as in undecimoprimera, decimoquinta. The feminine forms undecimaprimera and decimaquinta are accepted, but the above forms are preferred.

Ordinal Numerals from Twentieth to Ninety-Ninth (20th to 99th)

vigésimo                   twentieth
vigesimoprimero            twenty-first
trigésimo                  thirtieth
trigésimosegundo           thirty-second
cuadragésimo              fortieth
cuadragesimotercero       forty-third
quincuagésimo             fiftieth
quincuagesimocuarto       fifty-fourth
sexagésimo  sixtieth
sexagesimosexto  sixty-sixth
septuagésimo  seventieth
septuagesimosegundo  seventy-sixth
octagésimo  eightieth
octagesimoséptimo  eightieth
nonagésimo  ninetieth
nonagesimonoveno  ninety-ninth

NOTE:
All ordinal numbers that end in *primero, tercero,* and *noveno* can also have the endings *primo, tercio,* and *nono,* respectively.

### Ordinal Numerals from One Hundredth to One Thousand and First (100th to 1001st)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>centésimo</td>
<td>100th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centesimoprimero</td>
<td>101st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ducentésimo</td>
<td>200th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ducentesimosegundo</td>
<td>202nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tricentésimo</td>
<td>300th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tricentesimotercero</td>
<td>303rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuadringentésimo</td>
<td>400th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuadringentesimocuarto</td>
<td>404th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quingentésimo</td>
<td>500th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quingentesimoquinto</td>
<td>505th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexcentésimo</td>
<td>600th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexcentesimosexto</td>
<td>606th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>septimegimotercero</td>
<td>700th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>septoningentésimo</td>
<td>707th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>octingentésimo</td>
<td>800th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>octingentesimoctavo</td>
<td>808th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noningentésimo</td>
<td>900th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noningentesimonoveno</td>
<td>909th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milésimo</td>
<td>1000th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milesimoprimero</td>
<td>1001st</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Position and Uses of Ordinal Numerals

Ordinal numerals are placed before or after the noun, depending on specific conditions.

A. Ordinal numerals for chapters

With chapters, ordinal numerals may be used before or after the noun, up to ten.

tercer capítulo  

third chapter (Chapter 3)

capítulo tercero

octavo capítulo

eighth chapter (Chapter 8)
capítulo octavo

NOTE:
Cardinal numerals may also be used for chapter numbers from one to ten. Cardinals always follow the noun (capítulo uno, capítulo cinco); ordinals may precede or follow the noun (primer capítulo or capítulo primero; quinto capítulo or capítulo quinto). After ten, cardinal numerals are generally used:

capítulo trece  

Chapter 13
capítulo veinte

Chapter 20

B. Ordinal numerals for pages

With pages, ordinal numerals may be used up to nine. They are always placed before the word página, and not after.

primera página

(Not: página primera)
tercera página

(Not: página tercera)
NOTE:
Cardinals may also be used for page numbers up to ten; they are always placed after the word *página*: *página uno*, *página seis*. Beginning with ten, cardinals are generally used:

- *página diez*  
  (Not: *décima página*)
- *página dieciocho*  
  (Not: *decimoctava página*)

C. Ordinal and cardinal numerals with days of the month

*Primer**o is the only ordinal numeral used with the days of the month: *el primero de febrero* (*February 1st*). For the other days, cardinal numerals are used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardinal</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1º (primero) de febrero de 1898</td>
<td>February 1st, 1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (dos) de febrero de 1942</td>
<td>February 2nd, 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 (treinta y uno) de julio</td>
<td>July 31st</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. *Primer**o as an adverb

*Primer**o also functions as an adverb, just like *primeramente* or *en primer lugar*:

- *Primer**o le escribiré.*  
  First, I will write to her.
- *Primeramente irá a verla.*  
  First, he will go see her.
- *En primer lugar lo llamaré.*  
  First of all, I will call him.

It is also used with the meaning of *rather*, or *it is better to*:

- *Primer**o preguntar que cometer un error.*  
  Rather ask than make a mistake. (It is better to ask than to make a mistake.)
- *Primer**o averiguar que sospechar.*  
  Rather make sure than suspect. (It is better to make sure than to suspect.)

E. *Primer**o preceded by *lo*

*Primer**o*, preceded by the neuter article *lo*, is equivalent to *the first thing* or *whatever comes first*:

- *Mi hija es lo primero.*  
  My daughter comes first.
- *La salud es lo primero.*  
  Health comes first.
- *Lo primero que vimos fue la estatua.*  
  The first thing we saw was the statue.
F. Ordinal and cardinal numerals with names of kings and popes

With names of kings and popes, ordinals are generally used for numbers up to ten. They are placed after the proper noun and are expressed with Roman numerals:

Carlos V (quinto)  Alfonso X (décimo)  Juan Carlos I (primero)

However, cardinal numerals are used beyond ten and merely indicate a number in a sequence. They are also written with Roman numerals: Pío XII (doce), Juan XXIII (veintitrés), Benedetto XVI (dieciséis). Note how the following titles are read:

Pío XII: Pío doce  (Not: Pío el doce)
Alfonso X: Alfonso décimo  (Not: Alfonso el décimo)

G. Segundo as an adverb

Segundo also functions as an adverb, just like en segundo lugar:

Segundo, no me interesa.  Secondly, I am not interested.
En segundo lugar, estudiaremos el otro plan.  Secondly, we'll study the other plan.

H. Ordinal and cardinal numerals with centuries

With centuries, ordinals are generally used with numbers up to ten, while cardinals are used beyond ten. Both ordinals and cardinals follow the word siglo:

en el siglo primero  in the first century
en el siglo sexto  in the sixth century
en el siglo trece  in the thirteenth century
el siglo XX (veinte)  the twentieth century

I. Placement of ordinal numerals

If the ordinal is used to emphasize an item in a sequence, it is placed before the noun:

Carlos es el segundo chico que saca una A.  Carlos is the second boy who has gotten an A.
Es la tercera vez que lo veo.  It's the third time I've seen him.

J. With the words centenario (one hundred years), and aniversario (anniversary), ordinal numerals are also used:

el cuarto centenario de la conquista  the 400th anniversary (literally, the fourth centenary) of the conquest of America
el quincuagésimo aniversario de la inauguración  
the fiftieth anniversary of the inauguration

NOTE:
It is common to use cardinals instead of ordinals in informal situations:

Celebran el cuatrocientos aniversario de la fundación de la ciudad.  
They're celebrating the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city.

K. Expressing birthdays

Birthdays are not expressed with ordinals as in English. The sentence We are going to celebrate Molly's 70th birthday may be expressed in one of the following ways:

Vamos a celebrar los setenta años de Molly.  
We are going to celebrate Molly's seventy years (of age).

Vamos a celebrar sus setenta años.  
We are going to celebrate her seventy years (of age).

Vamos a celebrar el cumpleaños de Molly, que cumple setenta (años).  
We are going to celebrate Molly's birthday, who will be seventy (years of age).

Partitive Numerals

These numerals represent the number of parts into which the noun is divided:

media página  
half a page

tres cuartos de una manzana  
three quarters of an apple

la segunda parte de la novela  
the second part of the novel
dos décimos de la lotería  
two tenths of a lottery number

Partitives from One Half to One Tenth (½ to ¼th)

With the exception of medio (one half) and un tercio (one third), all the other partitives are the same as the ordinals:

½ medio  
one half

½ un tercio  
one third

¼ un cuarto  
one fourth

¼ un quinto  
one fifth

¼ un sexto  
one sixth
Partitives Beyond One Tenth (1/10th)

Fractions beyond one tenth add the ending -avo to the cardinals, with some spelling modifications. The exceptions are centésimo and milésimo (one hundredth and one thousandth). These numerals are used to express mathematical operations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fraction</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/11</td>
<td>un onceavo</td>
<td>one eleventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/12</td>
<td>un doceavo</td>
<td>one twelfth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/13</td>
<td>un treceavo</td>
<td>one thirteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>un catorceavo</td>
<td>one fourteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/15</td>
<td>un quinceavo</td>
<td>one fifteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>un dieciseisavo</td>
<td>one sixteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/17</td>
<td>un diecisieteavo</td>
<td>one seventeenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/18</td>
<td>un dieciochoavo</td>
<td>one eighteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>un diecinueveavo</td>
<td>one nineteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/20</td>
<td>un veinteavo</td>
<td>one twentieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/24</td>
<td>un veinticuatroavo</td>
<td>one twenty-fourth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>un veinticincoavo</td>
<td>one twenty-fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>un trentavo</td>
<td>one thirtieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/40</td>
<td>un cientoavo</td>
<td>one fortieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/50</td>
<td>un cincuentavo</td>
<td>one fiftieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/60</td>
<td>un sesentavo</td>
<td>one sixtieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/70</td>
<td>un setentavo</td>
<td>one seventieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/80</td>
<td>un ochentavo</td>
<td>one eightieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/90</td>
<td>un noventavo</td>
<td>one ninetieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/100</td>
<td>un centésimo</td>
<td>one hundredth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/120</td>
<td>un cientoavo</td>
<td>one hundred and twentieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/200</td>
<td>un doscientavo</td>
<td>one two hundredth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1000</td>
<td>un milésimo</td>
<td>one thousandth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:

(1) The word centésimo, which designates 1/100 (one hundredth) has another form, centavo, but that is used exclusively to refer to one cent in the monetary system.

(2) When the first numeral changes to dos, tres, cuatro, etc., the second numeral stays the same but in the plural form. Compare these numbers:
ADJECTIVES

Uses of Partitives

There are specific uses for partitives:

A. *Medio(a)* means *half*, with reference to weights, measurements, and time:

- 2 metros y medio
- 4 kilos y medio
- 2 libras y media
- medio kilo
- media manzana
- media hora
- un tercio
- dos tercios
- tres veinteavos
- ocho centésimos
- dos milésimos
- one third
- two thirds
- three twentieths
- eight hundredths
- two thousandths

B. *Medio* (masculine form only), followed by an adjective, means *a little* or *somewhat*:

- medio ocupado
- medio enferma
- medio enterados
- medio confundidas
- a little busy
- a little sick
- somewhat aware
- somewhat confused

C. *Centavo* (*one hundredth*) is used to designate *a cent*:

- un centavo
- cinco centavos
- one cent
- five cents

D. When partitives precede the word *parte(s)* (*part/s*), they take the feminine gender:

- una cuarta parte de la clase
- tres quintas partes de la casa
- one quarter of the class
- three fifths of the house
Multiple or Proportional Numerals

These numerals indicate the number of times that the noun is repeated: onefold, threefold, etc. Some examples of multiple numerals are:

- doble or duplo(a) twofold, double
- triple or triplo(a) threefold, triple
- cuádruple, cuádruplo(a) fourfold, quadruple
- quintuplo(a) fivefold
- séxtuplo(a) sixfold
- séptuplo(a) sevenfold
- óctuplo(a) eightfold
- nónuplo(a) ninefold
- décuplo(a) tenfold
- undécuplo(a) elevenfold
- duodécuplo(a) twelvefold
- terciodécuplo(a) thirteenfold
- céntruplo(a) one hundredfold

NOTES:

(1) Simple (single) is the name given to what is not double, triple, etc.:

- una hoja simple a single sheet

In Spanish, there are equivalents of single that do not use the word simple, as in the following examples:

- single room habitación individual (or para una persona)
- single-handed sin ayuda, solo
- single man hombre soltero
- single life vida de soltero, celibato
- single state estado civil soltero
- not a single (book, house) ningún libro, ninguna casa (or ni un libro, ni una casa)

(2) Duplicado (triplicado, cuadruplicado, etc.) is the name given to a copy of a document:

- Hay que firmar el duplicado. The copy must be signed.
- El documento debe ser por duplicado (triplicado, cuadruplicado, etc.). The document must be in duplicate (triplicate, quadruplicate, etc.).
The word *double* is used in English in many contexts where Spanish uses different expressions. Some of the most common ones are:

- **double bed**
  - *cama para dos personas (cama, de matrimonio, de dos plazas)*
- **double boiler**
  - *baño de María*
- **double-breasted jacket**
  - *saco cruzado*
- **double chin**
  - *papada*
- **double cross**
  - *traición*
- **double date**
  - *cita de dos parejas*
- **double-edged**
  - *de dos filos*
- **double entry**
  - *partida doble (in accounting)*
- **double-faced**
  - *falso, hipócrita*
- **double feature**
  - *programa de dos películas*
- **double meaning**
  - *doble sentido*
- **double-minded**
  - *vacilante*
- **double room**
  - *habitación con dos camas (or para dos personas)*
- **double talk**
  - *lenguaje ambiguo*
- **double door**
  - *puerta de dos hojas*

### Distributive Numerals

These numerals indicate a distribution of a plural noun to each one of the recipients. In the examples that follow, *regalos* (*gifts*), *sonrisas* (*smiles*), and *huesos* (*bones*) are the nouns:

- *María y Elena se dieron sendos regalos.*
  - María and Elena gave each other a gift.
- *Los niños hicieron sendas sonrisas a la maestra.*
  - Each one of the children smiled at the teacher.
- *El hombre compró sendos huesos para los cuatro perros.*
  - The man bought the four dogs one bone each.

### NOTES:

1. It is incorrect to use *ambos* or *ambas* (*the two of them*) with the meaning of *sendos, sendas* (*one each*). Observe the following sentences:

- *Los niños le dieron sendos regalos.* (one gift each)
- *Los niños le dieron ambos regalos.* (the two children together gave her two gifts)
(2) It is incorrect to use *sendo(a)*, *sendos(as)*, to give the idea of *large, impressive*, or *two of them*:

Incorrect: Se vino con *sendo* coche.  
Correct: un coche grande

Incorrect: Llegó con *sendas cajas llenas* de ropa.  
Correct: dos cajas

**Collective Numerals**

These numerals are nouns that represent a group (*couple, dozen, thousand*, etc.).

- *Me dio un par de guantes.*  
- *Hay una decena de patos.*  
- *Compré una docena de huevos.*  
- *Vino una veintena de hombres.*  
- *Había centenas de personas.*  
- *Hubo un centenar de chicos.*  
- *Miles de pájaros volaron.*  
- *Hay un millar de aficionados.*  
- *Sacó un millón en la lotería.*

She gave me a pair of gloves.  
There are ten ducks.  
I bought a dozen eggs.  
Twenty men came.  
There were hundreds of people.  
There were a hundred kids.  
Thousands of birds flew away.  
There are a thousand fans.  
She won a million in the lottery.

**NOTES:**

(1) While nouns like *veintena* and *treintena* represent *twenty* and *thirty*, *quin-cena* (*fifteen*) and *cuarentena* (*forty*) are also used without the preposition *de* to indicate *a two-week period* and *a quarantine*, respectively:

- *La compañía empleó a una quincena de hombres.*  
- *Le pagan por quincena.*  
- *Estuvieron en cuarentena.*

The company hired about fifteen men.  
The pay him every fifteen days.  
They were in quarantine.

(2) If the collective numeral is followed by *de* and a plural noun, the verb appears in the plural:

*Miles de pájaros volaron.*  
Thousands of birds flew away.

However, if the numeral is designating a specific number, the singular form of the verb is used:

*Una docena cabía en la caja.*  
*Una docena de huevos cabía en la caja.*  
One dozen fit in the box.  
One dozen eggs fit in the box.
Indefinite Adjectives

Indefinite adjectives point to the noun and indicate its number in an indefinite or imprecise manner. Many of these adjectives have four different endings to agree with the gender and number of the nouns. Some indefinite adjectives vary in either number or gender, while others are used exclusively in the plural form. There are also a few invariable adjectives.

Indefinite Adjectives with Variations of Gender and Number

A. The indefinite adjective *algún* (some, any, a)

1. This adjective agrees in gender and number with the noun it qualifies (*algún/a, algunos/as*), and takes the shortened form *algún* before masculine singular nouns. It can refer to animate and inanimate nouns and is usually placed before the noun:

   *Prefiero algún artículo más moderno.* I’d prefer a more modern article.
   *Quiero alguna novela corta.* I want a novel that is short.
   *Esperaba a algunos amigos.* He was waiting for some friends.
   *Llegarán de sorpresa alguna tarde.* Some afternoon they will arrive unexpectedly.

2. When placed after the noun, *algún/a* takes the meaning of *ningún/a* (not any). Notice that the sentences are in the negative:

   *No fue a fiesta alguna.* She didn’t go to any party whatsoever.
   *No tuve informe alguno.* I didn’t receive any reports at all.

3. *Alguno* is not the equivalent of the partitive *some* used in English. To convey the same idea, Spanish uses either the expression *un poco de* or the mass noun by itself.

   *Aceptaré un poco de dinero.* I’ll accept some money.
   *¿Prefieres café?* Would you prefer some coffee?
   *(Not: Aceptaré algún dinero. This is the short form of *algún*, which is used before a masculine noun.)*
NOTE:
There are some nouns, such as *bread*, which are mass nouns in English but not in Spanish. It is correct to say *algún pan*, with the meaning of *a* or *any* loaf of bread.

*Quiero algún pan de trigo que no tenga sal.*

I want any loaf of wheat bread that doesn’t have salt.

4. In some cases, *algunos* does not have exactly the same meaning as *unos*, even when both can be translated as *some* in English.

*Vi a unos chicos en la calle.*

I saw some children in the street. (indefinite amount; the street was not empty)

*Había algunos chicos en la calle.*

There were some children in the street. (a few; not all the ones I usually see)

*Cómpreme unas manzanas cuando vaya al mercado.*

Buy me some apples when you go to the market. (indefinite amount; the quantity is not important)

*Tráigame algunas manzanas para hacer dulce.*

Bring me some apples to make jam. (just a few)

NOTE:
The preposition *a* is used before an indefinite adjective or pronoun when it refers to a person (except after the verbs *tener* and *haber*):

*Vi a algunos chicos.*

I saw some children.

*Tengo algunos estudiantes.*

I have some students.

*Hay algunos estudiantes.*

There are some students.

5. In order to negate a question where any forms of *alguno* appear, these adjectives are replaced by *ningún* or *ninguna*. *Ningún* is the short form of *ninguno* used before a masculine singular noun.

*¿Tienes algún sobre como éste que pueda usar?*

Do you have any envelopes like this one that I can use?

*No, no tengo ningún sobre de ese tamaño.*

No, I don’t have any envelopes of that size.

*¿Recibió alguna carta hoy?*

Did you receive any letters today?

*No, ninguna carta ha llegado.*

No, no letters have arrived.

NOTE:
To avoid the repetition of the nouns *sobre* and *carta* in the preceding examples, the pronoun *ninguno* or *ninguna* may be used in the answers:
No, no tengo ninguno* de ese tamaño.
No, I don't have any of that size.

No, no recibí ninguna.
No, I didn't receive any.

¿Viste las películas de 007?
Did you watch the 007 movies?

No, no vi ninguna.
No, I didn't watch any.

6. The expression _alguno que otro_ and its variations are used with the meaning of _a few_. Similar expressions in Spanish are _unos cuantos, unas cuantas, unos pocos, unas pocas, algunos_, and _algunas_:

_Había alguno que otro árbol en medio del parque._
There were a few trees in the middle of the park.

_Me dieron alguna que otra foto de recuerdo._
They gave me a few pictures as souvenirs.

_En esa tienda encontré unos cuantos bolsos importados._
I found quite a few imported bags in that store.

_Tenía unas pocas cosas amontonadas en el cuarto._
He had a few things piled up in his room.

**B. The indefinite adjective _ciento_ (certain)**

This adjective agrees in gender and number with the noun it qualifies (_ciertola, ciertos/as_).

_Me contó ciertas cosas que no pude creer._
He told me certain things that I couldn't believe.

_Hablamos de cierta persona responsable._
We discussed a certain person who was responsible.

**NOTES:**

(1) _Ciento_ has the following meanings:

- **fixed, determined, specific**

  _Quedaron en verse a cierta hora._
  They agreed to see each other at a specific time.

- **some**

  _Ciertos médicos hablan de una cura._
  Some doctors talk of a cure.

  The _singular_ indefinite article (_un, una_) may precede _cierto_ or _cierta_, in which case the vagueness of the meaning is emphasized:

  _Siento un cierto temor cuando hay tormenta._
  I feel a certain fear when there is a storm.
  (I can't quite explain it.)

* The short form is not used because the adjective is not followed by the noun. As pronouns, _ninguno_ and _ninguna_ always appear in the singular form.

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Tiene una certa gracia al hablar. She has a certain grace when she speaks. (I don’t know how to define it.)

Also, un cierto and una cierta are synonyms of un tal and una tal (a certain), with reference to an unidentified person:

Recibí una carta de un cierto (un tal) Torres que trabaja en esa oficina. I received a letter from a certain man named Torres, who works in that office.

Hablé con una cierta (una tal) María Pérez, que lo conocía. I spoke with a certain woman named María Perez, who knew him.

(2) When placed after the noun, cierto takes the meaning of sure or accurate. In this position, the four variations of gender and number are used:

Se lleva la dirección certa. She is taking the right address with her.
Tenemos una lista con los nombres ciertos. We have a list of the right names.

(3) Other uses of cierto include:

A ciencia cierta (with certainty, for sure)
No lo sé a ciencia cierta pero creo que Juan lo compró. I don’t know for sure, but I think that Juan bought it.

Por cierto, de cierto, ciertamente (certainly, truly)
Es muy bueno por cierto. Certainly it is very good.
De cierto les digo que no tendremos vacaciones. Truly, I tell you that we will not have a vacation.
Ciertamente lo ha probado. She certainly has proved it.

Por cierto que (indeed, in fact)
Por cierto que es muy bonita. She is very pretty indeed.

Lo cierto es que (the fact is that)
Lo cierto es que llamó. The fact is that he called.

Exception: The English expression certain other, as in certain other laws, is rendered into Spanish as algunas otras leyes (Not: ciertas otras leyes).

C. The indefinite adjective cuanto (all the, every)

1. This adjective is always placed before the noun and agrees with it in gender and number (cuentola, cuentolas). Without an accent mark, cuanto refers to the whole amount, and is equivalent to all (of) the or everybody:
**Cuanto** cuidado puso en esa tarea fue inútil.  
All the care he put into that task was useless.  

**Cuanta** gente vino, recibió una entrada gratis.  
Everybody who came received a free ticket.  

Agruparon a **cuantos** hombres se voluntarizaron.  
They grouped all the men who volunteered.  

**Puedes darme cuantas** excusas quieras.  
You can give me all the excuses you want.

**NOTES:**  
(1) **Cuanto**, and its variations, can be replaced by the equivalent forms of **todo el** (all the), plus **que**:

- **Todo el cuidado que** puso en esa tarea fue inútil.  
  All the care he put into that task was useless.  

- **Puedes darme todas las** excusas que quieras.  
  You can give me all the excuses you want.

(2) **Cuantos/as**, preceded by **unos/as**, means a few (of) or some. Although these expressions are considered equivalent to **algunos/as** and **unos pocos, unas pocas**, they really give the idea of a larger amount:

- **Tiene unas pocas** plantas en el jardín.  
  She has a few (some) plants in the garden.  

- **Tiene algunas** plantas.  
  She has a few plants.  

- **Tiene unas cuantas** plantas.  
  She has (quite) a few plants.  

The phrase **unas cuantas** in this example indicates more plants than **unas pocas** or simply **algunas**.

2. With an accent mark, **cuánto** is used as an exclamatory adjective to show the magnitude of a certain thing (how much or how many):

- **¡Cuánto cuidado puso en eso!**  
  How much care she put into that!  

- **¡Cuánta gente vino!**  
  (Look) How many people came!  

- **¡Cuántos hombres lo dijeron!**  
  How many men said it!  

- **¡Cuántas excusas me dio!**  
  How many excuses she gave me!

**D. The indefinite adjective demasiado (too much, too many)**

This adjective is always placed before the noun and agrees with it in gender and number (**demasiado/a, demasiados/as**). It always indicates excess in some way:

- **Puso demasiado** queso en el pastel.  
  She put too much cheese in the pie.  

- **Tenía demasiado** salsa y no lo comí.  
  It had too much sauce and I did not eat it.  

- **Ha cometido demasiados** errores.  
  He has made too many mistakes.  

- **Me ha hecho demasiadas** promesas.  
  She has made me too many promises.
NOTES:

(1) All the variations of *demasiado* function as pronouns when the noun is not present:

*Tenemos demasiados. (vasos)*

We have too many. (glasses)

(2) *Demasiado* also functions as an adverb:

*Trabajó demasiado hoy.*

You worked too much today.

*Pepa se arregló demasiado.*

Pepa fixed herself up too much.

*¡No comas demasiado!* Don’t eat too much!

*La necesito demasiado para dejarla ir.*

I need her too much to let her go.

(3) When *demasiado* precedes a form of *poco*, it is used in the singular and means *not enough*. It can also be replaced by *muy* (*very*):

*Muestra demasiado poca fe.*

She does not show enough faith.

*Tiende demasiado pocos apuntes.*

He does not have enough notes.

*Compró demasiado pocas manzanas.*

He did not buy enough apples.

*Muestra muy poca fe.*

She shows very little faith.

*Tiende muy pocos apuntes.*

He has very few notes.

*Compró muy pocas manzanas.*

He bought very few apples.

(4) The English expression *too many other*, as in *They have too many other subjects to choose from*, could be rendered into Spanish as *Aparte de esas, ellos tienen demasiadas materias para elegir*.

E. The indefinite adjective *mismo* (*same, similar, own*)

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (*mismo/a, mismos/ás*).

1. When placed before the noun, it may be preceded by the definite article, in which case it has the meaning of *same*:

*Tenía el mismo vestido.*

She had the same dress on.

*Viven en la misma casa.*

They live in the same house.

*Me gustan los mismos deportes.*

I like the same sports.

*Siempre veo las mismas caras.*

I always see the same faces.

*Este es del mismo tamaño.*

This is (of) the same size.
2. If preceded by a possessive adjective, *mismo* shows identity and is translated as *own*. The adjective *propio* is also used in similar cases, in all its variations of gender and number:

   Vivía en su *misma* casa.  He lived in his own house.
   Lo pintó con sus *propias* manos.  She painted it with her own hands.

3. When placed after the noun, *mismo* takes the meaning of *self* or *very*:

   Llamó el doctor *mismo*.  The doctor himself called.
   Estaba parado en la puerta *misma*.  He was standing at the very door.
   Se lo pidieron los estudiantes *mismos*.  The students themselves asked him.
   Las secretarias *mismas* invitaron a sus jefes.  The secretaries themselves invited their bosses.

4. After a personal pronoun or the name of a person, *mismo* means *self*. It varies by gender and number:

   Me lo entregó él *mismo*.  He himself gave it to me.
   Vendrán ellas *mismas*.  They themselves will come.
   Se lo trajo Miguel *mismo*.  Miguel himself brought it to her.

5. After adverbs, *mismo* means *exactness*:

   Te llamaré mañana *mismo*.  I will call you tomorrow (without delay, for sure).
   Lo recibimos ahora *mismo*.  We received it just now.
   Estaba allí *mismo*.  It was right there.

**NOTES:**

(1) If expressions like *mañana*, *tarde*, *noche*, and *medianoche* are preceded by a demonstrative adjective, *mismo* usually agrees with the noun:

   Aquella tarde *misma*(o).  That very afternoon.
   Esta noche *misma*(o).  Tonight. (this very night)

(2) If the definite article precedes the noun, *mismo* must agree in gender and number with the article:

   en las tardes *mismas* en que venía a vernos  in those afternoons when she came to see us
   Ella tenía un cordón en el paraguas *mismo*.  She had a string in the umbrella itself.
Notice the change introduced by the definite article in the following sentence:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Hasta China mismo(a) está involucrada.} \quad \text{Even China itself is involved.} \\
&\text{Hasta la China misma está involucrada.} \quad \text{Even China itself is involved.}
\end{align*}
\]

The same idea could also be expressed as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Hasta mismo (la) China está involucrada.} \quad \text{Even China itself is involved.} \\
&\text{Hasta misma China está involucrada.} \quad \text{Even China itself is involved.}
\end{align*}
\]

If the article is part of the noun, either form is used:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{El Palacio Municipal está en La Habana mismo(a).} \quad \text{The Municipal Palace is right in La Habana.}
\end{align*}
\]

6. **Lo mismo** is a nominalized form that represents the following expressions:

   \(\text{(a) the same thing (la misma cosa, igual):}\)
   \[
   \begin{align*}
   &\text{Para mí es lo mismo.} \quad \text{It is the same to me.} \\
   &\text{A mí me da lo mismo.} \quad \text{It makes no difference to me.}
   \end{align*}
   \]

   \(\text{(b) just the same, in spite of, anyway:}\)
   \[
   \begin{align*}
   &\text{Lo quiero lo mismo.} \quad \text{I love him just the same (in spite of it).} \\
   &\text{Lo haremos lo mismo.} \quad \text{We'll do it anyway.}
   \end{align*}
   \]

   \(\text{(c) the same old thing:}\)
   \[
   \begin{align*}
   &\text{Es lo mismo de siempre.} \quad \text{It is the same old thing.}
   \end{align*}
   \]

   \(\text{(d) the same as:}\)
   \[
   \begin{align*}
   &\text{Será lo mismo que una visita al museo.} \quad \text{It will be the same as a visit to the museum.}
   \end{align*}
   \]

**NOTES:**

The expression *el mismo* translates as:

(1) **he himself** (with an accent mark on *él*, since it is a pronoun in this case):

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Está muy bien hecho. Él mismo lo hizo.} \quad \text{It is very well done. He did it himself.}
\end{align*}
\]

Being a pronoun, *él* changes to *ella*, *ellos*, or *ellas*, depending on the subject:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{¡Qué lindo! Ella misma lo hizo.} \quad \text{How pretty! She did it herself.}
\end{align*}
\]

(2) **his usual self**, referring to a human being:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Juan es el mismo muchacho de siempre.} \quad \text{Juan is the same old guy. He'll never change.}
\end{align*}
\]
(3) the same (masculine singular):

Quiero el mismo producto.  I want the same product.

The preceding examples merely compare the meaning of el mismo to lo mismo. However, it is necessary to remember that in Notes (2) and (3), the other three definite articles (la, los, and las) may also be used as needed, in which case mismo agrees in gender and number:

María es la misma de siempre.  María is the same old girl.
Quiero los mismos productos.  I want the same products.
Me interesan las mismas materias.  I am interested in the same subjects.

7. Common idiomatic expressions with mismo:

al mismo tiempo (at the same time)
Salieron de vacaciones al mismo tiempo.  They went on vacation at the same time.

así mismo (regardless, anyway, all the same)
Lo invitaremos así mismo.  We'll invite him all the same.

eso mismo (phrase that indicates approval)
Sí, eso mismo.  Yes, that's right.
Eso mismo.  That's right.

por eso mismo (for that reason, precisely)
Por eso mismo lo decimos los dos.  For that reason (That's why) the two of us say it.

el mismo de siempre (same as always; no change)
Juan es el mismo de siempre. Insiste en quedarse en casa.  Juan hasn't changed. He insists on staying home.

NOTE:
Mismo agrees in gender and number with any of the definite articles (el, la, los, las).

F. The indefinite adjective mucho (much, a lot of, many)

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (mucho/a, muchos/as). As an adjective, it is always placed before the noun:

Tiene mucho orgullo de su familia.  He is very proud of his family.
El cerdo tiene mucha grasa.  Pork has a lot of fat.
La leche tiene muchas calorías. Milk has a lot of calories.
Hay muchos chicos aquí. There are many boys here.

NOTES:
(1) Mucho (and all its variations) is also a pronoun:
Esta comida tiene mucha (grasa), pero es deliciosa.
This meal has a lot (of fat) but is delicious.

(2) Mucho functions as an adverb. In this case it has only one form:
Siempre estudia mucho. She always studies hard.

(3) Mucho (and its variations) also indicates too much, too many, plenty, and is a synonym of demasiado:
No me des más. Eso es mucho. Don’t give me more. That’s too much.
Te daré algunas. Son muchas para mí. I’ll give you some. There are too many for me.

(4) Lo mucho is a nominalized form of the adjective:
Es muy sencilla por lo mucho que tiene. She is very modest considering how much (money) she has.

(5) When mucho, followed by más or menos, precedes a noun, it must agree with the noun in gender and number:
Quiero muchos más tomates que los que me das. I want many more tomatoes than the ones you give me.
Los trabajadores tienen muchas menos esperanzas con ese sindicato. The workers have a lot less hope with that union.
Necesito mucho más dinero. I need a lot more money.
Prefiero mucha más tranquilidad. I prefer much more tranquility.

(6) When mucho, followed by más or menos, precedes an adjective, it is invariable:
La lección es mucho más difícil. The lesson is a lot more difficult.
Era mucho menos probable. It was a lot less probable.

(7) With the comparatives of inequality mejor, peor, mayor, and menor, mucho is invariable:
Juan es mucho mayor que yo. Juan is a lot older than I am.
La fiebre está mucho peor hoy que ayer. The fever is much worse today than yesterday.
The indefinite adjective **ninguno** (none, no one, not any)

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (**ningunol/a**, **ningunos/as**). Before a masculine singular noun, **ninguno** becomes **ningún**: 

No tengo **ningún** amigo. I have no friends.  
No queremos **ninguna** planta. We don’t want any plants.

**NOTES:**

(1) The singular form **ningún** or **ninguna** is used even when the context indicates a plural noun:

No había **ninguna** chica linda. There were no pretty girls.  
No tenían **ningún** libro bueno. They didn’t have any good books.

However, the plural forms are generally used when the nouns are plural in nature, as in words like **tenazas** (tongs), **tijeras** (scissors) or **pantalones** (pants), although the singular forms are also used:

No tenían **ningunas** tenazas que fueran baratas. They didn’t have any tongs that were cheap.  
No encontré **ningunos** pantalones de algodón. I didn’t find any cotton pants.  
No hay **ninguna** tijera en el cajón. There are no scissors in the drawer.  
No quiero **ningún** pantalón de lana. I don’t want any woolen pants.

(2) When **ninguno** functions as a pronoun, the singular forms **ninguno** and **ninguna** are usually used, even for plural meanings (the shortened form **ningún** is not used as a pronoun):

¿Tienes algún lápiz que pueda usar? Do you have a pencil that I can use?  
No, no tengo **ninguno**. No, I don’t have any.  
¿Hay algunas peras en la cesta? Are there any pears in the basket?  
No, no hay **ninguna**. No, there are none.  
¿Hay algunos pesos en el cajón? Are there any pesos in the drawer?  
No, no hay **ninguno**. No, there aren’t any.

(3) If the noun is inherently plural, the singular form is usually preferred:

¿Viste las tijeras sobre la mesa? Did you see the scissors on the table?  
No, no vi **ninguna**. No, I didn’t see any.  
¿Quiere llevarse los pantalones rojos? Do you want to take the red pants?  
No, no quiero llevar **ninguno**. No, I don’t want to take any.
(4) If *ninguno* precedes the verb, the negative *no* is not used:

*Ninguna* vi. I have not seen any.
*Ninguno* quiero llevar. I do not want to take any.
**But:** *No* vi *ninguna*.
*No* quiero llevar *ninguno*.

**H. The indefinite adjective *otro* (another, other)**

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (*otra*, *otro*, *otros*, *otras*). It is always placed before the noun:

- *Ahora tienen otro niño.* Now they have another child.
- *Escucharé otra canción.* I will listen to another song.
- *Vinieron otros estudiantes.* Other students came.
- *Esas son otras razones.* Those are other reasons.

**NOTES:**

(1) As a pronoun, *otro* varies in gender and number:

- *Quiero otro.* I want another one.
- *Otra llegó.* Another one came.
- *Había otros en la caja.* There were others in the box.
- *Teníamos otras blancas.* We had other white ones.

The pronouns *otros* and *otras*, preceded by *algunos*(*as*), have the meaning of *a few*:

- *Quisiera algunos otros. Estos no son suficientes.* I would like a few others. These are not enough.

(2) A definite article may precede any of the forms of *otro*:

- *El otro niño lo quería.* The other child wanted it.
- *La otra mañana lo vi.* I saw him the other morning.
- *Compré los otros tomates.* I bought the other tomatoes.
- *Trajo las otras cosas.* He brought the other things.

*El otro* and *la otra* are used with the meaning of *the other man* or *the other woman*, in the context of a love triangle:

- *Estaba con la otra chica.* He was with the other girl.
This connotation is more emphatic when *otro* or *otra* is used as a pronoun:

\[ \text{La vieron con el otro.} \quad \text{They saw her with the other one.} \]

\[ \text{(the other man)} \]

(3) *Otro* preceded by indefinite articles: as opposed to the English use of *another* and *one other* before the noun, the indefinite articles *un* and *una* are not used before *otro* in Spanish:

\[ \text{Déme otra oportunidad.} \quad \text{Give me another opportunity.} \]

\[ \text{Había otro recurso.} \quad \text{There was one other resource.} \]

(4) *Otro* may be preceded by possessive adjectives:

\[ \text{Aquí están tus otras medias.} \quad \text{Here are your other socks.} \]

\[ \text{Su otro amigo le mandará el boleto.} \quad \text{His other friend will send him the ticket.} \]

(5) *Otro* may be preceded by demonstrative adjectives or pronouns:

\[ \text{Me gustan estos otros duraznos.} \quad \text{I like these other peaches.} \]

\[ \text{No me dé esas otras.} \quad \text{Don’t give me those other ones.} \]

(6) *Otro* follows other indefinite adjectives. It can function as an adjective or a pronoun:

**Otro as an adjective:**

\[ \text{No me lo pidas. Tengo muchas otras cosas que hacer.} \quad \text{Don’t ask me. I have many other things to do.} \]

\[ \text{Visitó muchos otros museos interesantes.} \quad \text{She visited many other interesting museums.} \]

\[ \text{Not: muchos otros interesantes museos (The expression *muchos otros* must immediately precede the noun.)} \]

**Otro as a pronoun:**

\[ \text{Encontraron algunas otras.} \quad \text{They found other ones.} \]

\[ \text{Lo dijo alguna otra.} \quad \text{(a woman)} \]

(7) The indefinite adjective *tantos/as* (*so many*) may be placed before or after *otros/as*, although there is a change in meaning. Notice that *otros/as* may function as an adjective or a pronoun:

\[ \text{Hice tantos otros (planes) que ni recuerdo ahora.} \quad \text{I made so many others (other plans) that I don’t even remember now.} \]

\[ \text{Tenía diez postales y yo le di otras tantas (postales) para su colección.} \quad \text{She had ten postcards and I gave her an equal amount (of them) for her collection.} \]
(8) The English expression *every other*, as in *every other day*, is rendered into Spanish as *por medio*:

Van al médico día por medio. They go to the doctor every other day.

(9) Cardinal numerals follow *otros/as* in Spanish:

Compré otros dos cuadernos. I bought two other notebooks.

(10) The English expression *other than* is not rendered in Spanish as a form of *otro* plus *que*; instead, Spanish uses *diferente(s)* de or a subjunctive phrase with *que* and the negative form of *to be* (*ser*) in the required tense: *que no sea(n)*, *que no fuera(n)*, etc:

Prefiero un anillo diferente de éste. I prefer a ring other than this.

Puedes encontrar este tema en algunos poemas diferentes de los que están incluidos aquí. You can find this theme in poems other than the ones included here.

Quieren comprar una casa que no sea la que les ofreció él. They want to buy a house other than the one he offered them.

I. The indefinite adjective *poco* (*little, a little, few, a few, some*)

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (*poco/a*, *pocos/as*):

Tengo poco tiempo. I don't have much time.

Me queda poco dinero. Tendré que ir al banco. I have little money left. I'll have to go to the bank.

Tendrá poca paciencia con él. She will have little patience with him.

Hay pocos autos en la calle hoy. Será por el feriado. There are few cars in the street today. It must be because of the holiday.

Tiene pocas ambiciones. He has few ambitions.

NOTES:

(1) Synonyms of *pocos* and *pocas* are *alguno que otro*, *alguna que otra*; *uno que otro*, *una que otra*:

Trajo alguna que otra cosa. He brought a few (some) things.

Agrégale una que otra pasa. Add just a few raisins.

Although the expressions *unos cuantos* and *unas cuantas* translate into English as *a few* or *some*, they suggest a larger amount than what is indicated by the preceding expressions:

Trajo unas cuantas cosas. He brought quite a few things.
(2) The combination *a few other* plus a noun is translated into Spanish as *algún otro, alguna otra, algunos otros, algunas otras*:

Me devolvió el párrafo con **algunas otras** sugerencias.  

He gave me back the paragraph with a few other suggestions.

**Not:** *con otras pocas (or pocas otras) sugerencias*

The negative form *not many other*, used instead of *a few* as in *with not many other suggestions*, is rendered into Spanish as *sin (without) muchas otras sugerencias*, rather than the phrase *con no muchas otras sugerencias*.

(3) *Poco* also functions as an adverb and is usually placed after the verb in everyday use:

**Siempre como poco de noche.**  
I always eat little at night.

**Poco se sabe del accidente.**  
Little is known about the accident.

(4) *Un poco de* plus the noun means *a little (bit) of* or *some*. Only the masculine singular form *poco* is used:

*Requiere un poco de atención.*  
It requires a little bit of attention.

*Agregue un poco de arroz.*  
Add a little bit of rice.

- Although this expression (*un poco de*) is mostly used with mass nouns, it is also common with plural nouns that are seen as a whole:

*Quisiera un poco de arvejas.*  
I would like some peas.

- *Un poco de* may be replaced by *algo de* to express *some, a little (bit) of*:

*Agregue algo de arroz.*  
Add a little bit of rice.

*Debemos algo de dinero.*  
We owe some money.

- The expressions *algo de comer* and *algo de beber* are very common and are used to indicate *something to eat or drink*:

¿Quieres algo de comer?  
Do you want anything to eat?

(5) *Un poco* modifies adjectives and verbs, and functions as an adverb:

*Debe estudiar un poco.*  
He must study a little.

*Manejo un poco, pero siempre de día.*  
I drive a little, but always during the day.

*Es un poco complicado.*  
It is a little complicated.

*Su madre está un poco cansada.*  
Her mother is a little tired.
Un poco may be replaced by algo when the meaning is somewhat:

Está un poco (algo) triste estos días. She is somewhat sad lately.

The plurals unos pocos and unas pocas function as adjectives or pronouns, and translate as a few:

Llegaron unos pocos cajones. A few crates arrived.
Quedan unas pocas (hojas) en el cerezo. A few (leaves) remain on the cherry tree.

(6) When demasiado (too) precedes a form of poco, it is used in the masculine singular:

Tiene demasiado poco interés. He shows too little interest.
Dice demasiado pocas verdades. She makes too few truthful statements. / She doesn't make too many truthful statements.

The indefinite adjective raro (few, not frequent, not many)

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (raro/a, raros/as). However, as an indefinite adjective, it is more commonly used in the feminine form:

Rara vez vino a vernos. He didn’t come to see us much.
Lo veíamos en raras ocasiones. We saw him on just a few occasions.
Raro sermón evidenciaba lo que él realmente insinuaba. An occasional sermon would show what he was really suggesting.
Mamá leía en raros momentos. Mom would read on very few occasions.

NOTES:

(1) The adjective raro in the expression ¡Qué raro! means strange:

¡Qué raro que ella lo haya dicho! How strange it is for her to have said it!
¡Qué raro es Juan! No lo entiendo a veces. How strange Juan is! I do not understand him sometimes.

(2) The adverb raramente means rarely, seldom:

Venía raramente a la clase. He would rarely come to class.

It also means oddly or strangely, but it is not used very often in that form:

Los muebles estaban raramente distribuidos en el cuarto. The furniture was oddly arranged in the room.
Better:
Los muebles estaban distribuidos en el cuarto de una manera muy rara. The furniture was arranged in the room in a very odd fashion.
K. The indefinite adjective *tanto* (*so much, so many*)

1. This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (*tanto/a, tantos/as*) and is always placed before the noun:

   *No quiere tanto té.*  
   *Tanta alegría me conmueve.*  
   ¡*No sabía que tenías tantos alumnos!*  
   *Había tantas cosas bonitas que gastamos todo el dinero.*

   He doesn't want so much tea.  
   So much happiness moves me.  
   I didn't know that you had so many students!  
   There were so many nice things that we spent all the money.

2. As a pronoun, *tanto* is usually placed after the verb. The position before the verb adds emphasis to the pronoun. In this case, the pronoun is also pronounced more emphatically than the rest of the sentence (the expression is underlined in English for illustration only):

   *No quiere tanto.* (café)  
   ¡*Tanto no quiere!* (café)  
   ¡*Tanta me conmueve!* (generosidad)  
   *No sabía que tantos tenías.*  
   ¡*No sabía que tantos tenías!*  
   *Había tantas que gastamos todo el dinero.* (gangas)  
   ¡*Tantas había que gastamos todo el dinero!*  

   He doesn't want so much (coffee).  
   He doesn't want *so much!* (coffee)  
   *So much* (generosity) moves me!  
   I didn't know you had so many.  
   I didn't know you had *so many!*  
   There were so many that we spent all the money. (bargains)  
   There were *so many*, that we spent all the money!

3. As an adverb, only the masculine singular form *tanto* is used. It may be placed before or after the verb:

   *Viaja tanto que no tiene tiempo para descansar.*  
   *Tanto estudia que sacará una A.*

   She travels so much that she does not have any time to rest.  
   He studies so much that he will get an A.

   Before an adjective or another adverb, *tanto* becomes *tan*:

   *Era tan buena que la extrañé cuando se fue.*  
   *No me gusta algo tan triste.*  
   *Lo hizo tan bien que lo felicité.*

   She was so good that I missed her when she left.  
   I don't like something so sad.  
   He did it so well that I congratulated him.
4. Other uses of \textit{tanto} include:

(a) \textit{por tanto, por lo tanto} (therefore)
\textit{Por lo tanto, lo haremos ahora.} Therefore, we'll do it now.

(b) a numeral plus \textit{y tantos} (more than)
\textit{Tenía cincuenta y tantos años.} He was fifty-something.

(c) \textit{algún tanto} (a little)
\textit{Me habló algún tanto.} He spoke to me a little.

(d) \textit{un tanto} (a little)
\textit{Estaba un tanto nerviosa.} She was a little nervous.

(e) \textit{un tanto} (a certain, fixed amount)
\textit{Recibe un tanto por hora.} He makes (earns) a certain amount per hour.

(f) \textit{tanto} (as a noun, it means point or goal in a game)
\textit{Ganaron por dos tantos a uno.} They won two to one.

(g) \textit{un tanto por ciento} (a percentage)
\textit{Le dan un tanto por ciento de las ganancias.} They give him a percentage of the profits.

(h) \textit{entre tanto, en tanto} (in the meantime)
\textit{Entre tanto lo haremos.} We'll do it in the meantime.

(i) \textit{tanto mejor; tanto peor} (so much the better; too bad)
\textit{Si lo acepta, tanto mejor.} If he accepts it, so much the better.
\textit{Si no viene, tanto peor.} If he does not come, too bad.

(j) \textit{con tanto que, con tal que} (provided)
\textit{Te lo diré con tanto que te lo guardes.} I'll tell you, provided you keep it to yourself.

(k) \textit{estar al tanto} (to know; to be familiar with)
\textit{Estoy al tanto del programa.} I know about the program.

(l) \textit{tanto más} (especially)
\textit{Vamos a practicar, tanto más (más aún) cuando él lo ha sugerido.} We'll practice, especially now that he has suggested it.
(m) no es para tanto (it is not so bad)

Se queja pero no es para tanto. She complains, but it is not so bad.

L. The indefinite adjective todo (each, every, all of it, all of them, whole)

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number (todo/a, todos/as). Depending on its meaning, it may be placed before or after the noun. Observe the following cases:

1. every, each: before the noun (used in the singular form):

   Todo problema tiene una solución. Every (each) problem has a solution.
   Toda regla será obedecida. Every rule will be obeyed.

2. whole; all over: before the noun (used in the singular form):

   Todo el pastel se comió. He ate the whole pie.
   Hay moscas en toda la casa. There are flies all over the house.
   Recibió noticias de él durante todo un año. She received news from him for a whole year.
   Llovió toda una semana. It rained for a whole week.

NOTES:

(1) The expression all of it cannot be translated into Spanish as todo de él or todo de ella. To express this, include the noun, as in todo el pastel, or a direct object pronoun such as lo:

   Se comió todo el pastel. He ate all the pie.
   Se lo comió todo. He ate all of it.

(2) When todo/a/os/as precedes another adjective, it means entirely, completely, extremely, all:

   El teatro está todo lleno. The theater is completely full.
   Estaba toda contenta. She was all happy.
   El está todo triste. He is all sad.
   La blusa está toda arrugada. The blouse is entirely wrinkled.
   El patio está todo cubierto de nieve. The patio is all covered with snow.
   Estaban todos tristes. They were extremely sad.
   But: Todos estaban tristes. All of them were sad.
(3) With personal pronouns, **todos/as** is placed before or after the pronoun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Todas ellas estaban allí.</td>
<td>All of them were there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deben hacerlo ustedes todos.</td>
<td>All of you must do it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) Meaning *all the, all of the, todos/as* is placed before the noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Todos los chicos lo saben.</td>
<td>All the children know it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todas las azucenas son blancas.</td>
<td>All of the lilies are white.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- When the noun is preceded by the neuter article *lo*, the masculine singular form *todo* is placed before the article:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Todo lo trágico sucedió.</td>
<td>Everything tragic happened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trajeron todo lo demás.</td>
<td>They brought the rest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The definite article is generally left out in several fixed expressions, such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a toda prisa</td>
<td>fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a toda velocidad</td>
<td>fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a todo vapor</td>
<td>fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>con toda tranquilidad</td>
<td>very calmly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de todo tipo</td>
<td>of all types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en todo momento</td>
<td>always, at all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a todas partes</td>
<td>everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de todas maneras</td>
<td>anyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de todas formas</td>
<td>anyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de todos colores</td>
<td>(of) all colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de todos calibres</td>
<td>of all sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>por todos lados</td>
<td>everywhere, all over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>por todas partes</td>
<td>everywhere, all over</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M. The indefinite adjective **uno que otro** *(just a few, some)*

This adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number. It is usually used in the singular form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Había uno que otro niño en el patio de la escuela.</td>
<td>There were just a few children in the school yard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Una que otra calle del pueblo estaba arbolada.</td>
<td>A few of the streets in the town had trees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a pronoun, both the singular and the plural forms are used, although *algunos(as)* is a better choice for the plural:

_Había uno que otro en el patio de la escuela._

*There were just a few in the school yard.*

_Una que otra estaba arbolada._

*A few had trees.*

_Todas las casas del barrio tienen fondo y unas que otras (algunas) también tienen jardín al frente._

*Every house in the neighborhood has a back yard, and a few also have a garden in the front.*

_Unos que otros (Algunos) se adhirieron a la huelga. (trabajadores)_

*A few (workers) joined the strike.*

### Indefinite Adjectives That Vary Only in Number or Gender

**A. The indefinite adjective **_bastante_** (enough, plenty, quite a few, considerable)**

This indefinite adjective varies only in number (**bastante-s**). It also functions as a pronoun:

_Ya tengo **bastante** café. No me des más._

*I already have enough coffee. Don’t give me any more.*

_Hubo **bastante** lluvia en Florida._

*There was plenty of rain in Florida.*

_Tuvimos **bastantes** clases juntos._

*We had quite a few classes together.*

_Habrá **bastantes** alumnos allí._

*There will be plenty of students there.*

_Tiene **bastante** (dinero) para vivir bien._

*He has enough (money) to live well. [pronoun]*

_No quiere ver más cuadros. Ya vio **bastantes**._

*She doesn’t want to see any more paintings. She has already seen enough. [pronoun]*

**B. The indefinite adjective **_cual_** (which)**

This indefinite adjective varies only in number (**cual-es**). It is also called an interrogative adjective, depending on how it is used, and indicates a selection of one or more items among others. Without the noun, it becomes an indefinite (or interrogative) pronoun. As an interrogative, it must carry an accent mark called an occasional accent because it distinguishes different functions.

_¿**Cual** (libro) leíste?_  
_¿**Cuales** (monedas) se usaron durante la dictadura?_

_Which one (book) did you read?_  
_Which ones (coins) were used during the dictatorship?_

_No me dijo **cual** quería. (cuadro)_

*He didn’t tell me which one he wanted. (painting)*

Notice the cases where **cual** does not carry an accent mark in the following note.
NOTE:
The indefinite adjective or pronoun *cual* must not be confused with the relative pronoun, which has an antecedent (underlined noun in the example below) and is preceded by a definite article. As a relative pronoun, it does not carry an accent mark:

Indefinite adjective: ¿*Cuál* vestido te gusta?  
Indefinite pronoun: ¿*Cuál* te gusta?  
Relative pronoun: Ese *vestido*, el cual cuesta mucho, es de seda.

Some expressions with *cual* include forms with and without accent marks:

- **a cuál más** (each one)
  
  Tenía muchas flores, a cuál más bonita.  
  She had many flowers and each one was prettier than the last.

- **cuál más cuál menos** (all)
  
  Cuál más cuál menos, todos trajeron algo.  
  Some more, some less, everybody brought something.

- **cual si** (as if)
  
  Reaccionó cual si fuera el dueño.  
  He reacted as if he were the owner.

- **tal cual** (just as it is; as)
  
  Él me lo dio tal cual estaba.  
  He gave it to me just as it was.

- **tal para cual** (similar)
  
  María y Pedro son tal para cual.  
  María and Pedro resemble each other.

- **cada cual** (everyone)
  
  Cada cual hace lo que quiere.  
  Each one does what (s)he wants.

**C. The indefinite adjective cualquier (any, anyone, anybody)**

Although this indefinite adjective has only one form for both genders before the noun, it takes the form *cualquiera*, also for both genders, when placed after the noun:

- *cualquier libro*, *un libro cualquiera*  
  any book
- *cualquier maleta*, *una maleta cualquiera*  
  any suitcase
As a pronoun, cualquiera means anyone, anybody:

Se lo dieron a cualquiera. They gave it to anybody.

**D. The indefinite adjective múltiple (multiple, complex)**

This indefinite adjective varies only in number (múltiple-s). It may be placed before or after the noun:

- *Falleció por causa de sus múltiples heridas.* He died of multiple wounds.
- *Es un proceso múltiple que requiere mucha atención.* It is a complex process that requires a lot of attention.

**E. The indefinite adjective semejante (such, of that type)**

This indefinite adjective varies only in number (semejante-s):

- *No entiendo cómo ha podido darme semejante excusa.* I can’t understand how she could have given me such an excuse.
- *Es increíble que tenga semejantes problemas.* It’s incredible that he has such problems.

If semejante-s is placed after the noun, the indefinite article precedes the noun:

*¡Cómo ha podido decirte una cosa semejante!* How could he tell you such a thing!

**NOTES:**

1. After a noun, semejante a means similar to:

   - *No creo que tenga problemas semejantes a los míos.* I don’t think she has problems similar to mine (like mine).

2. Before the noun, semejante(s) and tal(es) have the same meaning:

   - *No acepté semejante (tal) proposición.* I didn’t accept such a proposal.

**F. The indefinite adjective suficiente (enough)**

This indefinite adjective varies only in number (suficiente-s). It may be used before or after the noun:

- *Me gustaría tener suficiente dinero para eso.* I would like to have enough money for that.
- *Creo que ella tiene razones suficientes.* I think she has enough reasons.
NOTE:
It is incorrect to use *suficientes* combined with *otros(as)* as is done in English. Just use *suficientes* or *demasiados(as)*:

*Tiene suficientes (demasiadas) razones para no hacerlo.*

Not: *Tiene suficientes otras razones para no hacerlo.*

G. The indefinite adjective *tal* (*such, such a, that*)

This indefinite adjective varies only in number (*tal-es)*:

*No sé qué haría yo en tales circunstancias.*  I don't know what I would do in such circumstances.

*Lo dijo con tal seriedad que todos lo creímos.* He said it so seriously that all of us believed it.

*Es la primera vez que admite tal cosa.*  It’s the first time that she has admitted such a thing.

*Creo que fue a tal hotel en Madrid.* I think he went to that hotel (that you mentioned) in Madrid.

NOTE:
When *tal* is used before a proper noun and is preceded by an article, the expression has a contemptuous connotation:

*Me presentó a una tal Pepa que vivía allí.* She introduced me to a certain Pepa who lived there.

*La tal Pepa se consideraba su amiga.* That Pepa considered herself her friend.

The Indefinite Adjective *Varíos (Several)*, Used Only in the Plural Form

This indefinite adjective varies only in gender. The feminine form is *varías*:

*Hay varíos documentos para firmar.*  There are several documents to be signed.

*Tiene varias clases los lunes.* She has several classes on Mondays.

*Las clases que tiene que tomar son varias.*  There are several classes he has to take.
NOTE:
When *varios* is placed after the noun, it means *different*:

*Pintó el cielo con colores varios.* He painted the sky with different colors.
*But:*  
*Pintó el cielo con varios colores.* He painted the sky with several colors.

## Indefinite Adjectives That Are Invariable in Form

**A. The indefinite adjective *cada* (each)**

Although it is an indefinite adjective, *cada* has a distributive value and is used only in the singular form:

*Cada documento tiene un sello.* Each document has a stamp.
*Le dieron un recibo a cada persona.* They gave each person a receipt.

As a pronoun, *cada* is followed by *uno* or *una* (each one), according to the noun:

*Cada uno tiene un sello.* Each one has a stamp.
*Le dieron un recibo a cada una.* They gave each one a receipt.

**B. The indefinite adjective *harto* (rather, very)**

This indefinite adjective is not used in some regions. It is the equivalent of *muy* (very):

*Dijo cosas harto interesantes.* She spoke about things that were very interesting.

It is also the irregular past participle of the verb *hartar* (to satisfy, to fill to excess). When this participle functions as an adjective, it agrees with the noun in gender and number (*harto/a, hartos/as*) and has the meaning of *tired to the limit, full, completely satisfied with food*:

*Estoy harta de todo.* I'm fed up with everything.
*Los chicos están hartos de los días de lluvia.* The children are tired of the rainy days.
*Están hartas; no quieren el postre.* They are full; they don't want the dessert.
Interrogative and Exclamatory Adjectives

The words *qué*, *cuál* (-es), and *cuánto/-a/-os/-as* are indefinite adjectives that become interrogative and exclamatory adjectives when they are placed before the noun in questions or exclamations. All of them carry accent marks.

### Qué

*Qué* is invariable in form and is equivalent to *what* in English. Notice that the indefinite article (*un* or *una*) is not used in Spanish before the singular noun when *qué* is an exclamatory adjective:

- ¡Qué tragedia la de Alberto!
- ¡Qué libro interesante!
- ¡Qué pueblos lindos hay en España!
- ¡Qué chicas inteligentes son sus hijas!
- ¿Qué receta quieres?
- ¿Qué estudiantes faltaron a clase?

**What a tragedy happened to Alberto!**

**What an interesting book!**

**What pretty little towns there are in Spain!**

**How intelligent his daughters are!**

**What recipe do you want?**

**What students missed class?**

### Other Uses of Qué Depending on the Following Word

**A.** The expression *Qué* + an adjective is the equivalent of English *how*:

- ¡Qué triste!

  **How sad!**

**B.** *Qué* plus a verb is translated in English as *what*:

- ¡Qué te parece!
- ¿Qué te parece esto?

  **What do you think! or Look at that!**

  **What do you think about this?**

**C.** *Qué* followed by an adverb is equivalent to *how* in English:

- ¡Qué bien lo hizo!

  **How well he did it!**
**Cuál**

Cuál has a plural form, cuáles, but does not change for gender. It is used more as an interrogative pronoun, however, without the noun:

- ¿Cuál quieres, la receta de sopa o la de guiso? Which recipe do you want, the one for soup or the one for stew?
- ¿Cuáles vas a comprar, las uvas de Chile o las de California? Which grapes are you going to buy? The ones from Chile or those from California?
- ¿Cuáles se perdieron? Which ones got lost?

**NOTES:**

1. When the noun is present in sentences like the preceding one, qué is used more often than cuál or cuáles. The use of cuál or cuáles seems to signal more the fact that there is a selection:

   - ¿Qué receta quieres? Which recipe do you want?
   - ¿Cuál de estas recetas quieres? Which one of these recipes do you want?

2. When cuál(es) keeps its function as an interrogative word within a sentence, it carries the accent mark:

   - No tengo idea cuál(es) quiere. I have no idea which one(s) he wants.

**Cuánto**

Cuánto varies for gender and number and becomes cuánta, cuántas, and cuántos. It is translated into English as how much or how many:

- ¡Cuánto arroz fue importado! How much rice was imported!
- ¡Cuánta grasa tiene la comida! How much fat this meal has!
- ¿Cuántas chicas llegaron? How many girls came?
- ¿Cuántos escritores vinieron? How many writers came?
The Future Tense

The Spanish future tense is equivalent to the English tense formed with the auxiliary words *shall* and *will*. There are three ways of representing future actions in Spanish: the informal future, the simple future, and the future perfect.

The Informal Future

This tense is most frequently used to express future actions in spoken Spanish. It is formed with the present tense of *ir* (to go), the preposition *a*, and the infinitive of the main verb. (In English, the present continuous or progressive form of *to be* is used with the infinitive of the main verb.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present tense of <em>ir</em></th>
<th><em>a</em> + infinitive</th>
<th>Present Progressive in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo voy</td>
<td>a cantar</td>
<td>I am going to sing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú vas</td>
<td>a comer</td>
<td>you are going to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él va</td>
<td>a vivir</td>
<td>he is going to live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella va</td>
<td>a cenar</td>
<td>she is going to have dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud. va</td>
<td>a preguntar</td>
<td>you are going to ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as vamos</td>
<td>a dormir</td>
<td>we are going to sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros/as vais</td>
<td>a reír</td>
<td>you are going to laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos van</td>
<td>a llorar</td>
<td>they are going to cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas van</td>
<td>a decidir</td>
<td>they are going to decide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uds. van</td>
<td>a caminar</td>
<td>you are going to walk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**

The informal future may be replaced by the present tense of the verb that appears in the infinitive, without changing the meaning of the sentence.

- Yo voy a cantar mañana. → I'm going to sing tomorrow.
- Yo canto mañana. → I sing tomorrow.
The Simple Future

The simple future is built on a single base word, which happens to be the infinitive of the verb. To form the simple future of -ar, -er, and -ir verbs, the endings -é, -ás, -á, -emos, -éis, and -án are added to the infinitive of the verb. The six basic personal pronouns are used in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mirar</th>
<th>conocer</th>
<th>sentir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>miraré</td>
<td>conoceré</td>
<td>sentiré</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>mirarás</td>
<td>conocerás</td>
<td>sentirás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>mirará</td>
<td>conocerá</td>
<td>sentirá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>miraremos</td>
<td>conoceremos</td>
<td>sentiremos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros</td>
<td>miraréis</td>
<td>conoceréis</td>
<td>sentiréis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>mirarán</td>
<td>conocerán</td>
<td>sentirán</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practicarás mucho castellano. You will practice a lot of Spanish.
Comeremos en este lugar. We will eat in this place.
Vivirá aquí hasta julio. He will live here until July.
Me levantaré a las seis. I will get up at six.
No tendremos lluvia. We will not have rain.

NOTES:

(1) All the forms have an accent mark on the last syllable, with the exception of the nosotros/as forms, which are stressed on the next-to-last syllable but do not carry a written accent.

(2) To conjugate reflexive verbs such as levantarse (to get up), write the corresponding reflexive pronoun (me, te, se, os, or nos) in front of the verb and add the infinitive with the corresponding endings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>levantarse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>levantaré</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>te</td>
<td>levantarás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>levantará</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>levantará</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>levantará</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as</td>
<td>nos</td>
<td>levantaremos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros/as</td>
<td>os</td>
<td>levantaréis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>levantarán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>levantarán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uds.</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>levantarán</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Me vestiré temprano. I will get dressed early.
To negate a sentence with a verb in the future tense, the word *no* is placed after the personal pronoun, if given, and before the conjugated verb. If the verb is reflexive, the word *no* has to be placed before the reflexive pronoun:

- Tú no cantarás en el coro. You will not sing in the choir.
- No me vestiré tarde. I will not get dressed late.

**Irregular Forms of the Simple Future**

There are many verbs that show irregularities in the stem. The following are examples of the irregular forms. The personal pronoun *yo* is used in these examples.

**A. The last vowel of the infinitive changes to a *d* in the simple future:**

- *poner* (to put)  
  > *pon(e)r*  
  > *pondré*

- *salir* (to go out)  
  > *sal(i)r*  
  > *saldré*

- *tener* (to have)  
  > *ten(e)r*  
  > *tendré*

- *valer* (to be worth)  
  > *val(e)r*  
  > *valdré*

- *venir* (to come)  
  > *ven(i)r*  
  > *vendré*

**B. The *ec* or *ce* of the infinitive is dropped in the simple future:**

- *decir* (to say)  
  > *d(ec)ir*  
  > *diré*

- *hacer* (to do/make)  
  > *ha(ce)r*  
  > *haré*

**C. The final vowel of the infinitive is dropped in the simple future:**

- *caber* (to fit)  
  > *cab(e)r*  
  > *cabré*

- *haber* (to have)  
  > *hab(e)r*  
  > *habré*

- *poder* (can)  
  > *pod(e)r*  
  > *podré*

- *querer* (to want)  
  > *quer(e)r*  
  > *querré*

- *saber* (to know)  
  > *sab(e)r*  
  > *sabré*
NOTES:
(1) Endings remain the same for all verbs, whether the stems are regular or irregular:
- é, - ás, - á, - émos, - éis, - án
(2) To determine which verbs have a regular or irregular conjugation, consult a book of verb conjugations or a dictionary.
(3) Verbs that contain one of the aforementioned verbs, such as convenir (to agree), contener (to contain), rehacer (to do again), and many others, also show the irregular stem in the future form:
(yo) contener ➔ contendré  convenir ➔ convendré  rehacer ➔ reharé

**Uses of the Simple Future**

**A.** The simple future is used to indicate events that will or will not happen in the future:

Carlos leerá unos informes.  
Carlos will read some reports.

Nos mudaremos a una casa.  
We will move to a house.

Mañana no hará frío.  
It won't be cold tomorrow.

**B.** The simple future may be replaced by the present tense in the following cases.

1. To indicate future events:

Mañana llega Matilde.  
Matilde arrives tomorrow.

Te veo a la tarde.  
I'll see you in the afternoon.

2. To indicate a lack of possibility in negative sentences, Spanish uses the present tense of querer (to want) and not the future tense, as English does:

El niño no quiere responder.  
The child won't answer.

La imagen no quiere venir.  
The image won't come in.

3. To indicate a polite request, querer (to want) and poder (can) are used in the present tense in Spanish instead of the future tense:

¿Quiere llevar esta carta?  
Will you take this letter?

¿Pueden ponerse de pie?  
Will you stand?
C. The simple future is used to express doubt, wonder, or probability, mainly when asking questions:

¿Cuántos días de vacaciones tendrán?
How many days of vacation do you think they’ll have?

¿Serán las cinco?
Do you think it is five o’clock?

Creo que serán las seis.
I think it is about six o’clock.

¿Qué estará pensando Miguel ahora?
What do you think Miguel is thinking about right now?

D. The simple future is used to express a command:

¡Ud. lo tendrá listo para mañana sin falta!
You will have it ready for tomorrow, for sure!

¡Estarás de vuelta a las diez!
You will be back at ten!

E. The simple future is used to express a possibility, where English uses might or may:

Será fácil como tú dices, sin embargo no lo haré.
It might be easy as you say; however I will not do it.

Ganará mucho dinero, pero no lo demuestra.
He might make a lot of money, but he doesn’t show it.

Será inteligente, pero no sale bien en los exámenes.
She may be intelligent, but she does not do well in the exams.

Uses of the Simple Future in Combination with Other Tenses

Simple Future and Subjunctive

When the fulfillment of a future event depends upon a hypothetical action, this second action (or the dependent clause) will be in the subjunctive. Expressions such as tan pronto como (as soon as), mientras que (as long as), después de que (after), cuando (when), enseguida que (as soon as), and others, precede the subjunctive form:

Nos acostaremos tan pronto como lleguen los niños.
We'll go to bed as soon as the children arrive.

Tomaré un café con él cuando venga.
I’ll have coffee with him when he comes.

Irán a casa enseguida que terminen.
They will go home as soon as they finish.

La chica esperará aquí mientras que el profesor prepare el ejercicio.
The girl will wait here while the professor prepares the exercise.
However, if the second action is a habitual action, the present tense is used instead of the future in both the main clause and the dependent clause:

- **Nos acostamos tan pronto como llegan los niños.** We go to bed as soon as the children arrive.
- **Tomo un café con él cuando viene.** I have coffee with him when he comes.
- **Van a casa enseguida que terminan.** They go home as soon as they finish.

**NOTES:**

(1) The expressions *antes que* and *antes de que* are always followed by the subjunctive, whether the main sentence is in the future or in the present, because the dependent clause is describing a situation that still has to happen:

- **Limpiaré el coche antes que él llegue.** I'll clean the car before he arrives.
- **Siempre limpio el coche antes de que él llegue.** I always clean the car before he arrives.

(2) The expressions *después que* and *después de que* are followed by the subjunctive when the main sentence is in the future because the dependent clause which they introduce refers to events that have not happened yet:

- **Preparará la comida después que los chicos vengan.** She will prepare the meal after the children come.

Please note that if a habitual action is intended, the present tense is used in both the main clause and the dependent clause, even when *después que* is used:

- **Mamá calienta la comida después que Papá llega.** Mom warms up the food after Dad arrives.

(3) If there are no dependent clauses, and the two actions take place in the future, the future tense is used for both:

- **Limpiaré el auto y él lo secará.** I will clean the car and he will dry it.

**Simple Future and Present**

If the future action does not depend upon a hypothetical, unreal action but will take place because of an action that is happening in the present, the second verb is in the present:

- **Compraré la fruta que tú quieras.** I'll buy the fruit that you want (whenever you tell me what fruit you want).
present:

Compraré la fruta que tú quieres. I'll buy the fruit that you want (and you have indicated which one).

**The Future Perfect Tense**

The future perfect tense is formed with the future of the auxiliary verb *haber* and the past participle of the main verb. *Haber* is one of the irregular verbs that drop the final vowel of the infinitive in order to form the future stem.

As for the past participle, there are regular and irregular forms. The verbs that have regular past participles take the following endings: *-ado* for *-ar* verbs, and *-ido* for *-er* and *-ir* verbs. There is not a specific rule for the formation of the irregular past participles. In English, verbs have forms that end in *-ed* (*walked, jumped, visited*), and irregular forms (*gone, left, eaten*). For a review of the most common ones, consult Chapter 10, The Past Participle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future tense of <em>haber</em></th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
<th>I will have finished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo habré</td>
<td>terminado</td>
<td>I will have finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú habrás</td>
<td>cantado</td>
<td>you will have sung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él habrá</td>
<td>puesto</td>
<td>he will have put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella habrá</td>
<td>dormido</td>
<td>she will have slept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud. habrá</td>
<td>hablado</td>
<td>you will have spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as habremos</td>
<td>dicho</td>
<td>we will have said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros/as habréis</td>
<td>venido</td>
<td>you will have come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos habrán</td>
<td>salido</td>
<td>they will have gone out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas habrán</td>
<td>recordado</td>
<td>they will have remembered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uds. habrán</td>
<td>esperado</td>
<td>you will have waited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Uses of the Future Perfect Tense**

**A.** The future perfect is used to express an action that will be completed at a certain point in the future:

Para mayo ya habré terminado mis cursos. By May I will have finished my courses.

Cuando salgas del trabajo mañana habremos llegado a Ponce. By the time you leave work tomorrow we will have arrived in Ponce.
B. The future perfect is used to indicate probability:

*Ella habrá tenido* miedo.
She may have been afraid.

*Los niños habrán salido, seguramente.*
The children have probably gone out.

C. The future perfect is used to admit a possibility about a situation in the past with the introduction of a condition or clarification:

*Tú habrás sido* generosa, pero eso no te impide que des dinero otra vez.
You may have been generous, but that does not keep you from giving money again.

*Yo habré estado descansando, sin embargo terminé el trabajo.*
I may have been resting, but regardless, I finished the job.
The Preterit Tense

The preterit tense describes an action that was completed at one point in the past or that lasted during a specified period of time and is viewed as a whole. The action could have taken place as a series of repeated events that ended at a specific time and that are not considered as a habitual or continuous action in the past with no specified beginning or ending, as in *I used to sing*.

Preterit Endings for Regular Verbs

There are two sets of regular endings for the preterit:

- **-ar verbs**: -é, -aste, -ó, -amos, -asteis, -aron
- **-er and -ir verbs**: -í, -iste, -ió, -imos, -isteis, -ieron

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Yo</th>
<th>Tú</th>
<th>Él</th>
<th>Ella</th>
<th>Ud.</th>
<th>Nosotros/as</th>
<th>Vosotros/as</th>
<th>Ellos</th>
<th>Ellas</th>
<th>Uds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hablar</td>
<td>hablé</td>
<td>hablaste</td>
<td>habló</td>
<td>habló</td>
<td>habló</td>
<td>hablamos</td>
<td>hablaste</td>
<td>hablaron</td>
<td>hablaron</td>
<td>hablaron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comer</td>
<td>comí</td>
<td>comiste</td>
<td>comió</td>
<td>comió</td>
<td>comió</td>
<td>comimos</td>
<td>comiste</td>
<td>comieron</td>
<td>comieron</td>
<td>comieron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vivir</td>
<td>viví</td>
<td>viviste</td>
<td>vivió</td>
<td>vivió</td>
<td>vivió</td>
<td>vivimos</td>
<td>viviste</td>
<td>vivieron</td>
<td>vivieron</td>
<td>vivieron</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

1. The final syllable of the *yo, él, ella, and Ud.* forms is stressed and carries an accent mark.
2. The forms *nosotras* and *vosotras* share the same forms as their corresponding masculine pronouns *nosotros* and *vosotros*. 
The final syllable of the *tú* form does not end in *-s*.

The forms for the first person plural *nosotros* of *-ar* and *-ir* verbs are identical to their corresponding forms for the present. The correct tense has to be deduced from context:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Siempre hablamos castellano en clase.} & \quad \text{We always speak Spanish in class.} \\
\text{Ayer hablamos mucho en la clase de conversación.} & \quad \text{Yesterday we spoke a lot in our conversation class.} \\
\text{Vivimos en la calle San Martín.} & \quad \text{We live on San Martín Street.} \\
\text{Vivimos en San Juan el año pasado.} & \quad \text{We lived in San Juan last year.}
\end{align*}
\]

### Irregular Preterit Forms

There are several irregular forms in the preterit.

**A. Ser (to be), ir (to go), and dar (to give) are entirely irregular in the preterit.**

The six basic personal pronouns are used below to show the conjugation of these verbs in the preterit:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ser / ir} & \\
\text{yo fui} & \quad \text{yo di} \\
\text{tú fuiste} & \quad \text{tú diste} \\
\text{él fue} & \quad \text{él dio} \\
\text{nosotros fuimos} & \quad \text{nosotros dimos} \\
\text{vosotros fuisteis} & \quad \text{vosotros disteis} \\
\text{ellos fueron} & \quad \text{ellos dieron}
\end{align*}
\]

**NOTE:**

*Ser* and *ir* share the same forms in the preterit. *Dar* takes the endings of *-er* and *-ir* verbs, but without any accents.
B. Some -ar, -er, and -ir verbs have irregular stems.

However, note that there are groups of these verbs that share common letters in their stems, and that all of these verbs share the following set of endings. Also notice that none of these endings carry accent marks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-e</th>
<th>-iste</th>
<th>-o</th>
<th>-imos</th>
<th>-isteis</th>
<th>-ieron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>uv</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>andar</td>
<td>anduve, anduviste, anduvo, anduvimos, anduvisteis, anduvieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estar</td>
<td>estuve, estuviste, estuvo, estuvimos, estuvisteis, estuvieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tener</td>
<td>tuve, tuviste, tuvo, tuvimos, tuvisteis, tuvieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haber</td>
<td>hube, hubiste, hubo, hubimos, hubisteis, hubieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poder</td>
<td>pude, pudiste, pudo, pudimos, pudisteis, pudieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poner</td>
<td>puse, pusiste, puso, pusimos, pusisteis, pusieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saber</td>
<td>supe, supiste, supo, supimos, supisteis, supieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacer</td>
<td>hice, hiciste, hizo, hicimos, hicisteis, hicieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>querer</td>
<td>quise, quisiste, quiso, quisimos, quisisteis, quisieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venir</td>
<td>vine, viniste, vino, vinimos, vinisteis, vinieron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| j  |    |       |    |       |         |        |
| conducir | conduje, condujiste, condujo, condujimos, condujisteis, condujeron |
| decir | dije, dijiste, dijo, dijimos, dijisteis, dijeron |
| traducir | traduje, tradujiste, tradujo, tradujimos, tradujisteis, tradujeron |
| traer | traje, trajiste, trajo, trajimos, trajisteis, trajeron |

**NOTE:**

While the ending of the third person plural is -ieron, the j group drops the i:

- condujeron  dijeron  tradujeron  trajeron

### Changes in the Verb Stem in the Preterit

Several verbs undergo changes in the stem of the infinitive when they are conjugated in the preterit. For practical purposes, only the six basic personal pronouns are shown in the following conjugation.
A. *Hacer* changes *c* to *z* in the third person singular of the preterit:

- yo hice
- tú hiciste
- él hizo
- nosotros hicimos
- vosotros hicisteis
- ellos hicieron

B. Spelling changes to preserve pronunciation

In order to preserve the consonant sound of the infinitive, verbs that end in -*car* and -*gar* undergo a change in the spelling of the first person, *yo*.

1. Endings in -*car*: (*buscar*)

   In Spanish, *c* before *e* or *i* is pronounced as *s*, while *c* before *a*, *o*, or *u* is pronounced as *k*. Since the first person, *yo*, ends in *é* in the preterit, the *k* sound is preserved by changing the *c* to *qu*:

   **buscar:** busqué, buscaste, buscó, buscamos, buscasteis, buscaron

   **NOTE:**
   A list of additional common verbs that show the same change in the first person includes, but is not limited to:
   - educar, explicar, marcar, recalcar, sacar, secar, tocar

2. Endings in -*gar*: (*pagar*)

   In Spanish, *g* before *e* or *i* has a sound similar to the strong sound of *b* in *ham*, while *g* before *a*, *o*, or *u* is pronounced like the English *g* in *gone*. Since the first person, *yo*, ends in *é* in the preterit, the *g* sound is preserved by changing the *g* to *gu*:

   **pagar:** pagué, pagaste, pagó, pagamos, pagasteis, pagaron

   **NOTE:**
   A list of additional common verbs that show the same change in the first person includes, but is not limited to:
   - apagar, colgar, entregar, jugar, llegar, negar, rogar
C. Changes in verbs that end in -zar

Verbs that end in -zar change the z to c in the yo form. This change is not made to preserve pronunciation in either Continental or Latin American Spanish. In Spain, the z as well as the c before e or i are pronounced like the English th in think. In Latin America, both the z and the c before e or i are pronounced as s. Observe the following verbs:

**realizar**

In Spain (all persons pronounced with the sound of th in think):
realicé, realizaste, realizó, realizamos, realizasteis, realizaron

**almorzar**

In Latin America (all persons pronounced with the sound of s in same):
almorcé, almorzaste, almorzó, almorzamos, almorzasteis, almorzaron

**NOTES:**

(1) A list of additional common verbs that show the same change in the first person includes, but is not limited to:

comenzar, empezar, gozar, rezar, utilizar

(2) All -ar and -er verbs that undergo stem changes in the present tense (called stem-changing verbs) do not have any changes in the preterit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Preterit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contar</td>
<td>(yo) cuento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perder</td>
<td>pierdo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) All -ir verbs that have a stem change in the present keep the e or the o of the infinitive when they are conjugated in the preterit, except in the third person singular and plural, where they change e to i and o to u:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Preterit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pedir</td>
<td>yo pido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tú pides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>él pide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nosotros pedimos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vosotros pedís</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos piden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Changes in the Endings in the Preterit

The following rules apply.

**A. The preterit ending changes when the stem of an -er or -ir verb ends in a vowel.**

If the stem of an -er or -ir verb ends in a vowel, a **y** replaces the **i** of the third person singular and plural:

- **leer:** (le er) leí, leíste, leyó, leímos, leísteis, leyeron
- **oír:** (o ir) oí, oíste, oyó, oímos, oísteis, oyeron

**B. The preterit ending changes for verbs that end in -uir.**

Verbs that end in -uir also substitute a **y** for the **i** in the third person singular and plural of the preterit tense:

- **construir:** construí, construiste, construyó, construímos, construisteis, construyeron
- **atribuir:** atribuí, atribuiste, atribuyó, atribuímos, atribuisteis, atribuyeron
Uses of the Preterit Tense

The preterit tense is used in Spanish to describe the following situations.

**A. The preterit is used to describe a completed action in the past.**

This usage is equivalent to the English preterit tense:

- *Me compré un coche nuevo.*
  - I bought a new car.
- *Ella invitó a sus amigas para conversar.*
  - She invited her friends to chat.
- *Juan trabajó para mi padre de mayo a septiembre.*
  - John worked for my father from May to September.
- *Mis amigos llegaron a las cinco.*
  - My friends arrived at five.

**B. The preterit is used to describe an action that lasted for some time in the past and is viewed as a whole.**

In English, the expression *used to* plus a verb in the infinitive might be used in such a context:

- *Mi hermano estudió en esa universidad.*
  - My brother used to study at that university.
- *María fue secretaria en su oficina.*
  - María used to be a secretary in his office.
- *Ellos vivieron en Santa Fe.*
  - They used to live in Santa Fe.

**C. The preterit is used to indicate a completed action in the past that extends its effect into the present.**

In English, the present perfect tense is used here:

- *Acabé de limpiar la casa.*
  - I have just finished cleaning the house.
- *Mis vecinos terminaron de mudarse.*
  - My neighbors have finished moving.
- *Ya salió para el aeropuerto.*
  - He has already left for the airport.

**NOTE:**

The preceding sentences may also be expressed using the present perfect in Spanish (used mostly in Spain) and the preterit in English:

- *Ya ha salido para el aeropuerto.*
  - He already left for the airport.
D. The preterit is used to describe an event that took place before another event in the past.

English uses the past perfect here:

*Juan dijo que María fue su mejor amiga en la escuela.*

Juan said that María had been his best friend at school.

*Me contaron que viniste a verlos.*

They told me that you had come to see them.

E. The preterit is used to describe a series of events delimited within a specific period of time:

*El semestre pasado fui a clases todos los jueves.*

Last semester I attended classes every Thursday.

*Cuando estuvo en la Marina siempre nos escribió.*

When he was in the Navy, he always wrote to us.

*Durante el verano tomé clases de natación.*

During the summer I took swimming lessons.

*Escuché música por dos horas.*

I listened to music for two hours.

**NOTE:**

If there is no adverbial phrase such as *el semestre pasado*, the imperfect tense has to replace the preterit:

*iba a clases todos los jueves.*

I used to go to classes every Thursday.

However, if it is understood in context that the length of time had a beginning and an end, the preterit is used:

*¿Qué hiciste el semestre pasado?*  

What did you do last semester?

*Fui a clase todos los jueves.*

I went to class every Thursday.

F. The preterit is used to describe an event of certain duration that has a specific beginning or end or that began and ended in the past:

*Almorzamos a las dos.*

We had lunch at two. (beginning)

*Leí el diario hasta tarde.*

I read the newspaper until late. (end)

*Asistí a clase de mayo a julio.*

I attended class from May to July.

G. The preterit is used to describe a situation governed by a verb of action or movement:

*Jaime trabajó toda la tarde.*

Jaime worked all afternoon.

*Carlos manejó sin parar.*

Carlos drove without stopping.
H. The preterit of *deber* plus an infinitive is used to describe an obligation or a duty:

\[ \text{Ellos debieron llegar más temprano.} \quad \text{They should have arrived earlier.} \]
\[ \text{Debí preparar el informe antes de su llegada.} \quad \text{I should have prepared the report before his arrival.} \]

**NOTE:**

The sentence *Ellos debieron llegar más temprano* could also be interpreted as an assumption, as in *They might have arrived earlier.*

I. The preterit is used to describe a sudden change in time or condition:

\[ \text{Se hizo la una y tuve que volver.} \quad \text{Suddenly, it was one o’clock and I had to return.} \]
\[ \text{Hubo una cantidad enorme de gente en la plaza.} \quad \text{There was a big crowd in the public square.} \]
\[ \text{Mi sobrino cumplió tres años en octubre.} \quad \text{My nephew turned three in October.} \]

J. The preterit is used to describe a change that is expressed by a reflexive or reciprocal verb:

\[ \text{Se volvió loca con tanto sufrimiento.} \quad \text{She went crazy with so much suffering.} \]
\[ \text{Se casaron el sábado pasado.} \quad \text{They got married last Saturday.} \]
\[ \text{Su hija se puso pálida con la noticia.} \quad \text{Her daughter turned pale when she heard the news.} \]
\[ \text{La familia de Juan se quedó sin un centavo.} \quad \text{Juan’s family was left without even a cent.} \]

K. The preterit of *irse* plus the present participle of the main verb is used to describe the progression of an event:

\[ \text{A medida que hablaba se fue tranquilizando.} \quad \text{As she talked, she calmed down little by little.} \]
\[ \text{Después de vivir allí tres meses nos fuimos ajustando.} \quad \text{After living there for three months we gradually got used to it.} \]

L. The preterit is used to describe a completed event in the past, of specific duration:

\[ \text{Charlamos por teléfono por dos horas.} \quad \text{We chatted on the phone for two hours.} \]
\[ \text{Se quedaron en ese motel por una semana.} \quad \text{They stayed in that motel for one week.} \]
Verbs That Change Their Meaning in the Preterit

Some Spanish verbs have a different meaning when they are used in the preterit tense than when they are used in the present:

**acabar de**
(to have just done)  
*Acabo de hacer los ejercicios.*  
I have just finished doing the exercises.
(to finish)  
*Acabé de leer y me dormí.*  
I finished reading and I fell asleep.

**conocer**
(to know)  
*Ellos conocen al profesor.*  
They know the professor.
(to meet)  
*Ellos conocieron al profesor ayer.*  
They met the professor yesterday.

**saber**
(to know)  
*Yo sé donde vive Juana.*  
I know where Juana lives.
(to find out)  
*Yo supe anoche que vive allí.*  
I found out last night that she lives there.

**poder**
(to be able)  
*Tú puedes hablar bien el castellano.*  
You can speak Spanish well.
(to manage)  
¡*Tú pudiste decirlo todo sin parar!*  
You managed to say it all without stopping!

**querer**
(to want)  
*Queremos ir a España en las vacaciones.*  
We want to go to Spain on our vacation.
(to try to)  
*Quisimos ir pero no había asientos.*  
We tried to go but there were no seats.

**no querer**
(not to want)  
*María no quiere hablar con Carlos.*  
María doesn’t want to talk to Carlos.
(to refuse)  
*María no quiso hablar con Carlos.*  
María refused to talk to Carlos.
Contrasts Between the Preterit Tense and the Imperfect Tense

The preterit, as well as the imperfect, represents actions that happened in the past. There are specific situations where one or the other tense must be used. Included in the following list are some of the most common of those situations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses of the Preterit</th>
<th>Uses of the Imperfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. An action that lasted for a while and is viewed as a whole: Tomé clases el año pasado. I took classes last year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. A completed action in the past that extends its effect into the present: Acabé de leer la novela. I just finished reading the novel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. An action that happened before another action in the past: Me dijeron que te recibiste. They told me you had graduated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. A completed action in the past with a beginning and an ending: Trabajó allí por un año. He worked there for a year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. A series of events within a specific period of time: Pedro nos visitó todo el tiempo que estuvo en la casa de sus abuelos. Pedro came to visit us all the time he lived with his grandparents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Habitual actions in the past: Siempre almorzaba allá. I always had lunch over there.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Actions that lasted in the past without specific duration: Llevaba zapatos de taco alto. She had high-heeled shoes on.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Actions in progress that took place simultaneously: Mamá barría el patio mientras yo lustraba los muebles. Mom swept the patio while I polished the furniture.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. An action in progress that is interrupted by an action in the preterit: Cuando estudiaba en la biblioteca, oí un ruido sordo. When I was studying in the library, I heard a muffled noise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Description of a scene in the past: Estaba nevando y el viento soplaba los copos. It was snowing and the wind was blowing the snowflakes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Description of physical characteristics in the past: Era alto y tenía el pelu oscuro. He was tall and had dark hair.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
g. The beginning of an event of certain duration:
*Fuimos al teatro a las seis.*
We went to the theater at 6 p.m.

h. A situation controlled by a verb of action:
*Bailó toda la noche.*
She danced all night.

i. To indicate obligation with the verb *deber*:
*Tú debiste avisarme antes.*
You should have told me in advance.

j. A sudden change of condition:
*Obtuvo el aumento de sueldo.*
She got a raise.

k. A change expressed with a reflexive or reciprocal verb:
*Me volví caritativa después de la experiencia que tuve.*
I became very charitable after the experience I had.

l. The progression of an event, with *irse* plus a present participle:
*Me fui acostumbrando a la nueva casa.*
I slowly got used to the new house.

NOTES:
(1) The preterit tense and the imperfect tense can both occur in the same sentence. There is usually a situation that has been going on and is interrupted by another action:

*Cuando estudiaba en la biblioteca, oí un ruido sordo.* When I was studying in the library, I heard a muffled noise.

*Empezó a nevar cuando estaba subiendo la montaña.* It began to snow when I was going up the mountain.
(2) There are cases when the choice between the preterit or the imperfect depends on the emphasis desired by the speaker:

Esos dos meses en Buenos Aires siempre íbamos a tomar el té en el Café Tortoni. We always went to have tea at the Café Tortoni those two months (that I was) in Buenos Aires.

Although there is a specific length of time given in the preceding sentence, it is the frequency of the action that is emphasized. In the following sentence, however, the speaker is viewing the actions in a mental time frame:

Siempre fuimos a tomar el té al Café Tortoni cuando estuve en Buenos Aires.
The Imperfect Tense

The imperfect tense is used in Spanish to describe an action that took place during some time in the past. This action may have occurred habitually or repeatedly during that time. The main difference between the imperfect and the preterit, both tenses representing actions in the past, is that in the imperfect the beginning and end of the action are not exactly known or determined. To indicate a similar idea, English uses the expressions used to, would, or the preterit tense.

Regular Verbs in the Imperfect

All except three Spanish verbs are considered regular in the imperfect. The three irregular verbs (ser, ir, and ver) will be discussed in the following section. Below you will find endings and sample conjugations for the regular verbs.

Endings for Regular Verbs

-ar verbs: -aba, -abas, -aba, -ábamos, -abais, -aban
-er and -ir verbs: -ía, -ías, -ía, -íamos, -íais, -ían

Sample Conjugations of Regular Verbs

cantar
yo cantaba
 tú cantabas
 él cantaba
 ella cantaba
 Ud. cantaba

beber
yo bebía
 tú bebías
 él bebía
 ella bebía
 Ud. bebía

escribir
yo escribía
 tú escribías
 él escribía
 ella escribía
 Ud. escribía
nosotros cantábamos
nosotras cantábamos
vosotros cantabais
vosotras cantabais
ellos cantaban
ellas cantaban
Uds. cantaban

nosotros bebíamos
nosotras bebíamos
vosotros bebíais
vosotras bebíais
ellos bebían
ellas bebían
Uds. bebían

nosotros escribíamos
nosotras escribíamos
vosotros escribíais
vosotras escribíais
ellos escribían
ellas escribían
Uds. escribían

NOTES:
(1) The pronouns yo, él, ella, and Ud. share the same verb form. The pronouns ellos, ellas, and Uds. also share the same verb form. Nosotras and vosotras share the same forms of their corresponding masculine pronouns nosotros and vosotros.
(2) In the conjugation of -ar verbs, nosotros and nosotras are the only forms that carry an accent. However, all forms of -er and -ir verbs have accents on the i.
(3) A habitual or repeated action in the past may also be expressed with the imperfect form of estar plus the present participle, that is, a verb that has the ending -ando or -iendo, represented by the -ing ending in English:

Yo estaba cocinando cuando oí la noticia.  I was cooking when I heard the news.
(or Yo cocinaba...)
Estábamos almorzando. (or Nosotros almorzábamos.)  We were having lunch.

Irregular Verbs in the Imperfect

As already mentioned, there are only three irregular verbs in the imperfect in Spanish: ser (to be), ir (to go), and ver (to see). For practical purposes, only the six basic personal pronouns are shown in the conjugations below.

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ser</strong></td>
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<td>yo era</td>
<td>yo iba</td>
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<tr>
<td>tú eras</td>
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<td>él era</td>
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<tr>
<td>nosotros éramos</td>
<td>nosotros ibamos</td>
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<td>vosotros erais</td>
<td>vosotros ibais</td>
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<td>ellos eran</td>
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<td><strong>ver</strong></td>
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</table>
NOTES:

(1) *Ser* changes its stem entirely in the preterit; the endings it uses are the *-er* endings of the imperfect, as in *bebía, bebías*, etc., but without the *i*. (These are also the endings for *-ar* verbs in the past subjunctive, which is also called the imperfect subjunctive: *cantara, cantaras*, and so on).

(2) The imperfect of *ir* consists of the *-ir* endings of the imperfect, as in *escribía, escribías*, etc., with the addition of a *b* inserted between the *i* and the *a*.

(3) *Ver* picks up an *e* in the stem and uses the *-er* endings of the imperfect, as in *bebía, bebías*, etc.

Uses of the Imperfect Tense

The Spanish imperfect tense is used to indicate several types of actions in the past.

A. The imperfect tense to express habitual actions in the past:

- *Siempre viajábamos a la playa.*
- *Yo cantaba en el coro cuando era niña.*
- *Ella venía a casa los viernes.*

B. The imperfect tense to express actions that happened in the past without a specific duration:

- *Carmen nos visitaba.*
- *Llevaba puestos unos anteojos.*
- *En ese entonces, íbamos a fiestas.*

C. The imperfect tense to express actions in progress that took place simultaneously:

- *Yo cantaba mientras el leía.*
- *Cuando Juan entraba, Carlos salía del cuarto.*
- *When Juan was coming in, Carlos was leaving the room.*
D. The imperfect tense to express an action in progress that was interrupted by an action in the preterit tense:

Cuando caminaba por el parque tuve una idea magnífica.
El llamó cuando yo dormía.

While I was walking in the park I had a great idea.
He called while I was asleep.

E. The imperfect tense to describe a scene in the past:

El cielo estaba azul y hacía un poco de calor.
Había árboles a cada lado del camino.

The sky was blue and it was a little hot.
There were trees on each side of the road.

F. The imperfect tense to describe physical characteristics in the past:

Sus manos eran pequeñas.
La expresión de su rostro reflejaba sus sentimientos.

Her hands were small.
The expression on her face reflected her feelings.

G. The imperfect tense to describe time in the past:

Eran las cuatro cuando vino.
Era la medianoche.
Era la una de la tarde.

It was four o'clock when he came.
It was midnight.
It was one o'clock in the afternoon.

H. The imperfect tense to describe age in the past:

Tenía 20 años cuando me casé.
No llegaba a cincuenta y se creía un hombre viejo.

I was twenty when I got married.
He was not even fifty and he considered himself an old man.

I. The imperfect tense to describe a general physical condition in the past:

Estaba cansada y sentía un malestar en la pierna.
La cabeza me daba vueltas.

I was tired and had discomfort in my leg.
My head was spinning.

J. The imperfect tense to express Once upon a time . . . in children's stories:

Había una vez una princesita...

Once upon a time there was a little princess . . .
Typical Expressions That Trigger the Imperfect Tense

When expressions such as the following appear in a sentence, the verb is usually in the imperfect. (See Chapter 6, The Preterit Tense, for contrasts between the use of the preterit and the imperfect.)

- a veces
- cada día (mañana, tarde, noche)
- cada dos días
- con frecuencia / frecuentemente
- cuando era niño (joven, viejo)
- de vez en cuando
- día por medio
- durante el verano (invierno, otoño)
- generalmente
- los fines de semana
- los lunes (martes, miércoles)
- nunca
- raras veces
- siempre
- todos los días (meses, años)
- todas las mañanas (tarde, noches)
- cuando yo quería

- sometimes
- each day (morning, afternoon, night)
- every two days
- frequently, often
- when he was a child (young, old)
- every once in a while
- every other day
- during the summer (winter, fall)
- usually
- on weekends
- on Mondays (Tuesdays, Wednesdays)
- never
- seldom
- always
- every day (month, year)
- every morning (afternoon, night)
- whenever I wanted to
The Conditional Tense

The conditional tense, called *condicional* or *potencial* in Spanish, corresponds to the English form *would* plus the infinitive of the main verb. A sentence that has a verb in the conditional indicates the possibility that an action could take place. These types of actions can be represented in Spanish with either the conditional tense (*I would go*), which is a one-verb form, or the compound form called the conditional perfect tense (*I would have gone*).

Regular Forms of the Conditional Tense

To form the conditional tense, the following endings are added to the infinitive of -*ar*, -*er*, and -*ir* verbs, regardless of whether the verbs have regular or irregular stems.

**Conditional Endings**

- *-ía, -ías, -ía, -íamos, -íais, -ían*

**Sample Conditional Conjugations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Yo</th>
<th>Tú</th>
<th>Él</th>
<th>Ella</th>
<th>Ud.</th>
<th>Nosotros</th>
<th>Nosotras</th>
<th>Vosotros</th>
<th>Vosotras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pensar</td>
<td>Pensaría</td>
<td>Pensarías</td>
<td>Pensaría</td>
<td>Pensaría</td>
<td>Pensaría</td>
<td>Pensaríamos</td>
<td>Pensaríamos</td>
<td>Pensaría</td>
<td>Pensaría</td>
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<td>Entender</td>
<td>Entendería</td>
<td>Entenderías</td>
<td>Entendería</td>
<td>Entendería</td>
<td>Entendería</td>
<td>Entenderíamos</td>
<td>Entenderíamos</td>
<td>Entendería</td>
<td>Entendería</td>
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<td>Recibir</td>
<td>Recibiría</td>
<td>Recibirías</td>
<td>Recibiría</td>
<td>Recibiría</td>
<td>Recibiría</td>
<td>Recibiríamos</td>
<td>Recibiríamos</td>
<td>Recibiría</td>
<td>Recibiría</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Iría a Madrid el año que viene.  
¿Comerías una manzana?
Escribiríamos la carta.
Se acostaría temprano.
¿Vendrías con vuestros padres?

NOTES:
(1) If the verb is reflexive, as in acostarse (to go to bed), the corresponding reflexive pronoun me, te, se, os, or nos is placed in front of the verb, which is conjugated as indicated above:

acostarse ➞ yo me acostaría
me acostaría, te acostarías, se acostaría, nos acostaríamos, os acostaríais, se acostarían

(2) The endings of the conditional tense are the same as the endings for the -er and -ir forms of the imperfect tense. To recognize the tenses out of context, remember that the endings of the conditional are added to the infinitive of the verb, while the endings of the imperfect are added to the stem of the verb after deleting the infinitive endings -er or -ir:

beber imperfect: beb ía conditional: beber ía
asistir imperfect: asist ía conditional: asistir ía

(3) All the endings in the conditional tense carry an accent mark.

Irregular Stem Forms

Some verbs show the following irregularities in the stem, which are the same irregularities as appear in the irregular forms of the future tense. The yo form is shown in these examples:

A. Changing of the last vowel into d in the conditional:

poner (to put)     pon(e)r ➞ pondr ía
salir (to go out)  sal(i)r ➞ saldr ía
tenir (to have)    ten(e)r ➞ tendr ía
valer (to be worth)  val(e)r  ➞  valdr ía
venir (to come)  ven(i)r  ➞  vendr ía

B. Dropping of ec or ce in the conditional:

decir (to say)  d(ec)ir  ➞  dir ía
hacer (to do / make)  ha(e)r  ➞  har ía

C. Dropping of the final vowel of the infinitive in the conditional:

caber (to fit)  cab(e)r  ➞  cabr ía
haber (to have)  hab(e)r  ➞  habr ía
poder (to be able)  pod(e)r  ➞  podr ía
querer (to want)  quer(e)r  ➞  querr ía
saber (to know)  sab(e)r  ➞  sabr ía

NOTES:
(1) Endings remain the same for the three conjugations, whether the stems are regular or irregular.
(2) Verbs that contain one of the above-mentioned verbs, such as *convenir* (to agree), *contener* (to contain), *rehacer* (to do again), and several others, keep the irregular stems in the conditional forms:

contener ➞ contendría  convenir ➞ convendría  rehacer ➞ reharía

Uses of the Conditional Tense

The conditional tense is used in the following circumstances.

A. The conditional to indicate possibility

The conditional is used to indicate the possibility of an action in the case of a hypothetical situation. In English, such a hypothetical situation is known as an *if clause* or a *contrary-to-fact statement*:

*Compraríamos* la casa de la esquina si tuviéramos dinero.
*¿Vendrías* mañana si pudieras?

We would buy the house on the corner if we had money (contrary to fact).
Would you come tomorrow if you could? (situation less likely to happen).
NOTES:
(1) The phrases *si tuviéramos* and *si pudieras* are in the imperfect subjunctive form. (See Chapter 14, The Subjunctive for details about *if clauses.*)

(2) The condition may be implicit, as follows:

*Comprariamos la casa de la esquina.*  
We would buy the house on the corner.

*¿Vendrías mañana?*  
Would you come tomorrow?

B. The conditional to express doubt, wonder, or probability

The conditional is used to express doubt or wonder about an action that already happened or the probability that an action could have happened in the past, where English uses *must, could,* or *might:*

*¿Cuántos días tendrían de vacaciones?*  
How many days of vacation could they have had?

*¿Serían las seis?*  
Could it have been six o'clock?

*Creo que serían las cinco.*  
I think it might have been five o'clock.

*¿Qué estaría pensando Juan cuando dijo eso?*  
I wonder what Juan could have been thinking when he said that.

C. The conditional to ask a question or to request something in a very polite manner:

*¿Me podrías alcanzar el lápiz?*  
Could you give me the pencil, please?

*¿Me daría Ud. tiempo para resolver este asunto?*  
Would you give me some time to solve this problem?

D. The conditional to indicate an expected action in the future from a specific point in the past:

*Oí decir que llegaría hoy.*  
I heard that she would come today. (I don’t know if she will.)

*Me dijo que compraría el boleto esta semana.*  
He said that he would buy my ticket this week. (I don’t know yet whether he has done it.)

E. The conditional to change a sentence with a verb in the future tense into indirect discourse:

*Vendré mañana a la tarde.*  
I’ll come tomorrow afternoon.

*Me dijo que vendría mañana a la tarde.*  
She told me that she would come tomorrow afternoon.
Te llamaré más tarde.
Dijo que me llamaría más tarde.

I’ll call you later.
He said he would call me later.

NOTE:
If the verb in the future tense is a command, the indirect discourse will be in the subjunctive instead of the conditional:

¡Llegarás más temprano!
Me mandó que llegara más temprano.
¡No te quedarás aquí!
Me dijo que no me quedara allí.

Arrive earlier!
He ordered me to arrive earlier.
Don’t stay here!
He told me not to stay there.

F. Imperfect instead of conditional

When English uses would to show a habitual action in the past, Spanish uses the imperfect tense, not the conditional:

Todas las tardes el coro practicaba las canciones.
Siempre salían juntos.

Every afternoon the choir would practice the songs.
They would always go out together.

NOTE:
The verbs soler and acostumbrar are also used, with the infinitive of the main verb, to indicate a customary action when English uses would:

Ella acostumbraba llamar todas las tardes.
Mamá solía escuchar música correntina en la cocina.

She would call every afternoon.
Mom would listen to music from Corrientes in the kitchen.

G. Use of present subjunctive or imperfect subjunctive

When English uses would (or will) after an expression of wish, Spanish uses the present subjunctive or the imperfect subjunctive, according to the situation:

Ojalá que vengas.
Espero que me escribas.
(present subjunctive)

I wish you would come.
I hope you will write to me.

Ojalá sacara la lotería.
Ojalá vinieras.
(imperfect subjunctive)

I wish I would win the lottery.
I wish you would come.
NOTE:
The imperfect subjunctive (\textit{sacara}, \textit{vinieras}) makes the possibility far more remote than the present subjunctive (\textit{escribas}, \textit{vengas}).

H. Use of the negative form of \textit{querer}

When English uses \textit{would} and a negative expression to indicate a refusal to do something, Spanish uses a negative form of the verb \textit{querer (to want)} in the imperfect or the preterit, depending on the situation:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Ella nunca quería decir la verdad.} (imperfect) \\
\textit{Él no quiso venir a verla cuando estuvo en el pueblo.} (preterit)
\end{quote}

\textit{She would never tell the truth. (ongoing situation)}

\textit{He wouldn’t come to see her when he was in town. (one time)}

I. Use of the conditional form of \textit{deber or ser}

When English uses \textit{should} to indicate the desirability of an action to be taken, Spanish uses the conditional form of \textit{deber or ser}:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Deberías escucharlo.} \\
\textit{No sería conveniente que Ud. cortara esas flores.}
\end{quote}

\textit{You should listen to him.}

\textit{You shouldn’t cut those flowers.}

NOTE:
If \textit{should} is used in English to denote a question or a cause for wonder, Spanish uses the conditional of the auxiliary verb \textit{haber}, followed by the preposition \textit{de} and the infinitive of the main verb:

\begin{quote}
\textit{¿Por qué habrías de pagar esa cuenta?} \\
\textit{No sé por qué él habría de decírselo a su hermano.}
\end{quote}

\textit{Why should you pay that bill?}

\textit{I don’t know why he should tell his brother about that.}

J. Expressing possibility depending on likelihood

When English uses \textit{should} to indicate a condition with \textit{if clauses}, Spanish uses the present tense if there is a strong possibility of the event happening or the imperfect subjunctive if the possibility is remote:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Si alquilas la casa, quiero verla primero.} \\
\textit{Si alquilaras la casa, querría verla primero.}
\end{quote}

\textit{If you should rent the house, I want to see it first.}

\textit{Should you rent the house, I would want to see it first.}
The Conditional Perfect Tense

The conditional perfect is formed with the conditional of the auxiliary verb *haber* and the past participle of the main verb. *Haber* is one of the verbs that drop the *e* of the infinitive in order to form the conditional stem, which is covered in the section Irregular Stem Forms, previously in this chapter.

As for the past participle, there are regular and irregular forms. The verbs that have regular past participles take the following endings: *-ado* for *-ar* verbs, and *-ido* for *-er* and *-ir* verbs. There is no specific rule for the formation of the irregular past participles. In English, verbs have forms that end in *-ed* (*walked, jumped, visited*), and irregular forms (*gone, left, eaten*). For a review of the most common irregular past participles in Spanish, consult Chapter 10, The Past Participle:

- **yo** **habría venido** I would have come
- **tú** **habrías dicho** you would have said
- **él** **habría hablado** he would have spoken
- **ella** **habría pensado** she would have thought
- **Ud.** **habría contemplado** you would have contemplated
- **nosotros habríamos recibido** we would have received
- **nosotras habríamos ido** we would have gone
- **vosotros habríais roto** you would have broken
- **vosotras habríais estado** you would have been
- **ellos habrían escrito** they would have written
- **ellas habrían dado** they would have given
- **Uds. habrían esperado** you would have waited

Uses of the Conditional Perfect Tense

The conditional perfect tense is used in the following situations.

**A.** The conditional perfect is used to express an action that would have been completed at a certain point in the past:

- **Marta habría venido ayer.** Martha would have come yesterday.
- **¿Tú me habrías llamado?** Would you have called me?
B. The conditional perfect is used to indicate probability within a specific context in the past:

_Ella habría sufrido mucho._ She would have suffered a lot.
_Yo habría tenido cuidado._ I would have been careful.

C. The conditional perfect is used to show the probability of an action being completed before another action in the past.

Notice the use of the imperfect subjunctive after _antes (de) que:_

_Dijo la maestra que nosotros habríamos tenido las notas antes de que terminara el curso._
The teacher said that we would have had the grades before the course was finished.

_Miguel explicó que ellos habrían salido antes que llegaran los chicos._
Michael explained that they would have gone out before the children arrived.
The Present Participle

The present participle, also known as the gerund (gerundio), is used to form sentences which are equivalent to the present progressive sentences. While in English all verbs take the -ing ending, there are regular and irregular endings for the present participle in Spanish.

Endings of the Present Participle

Regular Endings

To form the present participle of verbs that take regular endings, drop the infinitive ending -ar, -er, or -ir, and add -ando to the stem of -ar verbs, and -iendo to the stem of -er and -ir verbs:

- **-ar verbs**: -ando  
  hablar (to speak)  
  hablando (speaking)
- **-er verbs**: -iendo  
  correr (to run)  
  corriendo (running)
- **-ir verbs**: -iendo  
  vivir (to live)  
  viviendo (living)

Irregular Endings

A. When the stem of -er and -ir verbs ends in a vowel, the i of the -iendo ending changes to a y:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>traer</td>
<td>trayendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leer</td>
<td>leyendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huir</td>
<td>huyendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oír</td>
<td>oyendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excluir</td>
<td>excluyendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:

The present participle of the verb *ir* (to go) is *yendo* (going):

*Estás yendo muy rápido con este proyecto.*

You are going very fast with this project.
B. -er and -ir verbs that have stems ending in ll or ñ drop the i of the -iendo ending:

- bullir ➔ bullendo
- entullir ➔ entullendo
- escabullirse ➔ escabulléndose
- gruñir ➔ gruñendo
- mullir ➔ mullendo
- reñir ➔ riñiendo
- tañer ➔ tañiendo
- teñir ➔ tiñiendo

---

Stems of the Present Participle

Regular Stems

Stem-changing verbs that end in -ar and -er do not change the stem for the present participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>almorzar</td>
<td>yo almuerzo</td>
<td>almorzando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>empezar</td>
<td>yo empiezo</td>
<td>empezando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entender</td>
<td>yo entiendo</td>
<td>entendiendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pensar</td>
<td>yo pienso</td>
<td>pensando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perder</td>
<td>yo pierdo</td>
<td>perdiendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volver</td>
<td>yo vuelvo</td>
<td>volviendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exception

- poder ➔ yo puedo ➔ pudiendo
- jugar ➔ yo juego ➔ jugando

Irregular Stems

Stem-changing verbs that end in -ir show the following changes:

A. Verbs whose stem changes from e ➔ i in the present tense keep an i in the stem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pedir</td>
<td>yo pido</td>
<td>pidiendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seguir</td>
<td>yo sigo</td>
<td>siguiendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES:
(1) The letter *u* is inserted after the *g* in *siguiendo* to preserve the pronunciation of the infinitive.

(2) A few verbs that have stems ending in a vowel drop the *i* of the *-iendo* ending to avoid having two *i*’s together:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>freír</td>
<td>yo frío</td>
<td>friendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reír</td>
<td>yo río</td>
<td>riendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engreír(se)</td>
<td>yo me engrío</td>
<td>engriendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Verbs like *decir* and *venir* have exceptional forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>decir</td>
<td>yo digo</td>
<td>diciendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venir</td>
<td>yo vengo</td>
<td>viniendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Verbs whose stem changes from *e* ➔ *ie* in the present tense keep an *i* in the stem of the present participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sentir</td>
<td>yo siento</td>
<td>sintiendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preferir</td>
<td>yo prefiero</td>
<td>prefiriendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
If there are two *e*’s in the stem, the second one is the one that changes.

C. Verbs whose stem changes from *o* ➔ *ue* in the present tense keep a *u* in the stem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dormir</td>
<td>yo duermo</td>
<td>durmiendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morir</td>
<td>yo muero</td>
<td>muriendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uses of the Present Participle

The present participle is used in the following situations.

A. The present participle in the progressive tense

In combination with the verb *estar* (*to be*), the present participle forms the progressive tenses, which denote an action in progress:
### The Present Participle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Subject Pronoun</th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hablar</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>estoy hablando</td>
<td>I am speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tú</td>
<td>estás hablando</td>
<td>you are speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>él</td>
<td>está hablando</td>
<td>he is speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ella</td>
<td>está hablando</td>
<td>she is speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>está hablando</td>
<td>you are speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>estamos hablando</td>
<td>we are speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nosotras</td>
<td>estamos hablando</td>
<td>we are speaking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vosotros</td>
<td>estáis hablando</td>
<td>you are speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vosotras</td>
<td>estáis hablando</td>
<td>you are speaking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>están hablando</td>
<td>they are speaking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>están hablando</td>
<td>they are speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>están hablando</td>
<td>you are speaking</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Subject Pronoun</th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>correr</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>estoy corriendo</td>
<td>I am running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tú</td>
<td>estás corriendo</td>
<td>you are running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>él</td>
<td>está corriendo</td>
<td>he is running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ella</td>
<td>está corriendo</td>
<td>she is running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>están corriendo</td>
<td>you are running</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>estamos corriendo</td>
<td>we are running</td>
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<td>we are running</td>
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<td>estáis corriendo</td>
<td>you are running</td>
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<td>you are running</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>están corriendo</td>
<td>they are running</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>están corriendo</td>
<td>they are running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>están corriendo</td>
<td>you are running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Subject Pronoun</th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vivir</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>estoy viviendo</td>
<td>I am living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tú</td>
<td>estás viviendo</td>
<td>you are living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>él</td>
<td>está viviendo</td>
<td>he is living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ella</td>
<td>está viviendo</td>
<td>she is living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>están viviendo</td>
<td>you are living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>estamos viviendo</td>
<td>we are living</td>
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<td>nosotras</td>
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<td></td>
<td>vosotros</td>
<td>estáis viviendo</td>
<td>you are living</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vosotras</td>
<td>estáis viviendo</td>
<td>you are living</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>están viviendo</td>
<td>they are living</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>están viviendo</td>
<td>they are living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>están viviendo</td>
<td>you are living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:

1. The form of the present participle is invariable for all persons.

2. Besides the present progressive, *estar* is also conjugated in the following tenses:

   - yo *estuve* hablando: I was speaking
   - tú *estabas* escribiendo: you were writing
   - él *estará* durmiendo: he will be sleeping
   - ella *estaría* viajando: she would be traveling
   - Ud. *ha estado* trabajando: you have been working
   - nosotros *habíamos estado* viendo: we had been seeing
   - nosotras *habíamos estado* oyendo: we will have been hearing
   - vosotros *habríais estado* cocinando: you would have been cooking
   - vosotras *habrían estado* estudiando: you are studying
   - ellos *estuvieran* planeando: they were planning
   - ellas *hayan estado* practicando: they have been practicing
   - Ud.s. *hubieran estado* jugando: you had been playing

The boldfaced forms of *estar* in the preceding examples include the preterit, imperfect, future, conditional, present perfect, past perfect, future perfect, conditional perfect, and the four subjunctive forms (the last four examples): present, imperfect, present perfect, and past perfect or pluperfect.
With verbs of motion, the gerund is used after *estar* in idiomatic expressions to indicate location:

- *Mi casa está yendo derecho por esta calle.* My house is straight down on this street.
- *La farmacia estaba doblando la esquina.* The drugstore was around the corner.
- *La escuela está siguiendo, a la izquierda.* The school is straight ahead on the left.
- *El banco está subiendo un poco.* The bank is [going] up there a little.

Verbs such as *encontrarse, estar localizado, estar ubicado,* and *quedar* are also used to express the same idea, but not with the present participle:

- *Mi casa se encuentra más adelante en esta calle.* My house is straight down on this street.
- *La farmacia estaba localizada a la vuelta de la esquina.* The drugstore was around the corner.
- *La escuela queda allá derecho, a la izquierda.* The school is straight ahead, on the left.
- *El banco está ubicado cerca de la plaza.* The bank is near the public square.

**B. The present participle as an adverb**

When it is not used with an auxiliary verb, the present participle functions as an adverb that modifies the action of the verb:

- *Pasó el día mirando televisión.* She spent the day watching TV.
- *Salió hablando con Marta.* He left talking to Martha.
- *Viviendo en el centro, era fácil visitar los museos.* While I lived downtown, it was easy to visit the museums.
- *Me vino a ver, teniendo ella tiempo entre conferencias.* She came to see me, since she had time between conferences.

**C. The present participle and the idea of a continuous action**

In combination with verbs of motion such as *andar, ir, seguir,* and *venir,* the present participle emphasizes the idea of a continuous action:

- *Andan revisando todo en la oficina.* They have been checking everything in the office.
- *Va saliendo de la depresión.* He is [gradually] coming out of his depression.
- *Seguimos estudiando mucho.* We keep on studying a lot.
- *Vengo sintiendo un malestar.* I’ve been feeling discomfort.
**D. The present participle to imply a conditional statement:**

Nosotros lo haríamos, **siendo necesario.**  We would do it if it were necessary.

**Estando en la ciudad, yo visitaría el museo.**  If I were in the city, I would visit the museum.

**Considerando todo, podríamos aprovechar el tiempo.**  If we consider everything, we would be able to take advantage of the time.

**E. The present participle to denote an extended action**

After verbs of perception such as **oír, ver, observar,** and **escuchar,** the present participle is used instead of the infinitive to denote an extended action:

La **oí** llorando a la madrugada.  I heard her crying at dawn.

Te **vimos** regando el jardín.  We saw you watering the garden.

Los **observé** mezclando las acuarelas.  I watched them while they were mixing the watercolors.

Me **escuchó** hablando con Luis.  He heard me talking to Luis.

When the verbs of perception are used with verbs of motion, the infinitive may also be used:

La **vi** entrar.  (entrando)  I saw her coming in.

Los **escuchamos** salir.  (saliendo)  We heard them going out.

**F. Replacements for the present participle**

In some cases, the gerund or present participle is replaced in Spanish by a relative clause, an adjective, or an adjectival phrase.

1. A relative clause replacing the present participle:

First, notice where the gerund in Spanish functions as a secondary verb:

**Leyó los poemas mencionando el origen de su inspiración.**  She read the poems and mentioned the source of her inspiration.

**Le dieron los documentos identificando los problemas.**  They gave him the documents and identified the problems.

Now observe the use of the relative clause:

**Leyó los poemas que mencionaban el origen de su inspiración.**  She read the poems that mentioned the source of her inspiration.

**Le dieron los documentos que identificaban los problemas.**  They gave him the documents that identified the problems.
2. An adjective (not formed with a present participle) or an adjectival phrase replacing the present participle:

- an adjective
  - una película *espeluznante*  
  a horrifying movie
  - un signo *interesante*  
  an interesting sign
  - la selva *viviente*  
  the living forest
  - compañía *embotelladora*  
  bottling plant

- an adjectival phrase
  - papel *de envolver*  
  wrapping paper
  - aceite *de cocinar*  
  cooking oil
  - goma *de mascar*  
  chewing gum
  - hilo *de bordar*  
  embroidery thread
  - aguja *de tejer*  
  knitting needle
  - punto *de fusión*  
  melting point

**G. Use of the infinitive as a noun**

Although in English the gerund is used as a noun, Spanish uses the infinitive, with or without the definite article:

- *Comer* bien es saludable.  
Eating well is healthy.

- *El leer* instruye.  
Reading educates.

**H. The gerund to indicate manner**

Although English uses *by* + the gerund to indicate the manner in which something may be accomplished, Spanish uses only the gerund:

- *Puedes hablar con ella llamándola a la* oficina.  
You may talk to her by calling her in her office.

- *Aprenderán a manejar practicando todos* los días.  
You will learn how to drive by practicing every day.

**NOTES:**

(1) With some prepositions, Spanish uses the *infinitive* while in English the *gerund* is used as the object of the preposition:

- *Sin estudiar* no pasarás.  
Without studying you will not pass.

- *Con venir* no ganarás nada.  
By coming you will not gain anything.

- *No veo nada malo en comprar* lo necesario.  
I don't see anything wrong in buying what is necessary.
To indicate the justification of an action, Spanish uses the gerund or other equivalent expressions:

- La llamé diciéndole la verdad.
- I called her, telling (to tell) her the truth.
- La llamé para decirle la verdad.
- I called her to tell her the truth.
- ... porque quería decirle...
- ... because I wanted to tell her . . .
- ... al querer decirle...
- ... since I wanted to tell her . . .
- ... como quería decirle...
- ... since I wanted to tell her . . .
- ... puesto que quería decirle...
- ... because I wanted to tell her . . .
- ... ya que quería decirle...
- ... because I wanted to tell her . . .

I. Use of the infinitive as the object of a verb

Although English uses the gerund as the object of a verb, Spanish uses the infinitive:

- Me gusta escuchar música.
  I like listening to music.
- Odiamos venir tarde a clase.
  We hate coming late to class.
- Ella dejó de pensar en el problema.
  She stopped thinking about the problem.

J. Use of the past participle to describe states or conditions

Although English uses the gerund to describe posture or other states or conditions, Spanish uses the past participle:

- La niña está parada.
  The girl is standing.
- La silla está recostada en la puerta.
  The chair is leaning on the door.
- La señora está recostada.
  The lady is lying down.
- El diploma está colgado en la pared.
  The diploma is hanging on the wall.

K. Direct and indirect objects attached to the gerund (present participle)

If direct and/or indirect objects are used, these are attached to the gerund in Spanish:

- Viéndola enojada, me fui.
  Seeing that she was upset, I left.
- Su madre se acercó, dándoselo.
  Her mother came closer, giving it to her.
NOTES:

(1) If the progressive tense is used, the object pronouns may be placed before the verb *estar* or attached to the gerund:

*Su madre se lo está dando. / Su madre está dándoselo.*

(2) With reflexive or reciprocal verbs, the pronouns are placed before the verb or attached to the gerund:

*Me estoy peinando.*

*I am combing my hair.*

*Estamos escribiéndonos.*

*We are writing to each other.*
The Past Participle

The past participle is a verb derivative that functions as a verbal form, an adjective, and a noun. Some examples from the three Spanish conjugations are:

- *hablar* ➔ *hablado* (spoken)
- *romper* ➔ *roto* (broken)
- *vivir* ➔ *vivido* (lived)

Forms of the Past Participle

**Regular Forms**

Regular past participles end in *-ado* or *-ido*. These endings replace the ending of the corresponding infinitive:

- *-ar* verbs: *
  - cantar ➔ cantado* sung
  - eliminar ➔ eliminado eliminated
- *-er* verbs: *
  - entender ➔ entendido* understood
- *-ir* verbs: *
  - sufrir ➔ sufrido* suffered

**Irregular Forms**

Irregular past participles do not end in *-ado* or *-ido*. The following list shows some of the most common past participles:

- **abrir** abierto opened; open
- **cubrir** cubierto covered
- **decir** dicho said
- **escribir** escrito written
- **exponer** expuesto exposed
- **hacer** hecho done
- **morir** muerto died; dead
- **poner** puesto put
resolver  resuelto  resolved
romper    roto       broken
satisfacer satisfecho satisfied
ver     visto       seen
volver    vuelto     returned

NOTE:
Past participles of verbs that derive from verbs with irregular forms maintain the same irregularity as manifested in the original verbs:

describir  descrito  described
descubrir descubierto discovered
deshacer  deshecho  undone
devolver  devuelto  returned
imponer  impuesto  imposed
reabrir  reabierto  reopened

Verbs with Both Regular and Irregular Forms

Some verbs have two different past participles: a regular form that is used in the compound tenses (*ellos han prendido*; *they have caught*) and an irregular form used as an adjective or a noun (*preso; caught*). The irregular form cannot be used in compound tenses. These are some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Irregular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bendecir (to bless)</td>
<td>bendecido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elegir (to elect)</td>
<td>elegido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extender (to extend)</td>
<td>extendido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fijar (to fix)</td>
<td>fijado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freír (to fry)</td>
<td>freído</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maldecir (to curse)</td>
<td>maldecido</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
All regular and irregular past participles used to form compound tenses end in *-o* regardless of the gender and number of the subject that performs the action of the verb:

- Inés ha comprado un coche. Ines has bought a car.
- Juan ha vendido su casa. Juan has sold his house.
- Ellos han visto la foto. They have seen the photo.
Uses of the Past Participle

A. The past participle as a verbal form

The past participle is used in Spanish in combination with the verb *haber* (the auxiliary *to have*) to form the compound tenses called *perfect tenses*, as in the English forms *I have done*, *we have written*, or *they have walked*.

The forms of *haber* are presented here to facilitate the comprehension of the past participle. They are covered in detail in the sections of each chapter that refer to the perfect (or compound) tenses:

**Forms of haber**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yo he</th>
<th>tÚ has</th>
<th>él ha</th>
<th>ella ha</th>
<th>Ud. ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have</td>
<td>you have</td>
<td>he has</td>
<td>she has</td>
<td>you have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as hemos</td>
<td>vosotros/as habéis</td>
<td>ellos han</td>
<td>ellas han</td>
<td>Uds. han</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we have</td>
<td>you have</td>
<td>they have</td>
<td>they have</td>
<td>you have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**

*Haber* may be conjugated in the present (*yo he*), past (*yo había*), preterit perfect (*yo hubo*), future (*yo habré*), conditional (*yo habría*), present subjunctive (*yo haya*), and past or pluperfect subjunctive (*yo hubiera*) to form the following tenses or moods:

- present perfect: *yo he andado* (I have walked)
- past perfect: *tú habías comido* (you had eaten)
- preterit perfect*: *ella hubo dicho* (she had said)
- future perfect: *Juan habrá visto* (Juan will have seen)
- conditional perfect: *nosotros habríamos ido* (we would have gone)
- present perfect subjunctive: *vosotros hayáis permitido* (you have allowed)
- pluperfect subjunctive: *ellos hubieran seguido* (they had followed)

B. The past participle as an adjective

Past participles used as adjectives must agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify. Notice that the verb *haber* is not used in these examples:

- *Me gusta la blusa rayada.* I like the striped blouse.
- *Sus manos están arrugadas.* His hands are wrinkled.
- *Lo miró con ojos hundidos.* She looked at him with sunken eyes.
- *El espacio es reducido.* The space is limited.

* This tense is no longer used in spoken Spanish. It is seldom seen in the written form, but is found in literary works.
Combined with some verbs, past participles used as adjectives indicate specific states or conditions. Note the following examples:

1. With **tener** *(to have)*, past participles used as adjectives indicate the result of an action. The verb may be conjugated in any tense:

   * Tiene escritos dos libros.  
   * Tendrán la casa pintada.  
   * Nos tuvo recopilados los datos.  
   * Yo ya le tengo dicho.

   He has two books written.  
   They will have the house painted.  
   He had the data gathered for us.  
   I have already told him.

2. With the verb **estar** *(to be)*, past participles used as adjectives indicate the result of an action and are used to describe people, places, and things:

   * La luz está encendida.  
   * El chico estaba acalorado.  
   * El banco estará cerrado.  
   * Las puertas estuvieron abiertas.

   The light is (turned) on.  
   The child was hot.  
   The bank will be closed.  
   The doors were open.

3. With **ser** *(to be)*, past participles used as adjectives show an action or event in passive sentences, when the element acted upon becomes the subject of the sentence. This construction is called the *passive voice*. The verbs may be conjugated in any tense, while the agent of the action is stated or implicit:

   * La puerta fue abierta.  
   * Los votos fueron contados por la secretaria.  
   * El informe es dado por el jefe.  
   * Los perros fueron soltados.  
   * La obra es representada.

   The door was opened.  
   The votes were counted by the secretary.  
   The report is given by the boss.  
   The dogs were set loose.  
   The play is staged.

**NOTES:**

1. When the subject is not specified, the impersonal *se* construction is widely used:

   * Se soltaron los perros.  
   * Se representará la obra.  
   * Se leyó el poema.  
   * Se firmaron los documentos al final de la reunión.

   The dogs were set loose.  
   The play will be staged.  
   The poem was read.  
   The documents are signed at the end of the meeting.
(2) When past participles are used as adjectives with verbs of motion such as *andar, ir, llegar, salir, seguir, venir*, and *volver*, the idea of continuous state or condition is emphasized:

- Anda cansado.
- Salió entristecida.
- Siguen desesperados.
- Fui esperanzada.

He has been feeling tired.
She went out sad.
They are still desperate.
I went with big hopes.

### C. The past participle as a noun

Past participles used as nouns vary in gender and number and are used with definite and indefinite articles. Some examples follow:

- los bordados  el pescado  el vuelto
- un conocido  el bañado  el rapto
- un expreso  el sujeto  unas disputas
- la extinta  las presas  el recién casado
- el herido  una empleada  los puestos
- los muertos  el estado  una corrida
- el resto  el puesto  la venida
- la salida  un revuelto  la bebida

Past participles also become nouns in combination with the article *lo*. In this case, they always take the masculine singular form, and are modified by adverbs instead of adjectives:

- **Lo bien expresado es digno de aplauso.**
What is well said is worthy of praise.
- **Lo hablado claramente puede ahorrar malentendidos.**
What is said clearly can avoid misunderstandings.
- **Lo mal higienizado es peligroso.**
What is not sanitized is dangerous.

### D. The past participle as an adverb

Sometimes, past participles modify the subject and the verb, in which case they agree in gender and number with the subject:

- Comió apurada.
- Se quedó rendido.
- Salieron sorprendidos.
- Llegaron decepcionadas.

She ate in a hurry.
He ended up exhausted.
They left surprised.
They were disappointed when they arrived.
E. The past participle as an independent statement

Past participles indicate termination and agree in gender and number with the noun they modify:

 Una vez *hecha* la comida, ella se fue al trabajo.
 *Vendidos* los productos, se hicieron ricos.
 *Terminado* el examen, recibirá la nota.
 *Cansada* de escucharlo, ella se quejaba a su madre.

Once the food was cooked, she went to work.
Having sold the products, they became rich.
When the exam is finished, he will receive the grade.
Being tired of listening to him, she complained to her mother.

F. The past participle to denote *position* or *posture*

As mentioned in Chapter 9 under uses of the present participle, Spanish uses the past participle to denote position or posture, while English uses the gerund:

 *Elena está sentada.*
 *El niño se quedó acurrucado en el rincón de miedo que tenía.*
 *La mujer está arrodillada.*
 *El hombre está doblado por el dolor de espalda.*

Helen is seated.
The child stayed huddled up in the corner because of fear.
The woman is kneeling.
The man is bending down because of his back pain.
The Present Perfect Indicative

The present perfect in Spanish is equivalent to the present perfect in English. It usually describes an action that happened in the past and continues into the present or that may be repeated in the present. It can also indicate an action that has taken place in the recent past.

Forms of the Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect is formed with the present tense of the auxiliary verb *haber* (the auxiliary *to have* in English) plus the past participle of the main verb. Past participles end in *-ado, -ido*, or have irregular endings. Consult Chapter 10, The Past Participle, to review the forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>he visto</td>
<td>I have seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>has comprado</td>
<td>you have bought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>ha escrito</td>
<td>he has written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella</td>
<td>ha dormido</td>
<td>she has slept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>ha puesto</td>
<td>you have put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as</td>
<td>hemos venido</td>
<td>we have come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros/as</td>
<td>habéis hecho</td>
<td>you have done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>han oído</td>
<td>they have heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>han vuelto</td>
<td>they have returned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uds.</td>
<td>han dicho</td>
<td>you have said</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:

(1) The form *ha habido* (*there has been*) is the present perfect of *hay* (there is, there are).

**Ha habido** unos problemas en la mina. There have been some problems in the mine.

**Dicen que no ha habido nadie en la conferencia.** They said nobody was at the conference.
(2) No words can be placed between *haber* and the past participle.
*Yo no se lo he dicho.* I have not told him that.
*Tú ya lo has repetido.* You have already repeated it.

(3) The verb *haber* is rarely used as a transitive verb with the meaning of *tener* (*to have* as a possession):

(Rare: *yo he habido*) ➤ More common: *yo he tenido* ➤ I have had

Uses of the Present Perfect Tense

There are several uses for the present perfect tense.

A. The present perfect is used for an action that began in the past and continues into the present:

*Él ha estado escribiendo.* He has been writing.
*Hemos estado esperando.* We have been waiting.

B. The present perfect is used for an action that may be repeated in the present:

*Él ha venido llegando tarde a clase estos días.* He has been arriving late to class these days.
*Ella ha estado llamando por teléfono.* She has been calling on the phone.

C. The present perfect is used for an action that was terminated in the recent past:

*Mi padre ha llegado hoy.* My father arrived today.
*Ha terminado de comer.* He has finished eating.

D. The present perfect is used for an action that happened once in the past:

*Mi secretaria ha recibido un aumento de sueldo.* My secretary has received a raise.
*El preso ha confesado.* The inmate has confessed.

NOTE:
This form is widely used in Spain, while in Latin America the preterit is more common:

*Mi secretaria recibió un aumento de sueldo.* My secretary received a raise.
*El preso confesó.* The inmate confessed.
E. The present perfect is used for an action that culminated in the present as a result of events in the past:

*He aprendido mucho este año.*  
*I have learned a lot this year.*

*Mi hermana ha adelgazado mucho con ese régimen.*  
*My sister has lost a lot of weight with that diet.*

*Finalmente he aceptado la verdad de los hechos.*  
*I have finally accepted the truth about those facts.*
The Past Perfect Indicative

In Spanish, the past perfect indicative (pluscuamperfecto de indicativo) is equivalent to the past perfect in English. Its function is basically to describe an action that happened before another action in the past: *I had sent the letter before you came back.*

**Forms of the Past Perfect Tense**

The past perfect is formed with the imperfect of the auxiliary verb *haber* (the auxiliary *to have* in English) plus the past participle of the main verb. Past participles end in *-ado, -ido*, or have irregular endings. Consult Chapter 10, The Past Participle, to review the forms:

- **yo**: *había visto* I had seen
- **tú**: *habías comprado* you had bought
- **él**: *había escrito* he had written
- **ella**: *había leído* she had read
- **Ud.**: *había puesto* you had put
- **nosotros/as**: *habíamos venido* we had come
- **vosotros/as**: *habíais hecho* you had done
- **ellos**: *habían vuelto* they had returned
- **ellas**: *habían hablado* they had spoken
- **Uds.**: *habían dicho* you had said

**NOTES:**

1. The form *había habido* (*there had been*) is the past perfect of *hay* (*there is or there are*):

   - **Había habido mucho viento antes de la tormenta.** There had been a lot of wind before the storm.
   - **Creo que había* habido muchos artículos sobre la inflación.** I think there had been many articles about inflation.

* This form is used only in the singular.
(2) No words can be placed between haber and the past participle:

Él ya lo había traído a casa antes de que tú llegaras.  
He had already brought it home before you arrived.

Carlos no me las había dado cuando me viste.  
Carlos had not given them to me when you saw me.

(3) Adverbs like ya (already) or todavía and aún (yet) may be placed before haber or after the past participle:

Ellos ya habían venido.  
They had already come.

Ellos habían venido ya.  
They had already come.

No habían venido todavía.  
They had not come yet.

Todavía no habían venido.  
They had not come yet.

Aún no habían llegado.  
They had not arrived yet.

No habían llegado aún.  
They had not arrived yet.

In a preverbal position, todavía and aún must precede the negative no:

Todavía no lo había terminado.  
He had not finished it yet.

Aún no nos habían dado la fecha.  
They had not given us the date yet.

The same sentences may also be written as follows:

No lo había terminado todavía.  
He had not finished it yet.

No nos habían dado la fecha aún.  
They had not given us the date yet.

There are several ways to answer in the negative in Spanish using todavía or aún, which are equivalent to the expression not yet in English:

¿Terminaste el libro?  
Did you finish the book?

No todavía.  
Not yet.

Todavía no.  
Not yet.

No, todavía no.  
No, not yet.

Aún no.  
Not yet.

Uses of the Past Perfect Tense

This tense is used to indicate an action that took place before another action in the past. There are several possibilities to express this type of situation.
A. The two actions may appear in the sentence:

Nosotros **habíamos comido** antes de salir.
We had eaten before we went out.

El niño ya **había terminado** cuando la maestra lo llamó.
The boy had already finished when the teacher called him.

B. The most recent action may be left out:

**Había llovido.**
It had rained.

**Mis padres habían escrito.**
My parents had written.

C. Multiple actions may occur in the same sentence:

Laura ya **había visto y leído** la carta cuando vino y me dijo la verdad.
Laura had already seen and read the letter when she came and told me the truth.

D. Replacements for the past perfect in spoken language

In spoken language, the preterit, preceded by expressions such as **en cuanto, luego que, después que, or tan pronto como**, replaces the past perfect:

**Él se había sacado el sombrero antes de entrar a la oficina.**
He had taken off his hat before coming into the office.

**Después que se sacó el sombrero, él entró en la oficina.**
After he took off his hat, he came into his office.

**Yo recién había hablado con él cuando Cecilia me llamó.**
I had just spoken to him when Cecilia called me.

**Luego que habló con él, Cecilia me llamó.**
Right after I talked to him, Cecilia called me.

**Tito había comido antes de irse.**
Tito had eaten before going out.

**En cuanto comió, Tito se fue.**
As soon as he ate, Tito went out.

E. The preterit perfect

To indicate an action that happened immediately before another action in the past, the **preterit perfect**, or **pretérito anterior**, is sometimes used in writing. This tense also follows expressions such as the ones mentioned in D., above.

The forms of the preterit of **haber**, which are used to make the preterit perfect (along with the past participle of the main verb), are as follows:

*hube, hubiste, hubo, hubimos, hubisteis, hubieron*
Después que hubo comido, se fue a la escuela.
As soon as he ate, he went to school.

Así que hubo entrado, se quitó los zapatos mojados.
As soon as he came in, he took off his wet shoes.

NOTE:
The form hubieron is only used as the auxiliary form of haber in compound tenses. It is incorrect to use hubieron with the meaning of there were as in the following examples:

Incorrect: Hubieron tres ensayos para preparar la obra.
Correct: Hubo tres ensayos para preparar la obra.

Incorrect: Me enteré que hubieron dos chicos que faltaron.
Correct: Me enteré que hubo dos chicos que faltaron.

F. The perfect infinitive

After expressions such as después de, sin, a pesar de, and al, the perfect infinitive is used to indicate two actions that took place in the past. This tense is formed with the infinitive of haber plus the past participle of the main verb. In this case, English would use the gerund of the verb to have and the past participle of the main verb:

Entró después de haber golpeado la puerta.
Having knocked on the door, he entered.

A pesar de haber bajado el precio no pudieron vender el terreno.
In spite of having lowered the price, they were not able to sell the lot.

Salió sin haber saludado.
He left without having said good-bye.

Al haber venido tan tarde, pidió disculpas.
Having arrived so late, he apologized.
The Infinitive

The infinitive is used to describe the action denoted by the verb in an abstract manner. It does not give any information about a subject nor the time in which the action may take place. Examples in English are *to talk*, *to go*, *to write*, etc. The infinitive has three possible endings in Spanish: *-ar*, *-er*, and *-ir*. Classified according to these endings, verbs are said to belong to the first, second, or third conjugation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st conjugation</th>
<th>2nd conjugation</th>
<th>3rd conjugation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>hablar</em> (to speak)</td>
<td><em>comer</em> (to eat)</td>
<td><em>vivir</em> (to live)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sentarse</em> (to sit down)</td>
<td><em>ser</em> (to be)</td>
<td><em>dormir</em> (to sleep)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The infinitive is an impersonal mood because there are no variations in the form to indicate the person doing the action of the verb. In the following sentences, the equivalent English and Spanish infinitive forms function in just the same way:

- Quiero *hablar* castellano. (I want to speak Spanish.)
- Quieres *hablar* portugués. (You want to speak Portuguese.)

Uses of the Infinitive

A. Sometimes, English may use the gerund (*-ing* form) when Spanish uses the infinitive:

- *Me gusta* cantar en la lluvia. (I like singing in the rain.)
- *Odía* levantarse temprano. (She hates getting up early.)

B. When the two verbs used in the sentence share the same subject, the second verb must be in the infinitive form:

- *Quiero* comprar un coche nuevo. (I want to buy a new car.)
- *Vamos a mandar* la carta por vía aérea. (We are going to send the letter via air mail.)
NOTES:

(1) If the two verbs share the same subject but indicate a continuous action, the first verb may be one like estar, seguir, or continuar while the second verb takes the gerund ending -ando or -iendo, corresponding to the English -ing. This tense is called the present progressive if the first verb is in the present tense, the past progressive if the first verb is in the preterit or the imperfect, and so on. Consult Chapter 9, The Present Participle, for more information on the progressive tenses:

Juan está esperando noticias.  
Los estudiantes continúan escribiendo los ejercicios.  
Los operarios seguirán protestando.  
Yo estaba escuchando música.

Juan is waiting for news.  
The students continue writing the exercises.  
The workers will continue protesting.  
I was listening to music.

(2) With verbs of assertion, denial, doubt, or fear, such as creer, decir, dudar, parecer, saber, sospechar, temer, and others, the infinitive or a clause introduced by que (that) may be used even when there is only one subject:

Dijo que tiene bastante dinero.  
Dijo tener bastante dinero.  
Le parece que está enfermo.  
Le parece estar enfermo.  
Temo que no pueda verlos.  
Temo no poder verlos.

He said (that) he has enough money.  
He thinks (that) he is sick.  
I'm afraid I won't be able to see them.

(3) When the second verb points to an action that took place before the action of the first verb, the infinitive haber is used, followed by a past participle. The combination of haber plus a past participle is called infinitivo compuesto (compound infinitive) as opposed to infinitivo simple (simple infinitive) (as in haber recibido versus recibir):

Me alegra haber recibido la carta.  
Lamento haber llegado tarde.

I am happy to have received the letter.  
I am sorry to have arrived late.

C. When the two verbs used in the sentence have different subjects, a clause in the indicative or in the subjunctive must be used for the second verb in Spanish.

English uses the infinitive, a tense of the indicative (present, preterit, etc.), or the -ing construction in this case:

Estoy segura que ella lo conoce.  
(indicative)

I am sure she knows him.
No le gusta que dejes el coche allá en la entrada del garaje. He doesn’t like you to leave the car there in the driveway.

(present subjunctive)

Quería que ella te dijera la verdad. I wanted her to tell you the truth.

(past or imperfect subjunctive)

Me parece que ella se preocupa por los resultados. It seems to me that she is wondering about the results.

NOTE:
With verbs of persuasion such as pedir, aconsejar, and recomendar, or verbs that refer to the senses, such as escuchar, mirar, oír, sentir, or ver, Spanish may or may not take the infinitive in the second verb when there are different subjects:

Le pedí venir esta tarde. I asked him to come this afternoon.

Le pedí que viniera esta tarde. I asked him to come this afternoon.

Oigo golpear la lluvia en la ventana. I hear the rain hitting the window.

Oigo que la lluvia golpea en la ventana. I hear the rain hitting the window.

Miraba acercarse el auto por la avenida. I watched the car approaching down the avenue.

Miraba que se acercaba el auto por la avenida. I watched the car approaching down the avenue.

D. The infinitive is used in Spanish after the following prepositions.

1. a

The infinitive is used after the preposition a in the following cases.

(a) a plus infinitive after a verb that requires the preposition a. Some of these verbs are:

acostumbrarse, aprender, atreverse, comenzar, decidirse, dedicarse, empezar, enseñar, ir, lanzarse, llegar, and resignarse, among others

El grupo va a cantar en la iglesia. The group is going to sing in church.

Los jefes llegaron a arreglar el conflicto. The managers managed to solve the conflict.

(b) a plus infinitive to imply a command (in this case the a may also be omitted):

¡A estudiar! Study!

¡Terminar pronto! Finish up soon!

(c) a plus infinitive after verbs such as comenzar, empezar, echar(se), or ponerse, to indicate the beginning of an action, or after volver, in the sense of repeating an action:
**The Infinitive**

1. **El coro comenzó a cantar.** The choir began singing.
   
2. **Nos echamos a correr.** We started to run.
   
3. **El niño se puso a llorar.** The boy started crying.
   
4. **El volvió a estudiar el capítulo.** He studied the chapter again.

The infinitive is also used after the preposition *a* with verbs such as *llegar*, in the sense of *coming to the point of*:

- **Yo llegué a imaginarme la situación.** I got to the point of imagining the situation.
  
  *(I was able to imagine the situation.)*

- **Hasta ella vino a suponer lo que estaba pasando.** Even she came to realize what was going on.

2. **con**

The infinitive is used after verbs that require this preposition:

- **No se gana nada con quejarse.** You cannot gain anything by complaining.
  
  *Pablo amenazó con decir lo que sabía.* Pablo threatened to say what he knew.

3. **de**

The infinitive is used after the preposition *de* in the following cases.

(a) **de** plus infinitive to express a possibility:

- **De ir ustedes, ella les dará las notas.** If you go, she will give you the grades.
  
  *(Si ustedes van, ella les dará las notas.)*

- **De ofrecer historia medieval, tomaré la clase.** If they offer medieval history, I’ll take the class.
  
  *(Si ofrecen historia medieval, tomaré la clase.)*

**NOTE:**

If the second verb is in the conditional tense instead of the future, the possibility is more remote:

- **De ir ustedes, ella les daría las notas.** If you went, she would give you the grades.
  
  *(Si ustedes fueran, ella les daría las notas.)*

Notice the use of the imperfect subjunctive in the first verb of the second example sentence above, to agree with the second verb, which is in the conditional. This is a contrary-to-fact statement.
To indicate the same idea in the past, use *de + haber +* the past participle:

**De haber ido** ustedes, ella les habría dado las notas.

(If you had gone, she would have given you the grades.)

**NOTE:**

The clauses above that begin with *si* belong to the category of *if clauses in the past*, or contrary-to-fact statements.

**b)** The infinitive follows *de* when it is used in expressions such as *a pesar de* (*in spite of*), *antes de* (*before*), *después de* (*after*), *en lugar de* (*instead of*), and *en vez de* (*instead of*):

*Vino a pesar de sentirse mal.*

He came although he did not feel too well.

*Me lo mandó antes de venir.*

She sent it to me before she came.

*Lo llamaré a Emilio después de regresar.*

I’ll call Emilio after I come back.

*Maggie fue a la tienda en lugar de venir por acá.*

Maggie went to the store instead of coming here.

*Se compraron un auto en vez de ahorrarse el dinero.*

They bought a car instead of saving the money.

**c)** The infinitive follows *de* when it is used after an adjective:

*Es difícil de entender que no haya llamado.*

It is hard to understand that he has not called.

*Era interesante de ver todas las casitas en fila a lo largo del río.*

It was interesting to see all the little houses lined up along the river.

**d)** The infinitive follows *de* when it is used after a noun (in which case *de* plus the infinitive functions as an adjective):

*Mamá tenía una vieja máquina de coser marca Singer.*

Mom had an old Singer sewing machine.

*El niño necesita una goma de borrar.*

The child needs an eraser.

*Me dieron una máquina de afeitar eléctrica.*

They gave me an electric razor.

**e)** The infinitive follows *de* when it is used in the expression *tener ganas de*, with the meaning of *to feel like*:

*Tiene ganas de salir pronto de vacaciones.*

She feels like going on vacation soon.

*Tuvimos ganas de bailar.*

We felt like dancing.

**f)** The infinitive is used after *de* when it appears in the expressions *dejar de* (*to stop doing something*), *acabar de* (*to have just + a past participle, as in to have just eaten*), and *tratar de* (*to try*):
El hombre dejó de llamarla por teléfono. The man stopped calling her on the phone.

Acabo de leer su última novela. I have just finished reading his latest novel.

Traté de convencerla, pero no lo conseguí. I tried to convince her, but I couldn't.

(g) The infinitive is used after de following verbs such as acordarse, alegrarse, cansarse, darse cuenta, and olvidarse, which require the preposition:

Se alegró de salir de compras con ella. She was happy to go out shopping with her.

Nos olvidamos de mandar la carta. We forgot to send out the letter.

Me cansé de solicitar empleo en esas compañías. I got tired of applying for jobs in those companies.

4. en

The infinitive is used after the preposition en in the following cases.

(a) The infinitive after verbs that require the preposition en:

Gasta su herencia en viajar a lugares exóticos. He spends his inheritance traveling to exotic places.

Están interesados en comprar la hacienda. They are interested in buying the ranch.

Piensa sólo en trabajar. She only thinks about working.

A list of additional common verbs that require en includes, but is not limited to:

complacerse (to be pleased), consistir (to consist), convenir (to agree), insistir (to insist), tardar (to be delayed)

(b) The infinitive after en following an adjective or a pronoun such as primero, segundo, último, or único:

Molly fue la primera chica en aprender la lección. Molly was the first girl to learn the lesson.

Roberto será el último en salir. Roberto will be the last one to leave.

5. hasta

When the two verbs joined by hasta share the same subject, the infinitive is used for the second one:

Va a insistir hasta conseguir lo que quiere. She will insist until she gets what she wants.

Voy a quedarme hasta terminar la tarea. I'm going to stay until I finish the task.
However, if there is a change of subject, the subjunctive is used for the second verb:

Voy a quedarme hasta que ella termine la tarea. I'm going to stay until she finishes the task.

6. *para*

The infinitive after *para*, meaning *in order to*:

Compramos entradas para ver esa obra musical. We bought tickets (in order) to see that musical.

Para apreciar la naturaleza tienes que visitar Iguazú. (In order) To appreciate nature, you must visit Iguazu.

7. *por*

The infinitive after *por*, to indicate exchange or reason:

Daría cualquier cosa por ir a Japón. I would give anything to go to Japan.

Me retaron por llegar tarde. They scolded me for coming late.

Me ofreció un café por ayudarlo con su trabajo. He offered me a cup of coffee for helping him with his work.

8. *sin*

When a verb follows *sin* (*without*) it must be in the infinitive. English uses the present participle or other expressions:

Lo hizo sin chistar. He did it without saying a word.

Se casaron sin pensar dos veces. They got married without thinking twice.

Nos encontramos sin querer. We met by coincidence.

Aceptó sin titubear. She accepted without hesitation.

E. **After que**, when English uses an infinitive or the gerund, Spanish uses the infinitive:

Tengo mucho que hacer. I have a lot to do.

No tienen que comer ahora. They do not have to eat now.

No hace más que leer. All he does is read.

Caminar me gusta más que correr. I like walking more than running.
NOTE:
If an accent mark is placed on *que* in the second sentence above, the meaning changes, as follows:

*No tienen qué comer ahora.*

They don't have anything to eat now.

F. After *ser* (to be), as predicate of the sentence, when English uses either the infinitive or the gerund, Spanish uses the infinitive:

*Lo que quiero es hablar contigo.*

What I want is to talk to you.

*Lo que me gusta es caminar en la lluvia.*

What I like is walking in the rain.

G. The infinitive is used after *tener que, haber de,* and *haber que,* to indicate a moral or personal obligation:

*Tengo que estudiar para el examen.*

I have to study for the exam.

*Hemos de pedirle que se quede.*

We must ask him to stay.

*Hay que escribir todo el párrafo.*

You have to write the whole paragraph.

H. The infinitive after *al*

The infinitive is used after the contraction *al* to indicate an action that took place at the same time as another action or as an immediate consequence of the other action. In this case, English uses *upon* plus the gerund:

*Se sacó el sombrero al entrar.*

He took off his hat upon entering.

*Al oír la verdad se puso a llorar.*

Upon hearing the truth, she started crying (to cry).

NOTE:

The same construction in Spanish can also be used to show the results of an action (when the sentence in English would use *because* or *since,* instead of *upon* + the gerund):

*Al no recibir noticias, la llamó por teléfono.*

Since (Because) she had not received any news, she gave her a call.

*Se rompió la pierna al caerse de la escalera.*

She broke her leg because she fell from the stepladder.
1. **The infinitive is used as a noun, as follows.**

1. The infinitive used as a noun may or may not take the definite article. If it does, the masculine singular form of the article is used. Notice that in English, either the infinitive or the gerund may be used:

   - **Caminar es bueno para la salud.**  
     To walk is good for our health.
   - **El saber estudiar requiere habilidad.**  
     Knowing how to study requires skills.

   The predicate may be another infinitive, but never a gerund, as may be the case in English:

   - **Amar es ir más allá de la obligación.**  
     To love is to go the extra mile. / Loving is going the extra mile.
   - **Decir la verdad es mostrar integridad.**  
     To tell the truth is to show integrity.

2. If an adverb follows the infinitive used as a noun, the use of the article is optional:

   - **(El) Fumar demasiado puede causar cáncer.**  
     Smoking excessively may cause cancer.
   - **(El) Participar en actividades es bueno para la comunidad.**  
     Participating in activities is good for the community.

3. If a subject pronoun (*yo, tú, etc.*) follows the infinitive used as a noun, the article must be used:

   - **El venir tú con ese plan me sorprende.**  
     The fact that you are coming with that plan surprises me.
   - **El ir y venir ellos es insinuante.**  
     The fact that they are coming and going is suggestive.

4. If an adjective modifies the infinitive that is acting as a noun, the infinitive must be preceded by an article, a demonstrative adjective, or a possessive adjective:

   - **El comer descontrolado es perjudicial.**  
     Eating without self-control is harmful.
   - **Ese penetrante mirar me atemorizaba.**  
     That penetrating way of looking frightened me.
   - **Su andar pausado me recordaba a mi padre.**  
     His slow walking reminded me of my father.

5. Some infinitives have become true nouns, such that they take a plural form like other nouns. When the infinitive used as a noun is plural, the masculine plural form of the article and any adjective(s) should be used. If the infinitive as a noun is the subject of a verb, the verb must be conjugated in the third person plural:
Me fascina el amanecer a la orilla del mar. Every dawn at the seashore fascinates me. 
(Dawns at the seashore fascinate me.)

El poder absoluto del jefe es incuestionable. The absolute power(s) of the boss is (are) unquestionable.

In English, some infinitives become nouns by using the form of the gerund, which does not happen in Spanish. Some of those nouns in English are rating(s), painting(s), feeling(s), greeting(s), and closing(s).

Los cuadros de Goya son impresionantes. Goya’s paintings are impressive.

Paula te manda saludos. Paula sends you greetings.

The infinitive is used to indicate a command or a request, with emphasis on the action:

La profesora me mandó cerrar la puerta. The teacher ordered me to close the door.

However, if the emphasis is on the subject of the action, the subjunctive is used:

La profesora me mandó que cerrara la puerta. The teacher ordered me to close the door.

In English, the stress on the word me would help to indicate this emphasis.

With impersonal expressions, the infinitive is used if no subject is specified:

Es aconsejable hacer ejercicios físicos. It is advisable to exercise.

Era importante combatir los momentos tristes. It was important to fight the sad moments.

If a subject is specified, the infinitive is used when the emphasis is on the action. Notice that the subject appears as an indirect object pronoun or after the preposition para:

No me es posible escribir esa carta ahora mismo. It is impossible for me to write that letter right now.

Es importante para él asistir a esa conferencia. It is important for him to attend that conference.
However, when the emphasis is on the subject of the action, the subjunctive is used. These are typical subjunctive sentences, with impersonal expressions and a second subject:

\[
\text{Es imposible que yo escriba esa carta.} \quad \text{It is impossible for me to write that letter.}
\]
\[
\text{Es importante que él asista a esa conferencia.} \quad \text{It is important for him to attend that conference.}
\]

**L. The infinitive is used to show a negative reaction:**

- ¡Marcharse sin despedirse de nadie! Can you imagine that he left without saying good-bye!
- ¿Viajar en avión yo? ¡Olvidalo! You want me to travel by plane? Forget it!

**M. The infinitive is used in the passive voice, where English uses the gerund:**

- Se lo vio bajar la escalera. He was seen coming down the stairs.
- ¡Qué cantora! Se la oyó cantar en los mejores teatros. What a singer! She was heard singing in the best theaters.

**N. In the active voice, Spanish uses the infinitive when English uses either the infinitive or the gerund:**

- Ellos lo vieron hablar con el jefe. They saw him talk (talking) with the boss.
- El público la oyó cantar en los mejores teatros. The audience heard her sing (singing) in the best theaters.

**O. Object pronouns may be attached to the infinitive or placed in front of the conjugated verb:**

- Quiero comprarlo. I want to buy it for him.
- Se lo quiero comprar. I want to buy it for him.

The same rule applies to reflexive verbs in the infinitive:

- Tengo que lavarme las manos. I have to wash my hands.
- Me tengo que lavar las manos. I have to wash my hands.

**P. The infinitive may function as an adverb:**

- A juzgar por las noticias, no creo que vaya. Judging by the news, I don’t think she will attend.
- A decir verdad, esta lección es muy difícil. To tell the truth, this lesson is very difficult.
The Subjunctive

The subjunctive is a verbal mood used mostly in a dependent clause, which is a group of words that cannot stand alone as a sentence. The subjunctive mood shows the point of view or the feelings of the subject about the action indicated in the sentence. These feelings may indicate, among others, a command, a wish, a piece of advice, a necessity, a negation, or an emotion. The action may also reflect a hypothetical, contrary-to-fact, or doubtful occurrence. For the correct use of the subjunctive, several elements must be present. The absence of one of these elements in the sentence will preclude the use of the subjunctive mood.

Elements of a Subjunctive Sentence

There are three main elements of a subjunctive sentence:

1. Two different subjects
2. The relative pronoun *que*
3. Two verbs with the following characteristics:
   (a) The verb that accompanies the first subject (in the main clause) must denote will (*querer, recomendar, aconsejar*); emotions (*sentir, alegrarse*); denial (*negar, no querer*); nonexistence (*no haber, faltar*); indefiniteness (*buscar, necesitar*) or impersonal expressions, which are formed by a combination of *ser* and an adjective such as *interesante, conveniente*, or *bueno*, as in:

   - *Es bueno* que vengas mañana. It is good that you are coming tomorrow.
   - *Es interesante* que Uds. quieran viajar. It is interesting that you want to travel.

   (b) The verb that follows the second subject (in the dependent clause) must be conjugated in the subjunctive form, as indicated in the subsections on endings and stems within the sections about the forms of each subjunctive tense, below. This verb may be in the present subjunctive or in the imperfect subjunctive (also called past subjunctive), depending on the tense indicated by the verb in the main clause.
Structure of a Subjunctive Sentence

Note the various parts of each sentence in the two examples of subjunctive sentences that follow:

*El médico recomienda que Ud. camine todos los días.*

- two different subjects
- relative pronoun
- a verb of advice in the indicative
- a verb in the subjunctive form

The doctor recommends that you walk every day.

*Mis padres quieren que nosotros vengamos mañana a las ocho.*

- two different subjects
- relative pronoun
- a verb of will
- a verb in the subjunctive form

My parents want us to come tomorrow at eight.

NOTES:

(1) When there is no change in the subject, an infinitive is used. Observe the following sentences:

- two subjects: subjunctive

  *(Tú) Te alegras de que ellos tengan paciencia.*
  
  You are glad that they are patient.

- one subject: infinitive

  *Te alegras de tener paciencia.*
  
  You are glad that you are patient.

- two subjects: subjunctive

  *(Yo) Dudo que María pueda venir.*
  
  I doubt that María can come.

- one subject: infinitive

  *Dudo poder venir.*
  
  I doubt that I can come.

  *Dudo que (yo) pueda conseguir el dinero.*
  
  I doubt I can get the money.

  *(Dudo poder conseguir el dinero.)*
  
  (I doubt I can get the money.)

  *Dudo que (ella) pueda conseguirlo.*
  
  I doubt she can get it.

* Although the examples given here show the grammatically correct usage, it is widely accepted that when the first verb is a verb of doubt, the second verb is in the subjunctive form, even when both verbs have the same subject. When the subject of the second verb might be ambiguous, the context can make it clear.
No creo que (yo) tenga interesados cuando (yo) quiera vender la casa.
(No creo tener interesados cuando quiera vender la casa.)
No creo que (Pedro) tenga interesados cuando (él) quiera vender la casa.

I don't think I'll have people interested whenever I want to sell the house.
(I don't think I'll have people interested whenever I want to sell the house.)
I don't think (Pedro) will have people interested whenever he wants to sell the house.

(2) The personal pronouns may be left out in subjunctive sentences, just as with all other sentences in Spanish:

Nosotros necesitamos que Uds. manden la carta.
Necesitamos que manden la carta.

We need you to send the letter.
We need you to send the letter.

Since the subject of manden could be Uds. ellos, or ellas, the right subject is determined by context. Clarification may be needed.

Verbs That Trigger the Subjunctive in the Dependent Clause

The following is a partial list of verbs that may appear in the main clause of a sentence that will have the subjunctive in its dependent clause. If there are two different subjects in the sentence, a verb in the subjunctive form will be required in the dependent clause.

A. Verbs of will that trigger the subjunctive

1. Wishes and the subjunctive:

   agradecer (to be grateful)
   desear (to wish)
   esperar (to hope)
   preferir (to prefer)
   querer (to want)
   esperamos que Uds. traigan a sus amigos.
   Prefiero que me llames temprano.

   We hope that you will bring your friends.
   I would rather that you call me early.

2. Advice and the subjunctive:

   aconsejar (to advise)
   proponer (to suggest)
   recomendar (to recommend)
   rogar (to beg)
   sugerir (to suggest)
   suplicar (to beg)
Te aconsejo que compres el rojo.
Nos recomienda que le paguemos el alquiler pronto.

I advise you to buy the red one.
He recommends that we pay him the rent soon.

3. Permission or prohibition and the subjunctive:

aprobar (to approve)  
dejar (to permit, to allow)  
desaprobar (to disapprove)  
estar de acuerdo (to agree)  
impedir (to prevent)  
oponerse (to oppose)  
permitir (to let, to allow)  
prohibir (to prohibit)

Papá no nos deja que salgamos con ellos.
La profesora nos prohíbe que demos los resultados.

Dad does not allow us to go out with them.
The teacher does not allow us to give out the results.

4. Commands and the subjunctive:

decir (to tell)  
exigir (to demand)  
instigar (to urge)  
mandar (to command)  
ordenar (to order)  
pedir (to ask)  
requerir (to require)  
rogar (to beg)

El jefe requiere que los empleados firmen las tarjetas.
La señora pidió que el mozo le trajera más pan.
The boss requires the employees to sign the cards.
The lady asked the waiter to bring her more bread.

NOTES:

Certain verbs, such as decir (to tell or to say), notificar (to notify), or mencionar (to mention), do not trigger the subjunctive if they only provide information. The indicative is used in that case:

El dijo que viene su hermano mañana.
He said that his brother comes tomorrow.

(Information ➤ indicative)

El dijo que venga su hermano mañana.
He said for his brother to come tomorrow

(expression of will ➤ subjunctive) (that his brother should come tomorrow).

B. Verbs of emotion that trigger the subjunctive:

alegrarse (to be glad)  
encantar (to be delighted)  
lamentar (to regret)  
sentir (to be sorry)
esperar (to hope)  sorpresarse (to be surprised)
gustar (to like)  temer (to fear)

¡Me encanta que vengas a casa!  I am delighted that you are coming home!
Le sorprende que digas eso.  It surprises her that you say that.

**C. Verbs of doubt, disbelief, or denial that trigger the subjunctive:**

- no creer (not to believe)
- no comprender (not to understand)
- dudar (to doubt)
- no estar seguro (not to be sure)
- no creer (not to believe)
- negar (to deny)
- no parecerle (not to seem)
- no suponer (not to assume)

**Example:**

Dudo que ellos **tengan** su dirección.  I doubt that they have her address.

Negó que ella **hubiera pedido** el divorcio.  He denied that she had asked for the divorce.

No es verdad que ella **tenga** tres hijos.  It is not true that she has three children.

However, in the case of an affirmation, the indicative is used:

**Example:**

Es verdad que Juan **estudia** abogacía.  It is true that Juan studies law.

No niega que ella **ha pedido** el divorcio.  He doesn't deny that she has asked for the divorce.

**D. Verbs that indicate nonexistence or indefiniteness and that trigger the subjunctive:**

- buscar (to look for)
- necesitar (to need)
- no encontrar (not to find)
- querer (to want)
- no haber (there is/are not)
- no tener (not to have)

**Example:**

Necesito una casa que **tenga** tres habitaciones. ¿Tiene una?  I need a house that has three rooms. Do you have one?

No hay nadie que **quiera** trabajar el sábado.  There's no one who wants to work on Saturday.

However, when the sentence indicates existence or affirmation, the indicative is used:

**Example:**

Tengo una casa que **tiene** tres habitaciones.  I have a house that has three rooms.

Hay alguien que **quiere** trabajar el sábado.  There is someone who wants to work on Saturday.
E. Impersonal expressions that trigger the subjunctive:

1. Some of the most frequently used impersonal expressions that indicate emotions or opinions are the following:

   - *es agradable* it is nice
   - *es bueno* it is good
   - *es curioso* it is unusual
   - *es estupendo* it is great
   - *es extraño* it is strange
   - *es una lástima* it is a pity
   - *es malo* it is bad
   - *es necesario* it is necessary
   - *es raro* it is unusual
   - *es recomendable* it is advisable
   - *es urgente* it is urgent
   - *es vergonzoso* it is a disgrace

2. The verb *ser*, shown in the expressions above in the present tense, may also be used in these same expressions in any of the other tenses, such as the preterit, the imperfect, the conditional, or the future:

   - *Fue curioso* que yo *recibiera* esa nota.  It was unusual for me to get that note.

     (preterit)
   - *Era raro* que ellos *llegaran* a tiempo.  It was unusual for them to arrive on time.

     (imperfect)
   - *Sería posible* que ellos *tuvieran* tiempo.  It would be possible for them to have time.

     (conditional)
   - *Será estupendo* que Jaime *consiga* ese trabajo.  It will be great if Jaime gets that job.

     (future)

3. The verb *parecer* (to seem) is also used in impersonal expressions with the subjunctive:

   - *Parece increíble* que tú *no quieras* hablarle.  It seems incredible that you don't want to talk to him.

   - *Parecía un milagro* que todos *estuvieran* juntos allí.  It seemed like a miracle that everyone was there together.

The Present Subjunctive

The subjunctive has four tenses: present, imperfect or past, past perfect, and pluperfect. The following rules apply for verb endings and stems in the present subjunctive:
Forms of the Present Subjunctive

Present Subjunctive Endings

- **-ar verbs:** -e, -es, -e, -emos, -éis, -en*
- **-er and -ir verbs:** -a, -as, -a, -amos, -áis, -an**

Present Subjunctive Stems

The stem of most verbs in the present subjunctive comes from the stem of the *yo* form of the present indicative (without the *o* ending). This holds true for regular and stem-changing verbs and also for verbs in which the first person is irregular. Other verbs change the spelling in the subjunctive form to preserve the pronunciation of the indicative stems.

### A. Regular verbs: stems in the present subjunctive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cantar</td>
<td>yo canto</td>
<td>leer / vivir</td>
<td>lea / viva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yo canto</td>
<td>yo cante</td>
<td>yo leo / vivo</td>
<td>lea / viva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú cantes</td>
<td></td>
<td>lea / vivas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él cante</td>
<td></td>
<td>lea / viva</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella cante</td>
<td></td>
<td>lea / viva</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud. cante</td>
<td></td>
<td>lea / viva</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as cantemos</td>
<td></td>
<td>leamos / vivamos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros/as cantéis</td>
<td></td>
<td>leáis / vivíis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos canten</td>
<td></td>
<td>lean / vivan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas canten</td>
<td></td>
<td>lean / vivan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uds. canten</td>
<td></td>
<td>lean / vivan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please note that these are the same endings as for -er verbs in the present indicative, except for the *yo* form: (como), comes, come, comemos, coméis, comen

** Please note that these are the same endings as for -ar verbs in the present indicative, except for the *yo* form: (hablo), hablas, habla, hablamos, habláis, hablan
### B. Stem-changing verbs: stems in the present subjunctive

1. \( e \rightarrow ie \) stem-changing verbs in the present subjunctive

   (a) \( e \rightarrow ie \) stem-changing -\( ar \) and -\( er \) verbs change the stem in the subjunctive for all persons except the \( nosotros/as \) and the \( vosotros/as \) forms, just as they do in the present indicative (in the \( nosotros/as \) and \( vosotros/as \) forms, they revert to the infinitive stem). Remember that in stem-changing verbs, it is the second \( e \) that changes when there are two \( es \) in the stem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pensar (to think)</td>
<td>pienso</td>
<td>piense, pienses, piense,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pensemos, penséis, piensen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defender (to defend)</td>
<td>defiendo</td>
<td>defienda, defiendas, defienda,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>defendamos, defendáis, defiendan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>querer (to want)</td>
<td>quiero</td>
<td>quiera, quieras, quiera,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>queramos, queráis, quieran</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **Present Indicative:**
   - pensar: pienso, piensas, piensa, **pensamos**, **pensáis**, piensan
   - defender: defiendo, defiendes, defiende, **defendemos**, **defendéis**, defienden
   - querer: quiero, quieres, quiere, **queremos**, **queréis**, quieren

   (b) \( e \rightarrow ie \) stem-changing -\( ir \) verbs carry out the stem change in the subjunctive for all persons except for the \( nosotros/as \) and \( vosotros/as \) forms; for those forms, there is a different stem change: the single \( e \) of the stem (or the second \( e \) if there are two) changes to an \( i \) (note that this is different from what happens in the present indicative, where the \( nosotros/as \) and \( vosotros/as \) forms follow the stem of the infinitive):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mentir (to lie)</td>
<td>miento</td>
<td>mienta, mientas, mienta,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mintamos, mintáis, mientan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preferir (to prefer)</td>
<td>prefiero</td>
<td>prefiera, prefieres, prefiere,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>preferimos, preferís, prefieren</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **Present Indicative:**
   - mentir: miento, mientes, miente, **mentimos**, **mentís**, mienten
   - preferir: prefiero, prefieres, prefiere, **preferimos**, **preferís**, prefieren
NOTES:
(1) If the stem of the infinitive ends in a \( z \), the \( z \) becomes \( c \) in all the persons of the subjunctive, as in *empezar* (to begin):

\[
\text{yo empiezo} \Rightarrow \text{empiece, empieces, empiece, empecemos, empécís, empiecen}
\]

(2) There is one verb that changes \( i \) \( \Rightarrow \) \( ie \): *adquirir* (to acquire):

\[
\text{yo adquiero} \Rightarrow \text{adquiera, adquieras, adquiera, adquiramos, adquiráis, adquieran}
\]

Notice that the *nosotros* and *vosotros* forms use the \( i \) of the infinitive, as they do in the present tense of the indicative:

*adquirir*: adquero, adquieres, adquiere, *adquirimos*, *adquirís*, adquieren

(3) For practical reasons, only the six basic personal pronouns are used in the examples.

2.  \( e \Rightarrow i \) stem-changing verbs in the present subjunctive:

- *-ir* verbs only: all persons change \( e \) to \( i \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>pedir</em> (to ask for)</td>
<td><em>pido</em></td>
<td><em>pida, pidas, pida, pidamos, pidáis, pidan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>medir</em> (to measure)</td>
<td><em>mido</em></td>
<td><em>mida, midas, mida, midamos, midáis, midan</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Present Indicative:**

*pedir*: *pido, pides, pide, pedimos, pedís, piden*

*medir*: *mido, mides, mide, medimos, medís, miden*

3.  \( o \Rightarrow ue \) stem-changing verbs in the present subjunctive

(a) \( o \Rightarrow ue \) stem-changing *-ar* and *-er* verbs change the stem in the subjunctive for all persons except the *nosotros/as* and the *vosotros/as* forms, which follow the infinitive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>contar</em> (to count)</td>
<td><em>cuento</em></td>
<td><em>cuente, cuentes, cuente, contemos, contéis, cuenten</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>poder</em> (to be able)</td>
<td><em>puedo</em></td>
<td><em>pueda, puedas, pueda, podamos, podáis, puedan</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Present Indicative:
contar: cuento, cuentas, cuenta, contamos, contáis, cuentan
poder: puedo, puedes, puede, podemos, podéis, pueden

NOTE:
If the stem of the infinitive ends in a z, the z becomes c in all the persons of the subjunctive:

almorzar (to have lunch)
yo almuerzo ➔ almuerce, almuerces, almuerce, almorces, almorcéis, almuercen

(b) o ➔ ue stem-changing -ir verbs change the stem in the subjunctive for all persons except the nosotros/as and vosotros/as forms, which change the o of the infinitive into a u (not like the present indicative, where the nosotros/as and vosotros/as stems follow the infinitive):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>morir (to die)</td>
<td>muero</td>
<td>muera, mueras, muera, muramos, muráis, mueran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dormir (to sleep)</td>
<td>duermo</td>
<td>duerma, duermas, duerma, durmamos, durmáis, duerman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Present Indicative:
morir: muero, mueres, muere, morimos, morís, mueren
dormir: duermo, duermes, duerme, dormimos, dormís, duermen

C. Verbs with irregular first person in the present indicative: stems in the present subjunctive
Some verbs are irregular in the first person indicative only (all other persons follow the infinitive). Since the stem of the present subjunctive comes from the yo form of the present indicative, this stem change is maintained in all persons of the present subjunctive, as shown in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>caber (to fit)</td>
<td>quepo</td>
<td>quepa, quepas, quepa, quepamos, quepáis, quepan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conocer* (to know)</td>
<td>conoczo</td>
<td>conozca, conozcas, conozca, conozcamos, conozcáis, conozcan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* One of the exceptions to this pattern for verbs ending in -cer is mecer (to rock), which is conjugated in the present indicative tense as yo meezo, tú meces, él mece, nosotros mecemos, vosotros meceís, ellos mecen. The present subjunctive, derived from the present indicative yo form, is meza, mezas, meza, mezamos, mezáis, mezan.
### D. Verbs that change the stem to preserve pronunciation in the present subjunctive

In certain verbs, a spelling change is required in the present subjunctive to preserve the pronunciation of the first person indicative. As mentioned before, the spelling of the subjunctive stem originates in the *first person indicative* (*yo*). The change affects all persons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buscar (to look for)</td>
<td><em>büsco</em> c ➔ qu</td>
<td><em>büsque, busques, busque,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pagar (to pay)</td>
<td><em>pägo</em> g ➔ gu</td>
<td><em>pague, pagues, pague,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atestiguar (to witness)</td>
<td><em>ätestigüo</em> u ➔ ü</td>
<td><em>ätestigüe, atestigües, atestigüe,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>averiguar (to find out)</td>
<td><em>äverigüo</em> u ➔ ü</td>
<td><em>äverigüe, averigües, averigüe,</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**
If the stem in the first person indicative already has a *u* following the *g*, a diaeresis is placed on the *u* of the subjunctive to preserve the pronunciation of the *u*:
If there is already a spelling change in the first person indicative to preserve the pronunciation of the infinitive, the change is also kept through all persons of the present subjunctive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exigir (to require)</td>
<td>exijo</td>
<td>exija, exijas, exija, exijamos, exijáis, exijan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recoger (to collect)</td>
<td>recojo</td>
<td>recoja, recojas, recoja, recojamos, recojáis, recojan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All forms for verbs like *exigir* and *recoger* have a *g* in all persons of the present indicative, except the first person *yo*, which has a *j*.

### E. Irregular present subjunctive forms

The following verbs are irregular in the present subjunctive since they do not follow the spelling of the first person of the present indicative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dar (to give)</td>
<td>doy</td>
<td>dé*, des, dé*, demos, deis, den</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estar (to be)</td>
<td>estoy</td>
<td>esté, estés, esté, estemos, estéis, estén</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haber</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>haya, hayas, haya, hayamos, hayáis, hayan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ir (to go)</td>
<td>voy</td>
<td>vaya, vayas, vaya, vayamos, vayáis, vayan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saber (to know)</td>
<td>sé</td>
<td>sepa, sepas, sepa, separamos, sepadís, sepan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ser (to be)</td>
<td>soy</td>
<td>sea, seas, sea, seamos, sedís, sean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The accent mark on *dé* (one-syllable word) is used to distinguish it from the preposition *de* (of).
NOTE:
*Haber* is an auxiliary verb used to form the compound tenses: the present perfect and the past perfect indicative, the present perfect subjunctive, the pluperfect subjunctive, the future perfect, and the conditional perfect. A form of *haber* is also used to express availability as in *there is* and *there are* (*hay*). The other forms for expressing availability are: *hubo* (*there was* / *there were*), *había* (*there was* / *there were*), *habrá* (*there will be*), *habría* (*there would be*), and the subjunctive forms *haya* and *hubiera*.

*El recomienda que haya un lápiz para cada estudiante.*

He recommends that there be one pencil for each student.

*La maestra espera que haya veinte niños en la clase.*

The teacher hopes that there will be twenty children in class.

### Uses of the Present Subjunctive

The present subjunctive reflects the following actions or states.

**A. An action that is happening in the present**

*Quiero que firmes el formulario ahora.*

I want you to sign the form now.

**B. A state of being**

¡Qué bueno que seas mi amigo!  
¡Qué maravilloso que estés estudiando!

How nice that you are my friend!  
How wonderful that you are studying!

**C. Habitual actions**

*Nos alegra que ellos se reúnan siempre con nosotros.*

We are pleased that they always join us.

**D. An action that is likely to happen in the future**

*Es importante que Ud. envíe la carta el viernes.*

It is important that you send the letter on Friday.
NOTE:
In all the cases above, the verb in the main clause is in the present indicative, while the verb in the dependent clause is in the present subjunctive.

There is another case, however, when the verb in the main clause is in the preterit while the verb in the dependent clause is in the present subjunctive. This may happen only when

(1) the preterit verb is a verb of will, such as decir (to say), recomendar (to recommend), aconsejar (to advise), or sugerir (to suggest), and

(2) what was suggested, advised, recommended, etc., was expected to happen at that particular moment or in the future:

Ayer le sugerí que juegue esta tarde con nosotros. Yesterday I suggested to him that he play with us this afternoon.

Les dije que vayan mañana a ver esa película. I told them to go tomorrow to see that movie.

However, observe also the following examples where the imperfect (or past) subjunctive—underlined in these examples—must be used after the preterit, because of two different circumstances:

- The time for the suggested or recommended action has already passed:

Les dije que fueran esa misma tarde a ver la película. Les gustó muchísimo. I told them to go that afternoon to see the movie. They liked it a lot.

- The time for the suggested or recommended action is followed by a verb in the past tense:

Ayer le sugerí que jugará esta tarde con nosotros, pero no quiso. Yesterday I suggested to him that he play with us this afternoon, but (at that particular moment) he didn't want to.

Other Uses of the Present Subjunctive

A. Suggestions or invitations to do something as a group using the nosotros/as (we) form of the subjunctive

Grammatically, the nosotros/as (we) form of the subjunctive is known as a let's command. This form is equivalent to the English Let's + verb, as in Let's go, Let's sing, etc:

Cenemos en Casa Mariel esta noche. Let’s have dinner at Mariel’s tonight.
NOTES:

(1) The other standard (and nonsubjunctive) way to express this kind of suggestion or invitation to do something as a group in Spanish is by using *vamos a* + infinitive:

*Vamos a cenar en Casa Mariel esta noche.*
*Let’s have dinner at Mariel’s tonight.*

The *vamos a* + infinitive construction and the *let’s commands* (*nosotros* form of the subjunctive) are equally acceptable.

(2) Pronouns are attached to affirmative *let’s commands*:

*Pongámoslo en la sala.*
*Let’s put it in the living room.*

(3) When the pronoun *nos* is attached to a *let’s command*, the *s* of the verb is omitted:

*Pongámonos los abrigos. ¡Hace mucho frío!*
*Let’s put on our coats. It’s very cold!*  
(Not: *pongámosnos*)

(4) When both the indirect object and the direct object pronouns are used, and the indirect object pronoun is a *se* form, the *s* of the command form is dropped:

*Pongamos el abrigo al chico.*
*Pongámoselo.*  
(Not: *pongámosnos*)

(5) Pronouns used in the dependent clause of a subjunctive sentence are placed before the verb (these are not *let’s commands*):

*Juan quiere que lo pongamos en la sala.*
*Juan wants us to put it in the living room.*

*Mamá sugiere que nos pongamos los abrigos.*
*Mom suggests that we put on our coats.*

B. Indirect commands (*Let’s have someone else do it!*) using the subjunctive

1. To express this command, the main clause is eliminated and the sentence begins with the relative pronoun *que*:

*¡Que ella le dé la buena noticia!*  
*Let her give him the good news!*
2. Here are some common indirect commands and expressions:

- ¡Ojalá* que llegue bien!
- ¡Ojalá que no haga frío!
- Que descansen en paz.
- ¡Que lo pase bien!
- ¡Que regresen pronto!
- ¡Que sean muy felices!
- ¡Que te vaya bien!
- ¡Que tengan felices vacaciones!

I hope he will get there safely.
I hope it won't be cold.
May he rest in peace.
I hope you have a good time!
We hope you come back soon!
May you be very happy!
I hope everything goes well!
Have a good vacation!

C. The subjunctive in time clauses

1. The subjunctive in the time clause when the main clause indicates future action

When the verb in the main clause indicates a future action (simple future or informal future), the subjunctive is normally used in the time clause. Some of the expressions that trigger the subjunctive are: 

- **cuando** (when), **en cuanto** (as soon as), **ni bien** (as soon as), **tan pronto como** (as soon as), **hasta que** (until), **mientras** (while), **antes (de) que** (before), and **después (de) que** (after) (see notes [a] and [b] below about when **que** can be omitted in **hasta que**, **antes [de] que**, and **después [de] que**):

- *Cuando llegue a casa, dormiré una siesta.*  
  When(ever) I arrive home, I will take a nap.
- *Cuando llegue a casa voy a dormir una siesta.*  
  When(ever) I arrive home, I'm going to take a nap.
- *Iremos al banco en cuanto recibamos el cheque.*  
  We'll go to the bank as soon as we receive the check.
- *Va a ir al banco en cuanto reciba el cheque.*  
  She is going to the bank as soon as she receives the check.

(a) When the subject of the dependent clause is the same as the subject of the main clause, the relative pronoun **que** may be deleted. In this case, the infinitive is used instead of the subjunctive:

* Derived from the Arabic language, the expression *ojalá* means *I hope* (*yo espero*) and is widely used by Spanish speakers. It had its origin as praise to Allah; however, it no longer has religious connotations.
Leeré el libro hasta que (yo) lo termine.  
(subjunctive)  
I will read the book until I finish it.

Leeré el libro hasta terminarlo. (infinitive)  
Juan traerá el mapa antes de que (él) salga para su clase.  
Juan traerá el mapa antes de salir para su clase.  
Juan will bring the map before leaving for class.

El abogado firmará el documento después de que él lo lea.  
El abogado firmará el documento después de leerlo.  
The lawyer will sign the document after reading it.

(b) When the subject in the dependent clause is different from the subject in the main clause, the relative pronoun que must be used:

Leeré el libro hasta que Marta lo necesite.  
I will read the book until Marta needs it.

However, the preposition de in antes (de) que, después (de) que may be left out:

Juan traerá el mapa antes de que Pedro llegue.  
Juan traerá el mapa antes que Pedro llegue.  
Juan will bring the map before Pedro arrives.

El abogado firmará el recibo después de que el cliente lo lea.  
El abogado firmará el recibo después que el cliente lo lea.  
The lawyer will sign the document after his client reads it.

2. The subjunctive following antes de que

If the main verb indicates an action that is performed habitually, the present indicative is used in the dependent clause after the adverbial conjunction, with the exception of antes de que (before), which is always followed by the subjunctive:

Cuando Pedro llega a casa, (siempre) duerme una siesta.  
When Pedro arrives home, he (always) takes a nap. (indicative)

Vamos al banco en cuanto recibimos el cheque (cada vez).  
We go to the bank as soon as we receive the check (every time). (indicative)

Siempre hago la tarea antes de que vengan mis amigos.  
I always do my homework before my friends come. (subjunctive)
3. The subjunctive with verbs that convey information

Certain verbs, such as *recordar, decir, insistir*, and *repetir*, require the indicative in the dependent clause if they are used to convey information; otherwise, the subjunctive is needed:

- **Siempre le recuerdo (a ella) que es mi mejor amiga.** (indicative)
  
  I always remind her that she is my best friend.

- **Le recuerdo que alimente al gato por la noche.** (subjunctive)
  
  I remind you to feed the cat at night.

- **Mamá nos repite que tenemos suerte con los niños.** (indicative)
  
  Mom keeps telling us that we are lucky with the kids.

- **Mamá nos repite que volvamos antes de las cinco.** (subjunctive)
  
  Mom keeps telling us to come back before five o'clock.

### The Imperfect Subjunctive

The imperfect subjunctive, also called past subjunctive, is used in the same cases as the present subjunctive, with the exception that the situation or action indicated in the sentence has already happened. In this case, the verb in the main clause may be in the imperfect tense or in the preterit tense of the indicative. The conditional tense also appears in the main clause when a probability is indicated. Notice the following sentences, in which four different tenses are used in the main clause:

**Present:**

*Mamá quiere que prepare la ensalada.*

Mom wants me to prepare the salad.

*(prepare: present subjunctive)*

**Imperfect:**

*Mamá siempre quería que preparara la ensalada.*

Mom always wanted me to prepare the salad.

*(preparara: imperfect subjunctive)*

**Preterit:**

*Mamá quiso que preparara la ensalada ayer.*

Mom wanted me to prepare the salad yesterday.

*(preparara: imperfect subjunctive)*

**Conditional:**

*Mamá querría que yo preparara la ensalada.*

Mom would like me to prepare the salad.

*(preparara: imperfect subjunctive)*
Forms of the Imperfect Subjunctive

Imperfect Subjunctive Endings

The imperfect subjunctive may be formed in two different ways.

A. The first way of forming the imperfect subjunctive

The first way of forming the imperfect subjunctive, for -ar, -er, and -ir verbs, is to take the third person plural (ellos) preterit form of the verb, eliminate the ending -on, and add the following endings:

- a, as, a, amos, ais, an
- cantaron ➔ cantara, cantaras, cantara, cantáramos, cantarais, cantaran

These are the same endings as for the present subjunctive of -er and -ir verbs, as in venga; escribas, tengamos. However, the stem is different: remember that for the present subjunctive, the stem that the endings are added to is the stem of the first person singular, yo, of the present indicative; for the imperfect subjunctive, it is the stem of the third person plural of the preterit.

Some examples of the imperfect subjunctive are:

| yo hiciera | hacer | to do / to make |
| tú fueras | ir / ser | to go / to be |
| él comiera | comer | to eat |
| nosotros supiéramos | saber | to know |
| vosotros dierais | dar | to give |
| ellos amaran | amar | to love |

B. The second way of forming the imperfect subjunctive

The second way of forming the imperfect subjunctive, for -ar, -er, and -ir verbs, is to take the third person plural (ellos) preterit form of the verb, eliminate the ending -ron, and add the following endings:

- se, ses, se, semos, seis, sen
- cantaron ➔ cantase, cantases, cantase, cantásemos, cantaseis, cantasen
(These endings are used mostly in Spain, while the endings shown previously in A. are used both in Latin America and Spain.) See the following examples:

- **yo hiciese**  
  *hacer*  
  to do / to make

- **tú fueses**  
  *ir / ser*  
  to go / to be

- **él comiese**  
  *comer*  
  to eat

- **nosotros supiésemos**  
  *saber*  
  to know

- **vosotros dieseis**  
  *dar*  
  to give

- **ellos amasen**  
  *amar*  
  to love

**NOTE:**

For reasons of practicality, only the first set of endings (*a, as, a, amos, ais, an*) will be used for the examples in this chapter.

### Imperfect Subjunctive Stems

As we have seen, the stem of the imperfect subjunctive comes from the third person plural (*ellos*) of the preterit tense: *cantaron* (they sang), *bebieron* (they drank), *vivieron* (they lived). The preterit ending *-on* is dropped, and new endings are added to form the subjunctive. The forms for all verb categories are as follows:

#### A. The imperfect subjunctive of regular verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preterit</th>
<th>Imperfect Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>-ar</em></td>
<td><em>cantaron</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they sang</td>
<td><em>cantara, cantaras, cantara</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>cantáramos, cantarais, cantaran</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>-er</em></td>
<td><em>comieron</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they ate</td>
<td><em>comiera, comieras, comiera</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>comiéramos, comierais, comieran</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>-ir</em></td>
<td><em>vivieron</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they lived</td>
<td><em>viviera, vivieras, viviera</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>viviéramos, vivierais, vivieran</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### B. The imperfect subjunctive of stem-changing verbs

1. *-ar* and *-er* verbs do not change the stem in the preterit; therefore, there is no change in the stem of the imperfect subjunctive:
Infinite

Preterit third
person plural

Imperfect
Subjunctive

pensar (to think) pensaron pensara, pensaras, pensara, pensáramos, pensarais, pensaran

tender (to hang) tendieron tendiera, tendieras, tendiera, tendiéramos, tendierais, tendieran

2. However, since -ir verbs change the stem in the preterit in both the third person singular and the third person plural, the spelling of the imperfect subjunctive form is affected.

(a) The imperfect subjunctive of e ➞ ie stem-changing -ir verbs

For e ➞ ie stem-changing -ir verbs, the e of the stem changes to an i in the third person plural of the preterit. If there are two es in the stem, it is the second e that changes:

Infinitive

Preterit third
person plural

Imperfect
Subjunctive

sentir (to feel) sintieron sintiera, sintieras, sintiera, sintiéramos, sintierais, sintieran

preferir (to prefer) prefirieron prefiriera, prefirieras, prefiriera, prefiriéramos, prefirierais, prefirieran

(b) The imperfect subjunctive of e ➞ i stem-changing -ir verbs

The e of the stem changes to an i. If there are two es in the stem, it is the second e that changes:

Infinitive

Preterit third
person plural

Imperfect
Subjunctive

pedir (to ask for) pidieron pidiera, pidieras, pidiera, pidiéramos, pidierais, pidieran

repetir (to repeat) repitieron repitiera, repitieras, repitiera, repitiéramos, repitierais, repitieran

(c) The imperfect subjunctive of o ➞ u stem-changing -ir verbs

The o of the stem changes to u:

Infinitive

Preterit third
person plural

Imperfect
Subjunctive

dormir (to sleep) durmieron durmiera, durmieras, durmiera, durmiéramos, durmierais, durmieran
NOTE:
There are also irregular verbs whose infinitives end in -ar, -er, or -ir, which have irregular forms in the preterit. The imperfect subjunctive of these verbs follows the spelling of the third person plural of their respective preterit forms. See the section immediately following.

C. The imperfect subjunctive of verbs that have irregular forms in the preterit

Irregularities of the preterit will be carried over to all persons of the imperfect subjunctive, as shown in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Preterit third person plural</th>
<th>Imperfect Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>caber</td>
<td>cupieron</td>
<td>cupier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dar</td>
<td>dieron</td>
<td>dier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decir</td>
<td>dijeron</td>
<td>dijer-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estar</td>
<td>estuvieron</td>
<td>estuvier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haber</td>
<td>hubieron</td>
<td>hubier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacer</td>
<td>hicieron</td>
<td>hicier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ir</td>
<td>fueron</td>
<td>fuer-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leer</td>
<td>leyeron</td>
<td>leyer-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tener</td>
<td>tuvieron</td>
<td>tuvier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poder</td>
<td>pudieron</td>
<td>pudier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poner</td>
<td>pusieron</td>
<td>pusier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>querer</td>
<td>quisieron</td>
<td>quisier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saber</td>
<td>supieron</td>
<td>supier-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ser</td>
<td>fueron</td>
<td>fuer-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traducir</td>
<td>tradujeron</td>
<td>tradujer-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traer</td>
<td>trajeron</td>
<td>trajer-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:
(1) The nosotros/as forms carry an accent mark on the last e of the stem:
cupiéramos diéramos leyéramos

(2) The imperfect subjunctive of hay (there is or there are) is hubiera, and it is always singular:

El recomendó que hubiera un lápiz para cada estudiante.
La profesora esperaba que por lo menos hubiera veinte niños en la clase.
He recommended that a pencil be available for each student.
The teacher hoped that there would be at least twenty children in the class.
(3) The imperfect subjunctive forms *hubiera, hubieras, hubiera, hubiéramos, hubierais, and hubieran* of the verb *haber* are used as the auxiliary form for the pluperfect subjunctive (a compound form covered later in this chapter):

*Era bueno que ellos hubieran venido temprano.*

**D. The imperfect subjunctive of verbs that change the stem to preserve pronunciation**

-ar verbs that change their spelling in the present subjunctive to preserve the sound of the infinitive (*buscar ➔ busque*) do not need to change in the imperfect subjunctive, since the endings in the imperfect subjunctive begin with *a* and not *e*, and there is therefore no change in pronunciation. Besides, the spelling for the imperfect subjunctive derives from the *ellos* form of the preterit, where there is no need to change the spelling to preserve pronunciation to begin with (*buscaron, tocaron, pagaron, llegaron*):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
<th>Imperfect Subjunctive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>buscar</em> (to look for)</td>
<td><em>busque</em></td>
<td><em>buscara, buscaras, buscara, buscáramos, buscarais, buscaran</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tocar</em> (to touch)</td>
<td><em>toque</em></td>
<td><em>tocara, tocaras, toca, tocáramos, tocarais, tocaran</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pagar</em> (to pay)</td>
<td><em>pague</em></td>
<td><em>pagara, pagaras, pagar, pagáramos, pagarais, pagar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>llegar</em> (to arrive)</td>
<td><em>llegue</em></td>
<td><em>llegara, llegaras, llegara, llegáramos, llegarais, llegaran</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Uses of the Imperfect Subjunctive**

The imperfect subjunctive is used in the following cases:

**A. The imperfect subjunctive is used to indicate an action in the past in the same situations where the subjunctive would be required in the present:**

*Present Subjunctive*  
*Es interesante que Carlos me cuente las noticias.*

*Imperfect Subjunctive*  
*Era interesante que Carlos me contara las noticias.*
It is interesting that Carlos tells me about the news.

**Se alegra que llevemos los abrigos.**

She is glad that we are taking the coats.

It was interesting that Carlos would tell me about the news.

**Se alegró que lleváramos los abrigos.**

She was glad that we took the coats.

**NOTE:**

When the effects of the past action are still felt in the present, the present perfect subjunctive replaces the imperfect subjunctive:

**Es una pena que lo despideran.**

(Imperfect subjunctive)

It's a pity that they fired him.

**Es una pena que lo hayan despido.**

(Present perfect subjunctive)

It's a pity that they have fired him.

B. The imperfect subjunctive is used after the expression *ojalá* (or *ojalá que*), meaning *I hope*, to indicate contrary-to-fact or unlikely events:

**Present Subjunctive**

(there is hope)

**Imperfect Subjunctive**

(the possibility is remote)

- Ojalá que llueva mañana.
  - Ojalá lloviera mañana.
  - I hope it rains tomorrow.
  - I hope it would rain tomorrow.
- Ojalá que me escriba pronto.
  - Ojalá me escribiera pronto.
  - I hope she writes to me soon.
  - I wish she'd write to me soon.

C. The imperfect subjunctive is used in *if clauses* to indicate contrary-to-fact or unlikely events:

**Si pudiera, cambiaría de carrera ahora mismo.**

If I could, I would change careers right now.

**Iríamos en avión si tuviéramos que viajar.**

We would go by plane if we had to travel.

D. When the verb in the main clause is in one of the past tenses or in the conditional, the imperfect subjunctive is used in the dependent clause.

Notice that, as always, the pronoun is optional:

**Preterit**

**Quise que (ella) me dijera la verdad.**

I wanted her to tell me the truth. (one-time event)
**Imperfect**

*Quería* que (ella) *me dijera* la verdad.

I wanted her to tell me the truth, but she always refused. (repeated action)

**Present Perfect**

*He querido* que *me dijera* la verdad.

I have wanted her to tell me the truth. (recent past)

**Past Perfect**

*Había querido* que *me dijera* la verdad antes de irse.

I had wanted her to tell me the truth before she left. (two actions in the past)

**Conditional**

*Querría* que *me dijera* la verdad.

I would like her to tell me the truth. (possibility)

---

**E.** The imperfect subjunctive is used when the verb in the main clause is in the present indicative, but refers to a previous occurrence:

No me *parece* que (ella) *llegara* con él.

It doesn’t seem to me that she arrived with him.

*Es bueno* que (ellos) *vinieran* juntos.

It’s good that they arrived together.

*Es obvio* que (ella) *quisiera* haber tenido amigas.

It’s obvious that she would have wanted to have friends.

---

**F.** Imperfect subjunctive endings used to indicate politeness

The imperfect subjunctive endings *a, as, a, amos, ais,* and *an* (and not the *se* endings as in *quisiese*) are used with the verbs *querer* (to want), *poder* (to be able), and *deber* (should) to indicate politeness. The conditional tense may also be used:

*Quisiera* venir temprano.

I would like to come early.

Conditional: *Querría* venir temprano.

¿*Pudiera* Ud. firmar aquí?

Could you sign here?

Conditional: ¿*Podría* Ud. firmar aquí?

Tú *deberías* ayudarlo a Juan.

You should help Juan.

Conditional: Tú *deberías* ayudarlo a Juan.
Other Uses of the Imperfect Subjunctive

If Clauses and the Imperfect Subjunctive

To indicate that a situation is contrary to fact, the imperfect subjunctive is used in the *if clause* while a verb in the conditional form must be used in the main clause of the sentence:

\[
\text{Si tuviera tiempo, te escribiría} \quad \text{(conditional)} \quad \text{mas seguido.}
\]

If I had time, I would write to you more often.

The *if clause* (*si tuviera tiempo*) may be placed at the beginning of the sentence or after the main clause, as is also the case in English:

\[
\text{Te escribiría más seguido si tuviera tiempo.}
\]

I would write to you more often if I had time.

Observe the use of the imperfect subjunctive in another example:

\[
\text{La llevaría a la fiesta si supiera bailar.}
\]

He would take her to the party if he could dance.

\[
\text{Si supiera bailar, la llevaría a la fiesta.}
\]

If he could dance, he would take her to the party.

**NOTE:**

To imply a statement of possibility (likely to happen), both verbs in the sentence take the indicative:

\[
\text{Si tengo dinero a fin de mes, me compro algo lindo.}
\]

If I have money at the end of the month, I (always) buy something nice for myself.

\[
\text{Si tengo dinero a fin de mes, me compraré algo lindo.}
\]

If I have money at the end of the month, I will buy something nice for myself.

If the possibility is pending, the present and the future are used:

\[
\text{Si tengo dinero a fin de mes, me compro algo lindo.}
\]

If I have money at the end of the month, I will buy something nice for myself.

To imply the possible occurrence of two future actions, the conditional is used with the imperfect subjunctive:

\[
\text{Yo lo llamaría después que ella viniera.}
\]

I would call him after she arrived.

\[
\text{Comeríamos cuando tú llegaras.}
\]

We would eat when you arrived.
The Present Perfect Subjunctive

The present perfect subjunctive, just like the present perfect indicative (I have done, I have witnessed), is used to indicate an action that was completed before the enunciation of the speaker’s statement.

Forms of the Present Perfect Subjunctive

To form the present perfect subjunctive, it is necessary to use the auxiliary verb *haber* and the past participle of the main verb. The only difference is that the auxiliary verb *haber* is in the present subjunctive form.

The forms of *haber* in the present subjunctive (used to make the present perfect) are: *haya, hayas, haya, hayamos, hayáis, hayan*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Haber</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo haya</td>
<td>leído</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú hayas</td>
<td>venido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él haya</td>
<td>roto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros hayamos</td>
<td>hablado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros hayáis</td>
<td>abierto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos hayan</td>
<td>descubierto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have read
you have come
he has broken
we have spoken
you have opened
they have discovered

Compare the following sentences in the present perfect indicative and the present perfect subjunctive. The subjunctive sentences are introduced by the verbs *dudar* and *alegrarse*, which require the use of the subjunctive in the dependent clause:

**Present Perfect Indicative**

*El ha comprado las entradas.*
He has bought the tickets.
*Papá ha hablado con Juan.*
Dad has talked to Juan.

**Present Perfect Subjunctive**

*Dudo que él las haya comprado.*
I doubt he has bought them.
*Me alegra que haya hablado con él.*
I’m glad he has talked to him.

NOTES:

(1) While the verb *to have* indicates possession and is also used as an auxiliary (helping) verb in English, Spanish has two different verbs for these two functions: *tener* for possession and *haber* as an auxiliary verb:

*Tiene un buen libro.* (She has a good book.) (possession)
*Ella ha comprado uno.* (She has bought one.) (auxiliary verb)
(2) The present perfect subjunctive form of *hay* (there is or there are) is *haya habido*:

¡Qué bueno que *haya habido* tantos programas!

It's good that there have been so many programs!

## Uses of the Present Perfect Subjunctive

The present perfect subjunctive is used with past actions or with future events.

### A. The present perfect subjunctive with past actions

The verb in the main clause may be in the present indicative, present perfect indicative, future, or future perfect:

**Present:**

*Lamento que tú no* *hayas podido* *venir anoche.*

I regret that you were not able to come last night.

**Present Perfect:**

*A papá le ha gustado mucho que le* *hayas mandado* *una postal.*

Dad liked it very much that you sent him a card.

**Future:**

*Siempre sentiré que él no* *haya reconocido* *su error.*

I will always regret that he has not recognized his mistake.

**Future Perfect:**

*Al final de mi carrera creo que me habré lamentado de que tú nunca* *hayas querido* *estudiar conmigo.*

By the end of my career I think that I will have regretted that you never wanted to study with me.

### B. The present perfect subjunctive with future events

The present perfect subjunctive is used to indicate an action to be completed prior to another future event. In this case, the verb in the main clause may be in the present indicative, in the future, or in a command form.

**Present:**

*Es posible que para el lunes él ya* *haya pintado* *la casa.*

It is possible that he will have painted the house by Monday.
Present:
No creo que tú ya hayas tomado una decisión para mayo. I don’t think that you will have made a decision by May.

Future:
Será bueno que para mayo tú ya hayas tomado una decisión. It will be good for you to have made a decision by May.

NOTE:
If it is a most unlikely possibility that the event will happen, the conditional is used in the main clause, while the past perfect (or pluperfect) subjunctive (covered in the next section) is used in the dependent clause:

Conditional:
Sería bueno que para mayo tú ya hubieras tomado una decisión. It would be good for you to have made a decision by May.

Command (the command form is suggested by the present tense):
Insisto que para fin de curso Uds. hayan entregado el resumen. I insist that by the end of the course you have turned in your summary.

The Pluperfect Subjunctive

The pluperfect subjunctive, also called past perfect subjunctive, indicates a completed action that took place prior to another action in the past, in cases where a dependent clause is subordinate to a main clause.

Forms of the Pluperfect (Past Perfect) Subjunctive

The pluperfect subjunctive is equivalent to the past perfect indicative (yo había hecho/I had done), but with the difference that the auxiliary verb haber is in the imperfect subjunctive form (hubiera) rather than in the imperfect indicative (había). (Note that there is another imperfect subjunctive form of haber (hubiese, etc.) which is used mainly in Spain):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Haber</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo hubiera</td>
<td>venido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú hubieras</td>
<td>traido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él hubiera</td>
<td>regresado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros hubiéramos</td>
<td>dicho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hubiésemos</td>
<td>I had come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>you had brought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he had returned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we had said</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
vosotros hubierais (hubieseis)  cantado  you had sung
ellos hubieran (hubiesen)  reflexionado  they had reflected

Notice the following examples:

**Past Perfect Indicative**

Tú **habías** visto las fotos.
You had seen the pictures.

Ud. **había** perdido el avión.
You had missed the plane.

**Pluperfect or Past Perfect Subjunctive**

Carlos dudó que tú **hubieras** visto las fotos.
Carlos doubted that you had seen the pictures.

Yo no creí que Ud. **hubiera** perdido el avión.
I did not believe that you had missed the plane.

NOTES:

(1) As we pointed out in the notes to the section on the present perfect subjunctive, in English, the verb *to have* indicates possession (*I have a dog*) and is also used as an auxiliary (helping) verb (*I have bought a dog*). In Spanish, however, the verb *tener* is used for possession (*tengo un perro*), while *haber* functions as the auxiliary verb.

(2) The form *hubiese* is more common in Spain and in the written, literary form.

(3) The past perfect subjunctive form of *hay* (*there is / there are*) is *hubiera habido*, equivalent to *there had been*, although it is not possible to translate the Spanish verb form literally into English all of the time:

\[
Fue interesante que hubiera habido tanta gente. \\
It was interesting that there had been so many people.
\]

**Uses of the Pluperfect (Past Perfect) Subjunctive**

The pluperfect subjunctive is used in the following cases.

**A. The pluperfect subjunctive to describe a prior event in the past**

The pluperfect subjunctive is used to describe an action in the past that took place prior to another action, also in the past. The verb in the main clause may appear in the preterit or in the imperfect indicative:

**Preterit:**

\[
El no pudo aceptar que sus amigos hubieran muerto. \\
He could not accept that his friends had died.
\]
**Imperfect:**

*Yo dudaba que Uds. hubieran leído la carta.*  
I doubted that you had read the letter.

---

**B. The pluperfect subjunctive to indicate an action that is contrary to fact**

When the pluperfect subjunctive indicates an action that is contrary to fact, the verb in the main clause is in the conditional tense:

*¡Qué triste sería que ellos no hubieran llegado a tiempo!*  
How sad it would be for them not to have arrived on time!

---

**C. The pluperfect subjunctive or *de* plus infinitive in *if clauses***

1. The pluperfect subjunctive is used in *if clauses* when the verb in the main clause is in the conditional perfect or in the pluperfect subjunctive:

*Yo lo habría comprado si tú me hubieras entregado el dinero.*  
I would have bought it if you had given me the money.  
*Yo debería haber estado allí si lo hubiera sabido.*  
I would have to have been there, if I had known about it.  
*Si mi hermano hubiera tenido paciencia, yo hubiera hecho lo posible por ir a verlo.*  
If my brother had been patient, I would have done everything possible to go and see him.

Notice the same sentence when the hypothetical action is pointing toward the future rather than to an event that could have happened in the past, but never did:

*Si mi hermano tuviera paciencia, yo haría lo posible por ir a verlo.*  
If my brother were patient, I would do everything possible to go and see him.

2. Note that in such cases, the expression *de* plus the infinitive (or perfect infinitive) can also be used instead of the pluperfect subjunctive in the *if clause*, underlined below:

*Si lo hubiera sabido antes, yo hubiera (or habría) desistido.*  
If I had known ahead of time, I would have given up.
Si les hubieran dado permiso, ya hubieran (or habrían) salido.
De darles permiso, ya hubieran (or habrían) salido.
De haberles dado permiso, ya hubieran (or habrían) salido.
If they had been given permission, they would have already left.

Si hubiera ido allá, yo hubiera (or habría) visitado el museo.
De ir allá, yo hubiera (or habría) visitado el museo.
De haber ido allá, yo hubiera (or habría) visitado el museo.
If I had gone there, I would have visited the museum.
The Imperative

Commonly known as commands, the imperative is used to give orders that are more direct than the “softened commands” expressed by the subjunctive. The different forms of the imperative include the formal commands for Ud. (usted); the informal or familiar commands for tú; the command forms for Uds. (ustedes) and vosotros/as; the first person plural commands (Let’s commands or commands for the nosotros form); and the impersonal commands.

The Ud. and Uds. Formal Commands

These commands are used when addressing people (one person or more) in a formal manner. They are classified as single or plural formal commands.

A. Affirmative formal commands

The forms used for affirmative formal commands (to tell someone to do something) are the subjunctive forms for Ud. (usted) and Uds. (ustedes):

(Ud.) **Venga más temprano.**
Come earlier.

(Uds.) **Esperen el correo.**
Wait for the mail.

**NOTE:**
The equivalent softened commands, expressed with the subjunctive, would be similar to the following examples:

*Sugiero que Ud. venga más temprano.*
I suggest that you come earlier.

*Queremos que Uds. esperen el correo.*
We want you to wait for the mail.

Commands can be made more polite by the addition of the personal pronouns Ud. and Uds. and expressions such as *por favor* (please), *se lo ruego* (I beg you), *hágame el favor* (do me the favor), *si le parece* (if you like), *si Ud. quiere* (if you want), *si le viene bien* (if it is convenient for you), and others:

**Venga Ud. más temprano.**
Come earlier.

**Esperen Uds. el correo.**
Wait for the mail.
B. Negative formal commands

To express a formal command in the negative, simply place *no* before the verb:

- **No ponga** *(Ud.)* su cartera allí. — Don’t put your purse there.
- **No dejen** *(Uds.)* los libros acá. — Don’t leave the books here.

**NOTE:**
The equivalent softened commands, expressed with the subjunctive, would be similar to the following examples:

- **Recomiendo que no ponga** *(Ud.)* su cartera allí. — I recommend that you not put your purse there.
- **Sugerimos que no dejen** *(Uds.)* los libros acá. — We suggest that you not leave the books here.

C. Formal commands with reflexive verbs

1. Affirmative formal commands with reflexive verbs

   The pronoun *se* must be attached to both singular and plural command forms of the reflexive verb. Note the *n* that signals the plural form of the verb:

   - **sentarse**
     - Singular: *Siéntese.*
     - Plural: *Siéntense.* — Sit down.
   - **levantarse**
     - Singular: *Levántese.*
     - Plural: *Levántense.* — Get up.
   - **vestirse**
     - Singular: *Vístase.*
     - Plural: *Vístanse.* — Get dressed.

   **NOTE:**
   If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the *se* is placed before the verb:

   - **Le pido que se levante más temprano.** — I ask you to get up earlier.

2. Negative formal commands with reflexive verbs

   In negative commands, the pronoun *se* must be placed between *no* and the verb:

   - **No se sienta** *(Ud.)* en la sala. — Don’t sit down in the living room.
   - **No se queden** *(Uds.)* aquí. — Don’t stay here.
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command in the negative with a reflexive verb, the word order is the same as the one used for the direct command, above:

Le ruego que no se siente (Ud.) en la sala. I beg you not to sit in the living room.
Les pido que no se queden (Uds.) aquí. I ask you not to stay here.

D. Formal commands with direct and indirect object pronouns

1. Affirmative formal commands with object pronouns

Attach both direct and indirect object pronouns to the commands:

Dígale (Ud.) la verdad. Tell him the truth.
Mándenlo (Uds.) temprano. (el sobre) Send it early. (the envelope)
Envíenlos (Ud.) pronto. (la nota) Send it to us soon. (the note)
Llénenos (Uds.) los vasos. Fill the glasses for us.

Notice the double n in the last example sentence above: **Llénenos (Uds.) los vasos.** The first n is part of the plural command form llenen; the other n is part of the indirect object pronoun nos.

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the object pronouns are placed before the verb in the dependent clause, which is in the subjunctive:

Quiero que le diga la verdad. I want you to tell him the truth.
Sugiere que lo manden más temprano. He suggests that you send it earlier.

2. Negative formal commands with object pronouns

Direct and indirect object pronouns are placed between no and the verb:

No le diga (Ud.) la verdad. Don’t tell him the truth.
No lo manden (Uds.) más temprano. Don’t send it earlier.
E. Formal commands with direct and indirect object pronouns together

1. Affirmative formal commands with double pronouns

Attach both pronouns to affirmative commands. When using object pronouns together, the indirect object pronoun is always placed before the direct object pronoun. Notice that the indirect object pronoun changes from *le* or *les* to *se* when the direct object pronoun begins with *lo* (*lo, la, los, las*). This rule applies to all cases where double objects are used with commands:

- Véndaselo (Ud.). Sell it to her.
- *el libro (lo); ella (le)*
- Tráiganosla (Uds.). Bring it to us.

2. Negative formal commands with double pronouns

The indirect object pronoun is placed before the direct object pronoun, and both are placed between *no* and the verb:

- No se lo venda (Ud.). Don't sell it to her.
- No nos la traigan (Uds.) Don't bring it to us.

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, both pronouns are placed before the verb in the dependent clause, which is in the subjunctive:

- Sugiero que *se lo venda*. I suggest that you sell it to her.
- Queremos que *nos la traigan*. We want you to bring it to us.

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, both pronouns are placed before the verb in the dependent clause, which is in the subjunctive:

- Le pido que *no se lo venda*. I ask you not to sell it to her.
- Queremos que (Uds.) *no nos la traigan*. We want you not to bring it to us.
F. Formal commands with reflexive verbs and pronouns

1. Affirmative formal commands with reflexive verbs and pronouns

Direct object pronouns are attached to affirmative commands:

*ponerse* (to put on)  
*Aquí está el abrigo. Póngaselo (Ud.).*  
Here's the coat. Put it on.

*lavarse* (to wash)  
*Tienen las manos sucias. Lávense (Uds.).*  
Your hands are dirty. Wash your hands. (*Literally: Wash them.*)

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, both the reflexive pronoun *se* and the direct object pronoun are placed before the verb:

*Pido que *se* lo ponga.* I ask you to put it on.

*Queremos que *se* las laven.* We want you to wash them.

2. Negative formal commands with reflexive verbs and pronouns

Both the reflexive pronoun *se* and the direct object pronoun are placed between *no* and the verb, with the reflexive pronoun always before the direct object pronoun:

*ponerse*  
affirmative: *Póngaselo (Ud.).*  
Put it on.

negative: *No se lo ponga.*  
Don't put it on.

*lavarse*  
affirmative: *Lávenselas (Uds.).*  
Wash them (your hands).

negative: *No se las laven.*  
Don't wash them.

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form and the word order remains the same:

*Sugiero que no se lo ponga.* I suggest that you do not put it on.

*Es malo que no se las laven.* It's bad for you not to wash them.

The *tú* Informal or Familiar Commands

This command is used to address a person or a pet in an informal manner. The person could be a friend, a relative, a parent, a child, or a peer.
A. **Affirmative tú commands**

There are two different forms: regular and irregular.

1. **Regular affirmative tú commands**

   This form is the same as the third person singular (él, ella, Ud.) of the present indicative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present indicative</th>
<th>tú command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hablar</td>
<td>Habla español, Tita.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El (ella) habla español.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He speaks Spanish.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vivir</td>
<td>Vive feliz, Juan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud. vive feliz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You live happily.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **NOTE:**

   If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the subjunctive form of the verb is used in the dependent clause, instead of the third person singular of the indicative:

   *Quiero que hables español.*  
   *I want you to speak Spanish.*

   *Te ruego que vivas feliz.*  
   *I beg you to live happily.*

2. **Irregular affirmative tú commands**

   These forms are very short and must be memorized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>tú command</th>
<th>NOTE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>decir (to say)</td>
<td>Di la verdad.</td>
<td>Another short command is he, from the verb haber (He aquí, Henos, Helas, etc.), when haber was a synonym of tener. This form is very rare and appears in older manuscripts, literary works, and biblical materials. This form is not to be confused with heis, from the auxiliary haber, equivalent to has (puesto), and widely used in the romances and literature of the Golden Age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacer (to do)</td>
<td>Haz la tarea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ir (to go)</td>
<td>Ve a casa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poner (to put)</td>
<td>Pon la mesa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salir (to go out)</td>
<td>Sal de aquí.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ser (to be)</td>
<td>Sé bueno.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tener (to have)</td>
<td>Ten paciencia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venir (to come)</td>
<td>Ven pronto.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the subjunctive form of the verb is used in the dependent clause instead of the irregular form, above:

Quiero que _digas_ la verdad, Miguel.  I want you to tell the truth, Miguel.
Sugiero que _hagas_ la tarea, Lucía.  I suggest you do the homework, Lucía.

B.  **Negative _tú_ commands**

These commands use the same form as the second person singular _tú_ of the present subjunctive. There are no irregular negative _tú_ commands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present subjunctive</th>
<th>Negative <em>tú</em> command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>hablar</em></td>
<td>Quiero que tú <em>hablas</em>.  [No hables.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I want you to speak.  [Don't speak.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>estar</em></td>
<td>Siento que estés triste.  [No estés triste.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I'm sorry that you are sad.  [Don't be sad.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>decir</em></td>
<td>Quiero que <em>digas</em> la verdad.  [No <em>digas</em> la verdad.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I want you to tell the truth.  [Don't tell the truth.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hacer</em></td>
<td>Quiero que <em>hagas</em> la tarea.  [No <em>hagas</em> la tarea.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I want you to do the homework.  [Don't do the homework.]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C.  **Informal _tú_ commands with reflexive verbs**

1.  **Affirmative _tú_ commands with reflexive verbs**

The pronoun _te_ must be attached to the command form of the verb:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>lavar</em></td>
<td><em>Lávate</em> las manos.  [Wash your hands.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>cambiarse</em></td>
<td><em>Cámbiate</em> la ropa.  [Change your clothes.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ponerse</em></td>
<td><em>Ponte</em> los zapatos.  [Put on your shoes.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>irse</em></td>
<td><em>Vete</em> de aquí.  [Get out of here.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:
(1) Notice the use of the irregular forms _pon_ and _ve_, of the verbs _poner_ and _ir_, to express the affirmative command.
(2) If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command with a reflexive verb, the te is placed before the subjunctive form of the verb (e.g., te cambies) instead of being attached to the end of the command form (cambiate):

Sugiero que te cambies la ropa. I suggest that you change your clothes.

The same rule applies to the irregular forms pon, sal, etc:

Recomiendo que te pongas los zapatos. I recommend that you put on your shoes.

2. Negative tú commands with reflexive verbs

To express a negative command, place te between no and the second person of the present subjunctive form of the verb, such as laves, pongas, hablas, etc:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present subjunctive with the se</th>
<th>Negative tú command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cambiarse (cambiar)</td>
<td>(tú) cambies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irse (ir)</td>
<td>(tú) vayas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form and the word order stays the same:

Quiero que no te cambies la ropa. I want you not to change your clothes.
Sugerimos que no te vayas ahora. We suggest that you don't go now.

D. Informal tú commands with direct and indirect object pronouns

1. Affirmative tú commands with object pronouns

Direct and indirect object pronouns are attached to regular and irregular affirmative commands:

Escribela. (la carta) Write it. (the letter)
Hazlo ahora. (el ejercicio) Do it now. (the exercise)
Míralo. (a Juan) Look at him.
Llámansos. Call us.
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the object pronouns are placed before the verb, which is conjugated in the subjunctive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quiero que la escribas.</td>
<td>I want you to write it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugiere que lo hagas.</td>
<td>He suggests that you do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digo que lo mires.</td>
<td>I tell you to look at him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedimos que nos llames.</td>
<td>We ask that you call us.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Negative tú commands with object pronouns

Place the object pronoun between no and the second person singular form of the subjunctive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No la escribas.</td>
<td>Do not write it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No lo hagas ahora.</td>
<td>Do not do it now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No lo mires.</td>
<td>Do not look at him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No nos llames.</td>
<td>Do not call us.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form, and the word order stays the same:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sugiero que no la escribas.</td>
<td>I suggest that you don't write it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dice que no lo hagas ahora.</td>
<td>She says for you not to do it now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E. Tú commands with direct and indirect object pronouns together

1. Affirmative tú commands with double object pronouns

Attach both object pronouns to the commands. The indirect object pronoun must always be placed before the direct object pronoun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Direct Pronoun</th>
<th>Indirect Pronoun</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>escribir</td>
<td></td>
<td>Escribemela. (la carta)</td>
<td>Write it to me. (the letter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revisar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Revisaselos. (los ejercicios)</td>
<td>Check them for him. (the exercises)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Háznoslo. (el trabajo)</td>
<td>Do it for us. (the work)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, both objects must be placed before the second person singular form of the subjunctive, in the dependent clause:

Quiero que me la escribas.
Sugerimos que se los revise.
Queremos que nos lo hagas.

I want you to write it for me.
We suggest that you check them for him.
We want you to do it for us.

2. Negative tú commands with double object pronouns

Object pronouns are placed between no and the verb, with the indirect object pronoun always before the direct object pronoun (notice that a softened command with a subjunctive sentence takes the same form):

No me la escribas.
Sugiero que no me la escribas.
No se los revise.
Queremos que no se los revise.
No nos lo hagas.
Pedimos que no nos lo hagas.

Don't write it for me.
I suggest that you don't write it for me.
Do not check them for him.
We want you not to check them for him.
Don't do it for us.
We ask that you not do it for us.

F. Tú commands with reflexive verbs and a direct object pronoun

1. Affirmative tú commands with reflexive verbs and a pronoun

Direct object pronouns are attached to affirmative commands. Notice the reflexive pronoun te:

lavarse Lávate las. (las manos)
ponerse Póntelo. (el sombrero)

Wash them. (your hands)
Put it on. (the hat)

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, both the reflexive pronoun te and the direct object pronoun are placed before the verb, which is conjugated in the subjunctive form:

Es bueno que te las laves.
No quiero que te lo pongas.

It's good that you wash them.
I don't want you to put it on.
2. Negative *tú* commands with reflexive verbs and a pronoun

Both the reflexive pronoun *te* and the direct object pronoun are placed between *no* and the verb, which is conjugated in the second person singular of the present subjunctive form:

- *No te las laves.* Don't wash them.
- *No te lo pongas.* Don't put it on.

**NOTE:**

If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form and the word order remains the same:

- *Ruego que no te las laves.* I beg you not to wash them.
- *Pido que no te lo pongas.* I ask you not to put it on.

### The Plural of the *tú* Informal Command

This form is used to give an informal or familiar command to more than one person. The word *ustedes* (*Uds.*) is used in both Latin America and Spain, while *vosotros/as* is used only in Spain.

#### A. The *ustedes* command

The informal *ustedes* command follows the same rules as the formal *ustedes* command. A review of the various forms follows.

1. **Affirmative *ustedes* commands:**

   - with direct object: *Lean el capítulo.* Read the chapter.
   - *Léanlo.* Read it.
   - with indirect object: *Léanlos.* Read to us.
   - *Léannos.* Read it to us.
   - with both objects: *Léanloslo.* Put on your caps.
   - *Pónganse el gorro.* Put it on.
   - with reflexive verbs: *Pónganse.*
   - reflexive and object: *Pónganse.*

2. **Negative *ustedes* commands:**

   - with direct object: *No lean el capítulo.* Don't read the chapter.
   - *No lo lean.* Don't read it.
   - with indirect object: *No nos lean.* Don't read to us.
with both objects  
No nos lo lean.  
Don’t read it to us.
reflexive verbs  
No se pongan el gorro.  
Don’t put your caps on.
reflexive and object  
No se los pongan.  
Don’t put them on.

B. Affirmative and negative vosotros commands

This form is used to give a command to more than one person, and is used in Spain.

1. Affirmative vosotros commands:

   Change the letter r of the infinitive to a d:

   **Vosotros**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cantar</td>
<td>Cantad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beber</td>
<td>Bebed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reír</td>
<td>Reid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **NOTE:**

   If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the verb in the dependent clause must be in the subjunctive form. The endings for the vosotros/as form are -éis for -ar verbs, and -áis for -er and -ir verbs:

   Queremos que vosotros cantéis en el coro.  
   (cantar)
   We want you to sing in the choir.

   Sugiere que comáis más. (comer)
   She suggests that you eat more.

   Quiero que abráis la correspondencia ahora. (abrir)
   I want you to open the mail now.

2. Negative vosotros commands:

   Use the present subjunctive vosotros form for negative vosotros commands:

   **Present Subjunctive**  
   **Command**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cantar</th>
<th>(vosotros) cantéis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No cantéis.</td>
<td>Do not sing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beber</th>
<th>(vosotros) bebáis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No bebáis.</td>
<td>Do not drink.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>reír</th>
<th>(vosotros) riáis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No riáis.</td>
<td>Do not laugh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **NOTE:**

   If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form and the word order remains the same:

   Sugerimos que vosotros no bebáis más.  
   We suggest that you do not drink more.

   Es triste que vosotros no cantéis con nosotros.  
   It is sad that you don't sing with us.
C. **Vosotros commands with reflexive verbs**

1. **Affirmative vosotros commands with reflexive verbs**

   To give a command with a reflexive verb, start with the nonreflexive affirmative command, eliminate the final *d*, and then add the reflexive pronoun *os*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative Command</th>
<th>Command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peinarse</td>
<td>Peinaos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ponerse</td>
<td>Poneos los anillos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reírse</td>
<td>Reíos.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **NOTES:**
   
   (1) The verb *irse* is an exception to the above rule:

   ```
   irse
   Affirmative command of *ir*:  *Id.*  Go away.
   Command of *irse*:  *Idos.*  Go away.
   ```

   (2) If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the reflexive pronoun *os* is placed before the verb in the dependent clause, which is in the subjunctive:

   ```
   Quiero que vosotros *os peineis en el baño.*  I want you to comb your hair in the bathroom.
   Es bueno que vosotros *os riais del cuento.*  It's good that you laugh at the story.
   ```

2. **Negative vosotros commands with reflexive verbs**

   To give a negative command with a reflexive verb, put the reflexive pronoun *as* between the *no* and the verb, which is in the subjunctive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
<th>Command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peinarse</td>
<td>No os peineis.  Don't comb your hair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ponerse</td>
<td>No os pongais una corbata.  Don't put on a tie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reírse</td>
<td>No os riais.  Do not laugh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form and the word order remains the same:

*Es bueno que vosotros no os pongáis una corbata.*  
It is good that you don't put on a tie.

*Os pido que no os riáis de mí.*  
I ask you not to laugh at me.

D. **Vosotros** commands with object pronouns

1. **Affirmative vosotros** commands with object pronouns

Attach both direct and indirect object pronouns to the command form:

- *Miradme.* Look at me.
- *Traedlos (los libros).* Bring them (the books).
- *Pedidla (la cuenta).* Ask for it (the bill).

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, the pronoun is placed before the verb in the dependent clause, which must be in the subjunctive form:

- *Quiero que me miréis.* I want you to look at me.
- *Es bueno que los traigáis.* It's good that you will bring them.

2. **Negative vosotros** commands with object pronouns

Both direct and indirect object pronouns are placed between *no* and the verb in the subjunctive:

- *No nos pidáis dinero.* Don't ask us for money.
- *No los traigáis.* Don't bring them.
- *No lo reguéis (el jardín).* Don't water it (the garden).

E. **Vosotros** commands with direct and indirect object pronouns together

1. **Affirmative vosotros** commands with double object pronouns

Both pronouns are attached to the command. When using direct and indirect object pronouns together, the indirect object is placed before the direct object:
Abríd *mela* (la ventana). Open it for me (the window).

Firmádselo. (firmar) Sign it for him.

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, both pronouns are placed before the verb in the dependent clause, which is in the subjunctive form:

*Os pido que me la abráis.* I ask you to open it for me.

*Quiere que se lo firméis.* He wants you to sign it for him.

2. Negative *vosotros* commands with double object pronouns

Both direct and indirect object pronouns are placed between *no* and the verb, which is in the subjunctive form:

*No se lo digáis.* Don't say it to him.

*No nos los deís.* Don't give them to us.

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form and the word order remains the same:

*Espero que no se lo digáis.* I hope you won't say it to him.

*Preferimos que no nos los deís demasiado tarde.* We prefer that you not give them to us too late.

F. *Vosotros* commands with reflexive verbs and object pronouns

1. Affirmative *vosotros* commands with reflexive verbs and object pronouns

Attach the object pronouns to the commands:

*limpiarse*  
*Limpídóslos. (los zapatos)*  
Clean them yourselves.

*preguntarse*  
*Preguntádloslo (un asunto).*  
Ask it of yourselves.

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, both the reflexive pronoun *os* and the direct object pronoun are placed before the verb in the dependent clause, which is in the subjunctive:

*Desea que os los limpiéis.* She wishes you to clean them.

*Espero que os lo preguntéis.* I hope that you will ask it of yourselves.
2. Negative vosotros commands with reflexive verbs and object pronouns

Both the reflexive pronoun os and the direct object pronoun are placed between no and the verb, which is in the subjunctive form:

No os los limpiéis.  
No os lo preguntéis.

Do not clean them yourselves.  
Don’t ask it of yourselves.

NOTE:

If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form and the word order remains the same:

Sugiero que no os los limpiéis.  
Es mejor que no os lo preguntéis.

I suggest that you not clean them yourselves.  
It’s better that you not ask it of yourselves.

The First Person Plural nosotros Commands (Let’s Commands)

This command is used when the speaker suggests an action to be performed as a group, where the group includes the speaker.

A. Affirmative and negative nosotros commands

1. Affirmative nosotros commands may be expressed in two different ways in Spanish.

(a) The nosotros form of ir in the present tense, plus an infinitive:

Vamos a tomar un taxi.  
Vamos a sacar las entradas.

Let’s take a taxi.  
Let’s buy the tickets.

NOTE:

This form is more common in informal speech.

(b) The nosotros form of the present subjunctive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Subjunctive</th>
<th>Command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tomar</td>
<td>Tomemos un taxi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sacar</td>
<td>Saquemos las entradas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ir</td>
<td>exception: Vamos* a su casa.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The subjunctive form vayamos is also used, as in: Vayamos por partes. (Let’s take it step by step.) and Vayamos a las cifras actuales. (Let’s review the current figures.)
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there are no changes in the form and the word order remains the same:

- Es mejor que tomemos un taxi. It's better for us to take a taxi.
- Ella quiere que saquemos las entradas. She wants us to buy the tickets.
- Sugiero que vayamos* a su casa. I suggest that we go to her house.

2. Negative nosotros commands are expressed only with the subjunctive:

- No insistamos más. Let's not insist any more.
- No lleguemos tarde. Let's not arrive late.

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there are no changes in the form, and the word order stays the same:

- Él dice que no insistamos más. He says for us not to insist any more.

B. First person plural nosotros commands with reflexive verbs

1. Affirmative nosotros commands with reflexive verbs

Drop the final s of the subjunctive and add the reflexive pronoun nos:

- sentarse (to sit) sentemos ➔ sentemo + nos = sentémonos
- acordarse (to remember) acordemos ➔ acordemo + nos = acordémonos

Observe these examples:

- Sonríámonos ahora. (sonreírse) Let's smile now.
- Probémonos los zapatos. (probarse) Let's try on the shoes.

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, place the reflexive pronoun nos before the verb in the dependent clause, which will be in the subjunctive:

- Quiere que nos sonriamos ahora. She wants us to smile now.
- Es bueno que nos probemos los zapatos. It's good for us to try on the shoes.

* Notice the normal use of the subjunctive form.
2. Negative *nosotros* commands with reflexive verbs

To express a negative *nosotros* command, place the reflexive pronoun *nos* between *no* and the subjunctive form of the verb:

*No nos* hagamos los tontos.  
*No nos* durmamos.

Let's not clown around.  
Let's not fall asleep.

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form, and the word order remains the same:

*Dice que no nos* hagamos los tontos.  
*Quiere que no nos* durmamos en la conferencia.

She says for us not to clown around.  
He wants us not to fall asleep at the conference.

C. First person plural *nosotros* commands with object pronouns

1. Affirmative *nosotros* commands with object pronouns

Direct and indirect object pronouns are attached to the affirmative *nosotros* command:

*Bañemoslo* (al perro).  
*Corramosla* (a la niña).  
*Cerrémoslos* (los sobres).

Let’s bathe him (the dog).  
Let’s run after her (the little girl).  
Let’s close them (the envelopes).

**NOTE:**
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, place the object pronoun before the verb in the dependent clause, which is in the subjunctive:

*Mamá pide que lo* bañemos.  
*Dijo que la* corramos.  
*Es hora que los* cerremos.

Mom asks that we bathe him.  
She said for us to run after her.  
It’s time for us to close them.

2. Negative *nosotros* commands with object pronouns

Direct and indirect object pronouns are placed between *no* and the verb:

*No los* comamos fríos.  
*No le* causemos problemas.  
*No la* abramos hasta mañana.

Let’s not eat them cold.  
Let’s not cause her problems.  
Let’s not open it until tomorrow.
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form, and the word order remains the same:

Carlos dice que no los comamos fríos. Carlos says for us not to eat them cold.
Papá quiere que no le causemos problemas. Dad wants us not to cause him problems.

D. First person plural nosotros commands with direct and indirect object pronouns together

The indirect object pronoun is always placed before the direct object pronoun. As mentioned before, the indirect object pronoun changes from le or les to se when the direct object pronoun begins with l(lo, la, los, las). With the nosotros commands, the s of the verb is dropped before adding nos or se.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Hagamos una fiesta para Lidia.} & \quad \text{Let’s have a party for Lidia.} \\
\text{Direct object: una fiesta } & \quad \text{Indirect object: para Lidia }\\
\text{hacer: hagamos } & \quad \text{hagamo } + \text{ se } + \text{ la } = \text{ Hagámosela.}
\end{align*}
\]

1. Affirmative nosotros commands with double object pronouns

Both direct and indirect object pronouns are attached to an affirmative command. Always drop the s before adding nos or se:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Comprémoslo.} & \quad (\text{un regalo}) \quad \text{Let’s buy it for ourselves.} \\
\text{Arreglamos las telas.} & \quad (\text{las ventanas}) \quad \text{Let’s fix them for you.} \\
\text{Dibujamos la fruta.} & \quad \text{Let’s draw it for them.}
\end{align*}
\]

2. Negative nosotros commands with double object pronouns

Direct and indirect object pronouns are placed between no and the verb:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{No nos lo compremos.} & \quad \text{Let’s not buy it for ourselves.} \\
\text{No te las arreglemos.} & \quad \text{Let’s not fix them for you.} \\
\text{No se la dibujemos.} & \quad \text{Let’s not draw it for them.}
\end{align*}
\]

* The s is dropped in the first and third examples above: Compremo(s) nos lo ➤ Comprémonoslo and Dibujémo(s) se la ➤ Dibujémosela.
NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, there is no change in the form, and the word order remains the same:

PREFERE QUE NO nos lo compramos. I prefer that we not buy it for ourselves.
SUGIERE QUE no te las arreglemos. I suggest that we not fix them for you.
ES BUENO QUE no se la dibujemos. It's good that we not draw it for them.

E. First person plural nosotros commands with reflexive verbs and pronouns

1. Affirmative nosotros commands with reflexive verbs and pronouns

    Attach the pronouns to the commands:

lavarse Lavémonoslas. (las manos) Let's wash our hands.
calentarse Calentémonoslos. (los pasteles) Let's warm them up for ourselves.

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, place the reflexive pronoun nos and the direct object pronoun before the verb in the dependent clause, which must be in the subjunctive form:

Insiste en que nos las lavemos. She insists that we wash them.
Mamá prefiere que nos los calentemos. Mom prefers that we warm them up for ourselves.

2. Negative nosotros commands with reflexive verbs and pronouns

    Direct object pronouns follow the reflexive pronouns:

No nos las lavemos. (las manos) Let's not wash our hands.
No nos los calentemos. (los pasteles) Let's not warm them up for ourselves.

NOTE:
If a subjunctive sentence is used to express a softened command, place the reflexive pronoun nos before the object pronoun:

Quiere que no nos las lavemos. She wants us not to wash them.
Sugiere que no nos los calentemos. He suggests that we not warm them up for ourselves.
The Impersonal Commands

These commands are given in a general sense and may be expressed in two different ways:

A. Impersonal commands using the infinitive:

No fumar. No smoking.

No pisar el césped. Keep off the grass.

Abrocharse los cinturones. Fasten your seatbelts.

B. Impersonal commands using the subjunctive:

Hágase la luz. Let there be light.

No haya pleitos entre amigos. Let there not be arguments among friends.

Haya paz en el mundo. Let there be peace on earth.

Commands Expressed with the Present Tense

It is common to use the present tense to express a command in informal speech.

A. Ud. and Uds. commands

1. Using the imperative:

Lleve los vasos y póngalos en la mesa. (Ud.)

Lleven los vasos y pónganlos en la mesa. (Uds.) Take the glasses and put them on the table.

2. Using the present indicative:

Ud. lleva los vasos y los pone en la mesa. (present)

Uds. llevan los vasos y los ponen en la mesa. You take the glasses and put them on the table.
B. *Tú* commands

1. Using the imperative:

   *Escribe la carta y mándasela.* Write the letter and send it to him.

2. Using the present indicative:

   *Tú escribes la carta y se la mandas.* (present) You write the letter and send it to him.

C. Informal *ustedes* (plural of *tú*) commands

1. Using the imperative:

   *Limpien su cuarto y después hagan sus tareas.* Clean your room and then do your homework.

2. Using the present indicative:

   *Ustedes limpian su cuarto y después hacen sus tareas.* (present) You clean your room and then do your homework.

D. *Vosotros* commands

1. Using the imperative:

   *Cerrad la puerta y marchaos para casa.* Close the door and go home.

2. Using the present indicative:

   *Vosotros cerráis la puerta y os marcháis para casa.* (present) You close the door and go home.

E. First person plural (*nosotros*) commands

1. Using the imperative:

   *Salgamos silenciosamente y no regresemos más tarde.* Let’s leave silently and not come back later.
2. Using the present indicative:

Nosotros **salimos silenciosamente y no regresamos.** (present)

We leave silently and don’t come back.

**Commands Expressed with the Future Tense**

The future tense is also used to express a command in the second person singular and plural.

**A. Ud. and Uds. commands**

1. Using the imperative:

   *Venga mañana y déselo.* (Ud.)

   *Vengan mañana y dénselo.* (Uds.)

Come tomorrow and give it to him.

2. Using the future indicative:

   *Ud. vendrá mañana y se lo dará.* (future)

   *Uds. vendrán mañana y se lo darán.*

You will come tomorrow and give it to him.

**B. Tú commands**

1. Using the imperative:

   *No esperes hasta que él llegue.*

   Don’t wait until he comes.

2. Using the future indicative:

   *No esperarás hasta que él llegue.* (future)

   You will not wait until he comes.

**C. Informal ustedes (plural of tú) commands**

1. Using the imperative:

   *Resérvense el derecho de opinar.*

   Reserve yourselves the right to express an opinion.
2. Using the future indicative:

**Se reservarán el derecho de opinar.**(future) You will reserve yourselves the right to express an opinion.

**D. Vosotros commands**

1. Using the imperative:

**Comed hasta saciaros.** Eat until you are full.

2. Using the future indicative:

**Comeréis hasta saciaros.**(future) You will eat until you are full.
Pronouns

A pronoun is a word that stands in place of a noun or nouns. It is used mainly to avoid repetition of a noun already mentioned in the sentence, or when the noun is clearly understood in context. Nouns replaced by pronouns may belong to different groups, such as persons, things, nonhuman beings, places, abstract nouns, qualities, or events.

Pronouns are divided into the following categories: personal, object (direct and indirect), demonstrative, possessive, relative, interrogative, indefinite, and reflexive pronouns.

Personal (Subject) Pronouns

Personal pronouns (also called subject pronouns) are classified into persons (first, second, and third), both singular and plural. For example, *yo* (I) is the first person singular, and *vosotros* (you) is the second person plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>first</td>
<td><em>yo</em> (I)</td>
<td><em>nosotros, nosotras</em> (we)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second</td>
<td><em>tú</em> (you)</td>
<td><em>vosotros, vosotras</em> (you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third</td>
<td><em>él</em> (he), <em>ella</em> (she)</td>
<td><em>ellos</em> (they), <em>ellas</em> (they)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>ello</em> (it, neuter)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>usted</em> (you)</td>
<td><em>ustedes</em> (you)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**

- *tú* and *él* carry accent marks to distinguish them from the possessive adjective *tu* (*tu libro*) and the definite article *el* (*el libro*), respectively.
Special Uses of Some Subject Pronouns

A. **Tú**

*You*, informal. It is used to address children, relatives, friends, peers, or pets.

B. **Vos**

In some Latin American countries, *vos* is used instead of *tú* in everyday Spanish. This practice is known as *voseo*, as opposed to *tuteo*, which means addressing someone with the *tú* form.* Although widespread in some areas, the usage of *vos* (singular) is considered somewhat incorrect. This form has its origin in the pronoun *vosotros* (plural), brought by the Spaniards during the conquest and colonization of America. It uses a modified *vosotros/as* form of the verb, as follows:

1. **Vos in the present indicative**

   **(a)** In the present tense of -ar and -er verbs, *vos* forms drop the *i* of the *vosotros* form, and an accent mark is placed on the last vowel:
   
   - *Vosotros cantáis bien.* ➔ *Vos cantás bien.* You sing well.
   - *Vosotros coméis mucho.* ➔ *Vos coméis mucho.* You eat a lot.

   **(b)** In the present tense, -ir verbs remain exactly the same for the *vos* form as for the *vosotros* form:
   
   - *Vosotros sales ahora.*
   - *Vos salís ahora.* You are going out now.

   **(c)** Here are interrogative sentences using the present-tense *vos* forms of -ar, -er, and -ir verbs:
   
   - ¿*Vos cantás bien?* Do you sing well?
   - ¿*Coméis mucho vos?* Do you eat much?
   - ¿*Sales ahora?* Are you going out now?

   **(d)** Placement of the pronoun and punctuation with *vos* in interrogative sentences.

---

* When in a formal situation one person asks permission to start addressing the other one less formally, the question is: ¿*La puedo tutear?* or ¿*Nos podemos tutear?*, which grammatically means *Can I address you as tú* (instead of *Ud.*)?, and not ¿*La puedo vosear?* or ¿*Nos podemos vosear?* In the regions where people use the pronoun *vos*, the verb *tutear* indicates addressing someone with the *vos* form.
Notice that the pronoun can be used before or after the verb, and can also be left out. However, there should never be a comma separating the pronoun. If the speaker wishes to attract the attention of the person being asked the question, and this appears in written form (a dialogue in a short story or a novel, for example), a comma may be placed to indicate the emphasis:

Vos, ¿
cantás bien? You (there) . . . ¿Do you sing well?  
¿

cantás bien, vos? Do you sing well? You?

In a spoken situation, the intonation of the voice will determine the desired emphasis.

2. Vos in the imperative

In the imperative (commands), the final d of the vosotros form is dropped to make the vos form. An accent mark is used in all three conjugations:

vosotros: ¡Cantad! (Sing!) ¡Comed! (Eat!) ¡Salid! (Go out!)
vos: ¡

cantá! ¡

comé! ¡

salí!

3. Vos is also used after prepositions:

Tengo un regalo para vos. (para ti) I have a gift for you.
Me gustaría ir al cine con vos. (contigo) I would like to go to the movies with you.
Estaremos muy tristes sin vos. (sin ti) We will be very sad without you.

NOTE:
- See Appendix D, Sample Conjugations with the Pronoun vos.

C. Usted

You, formal: usted, abbreviated Ud., is used to address someone older, a person we do not know, or a superior. It is usually considered a third person pronoun because it takes the same verb forms as él (he) and ella (she).

NOTES:
- (1) Although the informal pronouns tú and vos and the formal Ud. are each used to address one person, they are not interchangeable. Once the sentence has begun with one of them, the same pronoun must be used again, whenever necessary. Keep in mind that a person who uses vos has no problem in communicating
with somebody else who uses tú, and vice versa. Notice the agreement between these pronouns and the verb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tú tienes</th>
<th>vos tenés</th>
<th>Ud. tiene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you, informal</td>
<td>you, informal</td>
<td>you, formal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Special forms of address, such as Vuestra Majestad (Your Majesty), Vuestra Alteza (Your Highness), and Vuestra Señoría (Your Lordship), are also considered third person (formal) pronouns.

¿Vuestra Majestad desea tomar el té ahora? Your Majesty wishes to have tea now?

(3) Ud. or Uds. is usually added to a verb to indicate politeness:

* Quiere Ud. entrar, por favor. *Would you come in, please.
* Siéntense Uds. *Sit down, please.
* Es claro que Ud. lo sabe. *It’s clear that you know it.

**D. Vosotros/as**

This pronoun is used only in Spain, to address more than one person informally. In Latin America, vosotros is not usually used, but can be found in some versions of the Bible and in other religious writings.

**E. Ustedes**

Abbreviated Uds., it is the equivalent of vosotros/as in Latin America, but it is also used in Spain. It is both formal and informal.

* NOTE: *
In English, the informal you all or you guys corresponds to the informal vosotros and ustedes.

**F. Nosotros**

This is the equivalent of we. The form nos as a subject pronoun is rarely heard or seen. It used to apply to high-ranking officers, as the beginning of the preamble of the Argentine constitution shows:

* Nos, los representantes del pueblo de la Nación Argentina *We, the representatives of the people of the Nation of Argentina*
G. Optional personal pronouns

Some personal pronouns that function as the subject of the sentence, or that belong to a dependent clause, are easily understood and may therefore be eliminated. It is not incorrect to use them, however:

(Yo) Quiero ir de compras.  
(Tú) Escribe buenos poemas.  
(Nosotros) Tenemos prisa.  
(Vosotros) Comeréis aquí.  
(Yo) Piensas que (tú) debes venir.

I want to go shopping.  
You write good poems.  
We are in a hurry.  
You will eat here.  
I think you should come.

NOTES:

(1) If the subject of a sentence is a thing or an animal, the subject pronoun is usually omitted in context:

Los pastores alemanes son inteligentes.  
Pueden reunir todas las ovejas con facilidad.  
Compré un auto nuevo. Es importado.

German shepherds are intelligent. They can gather all the sheep together very easily.  
I bought a new car. It is imported.

The corresponding object pronoun will be used, however:

Este es mi auto. Quiero pintarlo de rojo.

This is my car. I want to paint it red.

(2) The subject pronoun is used if a nonhuman subject is personified:

El amor es el más preciado de los dones.  
Él enriquece el alma de quien lo da.

Love is the most valuable gift. It enriches the soul of whoever gives it.

H. Required subject pronouns

Subject pronouns should be used in the following cases.

1. Whenever there is ambiguity (some pronouns share the same verb form):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple Tenses</th>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Preterit</th>
<th>Imperfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>tiene</td>
<td>él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>fue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>tienen</td>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>fueron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>cantaba</td>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>cantaban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>comerá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>comerán</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conditional  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>leería</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>leerían</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Present Subjunctive  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>salga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>salgan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imperfect Subjunctive  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>saliera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>salieran</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compound Tenses  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect Indicative</td>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>había comprado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>habían comprado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Perfect</td>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>habría dicho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>habrían dicho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect Subjunctive</td>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>haya venido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>hayan venido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluperfect Subjunctive</td>
<td>yo, él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>hubiera puesto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>hubieran puesto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. To give emphasis or to point to someone:

Yo creo que es una buena idea.  
I think it is a good idea.

Nosotros lo recomendamos.  
We recommend it.

Tú haces esto, y ella hace el resto.  
You do this, and she does the rest.

Agreement of Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns agree in gender and number with the noun to which they refer, which is called the antecedent.

Some of the personal pronouns are obviously masculine or feminine, singular or plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Gender/Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotras</td>
<td>we (feminine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotras</td>
<td>you (feminine plural, in Spain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>they (feminine)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other personal pronouns can have a gender or number given that is made clear by the modifying adjective or adjectives. See the following examples:
PRONOUNS

In the following examples, (f) stands for feminine and (m) for masculine:

Yo soy trabajadora. (f) I am a hard worker.
Yo soy español. (m) I am Spanish.
Tú eres atractiva. (f) You are attractive.
Tú eres bueno. (m) You are good.
Ud. es una buena directora. (f) You are a good principal.
Ud. está loco. (m) You are crazy.
Uds. están contentas. (f) You are happy.

When the adjective used with the pronouns nosotros, vosotros, ellos, and ustedes (Uds.) is masculine, it may refer to a group of males only or to a combination of males and females. Since an adjective referring to males only or to males and females together must be in the masculine plural form, further clarification of gender may be necessary in those cases. In the following sentences, each statement could refer to Guillermo and Miguel or to Miguel and Cecilia.

Nosotros somos simpáticos.
Vosotros estáis cansados.
Ustedes parecen seguros.
Ellos son altos.
Ellos—Miguel y Cecilia—viven solos.

Form Variations in Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns change their form when they are used after a preposition (i.e., as objects of prepositions). Here are the forms they take when they are the objects of prepositions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Variation (Object of Preposition)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>mí (sin mí, de mí)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>ti (ante ti, por ti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él, ella, Ud.</td>
<td>sí (para sí, en sí)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos, ellas, Uds.</td>
<td>sí (en sí, de sí)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>except after con, conmigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>except after con, contigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>except after con, consigo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES:

(1) The regional pronoun vos does not change after a preposition:
con vos, ante vos, sin vos

(2) Nosotros, nosotras, vosotros, and vosotras do not change after a preposition:
de nosotros, con nosotras, contra vosotros, sin vosotras

(3) The following pronouns carry an accent to distinguish them from other expressions:
para mí (for me)
but
mi casa (my house)
en sí (in himself)
but
si puedes (if you can)

Direct Objects and Direct Object Pronouns

This section begins with an introduction of the direct object prior to discussing the rules that regulate its corresponding pronouns.

The direct object (called complemento directo in Spanish) is the word or words that receive directly the action of the verb. It is easy to identify a direct object by asking the question what? (¿qué?) or whom? (¿a quién?) immediately after the verb in simple sentences:

The maid put flowers on the table. La mucama puso flores en la mesa.
The maid put (What did she put?) flowers. La mucama puso (¿Qué puso?) flores.

Observe the following sentence, where the expression my sons (a mis hijos) answers the question Whom? (¿A quién?):

I love my sons. Quiero a mis hijos.
I love (Whom?) my sons. Quiero (¿A quién?) a mis hijos.

The word flores and the expression a mis hijos in the preceding sentences are direct objects.

NOTE:
The personal a is required when the direct object is a person or a pet.
Word Order in Sentences with a Direct Object

In Spanish, the direct object usually follows the verb, unless emphasis is desired:

- **Quiero una casa con muchas ventanas.** I want a house with many windows.
- **Una casa con muchas ventanas quiero yo.** A house with many windows (is what) I want.

**NOTE:**

Sometimes, however, it may be difficult to distinguish between the subject and the direct object. See the following sentences:

- **Aterrizó el avión.**
  - **El avión aterrizó.**

  They could possibly both mean *He landed the plane* or *The plane landed.* Therefore, in order to avoid ambiguity, whether the subject and/or the direct object refers to persons, animals, or things, the preposition *a* (the personal *a*) is placed before the direct object. Observe the sentences now:

  - **Aterrizó el avión.** (Either he or the plane landed.)
  - **Aterrizó al avión.** He landed the plane.
  - **Chocó el auto.** (Either he wrecked the car or his car was involved in a wreck.)
  - **Chocó al auto.** He wrecked the car.
  - **El gato mordió la araña.** (Either the cat or the spider bit.)
  - **El gato mordió a la araña.** The cat bit the spider.

**NOTE:**

Another level of difficulty is when the subject and the direct object are both inanimate and the personal *a* is not used. See the following sentence:

- **La tala de los árboles provocó la sequía del suelo.** The cutting down of trees caused the dryness of the soil (soil dryness).

  It is possible to ask: What did the cutting down of trees cause? The answer would immediately signal the direct object: the dryness of the soil.

  However, the elements of the sentence could be inverted to produce an emphatic effect:

  - **La sequía provocó la tala de los árboles.**

  In this example, it cannot be assumed that soil dryness is the subject of the sentence and that the cutting of trees is the direct object, for logical reasons. Meaning, therefore, would have to be drawn from context in this kind of sentence.
Uses of the Personal a Before a Direct Object

The personal a precedes the direct object when the direct object is a specific person or persons:

- Yo veo a Dawn en la cocina. I see Dawn in the kitchen.
- Yo veo (¿A quién?) a Dawn. I see (Whom?) Dawn.

If the specific person is a single male being referred to with a noun and the article el, such as el profesor, el médico, or el cartero, the contraction of a + el must be used:

- Yo respeto al médico. I respect the doctor.

There are many verbs in Spanish that require the personal a before a direct object that refers to persons. Some other such verbs are:

- esperar (to wait for)
- conocer (to know)
- llevar (to take)
- escuchar (to listen to)
- comprender (to understand)
- querer, amar (to love)

NOTES:

(1) The personal a is not used if the direct object is an unidentified person or persons. Observe the difference in the following sentences:

- Busco un cardiólogo que no cobre mucho. I am looking for a cardiologist who will not charge much.
- Busco a un cardiólogo que me recomendaron. I am looking for a cardiologist that they have recommended.
- Escucho unos chicos que juegan en la calle. I listen to some children who are playing in the street.
- Escucho a los chicos que viven enfrente. I listen to the children who live across the street.

The personal a is used, however, before indefinite pronouns and adjectives such as nadie (no one), alguien (someone), ninguno/a, ningún (no one), alguno/a, algún (someone), cualquiera, cualquier (anyone, anybody), todos/as (everybody), cada uno/a (each one):

- No veo a nadie. I don't see anyone.
- Quiero ver a alguien. I want to see someone.
- Necesito a cualquiera. I need anybody.

(2) The verb tener (to have) does not use a personal a when the direct object is a person or a pet and the verb is followed by un, una (a, an), or by numbers:
Tengo un hermano casado.
Tengo un hermano y dos hermanas.
Tengo una secretaria.
Tengo una secretaria que habla francés y tres que hablan ruso.
Tenemos un buen mecánico.
Tenemos un mecánico, pero hace el trabajo de dos.
Tienen un gato negro.

(3) Cuando tener, seguido por el personal a, precede a un directo (una persona o un animal), tener se convierte en estar (to be). A literal translation is given for the following examples:

Tengo a mi hermano en el teléfono. (Está en la línea.)
Tenemos a Juan y a Pedro en casa. (Están en casa).
Tengo a mi gato en el jardín. (Está en el jardín).

(4) Cuando el directo es un animal o cualquier sustantivo personalizado, el personal a también se usa:

Llevó a Zen al veterinario.
Veo al perro en el jardín.
Agradezca a la suerte por darnos la oportunidad.

Direct Object Pronouns

Direct objects may be replaced by their corresponding pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Direct Object Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>te</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usted (Ud.)</td>
<td>lo, la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>lo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella</td>
<td>la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ello</td>
<td>lo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as</td>
<td>nos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros/as</td>
<td>os</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**NOTE:**

In Spain and some regions of Latin America, *le* and *les* are sometimes used instead of *lo* and *los* to replace a masculine noun. This practice is called *leísmo*. The use of these forms (*le* and *les*) is acceptable if the noun is a masculine person. However, it is incorrect to use them for feminine nouns, animals, or masculine objects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yo <em>lo</em> vi (a Juan).</td>
<td>Yo <em>le</em> vi. (I saw him.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Uds.</em> <em>los</em> vieron.</td>
<td><em>Uds.</em> <em>les</em> vieron. (You saw them.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a Juan y a Carlos)

**Correct**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>La <em>lo</em> visito. (a Elena)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo</em> veo. (a mi gato)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo</em> compré. (el lápiz)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Incorrect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Le visito.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Le veo.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Le compré.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**

Direct object pronouns that replace nouns take the following forms:

Feminine singular:  
*la pera*  
lo  
Feminine plural:  
*las peras*  
*las*  
Masculine singular:  
*el árbol*  
lo  
Masculine plural:  
*los árboles*  
*los*

---

**Word Order with Direct Object Pronouns**

To insert a direct object pronoun into a sentence, the following rules apply.

**A. The direct object pronoun before a single conjugated verb**

The direct object pronoun must always be placed directly before the conjugated verb if there is only one verb. Note the specific rules for the pronoun depending on whether the direct object is human or not.
1. If the direct object is a person

   The direct object pronoun must always be used for the persons yo (me), tú (te), Ud. (lo, la), nosotros/as (nos), vosotros/as (os), and Uds. (los, las), while the direct object that it stands for may be omitted:

   **Correct:**
   
   El *me* quiere a mí.
   
   El *me* quiere.
   
   He loves me.

   Yo *te* veo a ti.
   
   Yo *te* veo.
   
   I see you.

   Lo *visitaré* a Ud.
   
   Lo *visitaré*.
   
   I will visit you.

   Nos *aprecio* a nosotros.
   
   Nos *aprecio*.
   
   He appreciates us.

   No *os* olvida a vosotros.
   
   No *os* olvida.
   
   She does not forget you.

   **(Incorrect:)**

   (El quiere a mí.)

   (Yo veo a ti.)

   (Visitaré a Ud.)

   (Aprecia a nosotros.)

   (No olvida a vosotros.)

   (Esperaremos a Uds. mañana a las 10.)

   **(All Correct:)**

   Quiero a Juan.
   
   I love Juan.

   Lo quiero a Juan.
   
   Lo quiero.

   Aprecio a mis primas.
   
   I appreciate my cousins.

   Las aprecio a mis primas.
   
   Las aprecio.

However, the direct object pronouns *lo, la, los,* and *las,* which replace the direct objects equivalent to the third person singular (*él, ella*), and plural (*ellos, ellas*), may be left out when the direct object also appears in the sentence.

**All Correct:**

Quiero a Juan.

I love Juan.

Lo quiero a Juan.

Lo quiero.

Aprecio a mis primas.

I appreciate my cousins.

Las aprecio a mis primas.

Las aprecio.
2. If the direct object is not human, it needs to be left out when the pronoun is used in the sentence:

*Nosotros compramos las maletas.*  
We bought the suitcases.  
*Nosotros las compramos.*  
We bought them.  
*Vieron el tigre.*  
They saw the tiger.  
*Lo vieron.*  
They saw it.

However, when both the pronoun and the direct object are used in the sentence, the direct object is preceded by *a*:

*Nosotros compramos las maletas.*  
We bought the suitcases.  
*Nosotros las compramos a las maletas.*  
We bought the suitcases.  
*Vieron el tigre.*  
They saw the tiger.  
*Lo vieron al tigre.*  
They saw the tiger.

B. **Placement of the direct object when there are two verbs**

If there are two verbs, whether a combination of a conjugated verb before an infinitive or a conjugated verb before a present participle (*-ing: -ando, -iendo*), there are two possibilities, both entirely correct.

1. The direct object pronoun may be placed immediately before the conjugated verb:

*Nosotros preferimos comprar las revistas.*  
We prefer to buy the magazines.  
*Nosotros las preferimos comprar.*  
We prefer to buy them.  
*El está escribiendo una carta.*  
He is writing a letter.  
*El la está escribiendo.*  
He is writing it.  
*Yo te quiero ver siempre.*  
I want to see you always.  
*Iolanda os quiere ver.*  
Iolanda wants to see you.

2. The direct object pronoun may be attached to the infinitive or to the present participle:

*Nosotros preferimos comprarlas.*  
We prefer to buy them.  
*El está escribiéndola.*  
He is writing it.  
*Yo quiero verte siempre.*  
I want to see you always.  
*Iolanda quiere veros.*  
Iolanda wants to see you.
C. The direct object pronoun before the auxiliary *haber*

The direct object pronoun is always placed before the auxiliary verb *haber* in compound tenses. It cannot be attached to the past participle nor placed between the auxiliary verb and the past participle:

- Te *he recordado siempre.* I have always remembered you.
- Las *hemos comprado.* We have bought them.

Direct Objects and Objects of Prepositions

There are some verbs in English which require a following preposition but for which the corresponding verb in Spanish does not require one. Some of these verbs are *to wait for* (*esperar*), *to look for* (*buscar*), and *to look at* (*mirar*):

- El espera el tren. He waits for the train.
- Yo busco un lápiz. I am looking for a pencil.
- Ellos miran el agua. They look at the water.

While in Spanish *el tren, un lápiz,* and *el agua* function as direct objects, the equivalent expressions in English are objects of prepositions (*for, for, and at,* respectively).

**NOTE:**

If the direct object is a person or a pet, the verb in Spanish requires the personal *a:*

- El espera a su hermana. He waits for his sister.
- Yo busco a Jill. I'm looking for Jill.
- Ken mira a Zoe. Ken looks at Zoe.
- Mi vecina alimenta a Fifi. My neighbor feeds Fifi.

Imperative Form (Commands) and Direct Object Pronouns

Direct object pronouns are attached to affirmative commands and are placed between *no* and the verb in negative commands:

- Estúdiolas. Study them.
- No los escuches. Do not listen to them.
For other examples and uses of a direct object pronoun with one or two verbs, and together with an indirect object pronoun in the same sentence, see Chapter 15, The Imperative.

**Indirect Objects and Indirect Object Pronouns**

This section begins with an introduction of the indirect object prior to discussing the rules that regulate its corresponding pronouns.

**The Indirect Object**

The indirect object is the word on which the action of the verb falls indirectly. It refers to people or things and can be identified by asking the questions *To whom?* and *For whom?* (¿A quién? ¿Para quién?) or *To what?* and *For what?* (¿A qué? ¿Para qué?) after the direct object. The question goes back to the verb, though, as the examples show:

- *Juana compró unos pasteles para la niña.*
- *Mi padre consiguió unas patas nuevas para la mesa.*

Indirect objects may be replaced by their corresponding pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Indirect Object Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>me, mí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tú</td>
<td>te, ti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ud.</td>
<td>le, se, sí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>le, se, sí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella</td>
<td>le, se, sí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ello</td>
<td>le, se</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nosotros/as</td>
<td>nos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vosotros/as</td>
<td>os</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ustedes</td>
<td>les, se, sí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellos</td>
<td>les, se, sí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellas</td>
<td>les, se, sí</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES:
(1) *Mí, ti, and sí* are used after *para* to indicate an indirect object:

Tiene una carta para mí.  
He has a letter for me.

(2) The following pronouns do not change when used after *para* to indicate an indirect object:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vos</th>
<th>usted</th>
<th>vosotros</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>él</td>
<td>ustedes</td>
<td>vosotros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ella</td>
<td>nosotros</td>
<td>ellos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ello</td>
<td>nosotras</td>
<td>ellas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The regional pronoun *vos*, which is used instead of *tú*, appears as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>para vos</th>
<th>con vos</th>
<th>sin vos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>for you</td>
<td>with you</td>
<td>without you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) In some areas, especially in Spain, *la* and *las* are sometimes used instead of *le* and *les* for females, but these forms (*la* and *las*) are incorrect for the indirect object. This practice is called *laísmo*:

**Correct**  
Pedro le dio un regalo a Carmen.  
Pedro le dio un regalo.  
Pedro gave her a gift.  

**Incorrect**  
(Pedro la dio un regalo.)  

Pedro les dio un regalo a las niñas.  
Pedro les dio un regalo.  
Pedro gave them a gift.

**Personal a and Indirect Objects**

In some cases, an expression preceded by a personal *a* may be either an indirect object or a direct object (since direct objects are sometimes preceded by the personal *a*). In order to figure out whether it is a direct or an indirect object, try to place the word *to* in the English translation of the sentence. If the sentence makes sense with *to* in it, the expression is an indirect object.
In the sentence *Romeo ama a Julieta* (*Romeo loves Juliet*), for example, it is not possible to insert *to* in the sentence. Observe the following cases:

*Romeo ama a Julieta.*  
(Romeo loves (To whom?) Juliet.)  
(Incorrect, therefore *Juliet* is a direct object.)

*Romeo le manda una nota a Julieta.*  
Romeo sends a note (To whom?) to Juliet.  
(Correct, therefore *Juliet* is an indirect object.)

**NOTES:**

(1) A personal *a* is required in Spanish before indefinite pronouns such as *alguien*, *alguno/a*, *nadie*, *cualquiera*, *cada cual*, *cada uno/a*, and *todos/as*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>En la calle no vemos a nadie.</em></td>
<td>We don’t see anybody in the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Le dio a cada uno un beso.</em></td>
<td>She gave each one a kiss.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) The pronouns *cualquiera*, *cada cual*, *cada uno/a*, and *todos/as* may refer to people or things:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Juan les puso una marca a todas.</em> (las cajas)</td>
<td>John put a mark on all of them. (boxes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Le echaré fertilizante a cada uno.</em> (rosales)</td>
<td>I will put some fertilizer on each one. (rose bushes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Word Order in Sentences with an Indirect Object**

In Spanish there are several ways in which the indirect object may be used in a sentence.

**A. The indirect object after the direct object or before the subject**

The indirect object, preceded by the preposition *a*, may be placed either after the direct object or before the subject when emphasis on the indirect object is desired:

*Juana le dio unos pasteles a la niña.*  
*Juana gave some pastry to the girl.*

*A la niña Juana le dio unos pasteles; al niño le dio unas frutas.*

*To the girl, Juana gave some pastry; to the boy, she gave some fruit.*

*¿Juana les dio unos pasteles a ustedes?*  
*¿A Uds. Juana les dio unos pasteles?*

*Did Juana give you some pastry? (In English, the word *you* may be pronounced with more emphasis.)*

*¿A Uds.*  
*Juana le dio unos pasteles.*

*To the boy, Juana gave some pastry.*

*¿Juana le dio unos pasteles al niño?*  
*¿Juana le dio unos pasteles a la niña?*

*Did Juana give the boy some pastry? Did Juana give the girl some pastry?*
B. Placement of the indirect object when the subject is left out

If the subject (Juana) is left out, the indirect object [a la niña] may be placed either before the indirect object pronoun [le] or after the direct object [unos pasteles]:

- Before: \textit{A la niña le dio unos pasteles.} She gave some pastry to the girl.
- After: \textit{Le dio unos pasteles a la niña.} She gave some pastry to the girl.

- Before: \textit{A Uds. les dio unos pasteles.} She gave you some pastry.
- After: \textit{Les dio unos pasteles a Uds.} She gave you some pastry.

C. Use of the indirect object pronoun with specific persons

The indirect object pronoun must always be present when the indirect object (included or left out) refers to specific persons:

- Indirect object included: \textit{Juana le dio unos pasteles a la niña.} Juana gave some pastry to the girl.
- Indirect object left out: \textit{Juana le dio unos pasteles.} Juana gave her some pastry.
- Indirect object included: \textit{Juana les dio unos pasteles a Uds.} Juana gave you some pastry.
- Indirect object left out: \textit{Juana les dio unos pasteles.} Juana gave you some pastry.

NOTE:

If the indirect object refers to individuals in a general way or to inanimate objects, the pronoun may be left out. In the following sentences, the pronoun is not necessary:

- \textit{Él siempre (les) escribe cartas a los presos.} He always writes letters to people in jail.
- \textit{Pedro (le) dedicó un poema a la geografía de su país.} Pedro dedicated a poem to the geography of his native country.

D. When the indirect object is triggered by \textit{para}

If the indirect object is triggered by the preposition \textit{para}, there are two options.

1. To use the indirect object pronoun without the indirect object. The subject may be present or left out:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Juana le compró unos pasteles.} Juana bought her some pastry.
  \item \textit{Le compró unos pasteles.} She bought her some pastry.
\end{itemize}
2. To use the indirect object without the indirect object pronoun. The subject may be present or left out:

Juana compró unos pasteles para la niña.  
Compró unos pasteles para la niña.

Juana bought some pastry for the girl.  
She bought some pastry for the girl.

NOTES:

(1) If the indirect object pronoun le is used with the indirect object, the sentence has a different meaning. In that case, le refers to someone else from whom Juana bought pastry for the girl:

Juana le compró unos pasteles para la niña.  
Juana le compró (al hombre) unos pasteles para la niña.

Juana bought (from him) some pastry for the girl.  
Juana bought (from the man) some pastry for the girl.

(2) In Spanish, always use an indirect object pronoun in cases where, in English, a direct object would be introduced by a possessive adjective. The possessive adjective in English is replaced by the definite article in Spanish:

He made up her face.  
(Not: [El] Maquilló su cara.)

(sounds like: He put makeup on himself.)

She dressed their wounds.  
(Not: [Ella] Curó sus heridas.)

(sounds like: She dressed her own wounds.)

The incorrect Spanish sentences shown do not actually mean anything; the English translations given are the closest approximation to what those formulations might mean, but in fact, to be correct and have those meanings, the Spanish sentences would need a reflexive verb: Él se maquilló la cara; Ella se curó las heridas.

Word Order in Sentences with an Indirect Object Pronoun

When placing an indirect object pronoun in a sentence, the following rules apply.

A. Placement of the indirect object pronoun with a single verb

If there is only one verb in the sentence, the indirect object pronoun is placed directly before the conjugated verb. If the statement is negative, the word no precedes the pronoun:
El mozo nos sirvió agua. The waiter served us water.
Raúl me mandó una carta. Raúl sent me a letter.
Pedro no les escribió. Pedro didn't write to them.

**B. Placement of the indirect object pronoun with two verbs**

If there are two verbs, the first one being a conjugated verb and the second one either an infinitive or a present participle (ending in -ing: -ando, -iendo), there are two possibilities, both entirely correct.

1. The indirect object pronoun may be placed immediately before the conjugated verb. The negative no precedes the pronoun when the statement is negative:

   El mozo nos quiere servir agua. The waiter wants to serve us water.
   Raúl me vino a dar una carta. Raúl came to give me a letter.
   Ella te está haciéndote un vestido. She is making you a dress.
   Juan no te tiene que dar nada. Juan doesn't have to give you anything.

2. The indirect object pronoun may be attached to the infinitive or to the present participle:

   El mozo quiere servirnos agua. The waiter wants to serve us water.
   Raúl vino a darme una carta. Raúl came to give me a letter.
   Ella está haciéndote un vestido. She is making you a dress.

   In a negative sentence, then, the negative word is placed before the first verb:
   
   Juan no tiene que darte nada. Juan doesn't have to give you anything.

**C. Placement of the indirect object pronoun before haber**

The indirect object pronoun is always placed before the auxiliary verb haber in compound tenses, never between the auxiliary verb and the past participle. Also, it cannot be attached to the past participle:

   Juan me ha dicho la verdad. Juan has told me the truth.
   Ellos te han traído dinero. They have brought you money.
   (Incorrect: Juan ha me dicho la verdad.)

   If there is a negative word, this is placed before the indirect object pronoun:

   El no nos ha llamado. He hasn't called us.
Imperative Forms (Commands) and Indirect Object Pronouns

Indirect object pronouns are attached to affirmative commands and are placed between *no* and the verb in negative commands:

- *Danos el dinero.* Give us the money.
- *No nos des el dinero.* Do not give us the money.

In Chapter 15, The Imperative, there are examples and uses of indirect object pronouns when the sentences have one or two verbs, and also of indirect object pronouns used together with direct object pronouns in the same sentence.

Indirect Object Pronoun in Place of a Subject

Uses with *gustar* and Similar Verbs

Some verbs in Spanish use an indirect object pronoun instead of the subject that would appear in equivalent English sentences. One of these verbs is *gustar* (*to like*). In a sentence with *gustar*, the thing or person that is liked becomes the subject of the sentence, while the indirect object pronoun signals who is doing the action of liking.

There are two possibilities for placing the indirect object pronoun in this type of sentence.

**A. Sentences beginning with the indirect object or indirect object pronoun**

The sentence may begin with the indirect object pronoun or with the preposition *a* plus a noun or pronoun, in which case more emphasis is being placed on who is doing the liking:

- *Me gustan los días tibios.* I like warm days.
- *A mí me gustan los días tibios.* I like warm days.
- *A María le gustan los días tibios.* María likes warm days.
- *Al perro le gustan los días tibios.* The dog likes warm days.

**B. Sentences ending with the indirect object, or indirect object pronoun, plus verb**

The sentence may end with the forms of the indirect object, or the pronoun, and the verb indicated in the preceding sentences. The meaning in English is the same:
Los días tibios me gustan.
I like warm days.

Los días tibios me gustan a mí.
I like warm days.

Los días tibios le gustan a María.
María likes warm days.

Los días tibios le gustan al perro.
The dog likes warm days.

NOTES:
(1) These sentences literally mean: Warm days are appealing (or pleasing) to me / María / the dog.

(2) The verb *gustar* is also used with reflexive/reciprocal pronouns: *yo me gusto* (*I like myself*); *te gustas* (*you like yourself*); *nos gustamos* (*we like each other*). Other forms with indirect objects include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Le gustamos a Felipe.</th>
<th>Felipe likes us.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me gustas mucho.</td>
<td>I like you a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¿Te gusta?</td>
<td>Do you like me?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Forms of gustar**

The verb *gustar*, which belongs in the category of verbs such as *faltar* (*to lack*), *quedar* (*to have left*), *parecer* (*to seem*), etc. (excluding the forms in the second item of the preceding note), uses two forms, singular and plural, regardless of who does the action of the verb. The verb matches in number the things or persons liked. See the section Other Verbs Like *gustar* that follows for examples using these other verbs.

### A. Simple tenses of gustar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present indicative</td>
<td><em>gusta</em></td>
<td><em>gustan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(presente indicativo)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperfect indicative</td>
<td><em>gustaba</em></td>
<td><em>gustaban</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(imperfecto indicativo)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preterit</td>
<td><em>gustó</em></td>
<td><em>gustaron</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pretérito)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td><em>gustará</em></td>
<td><em>gustarán</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(futuro)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conditional</td>
<td><em>gustaría</em></td>
<td><em>gustarian</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(condicional)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
present subjunctive  
(presente subjuntivo)  
guste  
gusten

imperfect subjunctive  
(imperfecto subjuntivo)  
gustara  
gustaran

Examples:

Me gusta la naranja.  
I like the orange.

Me gustan las manzanas.  
I like the apples.

Nos gusta la película.  
We like the movie.

Nos gustan los invitados.  
We like the guests.

B. Compound tenses of *gustar*

1. Compound forms of *gustar* with the auxiliary *haber*

The compound tenses of *gustar* use the corresponding form of the auxiliary verb *haber* (singular or plural) and the past participle of the main verb, *gustado*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| present perfect indicative  
(presente perfecto del indicativo) | ha gustado     | han gustado       |
| past perfect indicative  
(pretérito perfecto del indicativo) | había gustado  | habían gustado    |
| preterit perfect*  
(pretérito anterior) | hubo gustado   | hubieron gustado  |
| future perfect  
(futuro perfecto) | habrá gustado  | habrán gustado    |
| conditional perfect  
(condicional perfecto) | habría gustado | habrían gustado   |
| present perfect subjunctive  
(presente perfecto del subjuntivo) | haya gustado   | hayan gustado     |
| pluperfect subjunctive  
(pluscuamperfecto del subjuntivo) | hubiera gustado| hubieran gustado  |

Le ha gustado la obra hasta ahora.  
He has liked the play so far.

A Teresa le han gustado las clases.  
Teresa has liked the classes.

No nos han gustado los libros.  
We haven't liked the books.

* No longer used in oral speech; only found in older writings.
2. Compound forms of *gustar* with the auxiliary *estar*

Another compound form uses the auxiliary verb *estar* (singular and plural) and the present participle (gerund) of the main verb, which is *gustando*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>estar</em></th>
<th><strong>Singular</strong></th>
<th><strong>Plural</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>está gustando</td>
<td>están gustando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preterit</td>
<td>estuvo gustando</td>
<td>estuvieron gustando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperfect</td>
<td>estaba gustando</td>
<td>estaban gustando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>estará gustando</td>
<td>estarán gustando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conditional</td>
<td>estaría gustando</td>
<td>estarían gustando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present subjunctive</td>
<td>esté gustando</td>
<td>estén gustando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past/imperfect subjunctive</td>
<td>estuviera gustando</td>
<td>estuvieran gustando</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

Me *estaba gustando* la película. I was liking the movie.

Creo que no le *estarán gustando* la casa. I think he might not be liking the house.

**Uses of *gusta* and *gustan***

The following rules apply for the use of the singular or plural forms of *gustar*.

**A. The singular form *gusta* is used in the following cases.**

1. When the item, person, or nonhuman liked is singular:

   Nos **gusta** el verano. We like the summer.
   
   Le **gusta** su profesor. He likes his professor.
   
   Me **gusta** el gato Félix. I like Felix the Cat.
   
   ¿Os **gusta** la ópera? Do you like the opera?

2. When what is liked is indicated by one or more infinitives:

   Les **gusta** enseñar. They like teaching.
   
   Me **gusta** cantar y bailar. I like to sing and dance.
B. The plural form **gustan** is used when what is liked is plural:

- *No me gustan mucho* mis tareas. I don't like my homework much.
- *Le gustan los de cuero.* He likes the leather ones.
- *Nos gustan los jardines y la casa.* We like the gardens and the house.

**Other Verbs Like gustar**

Some other verbs conjugated like **gustar** include:

- **doler** (to hurt)
- **interesar** (to interest)
- **encantar** (to be very pleasing)
- **parecer** (to seem)
- **enfermar** (to feel sick)
- **quedar** (to have remaining or left)
- **faltar** (to be lacking)
- **resultar** (to seem)

Just as with **gustar**, if the object liked is plural, an *n* must be added to the singular form of the present tense of the verb:

- *Esta obra me parece buena.* This seems like a good play to me.
- *Me faltan dos capítulos para leer.* I still have two chapters to read. (Literally, I lack two chapters to be read).
- *Nos quedan dos hijos en casa.* We still have two sons at home. (the others are gone).
- *Le duelen los pies.* His feet hurt.
- *Les interesa la película.* They are interested in the movie.
- *Te resultan aburridoras.* They seem boring (to you).
- *Nos encanta estudiar.* We like studying very much.
- *Le enferma ir al dentista.* Going to the dentist makes her sick.

**NOTES:**

1. Some students of the language confuse the verb **parecer** (to seem) with **aparecer** (to appear). Instead of the first example, they would say erroneously, *Esta obra me aparece buena.*

2. **Quedar** would also be a good choice for the second sentence, instead of **faltar**. The sentence would then read:

   - *Me quedan dos capítulos para leer.* I still have two chapters remaining (to read).

* Words like *mucho* (much), *poco, un poco* (a little), *algo* (some), and *bastante* (quite a bit) must be placed immediately after the verb.
In the third sentence, *faltar* cannot be used instead of *quedar*, since the meaning of the sentence would change. The statement *Nos faltan dos hijos en casa* means that two of the sons are away from the house or that the family would like to have two sons.

(4) *Resultar* and *parecer* are synonyms; therefore sentences one and six could each use either verb.

(5) These verbs can be conjugated in all the simple and compound tenses specified for the verb *gustar*.

**Direct and Indirect Objects Used Together**

In Spanish, as well as in English, an indirect object may precede or follow the direct object:

- Manuel le dio un auto a su hijo.  
  Manuel gave a car to his son.
- Manuel le dio a su hijo un auto.  
  Manuel gave his son a car.

**NOTES:**

(1) In English, the preposition *to* is needed when the indirect object follows the direct object, while in Spanish the objects just change positions in the sentence.

(2) Notice that the indirect object pronoun *le* is needed in both sentences.

   In Spanish, the indirect object is preceded by either *a* or *para*. However, a particular word order may be incorrect depending on the preposition used. Observe the following examples:

   **Correct:**
   - Manuel compró un auto para su hijo.  
     Manuel bought a car for his son.
   - Manuel le compró un auto a su hijo.  
     Manuel bought a car for his son.
   - Manuel le compró a su hijo un auto.  
     Manuel bought a car for his son.
   - Manuel, a su hijo, le compró un auto y a su hija (le compró) una muñeca.  
     Manuel bought a car for his son and a doll for his daughter.

   **Incorrect:** Manuel le compró un auto para su hijo.*

* If the pronoun *le* is eliminated, the same word order may be used if the speaker wants to make a clarification: Manuel compró un auto para su hijo y una muñeca para su hija. (Manuel bought a car for his son and a doll for his daughter.) If the pronoun *le* is kept in the sentence, the sentence is correct but the meaning has changed: Manuel le compró un auto para su hijo. (Manuel bought [from someone else] a car for his son.)
Direct and Indirect Object Pronouns Together

When both the direct and the indirect object pronouns are used together in a sentence, the position of the pronouns is the same as when direct and indirect object pronouns appear individually.

A. The indirect object pronoun always precedes the direct object pronoun.

B. Both pronouns are placed before a conjugated verb (here IOP stands for Indirect Object Pronoun; DOP for Direct Object Pronoun):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Carlos compra flores para ti.} & \quad \text{Carlos buys flowers for you.} \\
\text{Carlos te (IOP) las (DOP) compra.} & \quad \text{Carlos buys them for you.}
\end{align*}
\]

C. Placement of direct and indirect object pronouns together, with two verbs

If there are two verbs, the first being a conjugated verb and the second one an infinitive or a present participle (ending in -ando or -iendo), both pronouns are placed either before the conjugated verb or attached to the infinitive or to the present participle, whichever the case might be:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Carlos quiere comprar flores para ti.} & \quad \text{Carlos wants to buy flowers for you.} \\
\text{Carlos te las quiere comprar.} & \quad \text{Carlos wants to buy them for you.} \\
\text{Carlos quiere comprártelas.} & \quad \text{Carlos wants to buy them for you.} \\
\text{Carlos está comprando flores para ti.} & \quad \text{Carlos is buying flowers for you.} \\
\text{Carlos te las está comprando.} & \quad \text{Carlos is buying them for you.} \\
\text{Carlos está comprándotelas.} & \quad \text{Carlos is buying them for you.}
\end{align*}
\]

D. Placement of direct and indirect object pronouns before haber

Both pronouns are placed before the auxiliary verb haber in compound tenses. They are never attached to the infinitive in this case, nor placed between haber and the past participle:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Carlos ha comprado flores para ti.} & \quad \text{Carlos has bought flowers for you.} \\
\text{Carlos te las ha comprado.} & \quad \text{Carlos has bought them for you.} \\
(\text{Incorrect:}) & \\
(Carlos ha te las comprado.) & \\
(Carlos ha comprádotelas.) & \\
\end{align*}
\]
When the indirect object pronoun changes to se

When both the direct object pronoun and the indirect object pronoun begin with the letter I (e.g. les los, les la, le la, le los, etc.), the indirect object pronoun changes to se (se los, se la, se la, and se los, respectively).

NOTE:
The following section provides clarification and more examples. As a reminder, the following is a list of direct and indirect object pronouns:

Direct Object Pronouns: me te lo la nos os los las
Indirect Object Pronouns: me te le nos os les

Rules for the Position of Pronouns

A. The indirect object pronoun (IOP) always precedes the direct object pronoun (DOP).

The following rules apply.

1. Only one verb

If there is only one verb in the sentence, the two pronouns must be placed before the verb:

Compré un lápiz para ti.
I bought a pencil for you.

DOP: lo; IOP: te

Te lo compré.
I bought it for you.

2. One verb + infinitive

If there are two verbs and the second one is an infinitive, there are two possible ways of writing a correct sentence: the two pronouns may be placed before the conjugated verb or attached to the infinitive:

Quiero traer un lápiz para ti.
I want to bring you a pencil.

Te lo quiero traer.
I want to bring it for you.

Quiero traértelo.
I want to bring it for you.
There are some exceptions:

(a) The use of two pronouns may alter the meaning of the sentence, especially with verbs such as hacer, mandar, and ordenar. Observe the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le hice traer la valija.</td>
<td>I made him bring the suitcase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se la hice traer.</td>
<td>I made him bring the suitcase or I had someone bring it for him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les mandé llenar los espacios.</td>
<td>I had them fill in the blanks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se los mandé llenar.</td>
<td>I had them fill in the blanks or I had someone fill them in for them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) If the conjugated verb is reflexive, the reflexive pronoun must go with its corresponding verb. In the following example, this is the only possible way of enunciating this statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me sentaré a esperarlo.</td>
<td>I will sit down to wait for him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Not: Sentaré a esperármelo.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Not: Me lo sentaré a esperar.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. One verb + present participle

If there are two verbs in the sentence and the second one is a present participle, there are two possible ways to write a correct sentence in Spanish: the pronouns may be placed before the conjugated verb or attached to the present participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estoy trayendo un lápiz para ti.</td>
<td>I'm bringing you a pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te lo estoy trayendo.</td>
<td>I'm bringing it for you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estoy trayéndotelo.</td>
<td>I'm bringing it for you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Haber + past participle

The only correct way to use two pronouns in a construction with the auxiliary verb haber and a past participle is to place the pronouns before the auxiliary verb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He traído un lápiz para ti.</td>
<td>I have brought you a pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te lo he traído.</td>
<td>I have brought it for you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. When the indirect object pronoun changes to se

As mentioned before, when both indirect and direct object pronouns begin with the letter l, the indirect object pronoun changes from le to se and from les to se. Here are
some examples and notes about situations that pertain to the use of *se* in each one of the categories.

1. **Only one verb**
   
   If there is only one verb in the sentence, the two pronouns must be placed before the verb:

   *Pagué* una cuenta para Tom.
   
   I paid a bill for Tom.

   **DOP:** la; **IOP:** le

   *Se la* pagué.
   
   I paid it for him.

   **Compramos** libros para ellas.
   
   We bought books for them.

   **DOP:** los; **IOP:** les

   *Se los* compramos*.
   
   We bought them for them.

2. **One verb + infinitive**
   
   If there are two verbs in the sentence and the second verb is an infinitive, there are two possible ways of writing a correct sentence: the two pronouns may be placed before the conjugated verb or attached to the infinitive:

   *Quiero pagar* una cuenta para Tom.
   
   I want to pay a bill for Tom.

   **DOP:** la; **IOP:** le

   *Se la* quiero pagar.
   
   I want to pay it for him.

   *Quiero pagár* selas.
   
   I want to pay it for him.

   *Puedo comprar* un libro para ellas.
   
   I can buy a book for them.

   **DOP:** lo; **IOP:** les

   *Se lo* puedo comprar.
   
   I can buy it for them.

   *Puedo comprar* selo**.
   
   I can buy it for them.

---

* This sentence also means: We bought them from him/them. To indicate the difference in Spanish, the two sentences can be written as follows: *Se los compramos a él/éllos.* (We bought them from him/them.) and *Se los compramos para ellas.* (We bought them for them.)

** This sentence also means: I can buy it from him/them. To indicate the difference in Spanish, the two sentences can be written as follows: *Puedo comprar* selo a él/éllos. (I can buy it from him/them.) and *Puedo comprar* selo para ellas. (I can buy it for them.)
3. One verb + present participle

If there are two verbs in the sentence and the second verb is a present participle, there are two possible ways of writing a correct sentence. The two pronouns may be placed before the conjugated verb or attached to the present participle:

Estoy abriendo el negocio para Ud.
DOP: lo; IOP: le

Se lo estoy abriendo.
Estoy abriendose lo.

I am opening the store for you.

4. Haber + past participle

The only correct way to use two pronouns in a construction with the auxiliary verb haber and a past participle is to place the pronouns before the auxiliary verb:

He hecho la tarea para Juana.
DOP: la; IOP: le

Se la he hecho.

I have done the task for Juana.

I have done it for her.

5. Since the meaning of the pronoun se may be ambiguous when the sentence is out of context, clarification such as the following may be added to the sentence:

para él  a ellos  para Tom
a ella  para ellas  a los estudiantes
para Ud.  para Uds.  para mi madre

Se los compré a Ud.
I bought them for you.

or: I bought them from you.

Se las dimos a ellas.
We gave them to them.

Se la expliqué a los chicos.
I explained it to the kids.

Se lo hicimos a Tom.
We did it for Tom.

NOTE:
The indirect object triggered in Spanish by the prepositions a and para (to and for) can also be indicated in English by from and off:

La madre le sacó los zapatos mojados (al niño).
His mother took the wet shoes off him (the boy).

Ella se los sacó.
She took them off him.
El juez le pidió la verdad.
The judge asked the truth from the man.

El juez se la pidió.
The judge asked it from him.

Imperative Form (Commands) with Direct and Indirect Object Pronouns Together

For the use of direct and indirect object pronouns together in sentences that express a command, see Chapter 15, The Imperative.

Demonstrative Pronouns

The word demonstrative has its origin in the verb to demonstrate, or to show. Demonstrative pronouns modify a noun or nouns by showing the location of the noun or nouns represented by them.

In Spanish, there are three different categories of demonstrative pronouns that correspond to the same categories of demonstrative adjectives. Each one of these pronouns agrees in gender and number with the noun it replaces. The words éste, ése, aquél, their feminine forms ésta, ésa, aquélla, and the corresponding plural forms represent the Spanish equivalent of the English demonstrative pronouns. Note that the Spanish equivalents to this one and that one do not include uno or una to correspond to one in English. The written accent that used to be used to distinguish the demonstrative pronouns from the demonstrative adjectives is no longer required.

Categories of Demonstrative Pronouns

There are three categories of demonstrative pronouns.

A. Demonstrative pronouns replacing a noun or nouns near the speaker:

éste (león)          this one (lion)
éstos (leones)       these (lions)
ésta (mentira)       this one (lie)
éstas (mentiras)     these (lies)
Éstos viven en la selva africana. (leones) These live in the African jungle. (lions)
B. Demonstrative pronouns replacing a noun or nouns near the person spoken to, or near both the speaker and the listener:

- **ése** (amigo)  
  - that one (friend)
- **ésos** (amigos)  
  - those (friends)
- **ésa** (colmena)  
  - that one (beehive)
- **ésas** (colmenas)  
  - those (beehives)
- **Ése es el mejor del mundo.** (amigo)  
  - This one is the best in the world. (friend)

C. Demonstrative pronouns replacing a noun or nouns far from both the speaker and the listener:

- **aquél** (edificio)  
  - that one (building)
- **aquéllos** (edificios)  
  - those (buildings)
- **aquélla** (planta)  
  - that one (plant)
- **aquéllas** (plantas)  
  - those (plants)
- **Aquélla es de la región amazónica.** (planta)  
  - That one (over there) is from the Amazon region. (plant)

**NOTE:**

In English, expressions such as *over there, in the corner, further down*, etc., are usually added to the pronoun to point to the third location, which is designated in Spanish by **aquél/aquéllos/aquélla/aquéllas**. Additional identification may be used, if desired or needed:

- **Aquélla que está allá es de la región amazónica.** (planta)  
  - That one over there is from the Amazon region. (plant)
- **Aquélla que está allá es de la región amazónica y aquélla en el rincón es de los Andes.**  
  - That one over there is from the Amazon region, and that one in the corner is from the Andes.

**Neuter Demonstrative Pronouns**

There are three neuter demonstrative pronouns: **esto**, **eso**, and **aquello**. These pronouns refer to abstract or undefined nouns, situations, and ideas. They are always expressed in the singular form, take masculine singular adjectives, and never carry an accent mark:

- **Esto es bueno.**  
  - This is good.
- **Eso será ridículo.**  
  - That will be ridiculous.
- **Aquello era absurdo.**  
  - That was absurd.
They may also stand by themselves:

¿Qué quieres?
Aquello. Esto no me gusta.

What do you want?
That. I don't like this.

If the neuter pronoun is used when the gender of the noun is known, the pronoun replaces the idea behind it, rather than the noun. Notice the speaker's surprise denoted by the expression that has a neuter pronoun:

¡Qué es esto! ¿Quién trajo una cartera tan bonita?

What is this! Who brought such a pretty purse?

(The speaker is looking at the purse; however, there is no specific mention of the gender of the noun; esto/this refers to the whole situation.)

**Fixed Expressions with Neuter Pronouns**

Neuter pronouns are used in some idiomatic expressions, such as the following:

¡Eso!
Eso es.
Eso es todo.
Eso mismo.
en eso
en esto
todo esto
En eso, se escuchó un ruido enorme.
En esto, llegaron sus amigos.
“Eso es”—dijo Ismael.

That's it!
That's right.
That's all.
Exactly.
at that particular moment
at that time
all of this
At that moment, a loud noise was heard.
At that moment, his friends came.
“That's right”—said Ismael.

**The Pronoun lo**

Besides functioning as a neuter article, as in lo bueno es que... (the good thing is that . . .) and as an object pronoun, as in lo vimos (we saw it, we saw him), the word lo also functions as a demonstrative pronoun that replaces esto, eso or aquello:

Me dijo lo de costumbre.
Recibimos lo que habíamos pedido.

He told me the usual (thing).
We received what we had ordered.
Uses of Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns are used in the following cases.

A. The demonstrative pronoun as subject:

   \textit{Ésta es muy elegante. (blusa)} \quad \text{This one is very elegant. (blouse)}

B. The demonstrative pronoun to clarify a subject:

   Observe the following example. Keep in mind that in sentences with \textit{gustar}, whatever is liked becomes the subject:

   \begin{align*}
   A \ Delia \ no \ le \ gusta & \ mi \ prima \ porque \ es \ orgullosa. \\
   \text{Delia does not like my cousin because she is proud.}
   \end{align*}

   In this sentence, it is not entirely clear who is proud, Delia or the speaker’s cousin. To make it clear that it is the cousin, without repeating the subject \textit{mi prima, ésta} becomes the new subject of the verb \textit{ser} because it refers to \textit{prima}, the most recent noun in the sentence:

   \begin{align*}
   A \ Delia \ no \ le \ gusta \ mi \ prima \ porque \ ésta \text{ (mi prima)} \ es \ orgullosa. \\
   \text{The opposite situation would be:}
   \end{align*}

   \begin{align*}
   A \ Delia \ no \ le \ gusta \ mi \ prima \ porque \ aquélla \text{ (o Delia)} \ es \ orgullosa. \\
   \end{align*}

C. The demonstrative pronoun as object of the verb:

   Direct object:

   \textit{Quiero éstas.} \quad \text{I want these.}

   Indirect object:

   \textit{Se lo di a aquéllos. (estudiantes)} \quad \text{I gave it to those (students).}

D. The demonstrative pronoun by itself:

   \textit{Ésta. Prefiero la verde. (blusa)} \quad \text{This one. I prefer the green one. (blouse)}

   \textit{Aquélla. La casa que está en la esquina es más linda.} \quad \text{That one. The house that is on the corner is nicer.}
E. The demonstrative pronoun to indicate a place:

El grupo teatral se encuentra en ésta desde anoche. The theater group has been here (in this city) since last night.

Espero que ya hayan llegado a ésa sin problemas. I hope that you have already arrived there (in the city you were going to) without any problems.

F. The demonstrative pronoun to indicate time:

Demonstrative pronouns (as well as their corresponding adjectives) are used to indicate limitations of time. Éste, ésta, éstos, and éstas reflect the present time; ése, ésa, éses, and éses point to a time which is not very far from the present; aquél, aquélla, aquéllos, and aquéllas reflect a time that is long gone:

Éstas son las mejores tardes que hemos tenido. These are the best afternoons that we have had.

Ése fue un año memorable. That was a memorable year.

Claro que aquéllos eran los días más activos en la oficina. Of course those were the most active days in the office.

G. The demonstrative pronoun to express the equivalent of the former and the latter:

Carlos y Juan comenzaron el curso de español el año pasado. Mientras éste (Juan) lo hizo en el otoño, aquél (Carlos) lo tomó en la primavera. (In Spanish the word order is reversed).

Carlos and Juan began the Spanish course last year. While the former took it in the spring, the latter did it in the fall.

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns indicate who (or what) possesses what the noun indicates. These pronouns agree with the noun in gender and number:

- el mío (mi auto) mine (my car)
- la mía (mi casa) mine (my house)
- los míos (mis autos) mine (my cars)
- las mías (mis casas) mine (my houses)
- Las mías son más grandes. (casas) Mine are bigger. (houses)
- el tuyo (tu papel) yours (informal) (your paper)
**la tuya** (tu fiesta)  yours (informal) (your party)
**los tuyos** (tus papeles)  yours (informal) (your papers)
**las tuyas** (tus fiestas)  yours (informal) (your parties)
**El tuyo no tiene la rima correcta.** (poema)  Yours does not have the correct rhyme. (poem)

These forms are equivalent to the English **yours** (formal, in Spanish), **his**, **hers**, and **theirs**, for both singular and plural nouns.

**el suyo** (su perro)  Yours/His/Hers/Theirs has black hair. (dog)
**la suya** (su idea)  Yours/His/Hers/Theirs are excellent. (ideas)
**los suyos** (sus perros)  Yours/His/Hers/Theirs has black hair. (dog)
**las suyas** (sus ideas)  Yours/His/Hers/Theirs are excellent. (ideas)

**NOTE:**
In order to avoid ambiguity, the following expressions can be used to indicate **yours**, **his**, **hers**, and **theirs**, both singular (s) and plural (pl):

(1) yours/his/hers/yours (pl)/theirs:

**el de** Ud./él/ella/Uds./ellos/ellas
**la de** Ud./él/ella/Uds./ellos/ellas

(2) yours/his/hers/yours (pl)/theirs:

**las de** Ud./él/ella/Uds./ellos/ellas
**los de** Ud./él/ella/Uds./ellos/ellas

Example:

**El de Ud. es más moderno.** (televisor)  Yours is more modern. (television set)
**el nuestro** (nuestro cuadro)  ours (painting)
**la nuestra** (nuestra mesa)  ours (table)
**los nuestros** (nuestros cuadros)  ours (paintings)
**las nuestras** (nuestras mesas)  ours (tables)
**El nuestro es importado de Japón.** (cuadro)  Ours is imported from Japan. (painting)
**el vuestro** (vuestro país)  yours* (country)
**la vuestra** (vuestra tarea)  yours (chore)

* This pronoun indicates one or more things possessed by two or more persons, informal; it is used in Spain.
Neuter Possessive Pronouns

The neuter possessive pronouns *lo mío, lo tuyo, lo suyo, lo nuestro,* and *lo vuestro,* which refer to abstract or undefined nouns, are always expressed in the singular and take masculine singular adjectives:

- *Lo mío* es secreto. What I have is secret.
- *Lo tuyo* será expuesto. What you (informal, singular) have will be exposed.
- *Lo suyo* es muy serio. What you (formal, singular) have is very serious.
- *Lo nuestro* es placentero. What we have is pleasant.
- *Lo vuestro* no es bueno. What you (informal, plural) have is not good.

**NOTE:**

The construction *lo + de + a subject pronoun* (i.e. *lo de Ud., lo de Uds., lo de ella, lo de nosotros*) to indicate possession also takes masculine singular adjectives:

- *Lo de Uds.* es increíble. What you have . . . or What you have experienced is incredible.
- *Lo de nosotros* es bueno. What we have is good.

Uses of Possessive Pronouns

A. The possessive pronoun as subject:

- *La mía* es más interesante. (mi novela) Mine is more interesting. (my novel)

* This prepositional phrase cannot be used with the singular forms of the first person (*yo*) and the second person (*tú*) subject pronouns. Instead of *lo de yo* or *lo de tú,* the following forms are used: *Lo mío es apropiado.* (What I have is appropriate.) and *Lo tuyo es irónico.* (Yours [situation] is ironic.)

As in the preceding sentences, when the verb is followed by an adjective, the adjective must be masculine singular. However, if a modified noun follows the verb, the adjective must agree with the noun: *Lo tuyo no es buena idea.* (What you have . . . or What you suggest is not a good idea.) and *Lo nuestro es un caso perdido.* (Ours is a lost cause.)
B. The possessive pronoun as object of the verb:

Direct object:

Quiere conocer el mío. (apartamento)  She wants to see mine. (apartment)

Indirect object:

Quiere darles un regalo a los míos. (parientes) Literally: She wants to give a gift to mine (relatives).

C. The possessive pronoun by itself:

Los tuyos. No traigas los otros. (informes) Yours. Do not bring the other ones. (reports)

D. The possessive pronoun as an indication of respect:

There are a few fixed expressions of respect and courtesy, mainly used to address or refer to royal or high-ranking persons.

1. Su is used when talking about the person:

Su Señoría  His Lordship, Ladyship
Su Alteza  His/Her Highness
Su Majestad  His/Her Majesty
Su Excelencia  His/Her Excellency

2. Vuestra is used when addressing the person:

Vuestra Señoría  Your Lordship/Ladyship
Vuestra Alteza  Your Highness
Vuestra Majestad  Your Majesty
Vuestra Excelencia  Your Excellency

NOTES:

(1) Gender is shown by the adjectives or nouns that accompany the pronominal expression:

Su Alteza está ocupado.  His Highness is busy.
Su Majestad la reina.  Her Majesty the Queen.
Su Excelencia, el Presidente de la República.  His Excellency, the President of the Republic.

(2) The adjectives included in the title must be feminine:

Su Alteza Ilustrísima, el Rey de Grecia.  His Illustrious Highness, the King of Greece.
When talking to the person, that is, addressing the person as *vuestra*, the singular form of the possessive adjective, *su*, is also used in the sentence if it is necessary to indicate possession:

*Vuestra Señoría, su hermano acaba de llegar.*  Your Lordship, your brother has just arrived.

The abbreviation *Usía*, *Vuecencia*, and *Vuecelencia* are shortened forms of *Vuestra Señoría* and *Vuestra Excelencia*, respectively. Students of the language will find these expressions mainly in old works of literature or documents.

**E. The possessive pronoun after the verb ser (to be)**

1. To indicate possession in a general way, the article is usually omitted:

   _Esa entrada es mía; voy a ir al teatro mañana._  That ticket is mine; I am going to the theater tomorrow.

2. To indicate possession in a specific way, especially when there is a selection involved, the article is used:

   _Esa entrada es la mía, no la de Juan._  That ticket is mine, not Juan’s.

**Relative Pronouns**

A relative pronoun refers to a noun (called the antecedent), which also appears in the same sentence. In English, *that, who, whom, which, whose, and what* are relative pronouns. These pronouns connect two sentences:

- The lawyer arrived yesterday. He will be present.  
  _El abogado llegó ayer. Él estará presente._
- The lawyer, who arrived yesterday, will be present.  
  _El abogado, quien llegó ayer, estará presente._
- She sent flowers. The flowers are beautiful.  
  _Ella mandó flores. Las flores son preciosas._
- She sent flowers that are beautiful.  
  _Ella mandó flores que son preciosas._

In Spanish there are four basic relative pronouns: *que (that, which, who), quien (who), cual (which), and cuyo (whose).*

* *Usía* comes from *Useñoría* and *Vuestra Señoría.*
The Relative Pronoun *que* (that, which, who)

This pronoun is invariable and never changes form. It may refer to humans, nonhumans, and things:

- *El hombre que trajo la carta ya se fue.* The man that (who) brought the letter has already left.
- *Los conejos que ellos crían son grises.* The rabbits that they raise are gray.
- *Su generosidad, que muestra a menudo, es una de sus cualidades.* His generosity, which he often shows, is one of his virtues.

Uses of the Relative Pronoun *que*

This pronoun is used in several ways.

**A. The relative pronoun distinguished from the conjunction**

The relative pronoun *que* must not be confused with the conjunction *que*. This conjunction cannot be replaced by *quien* or by any of the forms of *cual* (*el/la cual, los/la cuales*) as the relative pronoun can. (For uses of *lo cual* and *lo que*, see the subsection Neuter Relative Pronouns at the very end of this section, *The Relative Pronoun que*.)

1. *que* as a relative pronoun

- *La mujer que abrió la puerta era vieja.* The woman who opened the door was old.
- *La mujer, quien abrió la puerta, era vieja.* The woman, who opened the door, was old.
- *La mujer, la cual abrió la puerta, era vieja.*

In the preceding first Spanish sentence, the information that follows the relative *que* is necessary and the clause is called a restrictive clause. Notice that there are no commas around a restrictive clause. In the next two Spanish sentences, the information provided after the relative is not necessary, and the clause is called a nonrestrictive clause, which has commas around it. Other examples are:

- *Todos los niños que habían esperado en el aula salieron a la misma hora.* All the children who had waited in the classroom left at the same time.
- *Todos los niños, quienes habían esperado en el aula...* All the children, who had waited in the classroom...
- *Todos los niños, los cuales habían esperado en el aula...*
2. *que* as a conjunction

When *que* is used as a conjunction, it does not replace a noun previously mentioned in the sentence (the antecedent):

*Creo que está sentado en la cocina.*
I think (that) he is sitting in the kitchen.

*Nos dijeron que el museo abre a las once.*
They told us (that) the museum opens at 11:00 A.M.

B. The relative pronoun *que* preceded by *el, la, los, or las*

1. The article that precedes *que* agrees in gender and number with the antecedent. This expression may mean *the one(s) who, the one(s) that,* or simply *who or which.* Verbs used with this expression include *ser* as well as others. In all cases, the noun could be inserted in the sentence without changing the meaning:

*Lola es la (chica) que me dio el dinero.*
*Lola is the one (who) gave me the money.*

*Jaime habló con el (amigo) que lo llamó.*
*Jaime talked to the person who called him.*

*Estos son los (sobres) que me trajo mi hermana.*
*These are the ones that my sister brought me.*

*Los (guantes) que me diste son muy bonitos.*
*The ones (that) you gave me are very pretty.*

*Éste es el cambio que me sobró, con el que podré comprar el periódico.*
*This is the change I have left, with which I’ll be able to buy the paper.*

2. A preposition may also precede the relative pronoun:

*Estas son las flores de las que te hablé.*
*These are the flowers I talked to you about.*

3. A definite article plus *que* may function as a subject, especially in proverbial usage. *Quien (who)* is also used in this case:

*El que persevera gana.*
*The one who (He who) perseveres, wins.*

*Quien persevera gana.*
C. The relative pronoun *que* in a nonrestrictive clause

When there is a nonrestrictive clause (one which supplies information that is not essential), commas must be placed before *que* and at the end of the clause:

- *El tren, que siempre llega atrasado, viene de San Juan.*
  - The train, which always arrives late, comes from San Juan.
- *Las lecciones, que enseña sin cobrar, son de inglés.*
  - The lessons, which she teaches at no charge, are English lessons.

D. The relative pronoun *que* is not optional

*Que* cannot be left out of a restrictive clause (one which gives information that is essential), as is commonly done in English:

- *La derrota que sufrieron fue terrible.*
  - The defeat (that) they suffered was terrible.

E. Placement of a preposition before *que*

If a preposition is used, it always precedes the relative pronoun *que* (notice how, in English, the preposition follows the verb when the relative pronoun is absent):

- *El dolor con que tuvo que vivir terminó con su vida.*
  - The pain he had to live with ended his life.

F. The relative pronoun *que* as subject of the verb

1. In a restrictive clause, which gives specific information:

- *El libro que salió a la venta es de Jiménez.*
  - The book that went on sale is by Jiménez.
- *El doctor que firmó la receta es un especialista.*
  - The doctor who signed the prescription is a specialist.

**NOTE:**

In a restrictive clause, *que* cannot be replaced by *quien*, even when the antecedent is a person. Therefore, it is **incorrect** to say: (*El doctor quien firmó la receta es un especialista.*)

2. In a nonrestrictive clause (one that supplies additional information and can be left out):

- *El libro, que salió antes de tiempo, es de Jiménez.*
  - The book, which came out ahead of time, is by Jiménez.
**G. The relative pronoun *que* as object of a preposition**

*Que* combines with the prepositions *a, con, de,* and *en.* While the definite article may be left out in a restrictive clause, it must be used in nonrestrictive clauses. Observe the following examples, where a form of *cual* may be used instead of *que*:

**Restrictive:**

- El lío en (el) *que* (en el cual) [where] está metido lo tiene nervioso.
  
  The problem in which he is involved makes him nervous.

**Nonrestrictive:**

- El lío, en el *que* (en el cual) está metido, lo tiene nervioso.

**Restrictive:**

- La simpatía con (la) *que* (con la cual) [with which] me dio el dinero me dejó pensando.
  
  The friendliness with which he gave me the money made me think.

**Nonrestrictive:**

- La simpatía, con la *que* (con la cual) me dio el dinero, me dejó pensando.

**Restrictive:**

- Las tiendas a (las) *que* (a las cuales) te refieres son muy caras.
  
  The stores you are referring to are very expensive.

**Nonrestrictive:**

- Las tiendas, a las *que* (a las cuales) te refieres, son muy caras.

**Restrictive:**

- Los ejercicios de (los) *que* (de los cuales) consta cada manual facilitan la comprensión.
  
  The exercises that each manual contains facilitate comprehension.

**Nonrestrictive:**

- Los ejercicios, de los *que* (de los cuales) consta cada manual, facilitan la comprensión.

**NOTE:**

Sometimes the relative pronoun *que* is used after the prepositions *a, con, de,* and *en* to refer to people, although this is not considered correct. It is better to use *quien, quienes,* or a form of *cual* (*el cual, la cual, los cuales, las cuales*).

**H. *Que* as an adverbial relative**

*Que* preceded by some prepositions and/or a definite article becomes an adverbial relative:

- El salón *en (el) que* estudiamos es bien grande.
  
  The classroom in which (where) we study is very large.

- La fiesta *de la que* llegó era en casa de Irene.
  
  The party from which she arrived was at Irene's house.

- La oficina *a la cual* nos dirigíamos estaba lejos.
  
  The office to which (where) we went was far away.

- El valor *con el que* sufrió su enfermedad lo hizo un santo.
  
  The courage with which he suffered his illness made him a saint.
NOTE:
Other adverbial expressions include a combination of que, preceded by a definite article, after a word or expression such as al lado, alrededor, debajo, detrás, encima, frente, or others. Que may be replaced by cual in these cases, although it makes the sentence more literary:

Esa era la casa frente a la que (a la cual) estaba la estatua. That was the house in front of which the statue was located.
Lo puso en la mesa, alrededor de la que (de la cual) estaban sentados los invitados. He put it on the table, around which the guests were sitting.

I. The relative pronoun qué as an interrogative

Que carries an accent mark (qué) when it is used as an interrogative after verbs of perception such as comprender, decir, entender, imaginarse, pensar, preguntar, saber, tener idea de, ver, and others. It may also be preceded by a preposition:

No me imagino con qué excusa vendrá. I can’t imagine with what excuse he is going to come.
No tenemos idea qué van a decidir. We don’t have any idea what they are going to decide.

J. The relative pronoun que with prepositions other than a, con, de, and en

Que combines with other prepositions besides a, con, de, and en, but the definite article must then be used in both restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses:

Este es el cuarto para el que compré la pintura. This is the room for which I bought the paint.
El cuarto, para el que compré la pintura, está arriba. The room, for which I bought the paint, is upstairs.

K. The relative pronoun que as a direct object

El barco que alquilamos ayer tiene un motor japonés. The boat (that) we rented yesterday has a Japanese engine.
El diario que compré trae la noticia. The newspaper (that) I bought has the news.
La tienda cubana, que visito con frecuencia, es buena. The Cuban store, which I visit frequently, is good.
**L. The relative pronoun que as an indirect object**

*Este es el vestido al que le arreglé el ruedo.*  
This is the dress whose hem I fixed.

*Se llevó la blusa azul, a la que le puse botones.*  
She took the blue blouse, which I put buttons on.

**M. The relative pronoun que and the personal a**

Before the definite article and *que*, the personal *a* is used when the relative pronoun could be replaced by *at which, to which, or (to) whom:*

*La estación a la que llegamos era Carlos Paz.*  
The station where (at which) we arrived was Carlos Paz.

*Llegamos temprano, a la que llegamos era Carlos Paz.*  
The station, where (at which) we arrived early, was Carlos Paz.

But:

*La estación que vimos era Carlos Paz.*  
The station we saw was Carlos Paz.

*Esa estación, que vimos ayer, era Carlos Paz.*  
That station, which we saw yesterday, was Carlos Paz.

*La tienda a la que le mandamos el recibo es cara.*  
The store to which we sent the receipt is expensive.

*La tienda, a la que le mandamos el recibo, es cara.*  
The store, to which we sent the receipt, is expensive.

But:

*La tienda que quería el recibo estaba cerrada.*  
The store that wanted the receipt was closed.

*La tienda, que quería el recibo, estaba cerrada.*  
The store, which wanted the receipt, was closed.

*El profesor al que nos mandaron es francés.*  
The professor to whom they sent us is French.

*El profesor, al que nos mandaron, es francés.*  
The professor, to whom they sent us, is French.

But:

*El profesor que llegó era francés.*  
The professor who arrived was French.

*El profesor, que llegó tarde, era francés.*  
The professor, who arrived late, was French.

*Las primas a las que no había visto nunca estaban allí.*  
The cousins whom I had never seen were there.

*Las primas, a las que no había visto nunca, estaban allí.*  
The cousins, whom I had never seen, were there.

But:

*Las primas que vivían allí estaban presentes.*  
The cousins who lived there were present.

*Las primas, que vivían allí, estaban presentes.*  
The cousins, who lived there, were present.
N. Prepositions used with *que* preceded by an indefinite noun

If an indefinite noun such as *nada* or *algo* precedes the relative pronoun *que*, a preposition is used when the expression can be replaced by *that preposition + a form of cual* (*which*):

- *No había nada a que (a lo cual) referirse.* There was nothing to refer to.
- *Había algo a que (a lo cual) resignarse.* There was something we could resign ourselves to.
- *Tiene algo de que (de lo cual) preocuparse.* She has something to worry about.
- *Encontramos algo en que (en lo cual) tener fe.* We found something to have faith in.

In the following sentences, *que* is used without a preposition and the substitution is not possible. The verb may appear conjugated or in the infinitive form:

- *No había nada que pudiéramos hacer.* There was nothing that we could do.
- *No hubo nada que hacer.* There was nothing to be done (that we could do).
- *Había algo que podíamos hacer.* There was something that we could do.
- *Me dieron algo (tenía que) revisar.* They gave me something (that I had) to check.

**NOTE:**

The *que* in *tener que* (*to have to*) and *haber que* (*must*) before an infinitive does not fit into the category of a relative pronoun:

- *Tenemos que pedirle dinero a Papá.* We have to ask Dad for money.
- *Hay que decirle que no venga.* We must tell him not to come.

O. Substitution of *lo cual* or *lo que* for *que*

When the antecedent is an indefinite noun such as *algo* or *nada*, and the relative pronoun is preceded by a preposition, *lo cual* or *lo que* must be used instead of *que* if the verb is conjugated.

- *No hay nada de lo cual (de lo que) pueda arrepentirse.* There is nothing she can repent of.
- *(Incorrect: No hay nada de que pueda arrepentirse.)*
- *Hay algunos con los cuales (con los que) hablo a menudo.* There are some with whom I talk often.
- *(Incorrect: Hay algunos con que hablo a menudo.)*
Lo que and lo cual are called neuter relative pronouns because of the neuter article lo. (Remember that definite articles are el, la, los, and las.)

1. The Neuter Relative Pronoun lo que (that, which, whatever)

The relative pronoun lo que is the neuter equivalent of el que and corresponds to the English pronouns what, which, and whatever. It may refer to a concept or an idea, as well as to a noun previously mentioned. Notice that the neuter definite article lo must precede que. This pronoun is invariable.

2. Uses of the Neuter Relative Pronoun lo que

(a) Lo que with a clause as an antecedent:

El informe no se envió a tiempo, lo que nos preocupa. The report was not sent on time, which worries us.

When lo que is followed by the subjunctive, it takes the meaning of whatever in English:

Lo que sea, será bienvenido. Whatever it is, it will be welcome.
Déjalo que haga lo que quiera. Let him do whatever he wants.

NOTES:

(1) Lo cual may replace lo que when it functions as a clause:

Todos los miembros estaban presentes, lo cual era de esperar. All the members were present, which was expected.

(2) The expression cosa que may sometimes be used instead of lo cual or lo que:

Llegó ayer por la tarde, cosa que me sorprendió. He arrived yesterday afternoon, which surprised me.

(b) Lo que to replace an undefined noun:

No puedo creer lo que me has dicho. I cannot believe what you have told me.
Te compré lo que me pediste. I bought you what you asked for.

(c) Lo que as a subject

Sometimes lo que functions as a subject, and is translated into English as what. As opposed to English, however, the neuter article must be used in Spanish:

Lo que pasa es inexplicable. What is going on is beyond words.
However, the English interrogative or exclamatory *what* is rendered into Spanish as *que*, without the article:

¡Qué buena película! — What a good movie!

¿Qué dice al pie de la página? — What does it say at the bottom of the page?

3. Different Meanings of *lo que*

   **cuánto**
   *Yo sé muy bien lo que (cuánto) ha trabajado.* — *I know how much* she has worked.

   **cómo**
   *Es increíble lo que (cómo) te extraña.* — It’s incredible *how* she misses you.

   **eso que, or aquello que**
   *Guardaré el secreto de lo que (eso que) dijiste.* — *I will keep the secret of* what you said.

   **lo cual**
   *Nos llamó, lo que (lo cual) nos sorprendió.* — He called us, which surprised us.

   **según**
   *Firmaron el contrato, lo que (según) se dice.* — They signed the contract, according to what they say.

   **NOTE:**
   The equivalent of the idiomatic expression *lo que es* is *as for* or *with regard to*:

   *Lo que es su trabajo, no lo satisface.* — As for his job, he is not satisfied.

4. *Lo cual* (which)

   The neuter relative *lo cual* refers to an entire clause, rather than to a noun, in which case it is equivalent to *lo que*:

   *Decidió cambiar la alfombra, lo cual (lo que) me pareció una buena idea.* — She decided to change the carpet, which I thought was a good idea.

   Compare the following sentence, where the definite article *la*, used instead of *lo*, changes entirely the meaning of the sentence, since the relative pronoun is now used to make reference only to the noun, not to the whole idea, as indicated by *lo cual*, in the preceding example.

   *Decidió cambiar la alfombra, la cual ya estaba muy gastada.* — She decided to change the carpet, which was already worn out.
The Relative Pronoun *quien* (who)

This pronoun has a plural form, *quienes*, but has no gender. It refers to persons only. Commas must enclose the relative clause when the pronoun is not preceded by a preposition:

- *Esta señora, quien vive lejos, es su hermana.*  
  This lady, who lives far away, is his sister.

- *Aquellos niños, quienes tienen hambre, comerán aquí.*  
  Those children, who are hungry, will eat here.

If there is a preposition, the commas are used when the information between the commas may be left out without altering what the speaker wants to convey:

- *La secretaria con quien trabajo se llama Amalia.*  
  The secretary with whom I work is called Amalia.

- *Los médicos, de quienes te hablé, son italianos.*  
  The doctors, whom I talked to you about, are Italian.

In English, the relative pronouns in expressions such as *to whom* (*a quien*), *with whom* (*con quien*), or *for whom* (*para quien*), may be omitted. These relative pronouns, along with the prepositions, must always be expressed in Spanish:

- *Esa es la chica a quien le dimos la muñeca.*  
  That is the girl to whom we gave the doll.

- *El muchacho con quien salgo estudia negocios.*  
  The boy with whom I go out studies business.

- *El hombre para quien trabajo es muy joven.*  
  The man for whom I work is very young.

**Uses of the Relative Pronoun *quien***

**A. The relative pronoun *quien* as a subject**

When there is no antecedent preceding *quien*, the relative pronoun functions as a subject. In this case, *quien* is equivalent to *el que*, but cannot be replaced by *el cual*:

- *Quien (El que) te hizo semejante regalo merece un aplauso.*  
  Whoever (He who) gave you such a gift deserves applause.

- *Quien (El que) lo dice, lo hace.*  
  Whoever (He who) says it, does it.
B. The relative pronoun **quien** as a direct object

When **quien** functions as a direct object, it must be preceded by the preposition *a*:

\[
\text{El cartero, a quien vi en el correo, no dejó el sobre.}
\]

The mailman, whom I saw in the post office, did not leave the envelope.

C. The relative pronoun **quien** as an indirect object

When **quien** functions as an indirect object, it must be preceded by the preposition *a*:

\[
\text{El cartero, a quien le di la carta, ya pasó.}
\]

The mailman, to whom I gave the letter, has already gone by.

D. The relative pronoun **quien** to mean **somebody (someone)** or **nobody (no one)**

Tenía **quien** lo fuera a buscar.

*He had someone to pick him up.*

No hay **quien** lo pueda aprobar.

*There is no one who can approve it.*

**NOTE:**

However, if the word **alguien** (someone) or **nadie** (no one) appears in the sentence, **que** is used instead of **quien**:

Tenía **alguien que** lo fuera a buscar.

*He had someone to pick him up.*

No hay **nadie que** lo pueda aprobar.

*There is no one who can approve it.*

E. The relative pronoun **quien** and the prepositions

With the exception of **cabe** (near) and **entre** (between), all prepositions may precede **quien**. **Entre** may, however, precede the plural form **quienes**:

\[
\text{Estos son los hombres entre quienes se mantuvo el secreto.}
\]

*These are the men among whom the secret was kept.*

**NOTE:**

**Cabe** is a form that appears in older literary pieces.

F. **Quién(es)** as an interrogative

**Quién(es)**, with an accent mark (**quién/quiénes**), is used as an interrogative word after verbs of perception such as **comprender, decir, entender, imaginarse, pensar, preguntar, saber, tener idea de, ver**, and others. It may also be preceded by a preposition:
No sé quién llegó.
No comprendió con quiénes había salido.

I don't know who arrived.
She didn't understand with whom he had gone out.

The Relative Pronoun cual (which)

This pronoun is used only in nonrestrictive clauses and may refer to persons, animals, or things. It has a plural form, cuales, while gender is determined by the definite article:

el cual, la cual, las cuales, los cuales

Since all the clauses used in the following examples are nonrestrictive, the relative pronoun may be replaced by que (with or without the definite article) or by quien. The use of cual makes the sentence sound too formal or elaborate:

Las armas, las cuales (que, las que) estaban escondidas, serán vendidas.
Los animales, a los cuales (a los que) alimentaron, eran salvajes.
Ese farmacéutico, el cual (quien) me dio la receta, es alemán.

The guns, which were hidden, will be sold.
The animals, which they fed, were wild.
That pharmacist, who gave me the prescription, is German.

In a restrictive clause, however, it is incorrect to use a form of cual:

Juan escribió en la hoja que estaba en la mesa.

(Incorrect: Juan escribió en la hoja la cual estaba en la mesa.)

NOTES:
(1) To clarify the antecedent when there is more than one noun (fruta and plato in the following example), a form of cual or que, preceded by the definite article, must be used:

La fruta de ese plato, que trajo Luis, no alcanza.

The fruit on that plate, which Luis brought, is not enough.

Here, it is not clear whether Luis brought the fruit or the plate. To indicate that the fruit (feminine in Spanish), rather than the plate (masculine), is what Luis brought, the article must be used:

La fruta de ese plato, la cual (la que) trajo Luis, no alcanza.
However, to show that what he brought was the plate, *el cual* or *el que* should be used.

(2) *Lo cual* has the same meaning as *lo que*:

\[ \text{Nos quedaban dos, lo cual (lo que) nos alegró.} \]

We had two left, which made us happy.

**Uses of the Relative Pronoun cual(es)**

The relative pronoun *cual(es)* is used in the following cases:

**A. The relative pronoun cual instead of quien**

*Cual*, preceded by the definite article, is used instead of *quien* to better identify the antecedent, that is, the noun to which the pronoun refers:

\[ \text{Éste es el profesor para quien hice el trabajo.} \]
\[ \text{Éste es el profesor para el cual hice el trabajo.} \]

This is the professor for whom I did the job.

**B. The relative pronoun cual after prepositional phrases**

*Cual* is used after prepositional phrases such as *cerca de*, *detrás de*, *en medio de*, and *por arriba de*:

\[ \text{El jardín estaba lleno de flores, en medio de las cuales caminábamos.} \]
\[ \text{El cielo tenía un enorme nubarrón negro, por arriba del cual se veía el sol.} \]

The garden was full of flowers, among which we were walking.

The sky had a huge dark cloud, on top of which the sun could be seen.

Notice the contraction in *por arriba de* + *el cual* in the preceding sentence.

**C. The relative pronoun cual after longer prepositions**

*Cual* is used after prepositions of more than one syllable, such as *desde*, *entre*, *para*, and *sobre*:

\[ \text{Hay dos habitaciones entre las cuales tienen un pequeño baño.} \]
\[ \text{Me gustó la torre, desde la cual se puede ver toda la ciudad.} \]

There are two rooms, with a small bathroom in between.

I liked the tower, from which one can see the whole city.
D. The relative pronoun cual after por, sin, and tras

*Cual* is used after the prepositions *por*, *sin*, and *tras*, since the expressions *por que*, *sin que*, and *tras que* have a different meaning:

- El camino **por el cual** fuimos a Madrid tenía muchos autos.  
  The road by which we went to Madrid had a lot of cars. 
  *(Incorrect: El camino **por que** fuimos a Madrid...)*
- El libro **sin el cual** no puedo estudiar es muy caro.  
  The book without which I cannot study is very expensive. 
  *(Incorrect: El libro **sin que** no puedo estudiar...)*
- Esa fue la idea **tras la cual** orienté mis esfuerzos.  
  That was the idea according to which I oriented my efforts. 
  *(Incorrect: Esa fue la idea **tras que** orienté...)*

E. The relative pronoun cual replaced by quien

Preceded by *a* + a definite article, a form of *cual* may be replaced by *quien*:

- Éste es mi primo peruano, **al cual** *(a quien)* Ud. vio en la biblioteca.  
  This is my Peruvian cousin, whom you saw in the library.

F. Cual as an interrogative

*Cual* and its derivatives, with an accent mark, functions as an interrogative after verbs of perception such as *comprender, decir, entender, imaginarse, pensar, preguntar, saber, tener idea de, ver*, and others. It may be preceded by a preposition:

- No entiendo **cuál** es la broma.  
  I don’t understand what the joke is. 
- No sabe con **cuáles** se va a quedar.  
  She doesn’t know which ones she is going to keep.

G. A cuál más

The expression *a cuál más* has a specific meaning:

- Había flores, **a cuál más** linda.  
  There were flowers, each one nicer than the others.

**NOTE:**

*Each one*, otherwise, translates as *cada cual*:

- **Cada cual** recibirá una medalla en la ceremonia.  
  Each one will receive a medal in the ceremony.
The Relative Pronoun *cuyo* (whose)

This form is a possessive relative pronoun that functions as an adjective and has gender and number: *cuyo, cuya, cuyos, cuyas*. As an adjective, *cuyo* (and its derivatives) agrees with the noun that follows it, rather than with the antecedent:

- El hombre, *cuyo* hijo ganó el concurso, vive aquí.
- Estos árboles, *cuyas* hojas se cayeron, florecerán en la primavera.

The man, whose son won the contest, lives here. These trees, whose leaves have fallen, will bloom in the spring.

As a pronoun, the use of *cuyo* (and all its forms) is obsolete; it may be found in works of literature and old documents. Its use is very limited, since it applies solely to people and can be used only with *ser*. In modern Spanish, it is replaced by *de quien(es), a quien(es)*, or a combination of *de* plus a form of *cual*:

(Obsolete: El hombre, *cuyo* es este portafolio, es muy joven.)
Correct: El hombre, *de quien* es este portafolio, es muy joven.

El hombre, a quien pertenece este portafolio, es muy joven.
The man, to whom this briefcase belongs, is very young.

(Obsolete: La autora, *cuyos* son estos artículos, es alemana.)
Correct: La autora, *de la cual* son estos artículos, es alemana.
The author, to whom these articles belong, is German.

NOTES:
(1) The forms *cuyo, cuya, cuyos*, and *cuyas* never take an article.

(2) If the antecedent is an indirect object, *a quien(es)* replaces a form of *cuyo*. Observe the following cases where English uses *whose* (*de quien*):

- Manuela, *a quien* le queda bien la chaqueta, está feliz.
- El soldado, *a quien* le recortaron el pelo, es nuevo.

Manuela, whose jacket fits her well, is happy. The soldier, whose hair was trimmed, is new.

(3) The English *whose*, used as an interrogative pronoun, becomes *de quién(es)* in Spanish, not *cuyo*. It carries an accent:

- ¿Tú sabes *de quién* es esa obra maestra?
- ¿De quién es esta mochila?

Do you know whose that masterpiece is? Whose is this backpack?
(4) In indirect discourse, de quién(es) is used in Spanish instead of a form of cuyo. It carries an accent:

Le pregunté de quién eran esas gafas. I asked him whose those glasses were.

(5) The expression in which case is translated into Spanish as en cuyo caso:

La conferencia puede ser cancelada, en cuyo caso nos avisarán. The conference might be canceled, in which case they will let us know.

The Use of the Personal a Before Relative Pronouns

The forms el/la que, los/las que, quien, and quienes are preceded by the personal a in the following cases.

A. The personal a is used when the verb requires it, as in agradecer a, visitar a, recordar a:

Recuerda a la que te escribe. Remember who writes to you.
Agradeció a los que la ayudaron. She thanked those who helped her.
No visitará a quien no lo quiera. He will not visit those who don’t want it.

B. The personal a is used whenever a relative pronoun acts as an indirect object:

Tu jefe es la persona a quien debes enviar el memo. Your boss is the person to whom you must send the memo.
Esa es la tienda a la que podemos devolver la caja. That is the store to which we can return the box.

The Use of Relative Adverbs Instead of Relative Pronouns

Relative adverbs may replace relative pronouns:

como
La manera en que (como) lo dijo dejó a todos preocupados. The way in which he said it left everybody worried. (adverb of manner)

cuando
La hora a la que (cuando) llegó no es asunto mío. The time when he arrived is none of my business. (adverb of time)
**cuanto**
Puse en el informe todo lo que (cuanto) me dijo. I put in the report everything she told me. (adverb of quantity)

donde
El estante en que (donde) estaba el florero era de pino. The shelf where the vase was standing was made of pine. (adverb of place)

**Summary of the Uses of Relative Pronouns**

Relative pronouns are used in restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses in the following functions. The English sentence is presented in the restrictive form only.

**A. The relative pronoun as subject**

Restrictive: La mujer que me hizo el vestido cobra mucho.
Nonrestrictive: La mujer, que (quien, la cual) me hizo el vestido, cobra mucho.
The woman who made the dress for me charges a lot.

Restrictive: El hombre que vino hace poco está afuera.
Nonrestrictive: El hombre, que (quien, el cual) vino hace poco, está afuera.
The man who came not long ago is outside.

Restrictive: Los chicos que vinieron ayer son sus hijos.
Nonrestrictive: Los chicos, que (quienes, los cuales) vinieron ayer, son sus hijos.
The children who came yesterday are his sons.

Restrictive: El perro que le mordió en la pierna estaba rabioso.
Nonrestrictive: El perro, que (el cual) le mordió en la pierna, estaba rabioso.
The dog that bit her leg was mad.

Restrictive: Las nubes que se aproximaban eran de lluvia.
Nonrestrictive: Las nubes, que (las cuales) se aproximaban, eran de lluvia.
The clouds that were approaching were rain clouds.

**B. The relative pronoun as direct object**

Restrictive: Ese es el estudiante que (a quien) vi en la biblioteca.
Nonrestrictive: Ese estudiante, a quien (al cual, al que) vi en la biblioteca, estaba estudiando.
That is the student (whom) I saw in the library.
Restrictive: Las señoras que Juan entrevistó en su casa son maestras.
Nonrestrictive: Las señoras, que (a quienes, a las cuales, a las que) Juan entrevistó en su casa, son maestras.
The ladies that Juan interviewed in their house are teachers.

Restrictive: Me encantó el regalo que me compraste.
Nonrestrictive: El regalo, que (el cual) me compraste ayer, me encantó.
Los regalos, que (los cuales) me compraste ayer, me encantaron.
I very much liked the gift(s) that you bought me.

C. The relative pronoun as indirect object

Restrictive: Este es el informe al que (al cual) le agregué un párrafo.
Nonrestrictive: El informe, al que (al cual) le agregué un párrafo, es éste.
This is the report to which I added a paragraph.

Restrictive: Esta es la chica a quien (a la cual, a la que) le di la dirección.
Nonrestrictive: Esta chica, a quien (a la cual, a la que) le di la dirección, irá a visitarte.
This is the girl to whom I gave the address.

Restrictive: Veo a los alumnos a quienes (a los cuales, a los que) les mostré el video.
Nonrestrictive: Esos alumnos, a quienes (a los cuales, a los que) les mostré el video, faltaron a clase.
I see the students to whom I showed the video.

D. The relative pronoun after the prepositions a, con, de, and en

Restrictive: Esa es la situación a que (a la que, a la cual) nos vamos a referir.
Nonrestrictive: Esa situación, a la que (a la cual) nos vamos a referir, es muy importante.
That is the situation to which we are going to refer.

Restrictive: Ya tiene una muchacha con quien (con la cual, con la que) puede ir al baile.
Nonrestrictive: La muchacha, con quien (con la cual, con la que) irá al baile, vive cerca de su casa.
He already has a girl with whom he is going to the dance.

Restrictive: Este es el tema de que (del cual, del que) conversamos.
Nonrestrictive: El tema, del cual (del que) conversamos, es interesante.
This is the subject which we talked about.
Restrictive: Me contó el problema en que (en el que, en el cual) está metido.
Nonrestrictive: El problema, en el que (en el cual) está metido, es muy serio.
He told me about the problem in which he is involved.

E. The relative pronoun after other prepositions

Restrictive: Esta es la orden por la cual (por la que) lucharemos.
Nonrestrictive: Esta orden, por la cual (por la que) lucharemos, es estricta.
This is the ordinance for which we are going to fight.

Restrictive: Este es el candidato por quien (por el cual, por el que) votaremos.
Nonrestrictive: El candidato, por quien (por el cual, por el que) votaremos, ganará.
This is the candidate for whom we are going to vote.

F. Relative pronouns and adjectives: cuyo/a, cuyos/as

Restrictive: Los libros cuyos capítulos son largos costarán más.
Nonrestrictive: Los libros, cuyos capítulos son largos, costarán más.
The books whose chapters are long will cost more.

Interrogative Pronouns

The following basic pronouns are used to formulate questions: qué, cuál, quién, de quién(es) (which now replaces the obsolete pronoun cuyo), and cuánto, with their variations of gender and number. If followed by a noun, these interrogative words function as adjectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>qué</td>
<td>cuánto</td>
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<tr>
<td>cuál</td>
<td>(invariable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>quién</td>
<td>cuáles</td>
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<td>cuyo, cuya</td>
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<td>cuánto, cuánta</td>
<td>cuyos, cuyas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>cuántos, cuántas</td>
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Uses of Interrogative Pronouns

The Interrogative Pronoun *qué*

A. *Qué* used to ask for a definition

When used to ask for a definition, *qué* is the subject of the verb *ser*, and is not interchangeable with *cuál*:

- ¿Qué es un mendigo?  
  What is a beggar?  
- ¿Qué son las flores secas?  
  What are dried flowers?  
- ¿Qué es esto?  
  What is this?

B. *Qué* used to secure information about an object or situation

*Qué* may be the object of any verb. In this case, it is not interchangeable with *cuál*:

- ¿Qué pasa aquí?  
  What is going on here?  
- ¿Qué traes en la bolsa?  
  What are you carrying in your bag?  
- ¿Qué piensan tus padres?  
  What do your parents think?

C. *Qué* used in place of *cuál* or *cuáles*

*Qué* can be used in place of *cuál* or *cuáles* to ask for clarification regarding the noun, or if the question involves a selection:

- ¿Qué te gusta más, el papel blanco o el azul?  
  Which do you like better, the white paper or the blue one?  
- ¿Cuál te gusta más, el papel blanco?  
  Which one do you like better, the white paper?

D. *Qué* functioning as an adjective

*Qué* functions as an adjective when it precedes a noun. When asking for specific information it is better to use *qué* than *cuál*, even when the questions may involve a selection:

- ¿Qué barco se usa para pescar trucha?  
  What boat is used for trout fishing?  
- ¿Qué libro recomienda?  
  What book do you recommend?  
- ¿Qué música te gusta?  
  What music do you like?
NOTE:
If the noun is left out, *cuál* is used whenever the idea is understood in context. It functions as a pronoun:

¿Cuál se usa para pescar trucha? Which one is used for trout fishing?
¿Cuál recomienda? Which one do you recommend?
¿Cuál te gusta? Which one do you like?

E. Prepositions before *qué*

The identification implied in the question may require the use of a preposition before the interrogative pronoun.

1. Not involving a selection; merely asking for information:

¿De qué está hecha la mesa? What material is the table made of?
¿Con qué vas a escribir? What are you going to write with?
¿Contra qué estaba recostado el policía? What was the policeman leaning against?
¿A qué le recuerda esta música? What does this music remind you of?
¿Para qué sirve esto*? What is this good for?
¿Por qué usas eso*? Why do you use that?

2. If the question involves a selection, *cuál* is used after the preposition:

¿De cuál (de esas maderas) estaba hecha la mesa? Which one (of all those types of wood) was the table made of?
¿Con cuál (de estos lápices) vas a escribir? Which one (of these pencils) are you going to write with?
¿Contra cuál (de esas paredes) estaba recostado el policía? Which one (of those walls) was the policeman leaning against?

F. *Que* after verbs of perception

*Que*, with an accent mark (*qué*), functions as an interrogative after verbs of perception such as *comprender, decir, entender, imaginarse, pensar, preguntar, saber, tener idea de, ver*, and others:

No sé qué problemas tiene con la compañía. I don’t know what problems he has with the company.

* While *para qué* means *for what purpose*, *por qué* asks *for what reason*. ¿Para qué vamos allá? (For what purpose [why] are we going there?); Vamos *para comprar unos sobres*. (To buy some envelopes.); ¿Por qué vamos allá? (For what reason are we going there?); Porque Irma no está bien. (Because Irma is not doing well.)
The Interrogative Pronoun cuál, cuáles

Cuál has a plural form, cuáles, and both words can refer to either one of the genders. They are used to inquire about something that involves a selection among two or more options.

A. Cuál as object of a verb

Cuál may be the object of any verb. The preposition de plus an article or demonstrative may be added to emphasize the selection:

- ¿Cuál fue la primera de la independencia? (batalla)  
  Which one was the first one of Independence?
- ¿Cuál es tu preferido? (corredor)  
  Which one is your favorite one? (driver)
- ¿Cuál (de ellos) se necesita para mañana? (informes)  
  Which one (of them) is needed for tomorrow? (reports)
- ¿Cuáles (de éstos) son los más caros? (autos)  
  Which ones (of these) are the most expensive? (cars)
- ¿Cuáles (de éstos) te gustan más? (guantes)  
  Which ones (of these) do you like better? (gloves)

B. Cuál as a subject of ser

Cuál is not interchangeable with qué when the question involves a selection, even when English may use what:

- ¿Cuál (de éstas) es la última canción de ese grupo?  
  What is the last song of that group?
- ¿Cuáles fueron las opciones que pudo considerar Emilia?  
  What were the options that Emilia could have considered?
- ¿Cuáles son los temas que encuentras interesantes?  
  What are the subjects that you find interesting?

Notice that in some fixed expressions, cuál is used as the subject of ser, regardless of what English uses:

- ¿Cuál es su dirección?  
  What is your address?
- ¿Cuál es su número de teléfono?  
  What is your phone number?
- ¿Cuál es la fecha de hoy?  
  What is today’s date?
- ¿Cuál es tu color preferido?  
  What is your favorite color?
C. **Cuál(es) replaced by quién(es)**

When the selection refers to human beings, *quién(es)* may be used instead of *cuál(es)*:

- ¿Quién es el mejor alumno? Who is the best student?
- ¿Quiénes son los mejores? Which ones are the best?

D. **Prepositions before cuál(es)**

The selection implied in the question may require the use of a preposition before the interrogative pronoun, when referring to either human beings or inanimate objects. *Who* or *which* may be used in English. See earlier section E. 2. under The Interrogative Pronoun *qué*:

- ¿Con cuál te quedas? Me quedo con el perro negro. Which one of these are you going to keep? I'll keep the black dog.
- ¿Para cuáles es la carta? Es para los que trabajan de noche. For whom is the letter? It's for the night shift workers.
- ¿A cuáles les darán el premio? To whom will they give the prize?
- ¿Para cuál sirve esto? Which one is this good for?
- ¿En cuál estás pensando? Who are you thinking about?

E. **Cuál(es) after verbs of perception**

*Cuál* and *cuáles*, with an accent mark, function as an interrogative after verbs of perception such as *comprender, decir, entender, imaginarse, pensar, preguntar, saber, tener idea de, ver*, and others:

- No se imagina cuál es la causa de esa demora. She cannot imagine what the cause for that delay might be.

---

**The Interrogative Pronoun quién, quiénes**

A. **Quién(es) used for human beings**

When the identification refers to human beings, *quién* and *quiénes* are used. Spanish gives information on number (singular or plural) and gender (masculine or feminine) with the use of specific forms that are invariable in English:

- ¿Quién vino ayer? Who came yesterday?
- ¿Quiénes vinieron hoy? (pl.) Who came today?
¿Quién es ese? (m.s.) Who is that?
¿Quiénes son aquéllas? (f.pl.) Who are they?

The forms cuál and cuáles may also be used, especially when the question involves a selection:

¿Cuáles están en huelga, los obreros del vidrio o los metalúrgicos?
¿Cuál es tu hermano, el que tiene barba?

Which ones are on strike, the glass craftsmen or the metalworkers?
Which one is your brother, the one with a beard?

B. Quién(es) with prepositions

Prepositions may precede quién and quiénes. This may not necessarily be the case in English:

¿En quién confías? Whom do you trust?
¿Hacia quiénes corrieron? Towards whom did they run?
¿Con quién saldrás hoy? With whom will you go out today?

C. Quién(es) after verbs of perception

Quién and quiénes, with an accent mark, function as an interrogative after verbs of perception such as comprender, decir, entender, imaginarse, pensar, preguntar, saber, tener idea de, ver, and others:

Carlos me dijo quién había llegado con la noticia. Carlos told me who had arrived with the news.

Cuyo, cuya, cuyos, cuyas replaced by de quién, de quiénes

Cuyo (and its derivatives) is no longer used as a pronoun. It has been replaced by de quién and de quiénes, which translates in English as whose. (As a relative adjective, cuyo precedes the noun and agrees with it in gender and number, as in cuya casa):

¿De quién es este marco? Whose is this frame?
¿De quiénes son estos sobres? Whose are these envelopes?
¿De quién es esta carta? Whose is this letter?
¿De quién son estas hojas? Whose are these sheets?
It is possible to use *qué*, preceded or not by a preposition, to imply possession in cases when English uses *whose*:

¿Qué marco es éste? ¿Es el de Pedro?  
¿Con qué auto fueron? ¿Con el tuyo?  
Whose frame is this? Pedro’s?  
Whose car did you take? Yours? (What car did you take? Yours?)

**NOTE:**
In these Spanish sentences, there is more emphasis on the item in question (*marco, auto*) than on the owner of the object. To emphasize the owner, *de quién* should be used:

¿De quién es este marco?  
¿De quién era el auto?  
Whose frame is this?  
Whose car was it?

### The Interrogative Pronoun *cuánto, cuánta, cuántos, cuántas*

This pronoun changes gender and number according to the noun that it replaces in the question:

¿Cuánto (café) necesitas?  
¿Cuánta (nieve) cayó?  
¿Cuántos (chicos) se quedaron?  
¿Cuántas (hijas) tienen?  
How much (coffee) do you need?  
How much (snow) came down?  
How many (children) stayed?  
How many (daughters) do they have?

#### A. *Cuánto* and its variants with prepositions

Prepositions may precede *cuánto* and its derivatives:

¿A cuánto lo dejamos?  
¿Con cuántas (naranjas) se puede hacer la mermelada?  
At how much will you let me have it? (talking about a price)  
With how many (oranges) can we make the marmalade?

#### B. *Cuánto* and its variants after verbs of perception

Any of the forms of *cuánto*, with an accent mark, function as an interrogative after verbs of perception such as *comprender, decir, entender, imaginarse, pensar, preguntar, saber, tener idea de*, and *ver*. These forms may also be preceded by a preposition:
No sabemos cuántos hay. We don’t know how many there are.
No me imagino a cuántas les dijo lo mismo Don Juan. (mujeres) I can’t imagine to how many of them Don Juan said the same thing. (women)

**Exclamation Words**

Many of the interrogative words can be used as exclamative forms.

**Qué as an Exclamation**

A. *Qué* as an exclamation may be followed by a noun, a modifier or an adverb.

Notice the use of the indefinite article in the English version:

- ¡Qué problema!
- ¡Qué linda casa!
- ¡Qué lejos queda!

**NOTE:**

In order to give emphasis, observe the following uses in which the English version is not affected.

1. The adjective may be placed before the noun:

   - ¡Qué buena programa!
   - ¡Qué casa linda!
   - ¡Qué lejos queda!

2. *Más* (more) or *tan* (so) may precede the adjective, but only when the adjective follows the noun:

   - ¡Qué casa más linda!
   - ¡Qué casa tan linda!

B. *Qué* as an exclamation may be preceded by a preposition:

- ¡En qué situación estaba! No me quiero ni acordar.
- ¡Con qué amigos se fue! Ninguno es bueno.
- ¡A qué abogado fue a consultar!

- What a problem!
- What a nice house!
- How far it is!

- What a good program!
- What a nice house!
- What a nice house!

- What a situation he was in! I don’t even want to remember.
- What friends he left with! None of them is (any) good.
- What a lawyer he consulted!
C. *Qué* as an exclamation may be followed by the preposition *de* to mean *how many*:

¡*Qué* de gente había ayer en el concierto! How many people there were in the concert yesterday!

¡*Qué* de tragedias sufrió en su vida! How many tragedies he suffered in his life!

*NOTE:*

If adjectives are added, they must be placed after the noun:

¡*Qué* de gente joven había en la fiesta! How many young people there were at the party!

D. *Qué* as an exclamation may be replaced by *cuán* in literary pieces, with the meaning of *how*:

¡*Cuán* bellas están las olas! How beautiful the waves are!

**Quién as an Exclamation**

This word is used mainly to convey hopes or wishes, and wonder.

A. **Quién to convey hope or wish:**

¡*Quién* fuera suertudo! I wish I were lucky!

¡*Quién* pudiera ir! I wish I could go!

B. **Quién to convey wonder:**

¡*Quién* diría! Can you imagine?

¡*Quién* iba a pensar! Can you imagine? / Who would have thought it?

**Indefinite Pronouns**

These pronouns replace persons, nonhuman beings, and things, in a general or imprecise manner. In Spanish they are called *indefinidos* or *indeterminados*. They can be categorized as follows.
A. Invariable indefinite pronouns

1. Used only in the singular form:

   - **algo**
     
   Compró algo. She bought something.

   - **alguien**
     
   Alguien viene. Someone comes.

   - **cada cual**
     
   Cada cual lo hace. Each one does it.

   - **cada uno**
     
   Cada uno está en su lugar. Each one is in its place.

   - **nada**
     
   No tiene nada. He has nothing.

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

   - **otro tanto**
     
   Yo hago otro tanto. I do likewise.

2. Used also with variations, indicated by the article:

   - **más** *(lo más, los más)*
     
   Quiero más. I want more.

   Más vienen los sábados. More come on Saturdays.

   Dijeron lo más que pueden. They said the most they can.

   Los más están de acuerdo. Most of them agree.

   Quiere algunos más. He wants some more.

   - **menos** *(lo menos, los menos)*
     
   Quiero menos. I want less.

   Menos vienen los sábados. Fewer come on Saturdays.

   Dijeron lo menos que pueden. They said the least they can.

   Los menos están de acuerdo. Few of them agree.

   Quiere algunos menos. He wants a few less.

   - **demás** *(lo demás, los demás)*
     
   Tiene libros y demás. She has books and other things.

   Lo demás es fácil. The rest is easy.

   Llegaron los demás. The others arrived.

   Also: Llegaron los otros.

B. Variable indefinite pronouns

1. With variations in number:

   - **bastante(s)**
     
   Tiene bastante / bastantes. She has enough.
**cual(es)**
Cual quiere café, cual quiere té.

Cuales quieren café, cuales quieren té.

**cualquiera / cualesquiera**
Quiero que venga cualquiera.
Cualquiera que sea.
Cualesquiera que sean.

**quien(es)**
Quién más, quien menos, todos quieren ir.
Quienes más, quienes menos, todos quieren salir.

**quien(es)quiera**
Vendrá con quienquiera.

Vendrá con quienesquiera.

**suficiente(s)**
Tienen lo suficiente.
Gracias. Tengo lo suficiente.
No hay suficientes. (platos)

**tal(es)**
Tal habrá que no querrá quedarse.
Tales habrá que no podrán venir.

---

2. Used only in the singular, in both genders:

**cada uno/cada una**
Cada uno/a lo traerá.

Each one will bring it.

---

C. Indefinite pronouns used only in the plural, in both genders:

**ambos/as**
Los vi a ambos.

I saw both of them.
Hablare con ambas.
or: Los vi a los dos.
Hablare con las dos.

**otros tantos/otras tantas**
Otros/as tantos/as llegarán por la mañana.
(as many as before)

**unos/unas**
Unos/as vieron la película.

**unos cuantos/unas cuantas**
Unos/as cuantos/as vieron la película.

**unos poco/unas pocas**
Unos/as poco/as lo saben.

**varios/varias**
Varios/as cantan bien.
En cuanto a modelos, hay varios.

---

**D. Indefinite pronouns with all the variations of gender and number:**

**alguno**
Algunos lo pidieron.

**alguno que otro**
Alguna que otra tendrá la nota.

**cuento**
Recibió cuanta quiso.

**demasiado**
Tenía demasiado.
Demasiadas (chicas) tenían esperanzas de conseguir el trabajo.

**mismo** (with an article)
No son las mismas.

---

I will speak to both of them.

other ones
Other ones will arrive in the morning.

some
Some saw the movie.

a good number
A good number (of them) saw the movie.

a few
A few know it.

several, different
Several sing well.
As for models, there are different ones.

some, someone
Some asked for it.

a few, some
A few will have the note.

as much, as many
He received as much as he wanted.

too much, too many
He had too much.

same
They are not the same.
**mucho**
*Mucha (manteca) no es aconsejable.*
Lo oyeron de muchos.

**ninguno**
*No vino ninguno.*
No compró ninguna.

**otro** (with or without an article)
*(El)* Otro lo pintó.
Las otras no quisieron escucharlo.

**poco**
*Me dejó con poca (mostaza).*
Compró pocas.

**todo**
*Todo está bien.*
Se vino con todo (su poder).

**uno**
*Siempre le dice la verdad a uno.*

---

**Reflexive Pronouns**

Reflexive pronouns are used when the direct or indirect object is the same as the subject of the sentence. Reflexive pronouns have the same forms as indirect object pronouns with the exception that *se* is used instead of *le* or *les* in the third persons singular and plural (*él, ella, Ud.*, *ellos, ellas, Uds.*).

The infinitive form of reflexive verbs always ends in *se*, as in the verbs *alegrarse*, *to be glad*; *ponerse*, *to put on*; *reírse*, *to laugh*. When the verb is conjugated, this pronoun changes according to the subject.

---

* The plural, *ningunos/as*, is rarely seen. It may be used to replace nouns that indicate a plural word, such as *tenazas* (pliers), *exequias* (funeral rites), or *pantalones* (pants).
**Forms of the Reflexive Pronouns**

The personal pronouns appear in parentheses, for clarification only:

- (yo) me myself to, for, from, or off myself
- (tú) te yourself to, for, from, or off yourself
- (él) se himself to, for, from, or off himself
- (ella) se herself to, for, from, or off herself
- (el / ella) se itself to, for, from, or off itself
- (Ud.) se yourself to, for, from, or off yourself
- (nosotros/as) nos ourselves to, for, from, or off ourselves
- (vosotros/as) os yourselves to, for, from, or off yourselves
- (ellos / as) se themselves to, for, from, or off themselves
- (Ud.s.) se yourselves to, for, from, or off yourselves

- **escribirse** Yo me escribo notitas. I write little notes to myself.
- **hacerse** Tú te hiciste un vestido. You made a dress for yourself.

**Position of Reflexive Pronouns**

**A.** Reflexive pronouns can be placed before a conjugated verb:

*Yo me saco el sombrero. (sacarse)*

I take off my hat.

**NOTE:**

To make the sentence negative, place *no* before the reflexive pronoun:

*Yo no me saco el sombrero.*

**B.** Reflexive pronouns can be placed between the negative and the verb in a negative command:

*No te saques el sombrero. (sacarse)*

Do not take off your hat.

**C.** Reflexive pronouns can be attached to an affirmative command:

*Acuéstate temprano. (acostarse)*

Go to bed early.
D. In the case of two verbs, when there is either an infinitive or a present participle, reflexive pronouns may be:

1. Placed before the conjugated verb:

   *Yo me quiero sacar el sombrero.*  I want to take off my hat.
   *El se está cambiando la ropa.*  He is changing his clothes.

2. Attached to the infinitive or to the present participle:

   *Yo quiero sacarme el sombrero.*  I want to take off my hat.
   *El está cambiándose la ropa.*  He is changing his clothes.

E. If there is a direct object pronoun, there are three possible scenarios.

1. The reflexive pronoun precedes the direct object pronoun when there is only one verb:

   *Ella se lo pone.*  She puts it on.

2. If there is a conjugated verb and an infinitive, the reflexive pronoun and the direct object pronoun precede either the conjugated verb or are attached to the infinitive. Observe the use of the pronouns in the second and third examples that follow:

   *Ella se quiere comprar un vestido.*  She wants to buy a dress for herself.
   *Ella se lo quiere comprar.*  She wants to buy it for herself.
   *Ella quiere comprárselo.*

   If the verb is in the progressive tense (endings -ando and -iendo in Spanish; -ing in English), both the reflexive pronoun and the direct object pronoun either precede the verb *estar* or are attached to the present participle:

   *Yo me estoy arreglando la casa.*  I am fixing the house for myself.
   *Yo me la estoy arreglando.*  I am fixing it for myself.
   *Yo estoy arreglándomela.*

3. If the verb is in one of the perfect tenses, the reflexive pronoun and the direct object pronoun always precede the auxiliary *haber*. They cannot be placed between the auxiliary and the main verb nor be attached to the past participle:
Yo me he arreglado la casa.  
I have fixed the house for myself.

Yo me la he arreglado.  
I have fixed it for myself.

**F. Se and the indirect object pronoun with passive reflexive verbs**

When the verb is a passive reflexive (see the section The Passive se, under Constructions with se at the end of this chapter), the indirect object pronoun follows the pronoun se. This form is used to indicate unplanned occurrences. The verb agrees with the direct object in number. In this type of sentence the direct object (fruta, suerte in the following examples) cannot be replaced by a direct object pronoun:

- **acabarse:**
  - Se acabó la fruta.  
  - There's no more fruit.
  - Se me acabó la fruta.  
  - I ran out of fruit.

- **terminarse:**
  - Se terminó la suerte.  
  - There's no more luck.
  - Se les terminó la suerte.  
  - They ran out of luck.

- **ponerse:**
  - Se nos pusieron los pelos de punta.  
  - Our hair stood on end.

**G. In the case of impersonal sentences, the indirect object pronoun follows the pronoun se:**

- **Se le** dieron todas las oportunidades.  
  - They gave him/her/you (singular/plural)/them all the opportunities.

- **Se nos** entregó el contrato.  
  - They gave us the contract.

**Functions of Reflexive Pronouns**

Reflexive pronouns may function as either direct or indirect objects.

**A. Reflexive pronouns as direct objects**

When the action of the verb goes back to the subject of the sentence, a reflexive pronoun is always used in Spanish (in English, expressions such as myself, herself, etc. may be omitted if the identity of the subject is obvious):

- Yo me peiné.  
  - I combed my hair.

- José se afeita de mañana.  
  - José shaves in the morning.
NOTE:
Some verbs, such as the following, are reflexive in Spanish but not in English:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{reírse} & \quad \text{Yo me reí.} & \text{I laughed.} \\
\text{irse} & \quad \text{Ella se fue.} & \text{She left.} \\
\text{quedarse} & \quad \text{Él se quedó.} & \text{He stayed.} \\
\text{equivocarse} & \quad \text{Nos equivocamos.} & \text{We made a mistake.} \\
\text{sentarse} & \quad \text{Me sentaré aquí.} & \text{I will sit here.} \\
\text{darse} & \quad \text{Se dio cuenta.} & \text{He realized.}
\end{align*}
\]

B. Reflexive pronouns as indirect objects

When there is a direct object (or a direct object pronoun) in the sentence, the reflexive pronoun functions as the indirect object. In English, this is indicated by expressions such as to (for, from, off) himself, herself, etc:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ella se lo hizo (a ella misma).} & \quad \text{She did it to herself.} \\
\text{Él se buscó una secretaria (para él).} & \quad \text{He looked for a secretary for himself.} \\
\text{Nosotros nos la compramos.} & \quad \text{We bought it for ourselves.} \\
\text{Julia se quitó ese peso de encima.} & \quad \text{Julia took that load off her mind.} \\
\text{Ellos se sacan los zapatos.} & \quad \text{They take off their shoes (off themselves).}
\end{align*}
\]

NOTE:
With parts of the body or personal possessions such as clothing, Spanish does not use possessive adjectives; therefore, the reflexive pronoun functions as an indirect object:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{cortarse:} & \quad \text{Me corté un dedo.} & \text{I cut my finger.} \\
\text{romperse:} & \quad \text{Raúl se rompió un brazo.} & \text{Raúl broke his arm.} \\
\text{ponerse:} & \quad \text{Se puso el sombrero.} & \text{He put on his hat.}
\end{align*}
\]

Reflexive and Reciprocal Pronouns

The pronouns that precede the first, second, and third persons plural (nosotros/as, vosotros/as, ellos/as, ustedes) can function as either reflexive or reciprocal pronouns. This ambiguity does not present itself in English since there are specific words used in each instance. The sentence \textit{Ana y Luisa se ayudan cuando tienen problemas} may mean either:
Ana and Luisa help themselves when they have problems.
(Ana helps herself and Luisa helps herself.)
(or) Ana and Luisa help each other when they have problems.

If it is necessary to clarify the meaning of the sentence in Spanish, the following expressions may be used:

**Reflexive:**

*Ellas se ayudan a sí mismas.*

They help themselves. (Each one helps herself.)

**Reciprocal:**

*Ellas se ayudan entre sí.*

They help each other.

(also, mutuamente, recíprocamente, la una a la otra, or unas a otras)

**NOTE:**

If the verb indicates reciprocity but is not a reflexive verb, the words *unol/a* and *otro/a* are used with prepositions such as the following:

*Viven el uno para el otro.*

They live for each other.

*No salen el uno sin el otro.*

They don't go out without each other.

*Trabajarán la una por la otra.*

They will work for each other.

*No pueden trabajar la una sin la otra.*

They cannot work without each other.

*Siempre están uno con el otro.*

They are always with each other.

*Cocinan una para la otra.*

They cook for each other.

The masculine form *uno para (por, sin, etc.) el otro* is used for males only or for mixed-gender pairs or groups. The feminine form *una para (por, sin, etc.) la otra* is used for females only.

---

**The Intransitive Character of Spanish Reflexive Verbs**

Several verbs in Spanish take on an intransitive meaning when the action stays with the subject; that is, they adopt the reflexive form whenever the subject is also the recipient of the action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>Intransitive Meaning (reflexive form)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>bañar</em></td>
<td><em>Bañé al niño.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to bathe</td>
<td><em>bañarse</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Me bañé.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**PRONOUNS**
Spanish Reflexive Verbs Versus Equivalent Nonreflexive Forms in English

Several verbs that are reflexive in Spanish and are conjugated with reflexive pronouns do not necessarily use expressions like *myself, oneself, themselves*, etc. in English. The English verbs may be one-word verbs, or else an auxiliary verb such as *to get, to be, to feel*, or *to become* combined with a past participle. Some examples follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Verb</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aburrirse</td>
<td>to get bored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divertirse</td>
<td>to have fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enojarse</td>
<td>to get mad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enristecerse</td>
<td>to get sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacerse</td>
<td>to become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morirse</td>
<td>to die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ofenderse</td>
<td>to feel offended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olvidarse</td>
<td>to forget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>portarse</td>
<td>to behave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preoccuparse</td>
<td>to be worried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentarse</td>
<td>to sit down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semantic Changes in Reflexive Verbs

Several Spanish verbs change their meaning in the reflexive form:

- **ir**
  - to go, to go out
  - Voy a la escuela.
  - Me voy mañana.

- **volver**
  - to return
  - Volvió temprano.
  - Se volvió loco.

- **probar**
  - to taste
  - Probaron el jugo.
  - Se probaron la gorra.

*Ir* and other verbs may also be used in their nonreflexive or reflexive forms without altering significantly their basic meaning. In that case, the reflexive form only emphasizes the participation of the subject in the action indicated by the verb, with a slight indication of involvement or enjoyment:
Constructions with se

The Passive se

Se is used in Spanish in a construction known as the passive reflexive (voz pasiva refleja) when the subject is inanimate and there is no specified agent of the action. The verb appears in the third person, singular or plural, according to the subject. Although the pronoun se makes the verb appear to be a reflexive verb, it only indicates a passive construction and it does not function as a reflexive pronoun. This construction does not carry a direct object but a passive subject.

Different verb tenses have been selected for the following examples where the passive subject precedes the verb.

Present

passive voice: La basura es tirada en el cesto.
passive se: La basura se tira en el cesto.
The trash is thrown into the basket.

Preterit

passive voice: El francés fue usado como idioma diplomático.
passive se: El francés se usó como idioma diplomático.
French was used as a language of diplomacy.

* An additional meaning for dormirse is to fall asleep.
Future
passive voice:                      El almuerzo será servido en el jardín.
passive se:                        Se servirá el almuerzo en el jardín.
Lunch will be served in the garden.

Present perfect
passive voice:                      Muchas solicitudes han sido aceptadas.
passive se:                        Se han aceptado muchas solicitudes.
Many applications have been accepted.

Present progressive
passive voice:                      Los pedidos están siendo considerados.
passive se:                         Los pedidos se están considerando.
Requests are being considered.

NOTE:
The verb(s) may also precede the passive subject:

Se están considerando los pedidos. Requests are being considered.

The Use of se in Unexpected Actions

The pronoun se precedes the indirect object (me, te, le, nos, os, les) in a construction used to emphasize an event as being unexpected, sudden, or just the fact that it happened to us, to him, and so on. The verb appears in the third person, singular or plural, according to the subject:

Se me perdieron los documentos. I lost the documents.
Se te olvidó el número. You forgot the number.
Se le quebraron las botellas. He cracked the bottles.
Se nos cayó el paquete. We dropped the package.
Se os rompieron los platos. You broke the plates.
Se les terminó el pan. They ran out of bread.

The active voice is used when the action is viewed as merely an occurrence. There is almost no change in the English translation:

Perdí los documentos. I lost the documents.
Te olvidaste el número. You forgot the number.
Quebró las botellas. He cracked the bottles.
Dejamos* caer el paquete. We dropped the package.
Rompisteis los platos. You broke the plates.
Terminaron el pan. They finished the bread.

NOTES:
(1) The preposition **a** + a noun or pronoun is usually added for clarification or emphasis:
A mí se me perdieron los documentos.
A Juan se le quebraron las botellas.
A mis padres se les terminó el pan.

(2) This form is also used in cases of possession, particularly with parts of the body, or to indicate personal or emotional attachment:
Se nos ensuciaron los pies. Our feet got dirty.
Se me arruinó la garganta. My throat got ruined.
Se te secó la piel. Your skin dried up.
Se les murió el perro. Their dog died.
Se le quemó la casa. Her house burned.
Se me fueron los hijos. My children moved out.

(3) Reflexive verbs may be used in the command form to express personal or emotional attachment. Some forms are only correct in the negative:
¡No se nos escapen! Do not flee from us!
¡No se me ponga triste! Do not get sad!
¡No se nos desaliente! Do not get discouraged!
Aparézcansele temprano. Show up early (in his house).

If the command is informal and singular, the same construction may be used, but se must be changed to **te**:
¡No te me desalientes! Do not get discouraged!
¡No te nos vayas! Do not leave us!

(4) If the verb is not in the preterit, there is no indication of an unexpected occurrence:
Se me pierden los papeles I lose my papers because I do not
  porque no los pongo en su lugar. put them where they belong.
Se les morirá el perro si no Their dog will die if they do not
  lo llevan al veterinario. take it to the vet.

* Notice the use of the verb *dejar* in this sentence, which may be translated into English as *We let the package fall.*
Impersonal Expressions with se

Impersonal expressions are formed with the pronoun *se* when the subject is human, but unspecified. Verbs are always in the singular, and are frequently followed by a direct object:

- *Se espera lluvia.*  
  Rain is expected.
- *Aquí se habla italiano.*  
  Italian is spoken here.
- *Se escucha mal por este teléfono.*  
  It is not possible to hear well on this phone.

**Uses of se in Impersonal Expressions**

There are several ways in which *se* is used.

**A. Se is used to replace the impersonal *uno/una* (one) when this is the subject of the verb.**

All impersonal verbs appear in the third person singular in this case:

- *Uno nunca sabe lo que está pasando.*  
  *Nunca se sabe lo que está pasando.*  
  One never knows what is going on.
- *¿Cuándo puede uno venir a la fiesta?*  
  *¿Cuándo se puede venir a la fiesta?*  
  When may one come to the party?
- *Una es trabajadora aunque no quiera.*  
  *Se es trabajadora aunque no se quiera.*  
  One is a hard worker even when one does not want to be.

**NOTES:**

1. The use of *uno* or *una* depends on whether the speaker is male or female.
2. If the verb is inherently reflexive, such as *sentarse* (*to sit down*), *uno/una* must be used to avoid the repetition of *se*:

- *Uno puede sentarse en el piso.*  
  *Uno se puede sentar en el piso.*  
  One can sit down on the floor.
  *(Incorrect: *Se puede sentarse en el piso.)*

- *Una puede probarse la ropa aquí.*  
  *Una se puede probar la ropa aquí.*  
  One can try on clothes here.
  *(Incorrect: *Se puede probarse la ropa aquí.)*
B. **Se is used to indicate an undefined subject.**

The third person plural that is used in English to indicate an undefined subject, e.g. *They (People) say that it will rain tonight*, is rendered in Spanish in two different ways.

1. **Se** and the singular form of the verb:

   \[ \textit{Se} \text{ dice que va a llover esta noche.} \]

2. The plural form of the verb, without **se**:

   \[ \textit{Dicen que va a llover esta noche.} \]

C. **Se and the personal a**

When the recipient of the action is animate, including *alguien* and *nadie*, the object is preceded by the preposition **a** and the verb appears in the singular:

- Se recibe a todos.  
  Everybody is welcome.
- Se respeta a los ancianos.  
  Seniors are respected.
- Se respeta a la abuela.  
  The grandmother is respected.
- Se cuida a los animales.  
  The animals are taken care of.
- No se respeta a nadie.  
  No one is respected.

**NOTES:**

1. In informal speech, and when the object is human, it is more common to use the verb in the plural (without **se**) with an unspecified subject:

   - Reciben a todos.  
     Everybody is welcome.
   - Respetan a los ancianos.  
     Seniors are respected.
   - Respetan a la abuela.  
     The grandmother is respected.

2. It is wrong to use the verb in the plural with **se**, since that has no meaning in Spanish:

   \[ \text{\textit{Incorrect: Se reciben a todos.}} \]
   \[ \text{\textit{Incorrect: Se respetan a los ancianos.}} \]

3. If **a** is not used and the verb agrees with the noun, the verb becomes reflexive or reciprocal:

   - Se respeta a la abuela. (impersonal **se**)  
     The grandmother is respected.
   - Se respetan a los ancianos. (impersonal **se**)  
     Seniors are respected.
Se respetan los ancianos. (reciprocal) Seniors respect each other.
Se respetan los ancianos. (reflexive) Seniors respect themselves.

(4) If the animate object refers to people as categories, rather than to a specific person, the verb is plural and is not preceded by a:
Se nombró al secretario. The secretary was designated.
Se nombraron secretarios. Secretaries were designated.

(5) It is possible to replace the direct object with a pronoun:
Se vistió al rey con elegancia.
Se lo vistió con elegancia. They dressed up the king with elegance.
Se amó a los enemigos en ese mundo ideal.
Se los amó. Enemies were loved in that ideal world.

(6) It is correct to replace the indirect object with a pronoun when the indirect object is preceded by the preposition para. Both sentences are correct:
Se abrió una excepción para Pablo.
Se le abrió una excepción. They made an exception for Pablo.
However, when the indirect object is preceded by the preposition a, it is better to use the form with the pronoun:
(Se dio un premio a Pablo.)
Se le dio un premio. Pablo was given an award.

(7) It is not possible to replace both the direct object and the indirect object in the third person, singular or plural. The repetition of se must be avoided:
Correct: Se le(s) perdonó el error. They forgave his/their mistake.
Incorrect: Se se* lo perdonó.

D. Se is used to express orders, rules, or simply to post a notice:
Se prohíbe escupir en el suelo. Spitting on the floor is forbidden.
Se paga en la caja. Pay at the cashier’s.
Se abre a las dos de la tarde. We open at 2:00 P.M.

* The indirect object pronoun le has to be changed to se when it precedes a direct object pronoun that begins with the letter l (lo, la, los, las), and so this combination must be avoided because it involves the repetition of se. However, combinations of the other first or second person pronouns are correct: Se me otorgó un premio con honores. or Se me lo otorgó con honores. (They gave me an award with honors.); and Se nos aplazó la entrega por dos meses, or Se nos la aplazó por dos meses. (They delayed delivery to us for two months.)
Summary of the Different Types of se

The pronoun *se* may indicate that the construction is reflexive, reciprocal, impersonal, or passive:

**Reflexive**

*El libro se cayó.*
The book fell.

*La niña se sentó.*
The girl sat down.

*Los hombres se murieron.*
The men died.

**Reciprocal**

*Las mujeres se pegaron.*
The women hit each other.

*Los chicos se escriben.*
The kids write to each other.

**Impersonal**

*Se visitó la escuela.*
They visited the school.

*Se visitó a los profesores.*
They visited the professors.

*Se visitó a los estudiantes.*
They visited the students.

**Passive**

*Se visitó la escuela.*
The school was visited.

*Se visitaron las escuelas.*
The schools were visited.

**NOTES:**

When the inanimate noun is in the singular form, it is not possible to distinguish the impersonal construction from the passive form. The sentence *Se visitó la escuela* could be expressing the impersonal *se* or the passive voice.

If the inanimate noun is in the plural, the impersonal *se* cannot be used with it. A *se* in this context can only be the passive construction.
Correct: *Aquí se venden manzanas.* (passive)
Apples for sale here.

Incorrect: *Se venden manzanas.* (impersonal)
Apples for sale here.

If the subject of the verb is the impersonal *uno/una*, the verb agrees with the subject in the singular:

*Uno pide mariscos si no hay pescado.*

One orders seafood if there is no fish.

However, if *uno/una* is replaced by *se*, the verb must be changed to the plural:

*Se piden mariscos si no hay pescado.*

People order seafood if there is no fish.
Prepositions

Prepositions are invariable words that establish a relationship between two words within a sentence:

- almohada de plumas  
  feather pillow
- bote sin remos  
  boat without oars
- programas para los jóvenes  
  programs for young people

The word *preposition* signals the place of this word in the sentence. A preposition precedes the word or words that complement the main word or idea. In the phrase *almohada de plumas*, the noun *plumas* complements the word *almohada* by pointing to specific characteristics of this particular pillow (it is *made of feathers*).

A preposition may be represented as a single word (called *preposición simple*), as two or more words grouped together (*preposición compuesta*), or as part of a compound word.

**Simple Prepositions**

There are not many simple prepositions in Spanish, and each one has a basic meaning in English:

- **a**  
  to, at
- **ante**  
  before
- **bajo**  
  under
- **cabe**  
  near
- **con**  
  with
- **contra**  
  against
- **de**  
  of, from
- **desde**  
  from
- **en**  
  in, on, at
- **entre**  
  between
- **hacia**  
  towards
- **hasta**  
  until
- **para**  
  for
- **por**  
  for
- **según**  
  according to
- **sin**  
  without
- **so**  
  under
- **sobre**  
  about, on
- **tras**  
  after

---

* This preposition is obsolete, but is found in old documents and literary works.
### Other Equivalent Uses in English

The following list contains the simple Spanish prepositions and their corresponding prepositions, prepositional phrases, or expressions used in English, as well as examples of their use. Please note that the Spanish prepositions are listed in alphabetical order. Their English equivalent prepositions also appear in alphabetical order and not according to the preponderance of their usage. Also note that, in cases where an equivalent preposition is not used in English, it is indicated as *(no preposition)*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>at</td>
<td>place; verbs of motion</td>
<td>Llegué temprano al teatro. I arrived early <em>at</em> the theater.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>place</td>
<td>Se sentaron <em>at</em> la mesa para almorzar. They sat <em>at</em> the table to have lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>price/rate</td>
<td>La harina está <em>at</em> un dólar la libra. Flour is <em>at</em> one dollar the pound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>measure</td>
<td>Maneja <em>at</em> cien millas por hora. She drives <em>at</em> a hundred miles per hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>direction</td>
<td><em>At</em> El miró <em>at</em> los niños. He looked <em>at</em> the children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by</td>
<td>manner</td>
<td>Lo haremos poco <em>by</em> poco. We'll do it little <em>by</em> little.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>At</em> Esta blusa está hecha <em>by</em> mano. This blouse was made <em>by</em> hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for</td>
<td>indirect object</td>
<td>Le compré un regalo <em>for</em> Juan. I bought a gift <em>for</em> Juan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from</td>
<td></td>
<td>Le comprare los boletos <em>from</em> Inés. I'll buy the tickets <em>from</em> Inés.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Le oí decir <em>from</em> Luisa que vendrá. I heard it <em>from</em> Luisa that she'll come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>At</em> Le quisieron los chicos <em>from</em> la madre borracha. They took the children <em>from</em> the drunk mother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>place; verbs of motion</td>
<td>Mañana llegará a Miami.</td>
<td>He'll arrive in Miami tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like</td>
<td></td>
<td>Este pastel sabe a chocolate.</td>
<td>This pie tastes like chocolate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of</td>
<td></td>
<td>Había olor a pino.</td>
<td>There was a smell of pine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on</td>
<td>location</td>
<td>El baño está a la izquierda.</td>
<td>The bathroom is on the left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manner</td>
<td></td>
<td>Iré a pie.</td>
<td>I'll go on foot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td></td>
<td>Te espero a la salida.</td>
<td>I'll wait for you on the way out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>indirect object</td>
<td>Le daré uno a mi jefe.</td>
<td>I will give one to my boss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vamos a la clase.</td>
<td>We go to class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Se fueron al campo.</td>
<td>They went to the countryside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason; purpose</td>
<td></td>
<td>Se fueron a vivir al campo.</td>
<td>They went to live in the countryside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Él vino a comprar uvas.</td>
<td>He came to buy grapes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up to</td>
<td></td>
<td>Iré a que me den el resultado.</td>
<td>I'll go to get the results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Al entrar lo vi allí.</td>
<td>Upon entering, I saw him there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up to</td>
<td></td>
<td>La maleza le llegaba a la cintura.</td>
<td>The underbrush reached up to his waist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<td>---------</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ante</strong></td>
<td>before</td>
<td>before</td>
<td><em>Se presentará ante los testigos.</em> She will appear before the witnesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>confronted with</td>
<td><em>Ante el peligro no sabía qué hacer.</em> Confronted with the danger, he did not know what to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in front of</td>
<td><em>El cura hizo una reverencia ante el altar.</em> The priest bowed in front of the altar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in the presence of</td>
<td><em>Se rindió ante sus enemigos.</em> He surrendered in the presence of his enemies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>bajo</strong></td>
<td>behind</td>
<td>behind</td>
<td><em>Se escondió bajo una falsa identidad.</em> He hid behind a false identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>below</td>
<td><em>Hacia dos grados bajo cero ese día.</em> It was two degrees below zero that day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>under</td>
<td><em>Estaba fresco bajo las ramas.</em> It was cool under the branches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cabe</strong></td>
<td>near, close to</td>
<td>S vice la puerta. (Found only in old literary works and documents). He stood up near the door.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>con</strong></td>
<td>about</td>
<td>about</td>
<td><em>Estoy feliz con la noticia.</em> I am happy about the news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in</td>
<td><em>Lo marcó con lápiz.</em> He marked it in pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of</td>
<td><em>La mujer con pantalones es mi tía.</em> (If the subject is omitted, this should read La de pantalones es mi tía.) The woman in pants is my aunt (the one in pants).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of</td>
<td><em>Sueño con hacer un viaje largo.</em> I dream of making a long trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| con     | with    | milk | Trajo una jarra con leche.  
|         |         |      | She brought a jug of milk. |
| on      |         |      | Contamos contigo esta noche.  
|         |         |      | We count on you tonight. |
| con     | with    |      | Llegó con él.  
|         |         |      | She arrived with him. |

**contra**  
against  
position  
contra  
contrary to, in opposition to  
contra  
De  
about  
Hablamos de sus clases.  
We talked about his classes.  
No sabe de qué se trata.  
She doesn't know what it is about.  
Los pusieron de guías.  
They assigned them as guides.  
María trabaja de enfermera.  
María works as a nurse.  
De niño estudiaba piano.  
As a child, he studied the piano.  
Vino de noche.  
He came at night.  
Se fue de madrugada.  
He left at dawn.  

**de**  
about  
De  
as; as a  
Los pusieron de guías.  
They assigned them as guides.  
María trabaja de enfermera.  
María works as a nurse.  
De niño estudiaba piano.  
As a child, he studied the piano.  
Vino de noche.  
He came at night.  
Se fue de madrugada.  
He left at dawn.  

**PREPOSITIONS**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lo sabemos de memoria.</td>
<td>We know it by heart.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leímos dos obras de Cela.</td>
<td>We read two plays by Cela.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos la tomó del brazo.</td>
<td>Carlos took her by the arm.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vino acompañada de Carlos.</td>
<td>She came accompanied by Carlos.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trabaja de día.</td>
<td>She works during the day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay cinco cuadras de mi casa al banco.</td>
<td>There are five blocks from my house to the bank.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enseña de agosto a mayo.</td>
<td>She teaches from August to May.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los aztecas vinieron del norte.</td>
<td>The Aztecs came from the north.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remigio es de Asunción.</td>
<td>Remigio is from Asuncion.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recibí una carta de Eduardo.</td>
<td>I got a letter from Eduardo.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacó el conejo de una galera.</td>
<td>He took the rabbit from the tall hat.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dijo el poema de memoria.</td>
<td>She recited the poem from memory.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De salir temprano, lo veré.</td>
<td>If I leave early, I will see him.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La chica de verde es Elena.</td>
<td>The girl in green is Helen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>La chica <em>de</em> blusa amarilla es mi prima.</td>
<td>The girl in the yellow blouse is my cousin.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>place</em></td>
<td>Es el parque más bonito <em>del</em> estado.</td>
<td>It's the nicest park in the state.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las aulas <em>de</em> la escuela son grandes.</td>
<td>The classrooms in the school are large.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>manner</em></td>
<td>Lo hicieron <em>de</em> prisa.</td>
<td>They made it in haste. (quickly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leyó el artículo <em>de</em> corrido.</td>
<td>He read the article in a continuous manner. (without stopping)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>reason</em></td>
<td>Lloró <em>de</em> pena.</td>
<td>She cried in grief.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>time</em></td>
<td>Estudia <em>de</em> tarde.</td>
<td>She studies in the afternoon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>of possession, ownership</em></td>
<td>Esa es la casa <em>de</em> mi tía.</td>
<td>That one is my aunt's house. (the house of my aunt)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el evangelio <em>del</em> apóstol</td>
<td>the book of the apostle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>una obra <em>de</em> Lorca</td>
<td>one of Lorca's plays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>category</em></td>
<td>Son prisioneros <em>de</em> guerra.</td>
<td>They are prisoners of war.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es estudiante <em>de</em> primer año.</td>
<td>He is a first-year student. (no preposition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tengo dolor <em>de</em> muelas.</td>
<td>I have a toothache. (no preposition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenemos una cama <em>de</em> dos plazas.</td>
<td>We have a double bed. (no preposition)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>material, made of</td>
<td>Quiere un vestido de seda.</td>
<td>She wants a silk dress. (a dress made of silk)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contents</td>
<td>No quiero té. Deme una taza de café.</td>
<td>I don’t want tea; give me a cup of coffee.</td>
<td>Un vaso de leche, por favor. A glass of milk, please.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identification</td>
<td>el presidente de la compañía</td>
<td>the president of the company</td>
<td>Los maestros de la escuela primaria tuvieron un aumento. The elementary school teachers got a raise. (no preposition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partitive</td>
<td>Quiero un poco de azúcar.</td>
<td>I want some sugar. (a little bit of sugar)</td>
<td>No dijo nada de nada. She didn’t say anything at all. (no preposition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pejorative</td>
<td>El generoso de mi tío no me dio nada para mi cumpleaños.</td>
<td>My generous uncle didn’t give me anything for my birthday. (no preposition)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compassion</td>
<td>El pobrecito del niño hacía dos días que no comía.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The poor little child had not eaten for two days. (no preposition)</td>
<td>purpose, use</td>
<td>Compré tazas de café.</td>
<td>I bought coffee cups. (no preposition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She was in the waiting room. (no preposition)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Estaba en la sala de espera.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She brought the tennis balls. (no preposition)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trajo las pelotas de tenis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He has a soccer ball. (no preposition)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tiene una pelota de fútbol.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have a twelve-year-old daughter. (no preposition)</td>
<td>age</td>
<td>Tienen una hija de doce años.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They were taken off the list.</td>
<td>off</td>
<td>Fueron sacados de la lista.</td>
<td>They were taken off the list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She hid out of fear.</td>
<td>out of, because of</td>
<td>Se escondió de miedo.</td>
<td>She hid out of fear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She cried out of happiness.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lloró de alegría.</td>
<td>She cried out of happiness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got more than twenty letters.</td>
<td>than</td>
<td>Recibí más de veinte cartas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have more than those you gave me.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tengo más de las que tú me diste.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is time to sleep.</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>Es hora de dormir.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is impossible to decipher the hieroglyphics.</td>
<td></td>
<td>El jeroglífico es imposible de descifrar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leandro is the boy with blue eyes.</td>
<td>with</td>
<td>Leandro es el niño de ojos azules.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Estaba cubierto de sudor.</em></td>
<td>He was covered with sweat.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Está enamorada de Julio.</em></td>
<td>She is in love with Julio.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fueron a una cena de treinta dólares por persona.</em></td>
<td>They attended a dinner with a thirty-dollar fixed price.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>desde</strong> from distance</td>
<td>José caminó desde el parque.</td>
<td>Joe walked from the park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>point of reference</td>
<td>Se veían las casas desde la ventanilla del avión.</td>
<td>One could see the houses from the airplane window.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>starting point in time</td>
<td>Estaré en casa desde las ocho en adelante.</td>
<td>I'll be home from 8:00 o'clock on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>since length of time</td>
<td>Estoy estudiando desde las cinco.</td>
<td>I have been studying since five.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>en</strong> at place</td>
<td>Los chicos están en la escuela.</td>
<td>The children are at school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dennis estudió en la universidad.</td>
<td>Dennis studied at the university.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La ceremonia será en la iglesia.</td>
<td>The ceremony will be at the church.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spanish English Uses Examples</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vamos a comer (estudiar) <strong>en</strong> la mesa de la cocina.</td>
<td>We are going to eat (study) <strong>at</strong> the kitchen table.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papá está <strong>en</strong> casa.</td>
<td>Dad is <strong>at</strong> home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estaré <strong>en</strong> la salida.</td>
<td>I’ll be <strong>at</strong> the exit door.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Está <strong>en</strong> una encrucijada.</td>
<td>He is <strong>at</strong> a crossroads.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El alquiler se <strong>fijó en</strong> cien dólares por semana.</td>
<td>The rent was fixed <strong>at</strong> one hundred dollars per week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me fui <strong>en</strong> coche.</td>
<td>I went <strong>by</strong> car.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinieron <strong>en</strong> avión.</td>
<td>They came <strong>by</strong> plane.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En sus notas se puede apreciar qué clase de estudiante es.</td>
<td>By his grades one can appreciate the kind of student he is.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La casa está <strong>en</strong> venta.</td>
<td>The house is <strong>for</strong> sale.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me llevó <strong>en</strong> su auto nuevo.</td>
<td>He took me <strong>in</strong> his new car.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las damas están <strong>en</strong> la iglesia.</td>
<td>The ladies are <strong>in</strong> church.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me gusta vivir <strong>en</strong> el campo.</td>
<td>I like to live <strong>in</strong> the country.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Se fueron a vivir en el campo.</td>
<td>They left (in order) to live in the countryside.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy estudia en su cuarto.</td>
<td>Roy studies in his room.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro se metió en un brete.</td>
<td>Pedro is in difficulties.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volveremos en una semana.</td>
<td>We will return in a week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo hicieron en venganza.</td>
<td>They did it in retaliation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empujó la pelota en el agujero.</td>
<td>He pushed the ball into the hole.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los muebles están en liquidación.</td>
<td>The furniture is on sale.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los obreros están en huelga.</td>
<td>The workers are on strike.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La estatua está en el estante.</td>
<td>The statue is on the shelf.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El niño se sentó en la mesa.</td>
<td>The child sat on the table.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Había mujeres entre ellos.</td>
<td>There were women among them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entre nosotros no hay nadie que pueda hacerlo.</td>
<td>Among us there is no one who could do it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardaremos el secreto entre nosotros.</td>
<td>We'll keep the secret among ourselves.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuando salen de vacaciones se comunican entre sí.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>entre</td>
<td>between</td>
<td>1. When they go on vacation, they get in touch with each other.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El pasillo está entre los dos cuartos.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The hallway is between the two rooms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trabajo entre las ocho y las cinco.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I work between eight and five.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entre tú y yo, es una buena idea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Between you and me, it’s a good idea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entre nosotros, esto es muy difícil.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Between us, this is very difficult.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between</td>
<td>2. The hallway is between the two rooms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El pasillo está entre los dos cuartos.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The hallway is between the two rooms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trabajo entre las ocho y las cinco.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I work between eight and five.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Entre tú y yo, es una buena idea.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Between you and me, it’s a good idea.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entre nosotros, esto es muy difícil.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Between us, this is very difficult.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Al trabajo lo hicieron entre cinco.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The work was done by five persons.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entre María y Carla se terminó la limpieza.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The cleaning was done by María and Carla.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>in, into</td>
<td>3. The deer disappeared into the woods.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El venado se perdió entre el bosque.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The deer disappeared in(to) the woods.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>to self</td>
<td>4. I said it to myself so they wouldn’t find out.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lo dije entre mí para que no se enteraran.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I said it to myself so they wouldn’t find out.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lo dijo entre sí.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>She said it to herself.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>through</td>
<td>5. Through the curtains one could see the house across the street.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entre las cortinas se podía ver la casa de enfrente.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Through the curtains one could see the house across the street.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>what with</td>
<td>6. What with the job and the house, she does not have time to study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entre el trabajo y la casa, no tiene tiempo para estudiar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What with the job and the house, she does not have time to study.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Se veía el emblema entre los pliegues de la bandera. One could see the emblem within the folds of the flag. Lo guardé entre mí antes de revelarlo. I kept it within myself before I revealed it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacia</td>
<td>around</td>
<td>Vendrán hacia la una. They will come around one o'clock. Va a decidir hacia mayo. He is going to decide around May.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hoy partieron hacia Madrid. They left for Madrid today. Sentía un gran amor hacia sus abuelos. She felt a deep love for her grandparents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>towards</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fueron hacia el centro. They went towards downtown. Mostró compasión hacia sus enemigos. He showed compassion towards his enemies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hasta</td>
<td>as far as</td>
<td>Manejamos hasta Austin. We drove as far as Austin.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>even</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hasta mi hermana lo creyó. Even my sister believed it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until</td>
<td></td>
<td>Se quedó hasta las cinco. He stayed until five.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>up to</td>
<td></td>
<td>No han llamado hasta ahora. They have not called up to now. Lei hasta el tercer capítulo. I read up to the third chapter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subimos <strong>hasta</strong> la cima. We went <strong>up to</strong> the top.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La conferencia será <strong>para</strong> mediados de abril. The conference will be <strong>around</strong> the middle of April.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Para entonces habremos recibido el pedido.</strong> By then, we will have received the order.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tengo algo</strong> <strong>para</strong> ti. I have something <strong>for</strong> you.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tengo trabajo</strong> <strong>para</strong> dos meses. I have work <strong>for</strong> two months.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>El ejercicio es</strong> <strong>para</strong> el lunes. The exercise is <strong>for</strong> Monday.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Me dio una alfombra</strong> <strong>para</strong> la sala. She gave me a carpet <strong>for</strong> the living room.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salió</strong> <strong>para</strong> Boulder anoche. He left <strong>for</strong> Boulder last night.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Es humilde</strong> <strong>para</strong> su posición. She is humble <strong>for</strong> her position.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traje esto</strong> <strong>para</strong> que lo veas. I brought this <strong>for</strong> you to see.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Necesito aceite</strong> <strong>para</strong> freír. I need oil <strong>for</strong> frying.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>¿Para qué sirve esta herramienta?</strong> What is this tool good <strong>for</strong>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para</td>
<td>principe</td>
<td>tiene bastante</td>
<td><strong>Para</strong> principe tiene bastante talento.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>talento.</td>
<td>For a beginner, he has lots of talent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estoy</td>
<td>muy</td>
<td>cansada para ese trabajo.</td>
<td><strong>Estoy muy cansada para ese trabajo.</strong> I'm too tired for that job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para</td>
<td>un buen</td>
<td>café, el de Brasil.</td>
<td><strong>Para un buen café, el de Brasil.</strong> As for good coffee, the best is from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Manda saludos para ti.</strong> He sends regards to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>hacia</td>
<td>Florida mañana.</td>
<td><strong>Iremos para Florida mañana.</strong> We'll go to Florida tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>direction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>a casa</td>
<td>para estudiar.</td>
<td><strong>Fui a casa para estudiar.</strong> I went home to study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in order to, purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>hablar</td>
<td>contigo.</td>
<td><strong>Llamé para hablar contigo.</strong> I called to talk to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>objective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>maestra</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Estudia para maestra.</strong> She's studying to be a teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>opinion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>él, esto</td>
<td>es una ganga.</td>
<td><strong>Para él, esto es una ganga.</strong> To him, this is a bargain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>sí</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Se lo dijo para sí.</strong> He said it to himself.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me preocupo</td>
<td>por</td>
<td>el resultado.</td>
<td><strong>Me preocupo por el resultado.</strong> I worry about the results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>por</td>
<td></td>
<td>imminence</td>
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<tr>
<td>La revolución está por estallar.</td>
<td>The revolution is about to break out.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Por</td>
<td>lo que</td>
<td>dijo, lo van a considerar.</td>
<td><strong>Por lo que dijo, lo van a considerar.</strong> According to what he said, they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>according to</td>
<td>are going to consider it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>along</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Corrió por la playa.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>They ran along the beach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>around</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Caminábamos por la ciudad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We walked around town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indefinite location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El vive por allá.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He lives around there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indefinite time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El trabaja por California ahora.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He works around California now.</td>
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<td>at</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trabaja por la noche.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He works at night.</td>
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<td>because</td>
<td></td>
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<td>A Luis lo suspendieron por venir tarde.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>They suspended Luis because he came late.</td>
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<tr>
<td>because of reason</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Se ganó el premio por buena alumna.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>She won the prize because she is a good student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by location, passage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tengo dos trabajos por mis hijos.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have two jobs because of my kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by means</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chocaron por la lluvia.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>They got into a wreck because of the rain.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Se casó por su dinero.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>He got married because of her money.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fui por la oficina de Jeff pero no estaba allí.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I went by Jeff's office but he wasn't there.</td>
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<td>Viajamos por avión.</td>
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<td>We traveled by plane.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| manner  | Lo mandé **por** correo.  
I sent it **by** mail. |
| agent; passive voice | **La cena fue preparada por** mi mamá.  
Dinner was prepared **by** my mother. |
| Yerma es una obra de teatro escrita **por** García Lorca.  
**Yerma** is a play written **by** García Lorca. |
| for duration | **Me quedé allí por** un mes.  
I stayed there **for** a month. |
| | **Lo pensó por unos minutos.**  
He thought about it **for** a few minutes. |
| exchange | **Pagué diez pesos por él.**  
I paid ten pesos **for** it. |
| | **Lo venderé por lo que me den.**  
I'll sell it **for** whatever they give me. |
| | **Compramos el bote por diez mil dólares.**  
We bought the boat **for** ten thousand dollars. |
| in the amount of | **Les di un cheque por diez dólares.**  
I gave them a check **for** ten dollars. |
| instead of | **Yo trabajé por él cuando estuvo enfermo.**  
I worked **for** him when he was sick. |
| on behalf of | **Lo ha hecho por su madre.**  
She did it **for** her mother. |
| to get | **Volvió por su cartera.**  
She came back **for** her purse. |
| to pick up | **Iré por mi amiga primero.**  
I'll go **for** my friend first. |
| for the sake of | **Hazlo por piedad.**  
Do it **for** mercy's **sake**. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No lo niegue, por Dios.</td>
<td>Do not deny it, for God’s sake.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se casaron por amor.</td>
<td>They got married for love.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continúa trabajando en esa compañía por conveniencia propia.</td>
<td>She continues working at that company for her own convenience.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentimos pena por ellos.</td>
<td>We feel sorry for them.</td>
<td>towards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estaré en casa por la mañana.</td>
<td>I will be home in the morning.</td>
<td>in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo necesita por escrito.</td>
<td>He needs it in writing.</td>
<td>necessity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay problemas por resolver.</td>
<td>There are problems to be resolved. (no preposition)</td>
<td>on manner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Está hablando por teléfono.</td>
<td>He is talking on the phone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo dijeron por radio.</td>
<td>They said it on the radio.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo pasaron por televisión.</td>
<td>They showed it on TV.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo llamó por compasión.</td>
<td>She called him out of compassion.</td>
<td>out of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro lo hizo por vanidad.</td>
<td>Pedro did it out of vanity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El camión pasó por el puente.</td>
<td>The truck went over the bridge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gana siete pesos por hora.</td>
<td>He makes seven pesos per hour.</td>
<td>per measure, rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Por más bonita que sea, no creo que merezca el premio.</td>
<td></td>
<td>regardless of</td>
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<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>through</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Regardless</strong> of how beautiful she is, I don’t think she deserves the award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throughout</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to purpose, in order to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Se esmeró por darle un hogar.</strong> He did his best to give her a home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up to, down to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Cuando se inundó la casa, el agua les llegaba por las rodillas.</strong> When the house got flooded, the water went up to their knees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>según</td>
<td>according to</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Según él, está claro.</strong> According to him, it’s clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Según parece, nos mudaremos.</strong> As it seems, we’ll move out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>la empleada archivaba las cartas según iban llegando.</td>
<td>The employee was filing the letters as they arrived.</td>
<td>depending on</td>
<td>Actuaremos según lo que pase. We'll act depending on what happens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sin pensaor</td>
<td>He did it without thinking.</td>
<td>without</td>
<td>Lo hizo sin pensar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Había personas sin electricidad.</td>
<td>There were people without power.</td>
<td>without</td>
<td>Había personas sin electricidad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habló so pena de muerte. (bajo)</td>
<td>He spoke under punishment of death.</td>
<td>under</td>
<td>Habló so pena de muerte. (bajo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consiguió el puesto so pretexto de experto.</td>
<td>He got the job under the pretext of being an expert.</td>
<td>under</td>
<td>Consiguió el puesto so pretexto de experto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El presidente habló sobre el presupuesto.</td>
<td>The president spoke about the budget.</td>
<td>about</td>
<td>El presidente habló sobre el presupuesto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se levantaba el sol sobre las montañas.</td>
<td>The sun was rising above the mountains.</td>
<td>above</td>
<td>Se levantaba el sol sobre las montañas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iremos sobre las cinco.</td>
<td>We'll go around five.</td>
<td>around time</td>
<td>Iremos sobre las cinco.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El papel está sobre la mesa.</td>
<td>The paper is on the table.</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>El papel está sobre la mesa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La luna se reflejaba sobre el agua.</td>
<td>The moonlight was reflected on the water.</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>La luna se reflejaba sobre el agua.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los charcos <strong>sobre</strong> la tierra parecían lagunitas.</td>
<td>The puddles <strong>on</strong> the ground resembled little ponds.</td>
<td><strong>on top of</strong></td>
<td>Un pájaro grande se posó <strong>sobre</strong> la chimenea. A big bird was perched on <strong>top of</strong> the chimney.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El avión voló <strong>sobre</strong> la ciudad.</td>
<td>The plane flew <strong>over</strong> the city.</td>
<td><strong>over</strong></td>
<td>El sol brilla <strong>sobre</strong> las nubes. The sun shines <strong>upon</strong> the clouds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tras (de) esperar, salió.</td>
<td>After waiting, he left.</td>
<td><strong>after</strong></td>
<td>Las cartas llegaron una tras otra. The letters arrived one <strong>after</strong> another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reanudaron su amistad año tras año.</td>
<td>They renewed their friendship year <strong>after</strong> year.</td>
<td><strong>after</strong></td>
<td>Reanudaron su amistad año tras año. The letters arrived one <strong>after</strong> another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaime corría tras (de) la madre.</td>
<td>James ran <strong>behind</strong> his mother.</td>
<td><strong>behind</strong></td>
<td>Se veía un lindo jardín tras (de) la cerca. One could see a pretty garden <strong>behind</strong> the fence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La aldea comenzaba tras (de) la pradera.</td>
<td>The village began <strong>beyond</strong> the prairie.</td>
<td><strong>beyond</strong></td>
<td>La aldea comenzaba tras (de) la pradera. The village began <strong>beyond</strong> the prairie.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Simple Prepositions in Compound Words**

Almost all the simple Spanish prepositions can be joined to other words as prefixes to form compound words. Some examples follow:
Compound Prepositions

Compound prepositions are made up of two or more words. They are also called prepositional phrases (frases preposicionales). Some of the compound prepositions in Spanish are equivalent to simple Spanish prepositions, while others are not. Compound prepositions may also be translated into English as one or more words. Some examples follow in each category.

A. Compound prepositions corresponding to an equivalent simple preposition in Spanish:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ante</td>
<td>al frente de</td>
<td>delante de</td>
<td>in front of, before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>frente de</td>
<td></td>
<td>in front of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>en presencia de</td>
<td>frente a</td>
<td>before, in the presence of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bajo</td>
<td>debajo de</td>
<td>in front of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>por debajo de</td>
<td></td>
<td>under, below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Translation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>con</td>
<td>en compañía de</td>
<td>with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contra</td>
<td>al contrario de</td>
<td>contrary to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td>en contra de</td>
<td>contrary to, in opposition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td>dentro de</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entre</td>
<td>en medio de</td>
<td>among, in between</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacia</td>
<td>con destino a</td>
<td>toward</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>con rumbo a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a camino a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>a fin de</td>
<td>in order to</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>con el propósito de</td>
<td>with the purpose of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>con intención de</td>
<td>with the intention of</td>
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<tr>
<td>por</td>
<td>a causa de</td>
<td>because of</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>a través de</td>
<td>through</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a cambio de</td>
<td>for, in exchange for</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>en favor de</td>
<td>for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>en virtud de</td>
<td>because of, by virtue of</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>en vista de</td>
<td>because of</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>por efecto de</td>
<td>because of, as a result of</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>por medio de</td>
<td>through</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>según</td>
<td>conforme a</td>
<td>according to</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>en cuanto a</td>
<td>as for, in regard to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sobre</td>
<td>acerca de</td>
<td>about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>arriba de</td>
<td>on top of, above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>encima de</td>
<td>on top of, above, on</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>por encima de</td>
<td>above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>respecto a</td>
<td>about</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>tras</td>
<td>después de</td>
<td>after</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>detrás de</td>
<td>behind</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>en pos de</td>
<td>after, behind</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tras que</td>
<td>besides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. Compound prepositions with no equivalent simple preposition:**

- a excepción de | with the exception of
- a fuerza de | with perseverance
- a pesar de | in spite of
alrededor de
ante todo
antes de
de por fuerza
en lugar de
en vez de
fuera de
junto a
lejos de
más allá de
around
above all, first of all
before
necessarily
instead of
instead of
outside of
close to, next to
far from
beyond

C. Two prepositions together

In some cases, two prepositions are grouped together to indicate a specific meaning:

Llegó hasta con sombrero.
He even came wearing a hat.

Fue fácil porque Diego estaba de por medio.
It was easy because Diego acted as a mediator.

Sólo tenía billetes de a diez en la cartera.
She only had ten-dollar bills in her wallet.

Era muy generoso para con todos sus amigos.
He was very generous toward all of his friends.

Tuvo que declarar por ante el juez.
He had to declare before the judge.

El gato vino de entre las plantas.
The cat came out from the bushes.

Tras de llegar tarde, no trajo la llave.
Besides coming late, she did not bring the key.

Functions of Prepositions

Prepositions point out the grammatical cases that exist in a sentence, that is, their specific functions within the sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prepositions</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>el libro de Juan</th>
<th>Juan's book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>genitive case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(used to indicate possession)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a and para</td>
<td>dative case (used to indicate indirect object)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Le di el papel a Carlos.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I gave the paper to Carlos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>El libro es para Miguel.</td>
<td></td>
<td>The book is for Miguel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>accusative case (used to indicate direct object)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Veo a María.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I see María.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quiere a sus hijos.</td>
<td></td>
<td>He loves his children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Notes on Preposition Usage

For the correct use of prepositions, the following rules must be taken into consideration.

A. **Prepositions are placed before the noun:**

- *Estudio con mi amiga.*  
  I study with my friend.
- *Viajamos hasta Chicago.*  
  We traveled to Chicago.

B. **Prepositions that are linked to a relative pronoun follow the noun to which they refer:**

- *El jardín, en el cual había rosas, era pequeño.*  
  The garden, in which there were roses, was small.
- *La posada a la que llegamos estaba llena.*  
  The inn at which we arrived was full.
- *El hombre con quien hablé trabaja en esa oficina.*  
  The man to whom I spoke works in that office.

C. **Prepositions cannot be joined by conjunctions:**

- *con/sin*  
  Correct: *Me gusta el pastel con sal o sin ella.*  
  I like the pie with or without salt.  
  (Incorrect: *Me gusta el pastel con o sin sal.*)

- *de/para*  
  Correct: *Empaquetan artículos de Perú y para ese país.*  
  They pack articles from and to Perú.  
  (Incorrect: *Empaquetan artículos de y para Perú.*)

- *a/de*  
  Correct: *Le pidió dinero al jefe y lo recibió de él.*  
  He asked for and received money from the boss.  
  (Incorrect: *Le pidió dinero al y recibió dinero del jefe.*)

- *sobre/debajo*  
  Correct: *Deja el almohadón sobre la mesa o debajo de ella.*  
  Leave the pillow on or under the table.  
  (Incorrect: *Deja el almohadón sobre o debajo de la mesa.*)
Uses of Specific Prepositions

The Preposition *a*

A. The preposition *a* to introduce the accusative case (the direct object)

Also called *personal a* (*la a personal*) when it appears before the direct object, the preposition *a* is used in the following cases.

1. Use *a* with a proper name that refers to a human being, a fictional character, or a personified animal, including pets:

   *Ella ama a Juan.*  
   *Los niños admiraban a Caperucita.*  
   *Me gustaba verlo a Tonto en las películas del oeste.*  
   *Yo quiero a Pelusa, mi gato siamés.*  
   *Yo quiero a mi caballo.*

   She loves Juan.  
   The children admired Little Red Riding Hood.  
   I liked to see Tonto in the movies of the Far West.  
   I love Pelusa, my Siamese cat.  
   I love my horse.

   **NOTE:**

   The preposition *a* is not used with the verb *gustar* or similar verbs. However, when these verbs are followed by an infinitive, the preposition *a* must follow the infinitive:

   *Me gusta mi perro.*  
   *Me gusta alimentar a mi perro.*  
   *Nos molesta Carlos. Es muy aburrido.*  
   *Nos molesta escuchar a Carlos.*

   I like my dog.  
   I like to feed my dog.  
   Carlos bothers us. He is very boring.  
   It bothers us to listen to Carlos.

2. Use *a* with wildlife, to indicate that the subject has a preference for specific animals:

   *Me gusta alimentar a los pájaros que vienen al jardín trasero.*

   I like to feed the birds that come to the backyard.

   **But:**

   *No me gusta ver las ardillas cerca de la casa.*

   I don’t like to see the squirrels near the house.
El guardián del zoológico alimentó al elefante. The zookeeper fed the elephant.

But:

El domador del circo tuvo que encerrar el tigre que se escapó. The circus tamer had to lock up the tiger that escaped.

NOTE:
The preposition a is also added when it is not clear which element is the direct object. In the following case, the subject’s likes and dislikes are not taken into consideration, as in the preceding examples. The following sentence may have two meanings:

El guardián mató el elefante que se enloqueció.

The zookeeper killed the elephant that went mad.

(or) The elephant that went mad killed the zookeeper.

By adding the personal a, it becomes clear that it was the zookeeper who killed the animal:

El guardián mató al elefante que se escapó.

The zookeeper killed the elephant that escaped.

Although this action may be expressed in English with the passive voice (The elephant was killed by the zookeeper), the active voice is preferred in Spanish for this type of sentence. Also see item 6 that follows.

3. Use a with a direct object that represents a person:

When the human direct object is not particularly singled out, the personal a is not used. Compare Quiero a mi abuelo with the following sentences:

Quiero una secretaria que sepa inglés.
Nunca encuentro un amigo cuando lo necesito.

I want a secretary that knows English.
I never find a friend when I need one.

4. Use a before each noun when the direct object is multiple:

Reconozco a María y a Elena en la foto.
Vi a mi primo y a mi tío en el mercado.

I recognize María and Elena in the picture.
I saw my cousin and my uncle in the market.

5. Use a before a collective noun that represents human beings:

El actor oía al público que lo aplaudía.
El político juntó a los adversarios.

The actor heard the audience applauding him.
The politician gathered his adversaries.
6. Use a before animate or inanimate direct objects, whenever it is not clear which one is the object (see note under preceding item 2):

   El niño corre el ratón. The boy runs after the mouse.
   El gato mordió el perro. The cat bit the dog.
   La colina tapa la iglesia. The hill hides the church.

   But: El niño corre al ratón. The boy runs after the mouse.
   But: El gato mordió al perro. The cat bit the dog.
   But: La colina tapa a la iglesia. The hill hides the church.

7. Use a after the verb ir, whether the verb is followed by an infinitive or a noun:

   Voy a ver a Juan mañana. I’m going to see Juan tomorrow.
   Iremos a Ohio en avión. We’ll go to Ohio by plane.

8. Use a after verbs of motion when a place is mentioned:

   Ayer llegó a Dallas. He arrived in Dallas yesterday.
   El avión se acercaba al aeropuerto en la niebla. The plane was approaching the airport in the fog.

9. Use a after certain verbs, to change their meaning:

   faltar (to be lacking) faltar (to miss)
   Faltan dos sillas. Two chairs are lacking.
   Jaime faltó a la reunión. Jaime missed the meeting.

   darse (to give to oneself) darse (to devote oneself to)
   Me di un golpe en el pie. I hit my foot.
   Se dio a la investigación. He devoted himself to research.

10. Use a in the contraction of a + el and an infinitive, to indicate a precise moment, as in on/upon going, entering, etc.:

   Al salir de la oficina, me caí en la calle. Upon leaving the office, I fell down in the street.
11. Use _a_ before the indefinite pronouns _algún_ and _nadie_, which always refer to people:

   Vi _a_ alguien entrar. I saw someone coming in.
   No reconozco _a_ nadie aquí. I don't recognize anybody here.

12. Use _a_ before the indefinite pronouns _alguno/a/os/as_ and _ninguno/a_, when these refer to human beings:

   Vi _a_ algunos que entraron. I saw some people entering.
   No queremos oír _a_ ninguno. We don't want to hear anybody.

13. Use _a_ before the adjectives _algún/a/os/as_ and _ninguno/a_, when these refer to people:

   Oyó _a_ algunos chicos que estaban jugando. She heard some children that were playing.
   No respeta _a_ ningún colega. He doesn't respect any colleagues.

14. Use _a_ to indicate a price, except after the verbs _costar_ (to cost) and _valer_ (to be worth):

   _El sillón está_ _a_ dos mil pesos. The sofa costs two thousand pesos.
   _Se vendió_ _a_ diez pesos. They sold it at ten pesos.
   But:
   _El sillón cuesta_ dos mil. The sofa costs two thousand.
   _El plato vale_ diez pesos. The dish is worth ten pesos.

15. Use _a_ to indicate a specific time:

   _Tengo que tomar la pastilla_ _a_ las tres. I have to take the pill at three o'clock.

**NOTES:**
Besides the limitations pointed out in items 1, 2, 3, and 14, the preposition _a_ is also not used in the following cases.

(1) The preposition _a_ is not used after verbs such as _dejar_ or _abandonar_, when the direct object is a place:

   _Dejé_ Caracas _a_ la semana pasada. I left Caracas last week.
   _Abandonaron_ la ciudad _a_ cuando empezó la guerra. They abandoned the city when the war began.
(2) The preposition *a* is not used after *ir* and other verbs of motion, when these verbs are followed by the adverbs *ahí, acá, allí*, or *allá*:

- *Fuimos allí el año pasado.*  
  We went there last year.
- *Llegó allí el martes.*  
  He arrived there on Tuesday.
- *Vine aquí para verte.*  
  I came here to see you.

(3) The preposition *a* is not used when the direct object is a place, unless the verb requires the proposition:

- *Juan de Garay fundó Buenos Aires.*  
  Juan de Garay founded Buenos Aires.
- *Vimos el estadio desde la carretera.*  
  We saw the stadium from the highway.
- *Nosotros visitamos Paraguay.*  
  We visited Paraguay.
- *Recuerdo Madrid.*  
  I remember Madrid.
- *Recorrió Valencia.*  
  He toured Valencia.

**But:**

- *Viajamos a Colombia.*  
  We traveled to Colombia.
- *Tú fuiste a la ciudad.*  
  You went to the city.

### B. The preposition *a* to introduce the dative case (the indirect object)

In the dative case (the indirect object), the preposition *a* is used with animate and inanimate objects:

- *Le mandé una carta a Tito.*  
  I sent a letter to Tito.
- *Le puso el collar al perro.*  
  He put the collar on the dog.
- *Le agregué huevos a la masa.*  
  I added eggs to the dough.
- *Me mandó flores a mí, lo que me sorprendió mucho.*  
  He sent flowers to me, which surprised me a lot.

**NOTE:**

The indirect object preceded by *a* may be replaced entirely by the indirect object pronoun when it is understood in context:

- *Le mandé una carta.*  
  I sent him a letter.
- *Me mandó flores.*  
  He sent me flowers.
The Preposition *con*

The preposition *con* is used in the following cases:

A. *Con* is used when *with* is used in English followed by animate, inanimate, and abstract nouns:

- Iré *con* José.
- Camina *con* su perro.
- Se fue *con* esperanzas.

- I'll go with José.
- She walks with her dog.
- He left with hopes.

B. *Con* is used to indicate a health problem:

- Estoy *con* dolor de cabeza.
- Está *con* un resfrío bárbaro.

- I have a headache.
- He has a terrible cold.

C. *Con* is used to signal a state of mind:

- Está *con* pena de él.
- Dio el regalo *con* alegría.

- She feels sorry for him.
- She gave the gift gladly.

D. *Con* is used in adverbial phrases, instead of adding *-mente* (*-ly*) to the adverb:

- Habló *con* claridad. (claramente)
- Lo escuchó *con* paciencia. (pacientemente)

- He spoke clearly.
- She listened to him patiently.

The Preposition *de*

The preposition *de* is used in the following cases:

A. *De* is used to indicate possession:

- *el trabajo de* Pedro
- *la hoja del* árbol

- Pedro’s job
- the leaf of the tree

B. *De* is used to specify the author of a book, painting, etc.:

- *Don Quijote* es una novela *de* Cervantes.
- *Vimos dos cuadros de* Goya.

- *Don Quixote* is a novel by Cervantes.
- We saw two paintings by Goya.
C. De is used with or without the verb ser (to be), to show origin or nationality:

La profesora es de Perú. The teacher is from Perú.
Sus padres son de Alabama. Their parents are from Alabama.
las uvas de Mendoza the grapes from Mendoza

D. De is used with verbs of movement, to show where the action originated:

Llegaron de Jamaica. They arrived from Jamaica.
Partió de Miami. He left Miami.
Me mudé del departamento. I moved out of the apartment.

E. De is used in a phrase used to qualify the noun (adjectival phrase):

Las flores del jardín tienen mucha luz para crecer. The flowers in the garden have a lot of sunlight for growing.
Las fotos del libro son en blanco y negro. The photos in the book are in black and white.
Tienen una casa de campo. They have a country house.
La chica de pelo crespo es su hija. The girl with curly hair is her daughter.

F. De is used to show of what material an object is made:

Le dio un anillo de oro. He gave her a gold ring.
Compré un cinturón de cuero. I bought a leather belt.

G. De is used as an equivalent of than when making a comparison that involves numbers:

Hay más de cuarenta sillas en esta clase. There are more than forty chairs in this classroom.
Tengo menos de un mes para hacerlo. I have less than a month to do it.

H. De is used in the de + infinitive combination as an equivalent of the English if clause:

De saberlo, hubiera comprado una entrada para mañana. If I had known, I would have bought a ticket for tomorrow.

I. De is used to show what a container holds or for what it is used:

una taza de té a cup of tea
una caja de chocolates a box of chocolates
un vaso de vino a glass of wine
J. *De* is used to tell the time or the part of the day when something takes place:

- A las dos *de* la mañana. At two in the morning.
- Es la una *de* la tarde. It's one in the afternoon.
- Vamos a ir *de* mañana. We'll go in the morning.
- Llegaron *de* noche. They arrived at night.

K. *De* is used to indicate measurements:

- La torre mide cincuenta metros *de* alto. The tower is fifty meters tall.
- La barra tiene dos centímetros *de* espesor. The bar is two centimeters thick.

L. *De* is used to indicate the purpose of an object:

- gorra *de* baño shower cap
- reloj *de* bolsillo pocket watch
- broche *de* la ropa clothes pin
- sombrero *de* playa beach hat

M. *De* is used as part of an adverbial expression of manner:

- lleno *de* deudas full of debts
- cargado *de* regalos loaded with gifts
- muerto *de* risa dying with laughter

N. *De* is used before a noun or a verb, to indicate the cause of an action:

- Se murió *de* pena. She died of grief.
- Adelgazó *de* caminar mucho. She lost weight from walking so much.
- Nos cansamos *de* escuchar esa música todo el día. We got tired of listening to that music all day.

O. *De* is used to show a portion or quantity:

- un kilo *de* cebollas a kilogram of onions
- un poco *de* leche some milk

P. *De* is used after an adjective, to describe someone:

- el bueno *de* mi hermano my good brother
- la modesta *de* Juana that modest Juana
- el sabio *de* su profesor his wise professor
Adverbs are parts of a sentence that modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. In Spanish, an adverb that modifies a verb is called a *complemento circunstancial*.

While adjectives agree in gender and number with the noun they modify, adverbs are invariable:

*Dos niños llegaron tarde.*

*Una chica también llegó tarde.*

**Classification of Adverbs**

Adverbs in Spanish are classified into two main groups: qualifying adverbs (*calificativos*) and determinative adverbs (*determinativos*). This last group includes the demonstrative, interrogative, relative, and indefinite adverbs. Some examples follow.

**A. Qualifying adverbs:**

*mejor* (better)  *peor* (worse)  *bien* (well)  *mal* (badly)  *claro* (clearly)

**B. Determinative adverbs:**

1. **Demonstrative adverbs:**

   *aquí* (here)  *acá* (here)  *allí* (there)  *así* (so, this way)

2. **Interrogative adverbs:**

   ¿*cuándo?* (when?)  ¿*dónde?* (where?)  ¿*cuánto?* (how much?)  ¿*cómo?* (how?)

3. **Relative adverbs:**

   *cuando* (when)  *donde* (where)  *como* (how)  *cuanto* (how much)  *cual* (which)
4. Indefinite adverbs:

*quizá* (perhaps)  
*tal vez* (maybe)  
*dondequiera* (wherever)  
*nada* (nothing)

### Other Categories for Classifying Adverbs

Adverbs are further classified according to their meaning, formation, and origin. Any given adverb may belong to two or more categories at the same time:

*Allá en aquella época salía con mis amigos.*
*(adverbio de tiempo)*

*Me gustaba estar allá con ellos.*
*(adverbio de lugar)*

At that time, I used to go out with my friends. (adverb of time)

I liked to be there with them. (adverb of place)

The following lists illustrate how some adverbs are classified according to these three categories.

#### A. Adverbs classified according to their meaning:

Since adverbs indicate *place* (*lugar*), *time* (*tiempo*), *manner* (*modo*), *quantity* (*cantidad*), etc., they can be classified as adverbs of place, time, manner, quantity, and so on.

1. Adverbs of place (*adverbios de lugar*)

These adverbs answer the question ¿dónde?

*aquí, acá, ahí, allí, allá, fuera, arriba, abajo, delante, detrás*

**NOTES:**

1. While *aquí* and *acá* both mean *here*, *aquí* refers to a place which is more specifically defined. *Acá* is also used in expressions like *por acá* (*around here*), *más acá* (*closer*), *un poco más acá* (*a little closer*):

*Ponlo aquí.* *Déjalo por acá.*

Put it (over) here.  
Leave it around here.

1. Although *allí* and *allá* are both equivalent to the English *there*, *allí* points to a more definite location. *Allá* is used in expressions like *un poco más allá* (*a little further*), *más allá* (*further away*), or *no tan allá* (*not that far*). (The expression *el más allá* has the meaning of *life after death*):

*Ponlo allí.* *Déjalo por allá.*

Put it (over) there.  
Leave it (over) there.
Ella vive allí, en esa casa. She lives over there, in that house.

Un poco más allá está la iglesia. A little further down is the church.

(3) Aquí, acá, allí, and allá may be followed by mismo to indicate an exact point within that location:

Estaba aquí mismo. It was right here.

Se sentó allá mismo. She sat down right over there.

(4) Adverbs of place which, in English, are preceded by up or down, are expressed in Spanish as follows:

up here  aquí arriba, acá arriba
up there  ahí arriba, allí arriba, allá arriba
down here  aquí abajo, acá abajo
down there  allí abajo, allá abajo

(5) The English suffix -ward(s), which conveys movement towards a specific direction, is rendered in Spanish by the preposition hacia or para:

upward  hacia arriba, para arriba
downward  hacia abajo, para abajo
backward  hacia atrás, para atrás
forward  hacia adelante, para adelante

(6) There are no Spanish equivalents for the English suffix -where that refers to an unidentified area. Prepositions or phrases are used instead:

somewhere  en alguna parte
somewhere here  por acá, por aquí
somewhere there  por allá, por allí, por ahí
nowhere  en ninguna parte
anywhere  en cualquier parte
2. Adverbs of time (adverbios de tiempo)

These adverbs answer the question ¿cuándo?:

hoy, ayer, mañana, tarde, aún, temprano, anoche, nunca, siempre, ya

NOTE:
(1) When aún carries an accent mark, it means still or yet, depending on context. Todavía is a synonym of aún in this case. When the verb is negative, it is translated into English as yet; when the verb is affirmative, it is rendered into English as still. Notice that the verb in Spanish can be affirmative or negative when using aún or todavía. (See Note 2 for the use of aun with no accent mark):

No lo he leído aún (todavía). I haven't read it yet.
Aún (todavía) está comiendo. She's still eating.
Todavía (aún) no llamó. He hasn't called yet.
Todavía (aún) estoy aquí. I'm still here.

With compound tenses in the negative, aún and todavía (yet) may be placed either before the negative or after the past or present participle, but never between the auxiliary and the main verb:

No ha firmado aún. He has not signed yet.
Aún no lo habían dicho. They hadn't said it yet.
Todavía no han terminado. They have not finished yet.
No he ido todavía. I haven't gone yet.
No están comiendo aún. They are not eating yet.
Todavía no está hablando. He is not speaking yet.

With progressive tenses in the affirmative, aún and todavía (still) may be placed as indicated below:

Before the auxiliary verb:
Aún estaban durmiendo cuando Juan llegó. They were still sleeping when Juan arrived.

After the present participle:
Cuando me fui ella estaba trabajando todavía. When I left, she was still working.

Between the auxiliary and the present participle, for emphasis:
El niño se quedó todavía jugando después que la madre lo llamó. The boy still continued playing after his mother called him.
Without an accent mark, "aun" means "even, including, or also." "Hasta," "incluso," and "también" are synonyms of "aun" in this case:

- **Aun Juan lo ha leído.** Even Juan has read it.
- **Juan aun lo ha leído.** Juan has even read it.
- **Hasta Pedro vino tarde.** Even Pedro arrived late.
- **Pedro no trajo nada y hasta vino tarde.** Pedro didn't bring anything and he even came late.
- **Incluso Isabel lo está diciendo.** Even Isabel is saying it.
- **Isabel incluso lo está diciendo.** Isabel is even saying it.

The use of "también" is flexible, since it may be placed before or after the subject, and after the main verb. The meaning of the sentence will change depending on the positioning of these adverbs:

- **También Andrés lo ha leído.** Also Andrés has read it. (Even Andrés.)
- **Juan también lo ha leído.** Juan has also read it. (He not only bought it, he also read it.)
- **Juan lo ha leído también.** Juan has read it also. (Either one of the above meanings.)

The negative "not even" is rendered in Spanish as "ni aun" or "ni siquiera." These expressions are placed before the subject when the emphasis is on the subject alone.

- **Ni aun Juan lo ha leído.** Not even Juan has read it. (Nobody has read it.)
- **Ni siquiera él sabe.** Not even he knows.

If the emphasis is on the action, "ni aun" (or "ni siquiera") is placed before the verb and it carries a strong negative connotation:

- **Juan ni aun lo ha leído.** Juan has not even read it.
- **Él ni siquiera lo sabe.** He doesn't even know it.

It is also possible to split these expressions before and after the verb, but they definitely cannot be used as a whole expression after the verb. However, when "aún" is placed after the verb, it becomes a synonym of "todavía" (yet) and must carry an accent mark:

- **Él ni lo sabe siquiera.** He doesn't even know it.
- **Juan ni lo ha leído aún.** Juan has not even read it.
(4) *Ya* is translated into English as *already* when the verb is affirmative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Nosotros ya fuimos allá.</em></td>
<td>We already went there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ya lo habría visto.</em></td>
<td>I would have already seen it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lo he visto ya.</em></td>
<td>I have already seen it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ellos se mudaron ya.</em></td>
<td>They have moved already.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that *ya* is not placed between *haber* and the past participle in the perfect tenses (as in the second and third sentences). However, in the progressive forms, it may be placed before or after the auxiliary verb, after the present participle, or at the end of the sentence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Ella ya está diciéndoselo a todo el mundo.</em></td>
<td>She is already saying it to everybody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ella está ya diciéndoselo a todo el mundo.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ella está diciéndoselo ya a todo el mundo.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ella está diciéndoselo a todo el mundo ya.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(5) With a negative verb, *ya* takes the meaning of *no longer* or *not anymore* in English. It may also be used with *más*, for emphasis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Ya no lo veo (más) por aquí.</em></td>
<td>I no longer see him around here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ya no vamos (más) allá.</em></td>
<td>We don’t go there anymore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No se acordaba ya de eso.</em></td>
<td>She didn’t remember that any longer (anymore).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ya no lo había visto más por el barrio cuando me mudé.</em></td>
<td>I had no longer seen him around the neighborhood when I moved out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) *Nunca* and *jamás* mean *never* and are considered indefinite adverbs. They may be used together for emphasis as *nunca jamás*, which is equivalent to *never ever*. Observe the use of *nunca más* in the third sentence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Nunca jamás volvió a casa.</em></td>
<td>He never ever came back home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No lo dijo nunca jamás.</em></td>
<td>She never ever said it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No lo dijo nunca más.</em></td>
<td>She no longer said it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, a combination of *jamás* (*ya más*) and *más* does not exist in Spanish.

3. Adverbs of manner (*adverbios de modo*)

These adverbs answer the question *¿cómo?*

*bien, mal, mejor, peor, alto, bajo, rápido, lento, suavemente*
4. Adverbs of quantity (adverbios de cantidad)
   These adverbs answer the question ¿cuánto?
   mucho, poco, más, menos, muy, demasiado

5. Sequencing adverbs (adverbios de orden)
   These adverbs answer the question ¿antes o después?
   primero, últimamente, luego, al final, antes, después

6. Affirmative adverbs (adverbios de afirmación)
   These adverbs answer the question ¿sí o no? in the affirmative:
   sí, seguro, cierto, claro, también

7. Negative adverbs (adverbios de negación)
   These adverbs answer the question ¿sí o no? in the negative:
   no, ni, jamás, nunca, tampoco, nunca jamás

8. Adverbs of doubt (adverbios de duda)
   These adverbs answer the question ¿sí o no? with doubt:
   quizás, probablemente, tal vez, posiblemente

B. Adverbs classified according to their formation:

Adverbs are classified into simple and compound, according to whether they are formed by one or more words. Examples follow:

1. Simple adverbs:
   hoy (today)          así (this way)          bien (well)

2. Compound adverbs:
   anteanoche (the night before last)    cuando quiera (whenever)    también (also)
C. Adverbs classified according to their origin:

Adverbs are also classified into primitive and derivative, depending on whether they derive from another word or not.

1. Primitive adverbs:
   - bajo (low)
   - tarde (late)
   - lejos (far)

2. Derivative adverbs:
   - bajito (low)
   - tardísimo (very late)
   - felizmente (happily)

**NOTES:**

(1) Adverbs may be expressed with a diminutive or a superlative form:

- cerca
  - Su casa está cerca. Her house is close.
  - Compré poquísimo. I bought very little.
  - Habló bajísimo. He spoke in a low voice.
  - Estudié muchísimo. I studied very much.

- poco
  - Compré poquísimo. I bought very little.

- mucho
  - Estudié muchísimo. I studied very much.

The forms cerca, from cerca (near), and lejísimos, from lejos (far), are used within a familiar setting. It is also very common to hear the word lejísimo without the final s to refer to something that is far away.

(2) An accent mark must be placed on an adverb to make a distinction between the adverb and another part of the sentence:

- El habló más esa noche. He spoke more that night.
- El habló, más esa noche estaba cansado. He spoke, although that night he was tired.
- María dijo que sí. María said yes.
- María dijo que si viene lo traerá. María said that if she comes, she will bring it.

(3) The adverbs tanto (much, so) and cuanto (how) are shortened to tan and cuán respectively before adjectives or another adverb. Note that cuán takes an accent mark. The adjectives mejor and peor, however, take the complete form tanto:

- Es tan bonita que ganó el contrato enseguida. She is so beautiful that she got the contract right away.
- Nunca cantó tan bien como hoy. He never sang as well as today.
- Siempre recuerdo cuán* bueno era su padre. I always remember how good his father was.
- Se notó cuán* sencillamente aceptó el premio. It was noticeable how humbly she received the award.

* In spoken Spanish, cuán is replaced by qué.
Si no quiere venir, **tanto mejor** (peor). If he doesn't want to come, so much the better (worse).

(4) The neuter article *lo* placed before an adverb is equivalent to *how* plus an adverb in English:

Mencionaron *lo pronto* que respondió al llamado.

They mentioned how soon he responded to the call.

**D. Adverbs ending in -mente (-ly in English)**

These are mostly adverbs of manner that derive from adjectives. The suffix *-mente* can be added to the following types of adjectives.

1. **-mente** can be added to the feminine form of many adjectives, including some past participles used as adjectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>blando</em></td>
<td><em>blanda</em></td>
<td><em>blandamente</em></td>
<td>softly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tierno</em></td>
<td><em>tierna</em></td>
<td><em>tiernamente</em></td>
<td>tenderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>acertado</em></td>
<td><em>acertada</em></td>
<td><em>acertadamente</em></td>
<td>wisely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **-mente** can be added to an adjective that ends in *-e*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>breve</em></td>
<td><em>brevemente</em></td>
<td>briefly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>suave</em></td>
<td><em>suavemente</em></td>
<td>softly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **-mente** can be added to an adjective that ends in a consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>fácil</em></td>
<td><em>fácilmente</em></td>
<td>easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>cortés</em></td>
<td><em>cortésmente</em></td>
<td>politely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Uses of Adverbs**

**A. An adjective or adverbial phrase used instead of an adverb**

In some instances, an adjective or an adverbial phrase is used in Spanish instead of an adverb. An adverbial phrase is a noun preceded by *con*, as in *con generosidad*, or an adjective preceded by the phrase *de una manera/de un modo*:

*La miró triste y después se fue.*
*La miró con tristeza y después se fue.*
*La miró de una manera triste y después se fue.* He looked at her sadly and then he left.
Laura lo esperó ansiosa para saber el resultado.
Laura waited for him anxiously to find out the result.

Lo hicieron rápido.

Lo hicieron de un modo rápido y eficiente. Literally: They did it in a rapid and efficient manner. (fast and efficiently).

B. Accents on adverbs

If the adjective carries a written accent, the accent is maintained in the resulting adverb:

débil ➤ débilmente weakly

C. A past participle used as an adjective may also function as an adverb:

Llegó preocupado. He was worried when he arrived.

D. When two adverbs modify the same verb

If two adverbs ending in -mente modify the same verb, and the adverbs are joined by a conjunction, the suffix -mente only appears on the second one. This is usually seen in the written form. In spoken Spanish, the form con plus an adjective is more commonly used:

El hombre se expresó sabia y claramente. The man expressed himself wisely and clearly.
El hombre se expresó con sabiduría y (con) claridad.

E. When more than two adverbs modify the same verb

If more than two adverbs are used with the same verb, the last adverb in the series is the only one that may end in -mente. The other adverbs use the feminine form of the adjective. Of the two examples that follow, the second sentence is considered better style:
El hombre se expresó clara, sabia y elocuentemente.

El hombre se expresó con claridad, sabiduría y elocuencia.

The man expressed himself clearly, wisely, and eloquently.

F. When multiple adverbs are separated by a comma

It is also common practice in literary works to use the suffix -mente in more than one adverb when they are separated by a comma:

Después de oírlo, él salió lentamente, sigilosamente.

After hearing it, he left slowly, secretly.

G. When each adverb modifies a different verb

When each adverb modifies a different verb, repetition of the suffix -mente must be avoided:

La dama se sentó con elegancia y escribió lentamente.
La dama se sentó elegantemente y escribió despacio.

The lady sat down elegantly and wrote slowly.

H. Adverbs that modify verbs in the perfect and progressive tenses

1. Adverbs that modify verbs in the perfect tenses

Adverbs that end in -mente cannot be placed between an auxiliary and the main verb in the perfect tenses:

Ellas lo han dicho sinceramente y van a hacerlo.

They have sincerely said it, and are going to do it.

2. Adverbs that modify verbs in the progressive tenses

However, adverbs ending in -mente may be used between the auxiliary and the main verb in progressive tenses, especially in literary style:

Juana iba silenciosamente caminando hacia el río.

Juana was silently walking towards the river.
Notice the following example, where the phrase *en silencio* is used instead of *silenciosamente*, in a very delicate style:

*Juana iba en silencio caminando hacia el río.*

## I. Adverbs for numbers and sequencing

The only ordinal numbers that end in *-mente* are *primeramente* (*first, firstly*) and *últimamente* (*last, lastingly*). In all other cases, phrases such as *en segundo lugar* and *en tercer lugar* are used; the phrases *en primer lugar* and *en último lugar* are possible for *first* and *last*, as well. *First* and *last* can also be expressed as *primero* and *por último*, respectively:

*Primeramente* tenemos que hacer una lista.

*En primer lugar* tenemos que hacer una lista.

*Primero* tenemos que hacer una lista.  

First (Firstly), we have to make a list.

The adverb *últimamente* is generally used as a synonym of *lately* or *recently*:

*Últimamente* no se han oído más rumores.

*Ha habido algunos accidentes últimamente.*

We haven't heard any more rumors lately.

There have been some accidents recently.

To indicate something that happens *last in a sequence*, *por último* is used instead:

*Por último*, debes darle la fecha de salida.  

Finally, you must give him the date of departure.

Notice the uses of *al fin, por fin, finalmente* (*finally, at last*), and *al final* (*at the end*), in the following examples:

*¡Al fin (¡Por fin) llegaron los invitados!*  

*¡Finalmente llegaron los invitados!*  

*Al final todos se fueron contentos.*

Finally the guests arrived!

At the end, everybody left happy.

**NOTE:**

*Al final* also has the connotation of *after all*, as in this sentence:

*Al final, después de tanto quejarse ella vino también.*

She came too, after all, in spite of all that complaining.
Position of Adverbs

A. Adverbs usually follow the verbs they modify:

   El viejo camina despacio.        The old man walks slowly.

B. If formed by a combination of words, adverbs may be placed before or after the word or words they modify:

   Lo abrió con todo cuidado.       She opened it carefully.
   Con todo cuidado lo abrió.

C. Adverbs usually precede an adjective or another adverb:

   El hombre es muy viejo.          The man is very old.
   El viejo camina bastante despacio. The old man walks rather slowly.

NOTES:

(1) *Muy* (very), a short form of *mucho* (much), is used before some adverbs and adjectives:

   muy grande        very large
   muy bien          very well
   muy bueno         very good
   muy generosamente very generously
   muy violentamente very violently
   mucho mejor       a lot (or much) better
   mucho peor        a lot (or much) worse
   mucho menos       a lot (or much) less
   mucho más         a lot (or much) more
   mucho mayor       a lot (or much) older
   mucho menor       a lot (or much) younger

(2) *Bien* is used instead of *muy* to indicate emphasis:

   Está bien interesante esta película.  This film is very interesting.
   Llegó bien temprano ayer.            She came very early yesterday.
(3) The complete form *mucho* (or the superlative *muchísimo*) is used when the modified word is not stated in the sentence:

*Elena está muy nerviosa* ¿no? 
*Sí, mucho (muchísimo).*
Elena is very nervous, don't you think?  
Yes, very much (so).

(4) The expression *Muy señor mío* (the equivalent of *Dear Sir*) is used as a polite form for addressing a letter.

(5) In some regions, *muy* is sometimes used before *sin* (without) when this preposition is part of an adjectival or adverbial expression:

*No me gusta ese traje. Es muy sin gracia.*  
*I don't like that outfit. It's not appealing (graceful).*

*Lo hizo muy sin interés.*  
*He did it without much interest.*

## Adverbial Complements

Several parts of the sentence may function as adverbial complements:

- **A verb as adverbial complement**
  - *después de comer*  
  *after eating*
  
  *antes de salir*  
  *before going out*

- **An adverb as adverbial complement**
  - *muy poco*  
  *very little*
  
  *demasiado bien*  
  *well enough*

- **A noun as adverbial complement**
  - *cerca del patio*  
  *near the patio*
  
  *atrás del libro*  
  *behind the book*

- **A pronoun as adverbial complement**
  - *atrás del mío*  
  *behind mine*
  
  *dentro de sí*  
  *inside himself*

- **A sentence as adverbial complement**
  - *Ahora que ella vino.*  
  *(Now that she has come.)*
  
  *Después que Ud. lo lea.*  
  *(After you read it.)*
Adverbial Phrases

Adverbial phrases (frases or modos adverbiales) are groups of two or more words that function as adverbs. Here are some examples:

- de vez en cuando: every once in a while
- sin más ni menos: without any to-do
- de repente: suddenly
- a ciegas: blindly
- más adelante: further on
- a más y mejor: greatly
- a lo mejor: maybe
- cuanto antes: as soon as possible
- por poco: almost
- antes que cante el gallo: very early
- más viejo que Matusalén: very old
- más largo que esperanza de pobre: very long
- a paso de tortuga: very slowly
- como quien no quiere la cosa: on the sly
- donde el diablo perdió el poncho: very far
- como escupida de músico: very fast

Functions of Adverbs

Adverbs may perform different functions in the sentence.

A. Adverbs can function as nouns:

*Nunca* es un término que no existe en su vocabulario. Never is a term that doesn't exist in her vocabulary.

B. Adverbs can function as adjectives:

*Quiere mucha* atención. She wants a lot of attention.

C. Adverbs can function as pronouns:

*No gana mucho* (dinero, sueldo). He doesn't make much (money).
D. Adverbs can function as interjections:

¡Abajo! (Down!)  ¡Bien! (Well done!)  ¡Adentro! (Go inside!)

E. Adverbs can function as relative pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>donde</td>
<td>Esa es el aula donde (en la que) cursé el primer grado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>como</td>
<td>Lo hice como (de la manera en que) Ud. me lo indicó.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuándo</td>
<td>Esa era la hora cuándo (en que) llegó.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That is the classroom where I attend first grade.
I did it as (the way) you showed me.
That was the time when he arrived.

**Comparative and Superlative Forms**

Adverbs modify verbs and other adverbs to intensify or diminish their intrinsic qualities. In English, in some cases, adverbs are used by themselves; in other cases, they are followed by *than*. They also help to compare adjectives and nouns (see Chapter 4, Adjectives). Some examples are:

*He ate less than Peter.*
*He ate more slowly than Peter.*
*I studied a lot.*
*She sang very nicely.*

In Spanish, too, as we have seen, adverbs can be made up of only one word, but they can also appear as an adverbial phrase:

*Él comió menos que Pedro.*
*Él comió más despacio que Pedro.*
*Yo estudié mucho.*
*Ella cantó muy bien.*

**Comparison of Inequality Involving Verbs**

In Spanish, the action indicated by a verb can be moved to a higher or a lower degree of intensity by inserting *más que* or *menos que* right after the verb:

*El perro come más que el gato.*  The dog eats more than the cat.
*El secretario viaja menos que el jefe.*  The secretary travels less than his boss.
NOTES:
The meanings of the previous sentences shown can be expressed in different ways, as follows.

(1) The meaning stays the same when the order of each sentence is inverted and the comparative expression is changed:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{El gato come menos que el perro.} & \quad \text{The cat eats less than the dog.} \\
\text{El jefe viaja más que el secretario.} & \quad \text{The boss travels more than his secretary.}
\end{align*}
\]

(2) The meaning stays the same when the sentences are expressed in the negative, using the formula \textit{no} + verb + \textit{tanto como}:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{El gato no come tanto como el perro.} & \quad \text{The cat doesn't eat as much as the dog.} \\
\text{El secretario no viaja tanto como el jefe.} & \quad \text{The secretary doesn't travel as much as his boss.}
\end{align*}
\]

Comparison Involving Numbers

When the comparison involves a number, the preposition \textit{de} follows \textit{más} or \textit{menos}:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Compraré más de dos paquetes.} & \quad \text{I will buy more than two packages.} \\
\text{Tienen menos de ocho vuelos semanales al Uruguay.} & \quad \text{They have fewer than eight flights a week to Uruguay.}
\end{align*}
\]

Comparison of Equality Involving Verbs

The intrinsic value of a verb which affects more than one subject in the sentence can be equally compared by inserting the adverbial expression \textit{tanto como} right after the verb:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Este departamento trabaja tanto como el de finanzas.} & \quad \text{This department works as hard as the finance department.} \\
\text{En Puerto Rico llueve tanto como en Florida.} & \quad \text{In Puerto Rico it rains as much as in Florida.}
\end{align*}
\]

NOTES:

(1) The meaning stays the same even when the word order is inverted:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{El de finanzas trabaja tanto como este departamento.} & \quad \text{The finance department works as hard as this one.} \\
\text{En Florida llueve tanto como en Puerto Rico.} & \quad \text{In Florida it rains as much as in Puerto Rico.}
\end{align*}
\]
(2) To negate these sentences, the word no is placed in front of the verb, in which case the sentence becomes a comparison of inequality:

*El de finanzas no trabaja tanto como este departamento.*

The finance department doesn't work as hard as this one.

*En Florida no luce tant como en Puerto Rico.*

In Florida it doesn't rain as much as in Puerto Rico.

### Comparison of Inequality Involving Other Adverbs

Adverbs are placed in front of other adverbs to intensify or diminish their inherent value. In Spanish, adverbs and adverbial forms such as *más, menos, mucho más, mucho menos, un poco más, un poco menos, casi tan*, and others, are generally placed before another adverb for this purpose:

*La directora habló más claro que la maestra de segundo grado.*

The principal spoke more clearly than the second grade teacher.

*La entrevista fue hecha menos eficientemente que la conferencia.*

The interview was conducted less efficiently than the conference.

*El funcionario presentó el problema mucho más abiertamente que su superior.*

The official presented the problem much more openly than his superior.

*La chica escribió un poco más detalladamente que su novio.*

The girl wrote in a little more detail than her boyfriend.

*Mi amiga lo hizo casi tan bien como tú.*

My friend did it almost as well as you.

*Pedro lo sugirió un poco menos agresivamente que el entrenador.*

Pedro suggested it a little less forcefully than the coach.

### NOTES:

The meanings of the sentences previously shown can be expressed in different ways, as follows.

(1) The meaning stays the same when the order of each sentence is inverted and the comparative expression is changed:

*La maestra de segundo grado habló menos claro que la directora.*

The second grade teacher spoke less clearly than the principal.

*El entrenador lo sugirió un poco más agresivamente que Pedro.*

The coach suggested it a little more forcefully than Pedro.

(2) The meaning stays the same when the sentences are expressed in the negative, using the formula *no + verb + tan + adverb + como*:
La maestra de segundo grado no habló tan claro como la directora. The second grade teacher did not speak as clearly as the principal.

Pedro no lo sugirió tan agresivamente como el entrenador. Pedro did not suggest it as forcefully as the coach.

**Comparison of Equality Involving Other Adverbs**

Another way to express that a verb's function is performed equally by more than one subject in the sentence, insert the formula *tan* + adverb + *como* right after the verb.

La bailarina baila tan delicadamente como su acompañante. The ballerina dances as delicately as her companion.

Luisa reza tan piadosamente como sus hermanas. Luisa prays as piously as her sisters.

**NOTES:**

(1) The meaning of the sentences previously shown stays the same even when the order of each sentence is inverted:

Su acompañante baila tan delicadamente como la bailarina. Her companion dances as delicately as the ballerina.

Sus hermanas rezan tan piadosamente como Luisa. Her sisters pray as piously as Luisa.

(2) To negate these sentences, the word *no* is placed in front of the verb, in which case the sentence becomes a comparison of inequality:

Su acompañante *no* baila tan delicadamente como la bailarina. Her companion does not dance as delicately as the ballerina.

Sus hermanas *no* rezan tan piadosamente como Luisa. Her sisters do not pray as piously as Luisa.

**Superlatives**

The superlative forms of adverbs are generally formed with expressions such as *suma-mente* (exceedingly), *extremadamente* (extremely), *inmensamente* (immensely), *más* (most), *menos* (least), *muy* (very), and a few that end in *-ísimo*, among others:

Nicolás toca el piano sumamente bien. Nicolás plays the piano exceedingly well.

Ella debe estudiar más. Sabe poquísimo. She has to study more. She knows very, very little.
La casa queda lejísimos.
The house is far, far away.

Cuanto menos tiene Juan, más feliz se siente.
The less Juan has, the happier he feels.

Teresa hace lo más que puede para satisfacer a su familia.
Teresa does the most she can to satisfy her family.

Felipe iba manejando extremadamente rápido cuando chocó el auto.
Felipe was driving extremely fast when he wrecked his car.

José terminó el trabajo muy ingeniosamente.
José finished the job very cleverly.

Los saludé muy atentamente.
I sent my regards very sincerely.
Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words or phrases that join different parts of a sentence. Simple conjunctions (conjunciones simples) are formed by one word (such as pero); compound conjunctions (conjunciones compuestas) are a combination of two words together (such as aunque, siquiera); and conjunctive phrases have two or more words (si bien, con tal de que).

Conjunctions are classified according to their function, into coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. Each one of these groups is divided into subgroups. Simple and compound conjunctions and conjunctive phrases can fall into any of these groups and subgroups.

Coordinating Conjunctions

These conjunctions link independent parts of the sentence. They are divided into five subgroups. Examples are provided for each conjunction.

A. Adversative conjunctions (adversativas) indicate an opposition:

- a pesar de (que)
- ahora
- antes
- antes bien
- aun cuando

Iba a venir; ahora, ni vino ni llamó.

Tiene buena salud a pesar de su edad.

No es fácil; antes (bien), lleva mucho tiempo.

No lo haré aun cuando tú lo digas.

- aunque
- bien que

in spite of
however; but; now
rather
on the contrary; rather
even if; notwithstanding
He was going to come; however, he neither came nor called.
He is in good health in spite of his age.
It is not easy; rather, it takes a long time.
I won't do it, even if you say so.

although; even if
although
mas
ni siquiera
No saldré aunque vengas.
No lo creo, bien que lo haya dicho.
No le gusta, mas lo hará.
No vino nadie, ni siquiera tu hermano.

pero
por más que
si bien
No vino, pero llamó.
No me gusta el jamón, pero lo como igual.
No lo usaré, por más que me lo regale.
No es posible, si bien lo hayas sugerido.

sino
siquiera
No quiero el vestido sino la falda.
Dile esto, siquiera no le digas nada más.

B. Continuative conjunctions (continuativas) provide a continuation of the discourse:

ahora bien
ahora pues
pues
Ahora bien, iremos todos.
Ahora pues, ¿qué comemos?
Las compró, pues, las comeremos.

C. Copulative conjunctions (copulativas) join simple words or phrases:

y
and (used before a consonant and also
before a word that begins with hie)
e
and (used before i or hi)
ni
neither; nor
que
that; than
D. Disjunctive conjunctions (disyuntivas or distributivas) imply an exclusion or an alternative.

1. Exclusion:

   o
   u
   o bien
   Quiero un libro o una revista.
   O lo comes o lo guardo.
   leones u osos
   mujeres u hombres
   iremos en auto o bien en autobús.

2. Alternative:

   ahora... ahora...
   ora... ora...
   bien... bien...
   que... que...
   ya... ya...
   Se pasa el tiempo, ahora leyendo, ahora trabajando.
   Vive ora en el campo, ora en la ciudad.
   Trabaja, bien en la casa, bien en el jardín.
   Siempre se queja, que esto, que lo otro.

   Los domingos le gusta hacer algo, ya coser, ya cocinar.
E. Illative conjunctions (*ilativas*) show a consequence:

- **así que**
- **conque**
- **luego**
- **por consiguiente**

No me gusta, **así que** ya lo sabes.
La maestra lo sugirió, **conque** lo estudiarán.
Se lo pedimos, **luego** lo hizo.
El jefe lo dijo, **por consiguiente** todos fueron.

- **so**
- **so; so then; now then**
- **therefore**
- **therefore**

I don't like it, so now you know.
The teacher suggested it, so they will study it.
We asked him; therefore, he did it.
The boss said so; therefore, everybody went.

- **por lo tanto**
- **por tanto**
- **pues**
- **que**

Nos gusta viajar, **por lo tanto** iremos a Europa.
No ahorró, **por tanto** se quedó pobre.
No trabajó, **pues**, se quedó sin nada.
Ponlo ahí, **que** lo veamos.

- **therefore**
- **therefore**
- **so**
- **so**

We like to travel, therefore we'll go to Europe.
He didn’t save, therefore he became poor.
He didn’t work, so he was left with nothing.
Put it over there, so that we can see it.

Subordinating Conjunctions

These conjunctions join a dependent clause to the main clause. There are six subgroups. Examples are provided for each conjunction.

A. Causal conjunctions (*causales*) point to a reason or cause:

- **como que**
- **cuando**
- **porque**

Los tengo, **como que** los compré.
**Cuando** tú lo recomiendas debe ser bueno.
Aun **cuando** no lo hiciera por él, lo haría por ti.
**No te lo repito porque** ya lo sabes.

- **because**
- **since; although**
- **because**

I have them, because I bought them.
Since you recommend it, it must be good.
Although I wouldn’t do it for him, I would do it for you.
I do not repeat it because you already know it.

- **pues**
- **pues que**

because; since
since
puesto que
que
Lo compré pues era lindo.
No probamos el pastel, pues no lo trajo.
Puesto que estudié los verbos, ahora los sé.
Que es muy habilidoso, todos lo saben.

supuesto que
una vez que
Vamos a ir con ellos, supuesto que han llegado.
Va a cumplir su promesa una vez que lo ha dicho.

although; since
because; that
I bought it because it was pretty.
We didn’t taste the pie, since he didn’t bring it.
Since I studied the verbs, now I know them.
Everybody knows that he is very skillful.

since; supposing that
since; inasmuch as
We’ll go with them, supposing that they have arrived.
She will fulfill her promise since she has said it.

B. Comparative conjunctions (comparativas) show a comparison:

a modo de
así como
como
igual que
más que
Se puso el pañuelo a modo de un cinturón.
Escribe el inglés así como lo habla.
Roscoe se porta como un niño.
Habla igual que un viejo.
No iremos al cine más que tú insistas.

like; as
just as
as; like
as; the same as; like
although; even if
She put the scarf on like a belt.
He writes English just as he speaks it.
Roscoe behaves like a child.
He speaks like an old man.
We won’t go to the movies even if you insist.

C. Conditional conjunctions (condicionales) establish a condition:

como
con tal que
cuando
dado que
Como no estudies, no aprenderás nada.
Ahorraré el dinero con tal que tenga suficiente para gastos diarios.
Te daré las llaves cuando me las pidas.

Dado que él lo dice, lo creeré.

if
provided
when
provided; as long as
If you don’t study, you will not learn anything.
I'll save the money, provided I have some left over for daily expenses.
I’ll give you the keys when you ask me for them.
As long as he says it, I’ll believe it.
o bien
si
si no
siempre que
ya que
Préstame el libro, o bien no te ayudaré.

Comeremos allí si tú quieres.
No voy a darle la noticia, si no se pondrá triste.
Estaremos listos, siempre que lo tengamos que hacer.
Lo hice ya que me lo pediste.

D. Conclusive conjunctions (finales) point to a purpose:

a fin de que
a que
con objeto de que
para que
Voy a estudiar a fin de que pueda trabajar allí.
Vino a que se lo reparara.
Mandó una carta con objeto de solicitar trabajo.
Trajo a su novio para que fuera con nosotros.

E. Modal conjunctions (modales) indicate a way or manner:

así como
como
como si
conforme a
Lo haremos así como ellos sugieren.
Será como Ud. quiere.
Actúa como si estuviera cansado.
Lo hizo conforme a las especificaciones.
de manera que
de modo que
otherwise
if
otherwise
provided
since
Lend me the book, otherwise I will not help you.
We'll eat there if you like.
I won't give her the news, otherwise she will be sad.
We'll be ready, provided we have to do it.
I did it since you asked me.

so that
so that
in order to
in order that; so that
I'm going to study so that I can work there.
He came so that I would repair it for him.
He sent a letter in order to apply for a job.
She brought her boyfriend so that he could come with us.

just as
as
as if
according to; consistent with
We'll do it just as they suggest.
It will be as you want.
He behaves as if he were tired.
She did it according to specifications.

so as to; so that
so that
según
según que
sin que
Lo pondremos aquí de manera que lo vean.
Vamos a explicarlo, de modo que todos lo sepan.
Según Pedro, lloverá.
Voy a responder según que vaya recibiendo noticias.
Me lo dio sin que se lo pidiera.

according to
as
without
We'll put it here so that they will see it.
We are going to explain it so that everybody will know it.
According to Pedro, it will rain.
I'll respond as I start receiving the news.
He gave it to me without my asking for it.

F. Temporal conjunctions (temporales) show a time limit:

apenas
así que
como
cuando
Hablamos apenas vino.
Se fue a dormir así que se fueron los huéspedes.
Como su padre llegó, se pusieron a jugar.

Hazlo cuando quieras.

cuanto antes
en cuanto
luego que
mientras
Hazlo cuanto antes.
Dámelo en cuanto esté listo.
Lo haré luego que lo aprueben.
Puedo vivir así mientras se queden conmigo.

no bien
siempre que
tan luego
Te llamaré no bien termine el trabajo.
Iremos todos siempre que vuelvas temprano.
Saldremos de compras tan luego me den el cheque.

as soon as
as soon as; after
as soon as
when
We spoke as soon as he came.
She went to sleep as soon as the guests were gone.
They started playing as soon as their father arrived.
Do it whenever you want.

as soon as possible
as soon as
after; as soon as
while
Do it as soon as possible.
Give it to me as soon as it's ready.
I'll do it as soon as they approve it.
I can live like this while they stay with me.

as soon as
whenever; provided
as soon as
I'll call you as soon as I finish the job.
All of us will go provided you come back early.
We'll go shopping as soon as they give me the check.
NOTES:
(1) Many adverbs and adverbial phrases function as conjunctions.
(2) One conjunction may belong to different subgroups.
(3) Que is both a relative pronoun and a conjunction. If it can be replaced by which, it is a relative pronoun.
(4) There is another use of tan luego, as in the following sentence: ¡Tan luego a mí me lo dice! In this case, the expression has an ironic connotation, meaning: And to me she says that!
Interjections

Interjections (interjecciones) are expressions of feelings that a speaker produces suddenly. “Hey!” “Aha!” “Oh!” and “Come on!” are some of the most common interjections used by English speakers. In Spanish, interjections are enclosed in exclamation points, one at the beginning and one at the end of the word or expression, just like all other exclamations in this language.

Categories of Interjections

A. Interjections classified according to their form

There are five subdivisions. Several examples are provided for each category.

1. Proper interjections (propias)

These are words that have no other function in the sentence but the sudden expression of feelings:

¡Ah! ¡Ay! ¡Bah! ¡Oh! ¡Uf! ¡Upa! ¡Zape!

2. Improper interjections (impropias)

These interjections include nouns, adjectives, verbs, and other expressions that are used as interjections:

¡Caracoles! ¡Bueno! ¡Viva! ¡Hola! ¡Dale! ¡Qué macana!

3. Single interjections (simples)

These are one-word expressions:

¡Ea! ¡Anda! ¡Vale! ¡Puf!
4. Double interjections (dóbles)

These are expressions consisting of a repeated word:
¡Hurra! ¡Hurra! ¡Bien! ¡Bien! ¡Uy! ¡Uy! ¡Vamos! ¡Vamos!

5. Exclamative expressions (modos interjectivos)

These are two or more words that function as interjections:
¡Madre mía! ¡Válgame Dios! ¡Què desastre!
¡Ay de mí! ¡Ojalá que sí! ¡Vaya sorpresa!

B. Interjections classified according to the feelings denoted

Some of the most common proper and improper interjections, which vary regionally in the Hispanic world, belong to groups such as the following:

1. Pain:
¡Ay! ¡Ah! ¡Uy! ¡Aya! ¡Ayayay!

2. Happiness:
¡Ay! ¡Aleluya!

3. Surprise:
¡Ay! ¡Ah! ¡Epa! ¡Guay! ¡Uy! ¡Oh!

4. Admiration:
¡Ah! ¡Pardiez! ¡Ha! ¡Ay! ¡Ayayay!

5. Cheering:
¡Arre! ¡Ea! ¡Upa! ¡Sus! ¡Ce! ¡Vamos! ¡Olé!

6. Attention:
¡Ea! ¡Mira! ¡So! ¡Ta! ¡To! ¡Aquí!

7. Approval:
¡Ajá! ¡Bis! ¡Bravo! ¡Viva! ¡Arriba! ¡Amén! ¡Olé!
8. Bother:

¡Quiá! ¡Rayos! ¡Uf! ¡Za! ¡Zape! ¡Fuera!

9. Disapproval:

¡Abajo! ¡Ca! ¡Dale! ¡Fuera!
Accents

Depending on how the syllables of a word are emphasized when the word is pronounced, a syllable in Spanish is considered either accented (tónica or acentuada), when the stress falls on that particular syllable, or else unaccented (átona or inacentuada), when the stress does not fall on that syllable.

The stress may appear in a word in four different ways.

A. Stress on the last syllable, in which case the word is called aguda:
   canción, compás, café, barril, feliz

B. Stress on the next-to-last syllable, in which case the word is called grave or llana:
   lápiz, come, lunes, fácil, mártir

C. Stress on the third-to-last syllable, in which case the word is called esdrújula:
   exámenes, cálido, próxima, geográfico, matemáticas

D. Stress on later syllables, in which case the word is called sobresdrújula:
   perdóneselo, cántemelas, constrúyanoslo, repítaselos, devotísimamente

NOTES:
(1) All words in the preceding third and fourth categories (C., esdrújulas, and D., sobresdrújulas) carry an accent mark on the stressed syllable.

(2) Monosyllabic words do not carry accent marks unless they are homonyms needing clarification. See examples in the section headed Monosyllables, at the end of Appendix A.
Rules

The following rules determine whether to place a written accent mark on the stressed syllable of words in each category previously mentioned.

A. Words with stress on the last syllable (agudas)

All words in this category that end in \( n, s, \) or in any vowel \( (a, e, i, o, u) \) carry an accent mark:

- \( \text{latón, gruñón, París, salís, bebé, mamá, alelí} \)

If the word ends in any other consonant, no written accent mark is needed:

- \( \text{barril, cantad, feliz, alud, amor} \)

NOTES:

1. If the \( s \) at the end of a word is preceded by a consonant, no written accent mark is needed:

- \( \text{tictacs, mamuts, robots} \)

2. The letter \( y \) is considered a vowel when it sounds like \( i \) and appears at the end of a word such as:

- \( \text{ley and carey (diphthongs)} \)
- \( \text{Paraguay, Uruguay, buey (triphthongs)} \)

These words do not have written accent marks.

B. Words with stress on the next-to-last syllable (graves or llanas)

All words in this category that do not end in the letters \( n, s, \) or a vowel carry an accent mark:

- \( \text{difícil, frágil, Ramírez, revólver, carácter, ultimátum} \)

NOTE:

If a word in this category ends in \( n, s, \) or a vowel, no accent mark is needed, as in:

- \( \text{examen, joven, martes, saltas, rosa, corre} \)

This rule is the inverse of rule A.
C. Words with stress on the third-to-last syllable (esdrújulas)

All words in this category carry an accent mark, regardless of their final letter:

silaba, mayúscula, minúscula, físico, Nápoles, mínimo, bellísima

D. Words with stress on earlier syllables (sobresdrújulas)

All words in this category carry an accent mark, regardless of their final letter. Many of the words in this category are verbal forms to which pronouns have been added:

cómételo, termínaselas, recíclanoslos, dibújatelas.

Other words are adverbs formed by the addition of the suffix -mente (-ly in English) to adjectives that already carry an accent mark, as in:

fácilmente, esporádicamente, entusiásticamente

E. When a word is modified

When the base form of a word is modified in any way, each different modified form takes accent marks according to the rules that apply to that particular modified form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Él da.</td>
<td>He gives.</td>
<td>(monosyllable, no accent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dame.</td>
<td>Give me.</td>
<td>(rule B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dámelo.</td>
<td>Give it to me.</td>
<td>(rule C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dándomelo.</td>
<td>Giving it to me.</td>
<td>(rule D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canción</td>
<td>song</td>
<td>(rule A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canciones</td>
<td>songs</td>
<td>(rule B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>examen</td>
<td>exam</td>
<td>(rule B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exámenes</td>
<td>exams</td>
<td>(rule C)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Capital letters

Every letter that carries an accent mark shows the accent, even if the letter is capitalized:

Él escribió una carta.

 LOS ARTÍCULOS
 BENITO PÉREZ GALDÓS
 ÁREAS INHÓSPITAS DE LA PATAGONIA
 JOSÉ MARTÍNEZ RUIZ (azorín)
G. Interrogative and exclamatory words

All interrogative and exclamatory words carry accent marks, as in the following examples:

¿Cuál?, ¿Qué?, ¿Cuántos?, ¿Quiénes?, ¿Dónde?, ¿Cómo?
¡Cuántos!, ¡Quién será!, ¡Dónde lo puso!, ¡Qué sorpresa!

H. Compound words

Compound words are words formed by two or more words. The accent mark is placed only on the last word, and only if an accent mark is necessary according to the preceding rules. Some examples are:

- **puntapié**: The word *pie* does not carry an accent mark, but as part of the compound word, it belongs to rule A.

- **asimismo**: The word *así* loses its accent mark to adjust to the newly formed word: rule B applies and there is no written accent mark.

- **decimoséptimo**: The word *décimo* loses its accent mark; the new word takes its accent mark according to rule C.

However, if the compound word includes a hyphen between the two words that constitute it, each word keeps its original accent, as in *económico-político*.

Diphthongs

The preceding rules also apply when the stressed syllable has a diphthong, which is a gliding combination of two vowels, either a strong vowel (*a, e, o*) followed by a weak one (*i, u*), or vice versa. Here are some examples of words that contain diphthongs, as well as some exceptions to the rules.

A. When the stress is on the last syllable

1. When a word in this category requires a written accent mark because it ends in *n, s,* or a vowel (preceding rule A), and the last syllable contains a diphthong, the accent is placed over the strong vowel (*a, e, o*)

   *versión, exclamación, permitió, caráu, cantáis, bebéis*
NOTE:
The word argüís, which is the vosotros form of the verb argüir, carries an accent mark, according to rule A. The diaeresis on the letter u indicates that this vowel must be pronounced as a whole letter, not as in guitarra, where it is silent, just as in the English word guitar.

2. If the word ends in any other consonant, there is no accent mark:

labial, fluvial, desear

NOTE:
The word cual is monosyllabic and does not carry an accent mark unless it is used as an interrogative word, cuál. In both cases, it means which.

The name Ruiz contains a diphthong but is monosyllabic; therefore it doesn’t need an accent.

3. Words like vio, dio, fue, fui, pie, and fiel are monosyllabic words and do not carry an accent mark. The word infiel, however, has two syllables, but does not have a written accent because it ends in a consonant other than n or s. Dios is also monosyllabic and carries no accent mark, but for adiós, which has two syllables, the last one carries an accent mark because it ends in s.

4. The words ciudad and fluidex each have a diphthong formed by two weak vowels. The diphthong is not affected by the stress, which falls on the last syllables, dad and dez, respectively. These words do not carry an accent mark because they follow rule A. Other examples are enviudar and triunfar.

5. If in a combination of a strong vowel and a weak one, the weak vowel is stressed, as in maíz or baúl, the accent mark falls on the weak vowel to preserve pronunciation and the diphthong disappears, becoming a hiatus (see the section Hiatuses that follows). Notice that now the word has become a two-syllable word.

6. The letter h between a strong vowel and a weak one does not destroy the diphthong, as in the word rehusar, when the diphthong is in the unaccented syllable. When the verb is conjugated, however, an accent mark is needed to preserve pronunciation: rehíso; in this case the accent falls on the next-to-last syllable. If the two vowels that appear next to each other are both strong, as in rebén, the diphthong disappears and the vowels are pronounced separately.
7. If the two vowels that appear next to each other are weak, as in construí, the stress falls on the second vowel. This word carries an accent mark because it follows rule A. However, construímos and construído have the stress on the second vowel, but no accent mark is required because the words follow rule B. Other words that obey the same rules are huí (rule A), and huíste (rule B).

B. When the stress is on the next-to-last syllable

1. If the stressed syllable contains a diphthong, the stress falls on the strong vowel: peine, deuda, caigo, cuartos, caucho.

These words do not carry an accent mark because they agree with rule B. Some words with diphthongs that do need an accent mark according to the same rule are:

huésped, káiser, béisbol

2. If, in a combination of a strong vowel and a weak one, the weak vowel is stressed, as in oído, the accent mark falls on the weak vowel and the diphthong disappears, becoming a hiatus. Other examples are continuó, continuás. However, continuamos does not carry an accent mark because the stress falls on the strong vowel and the word follows rule B.

3. The letter b between a strong vowel and a weak one destroys the diphthong when the stress falls on the diphthong. Examples are búho and vabído. Both words carry an accent mark on the weak vowel to preserve pronunciation. They are an exception to rule B. However, if two vowels that appear on either side of an b are both strong, as in moho, the word does not carry an accent mark because it follows rule B.

4. When two vowels that appear next to each other are both strong, there is no diphthong and the syllables are separated:

lees, caen, paella, saeta

None of these words are accented because they follow rule B.

5. When two vowels next to each other are both weak, the stress falls on the second vowel:

viuda, cuita, buitre, jesuita, diurno, cuiden
These words follow the general rules of pronunciation, so a word like *cuidense* becomes a three-syllable word, and must carry an accent mark according to rule C. Words like *construido* and *fluido* do not form a diphthong since the stress falls on the second vowel to preserve pronunciation. An accent is not needed because the word follows rule B. Sometimes the word *fluido* is pronounced *flúido*, in which case it carries an accent mark because it becomes a three-syllable word.

**C. When the stress is on earlier syllables**

All words in this category carry an accent mark on the stressed syllable. Some examples are:

*archipiélagos, averiguándolo, reponiéndomelas, entusiásticamente*

Other words with diphthongs not affected by the accent mark are:

*diurético, cuidándolo.*

**Triphthongs**

If the syllable contains a triphthong, which is a gliding combination of three vowels—two weak ones and a strong one in the middle—the accent is placed over the second vowel:

*licuáis, renuncíáis, pronunciáis, Vieira, acentuéis.*

All these words follow the general rules for the placing of accent marks. However, in the *vosotros* form of the conditional tense, such as *devolveríáis, pediríáis,* and *habríáis,* the accent is placed on the first weak vowel to preserve pronunciation, and the triphthong disappears, forming a hiatus.

**NOTES:**

(1) The combination of vowels in words like *guión* and *guiar* does not constitute a triphthong since the letter *u* is silent. The syllable *gui* is pronounced as in the English word *guitar.* Besides, in both words there is a hiatus because the diphthong is eliminated by the stress on the strong vowels. They follow rule A.

(2) The accent on the first weak vowel in the combination of four vowels that appears in the *vosotros* form of the conditional tense—as in *leíáis* and *veíáis*—divides the words into three syllables. There is a diphthong in the last syllable, however.
Hiatuses

The hiatus is a combination of two or more vowels that belong to different syllables. A hiatus may happen in a combination of words or inside one word. Accents are placed according to the rules of pronunciation. Some examples follow.

A. Hiatuses in a combination of words:

- Está allí inerte.
- Llamó u oyó todo.
- Peleé en la batalla.
- Va a Alabama.

B. Hiatuses inside a word:

- Rule A: peón, león, país, engreír, construir
- Rule B: sentía, poema, poesías, canoa
- Rule C: poético, paradisíaco, caótico, período
- Rule D: poéticamente, feísimamente, criénslo

Monosyllables

Monosyllabic words do not carry accent marks. In some words of only one syllable where the exact same spelling and pronunciation can have different meanings (homonyms), the distinction between the meanings is made by placing an accent mark on one of them:

- aún — yet, still
- dé — give (subjunctive)
- él — he
- más — more
- mí — me
- sé — I know
- sí — yes, him/herself
- té — tea
- tú — you
- qué — what
- aun — even
- de — of, from, letter “d”
- el — the
- mas — but
- mi — my, musical note
- se — (pronoun)
- si — if, musical note
- te — (pronoun) and letter “t”
- tu — your
- que — that
Some exceptions are:

di  tell (command)  di  gave (past tense)

NOTE:

When the command *di* is used in a word that becomes a three-syllable word with the addition of pronouns, as in *dímelo*, the accent mark is used to agree with the general rules for written accent marks (rule C):

ve  go (command)  ve  see (command)

**Optional Accent Marks**

The following pronouns now require an accent mark only in cases when the meaning may be ambiguous; otherwise, the use of the accent mark is optional:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>éste</th>
<th>this one (pronoun)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ése</td>
<td>that one (pronoun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aquel</td>
<td>that one there (pronoun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sólo</td>
<td>only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>este</td>
<td>this (adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ese</td>
<td>that (adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aquel</td>
<td>that (adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solo</td>
<td>alone, single</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Classification of Words

Homonyms

Homonyms are words that are spelled and pronounced the same way, but have different meanings. Some examples are:

*aún ➔ aun; té ➔ te; dé ➔ de*

More information is provided in Appendix A, Accents, under the heading Monosyllables.

Antonyms

These are words of opposite meaning. Some examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cómodo</th>
<th>comfortable</th>
<th>molesto</th>
<th>uncomfortable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exterior</td>
<td>exterior</td>
<td>interior</td>
<td>interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fuerte</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>débil</td>
<td>weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idéntico</td>
<td>identical</td>
<td>distinto</td>
<td>different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mentira</td>
<td>lie</td>
<td>verdad</td>
<td>truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obediente</td>
<td>obedient</td>
<td>rebelde</td>
<td>rebellious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Synonyms

These are words that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another word in the same language. Some examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>inesperado</th>
<th>sudden</th>
<th>imprevisto</th>
<th>unforeseen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>inferior</td>
<td>inferior</td>
<td>subordinado</td>
<td>subordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modificación</td>
<td>modification</td>
<td>reform</td>
<td>reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mudar</td>
<td>to alter</td>
<td>cambiar</td>
<td>to change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paronyms

These are words that are similar because of their etymology or form, but that have different meanings. Some examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abertura</td>
<td>opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abrazar</td>
<td>to hug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acto</td>
<td>act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extracto</td>
<td>extract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lesión</td>
<td>injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prescindir</td>
<td>to do without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rayar</td>
<td>to scratch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>obertura</td>
<td>overture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abrasar</td>
<td>to burn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apto</td>
<td>apt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estrato</td>
<td>stratum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lección</td>
<td>lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presidir</td>
<td>to preside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rallar</td>
<td>to grate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Division of Words into Syllables

Words are divided in Spanish according to the following rules.

**A. One consonant between two vowels**

If there is one consonant between two vowels, the consonant joins the following vowel:

co-mi-do; Pe-pi-ta; pa-ja-ri-to.

At the end of a line, words are separated accordingly:

Le dije que nosotros siempre hemos comi-do en ese restaurante.
En su casa tiene muchos pa-jaritos cantores.

**B. Consonant groups**

The following consonants grouped together are considered as one consonant and begin a syllable with the next vowel:

bl br ch cl cr dr fl fr gl gr ll pl pr rr tr

Examples:

pro-ce-so; re-cla-mo; re-tra-to; se-lla-do; co-rrí-da; mu-cho

**NOTES:**

(1) These consonants remain together when the syllables are separated at the end of the line, for example in a handwritten note:

En el museo tenían estatuas y muchos re-tratos de los reyes.  At the museum they had statues and many portraits of the kings.
All the documents were sealed and signed.

If the combination \textit{rr} appears in a compound word, as in \textit{contrarreforma}, the double \textit{rr} is not used if the compound word is divided with a hyphen after the first word at the end of the line:

\textit{contrarreforma}

The word \textit{interrelacionar} is divided into \textit{inter-relacionar} at the end of the line. (Derivatives of this word also keep both words when divided at the end of a line.)

The letter \textit{x} is the equivalent of two consonants in a row, either \textit{gs} or \textit{cs}. In its written form, this letter is grouped with the following vowel:

\textit{e-xa-men; pró-ximo; ta-xi}

However, when pronounced, it is attached to the previous vowel:

\textit{ex/amen; próx/imo; tax/i}.

\textbf{C. Other consonant combinations}

In the case of a combination of consonants not included in rule B, the consonants are separated and each one is grouped with the vowel next to it:

\textit{Car-los; son-da; pan-ta-no}

\textbf{D. Three consonants between two vowels}

If there are three consonants between two vowels, the following rules apply.

1. If two of the consonants constitute one of the pairs listed in rule B, those consonants stay together:

\textit{com-pli-ca-do; res-trin-gi-do; es-plén-di-do}

2. If none of the combinations listed in rule B are present, the first two consonants are joined to the vowel before them and the third consonant is joined to the following vowel:

\textit{ist-mo; cons-tan-te}. 
E. Combinations of four consonants

If there is a combination of four consonants, the word is divided as follows:

- **mons-truo**  
  The **tr** stays together, as specified in rule B. The combination **ns** follows the rule given for the first two consonants in rule D, point 2.

- **trans-plan-tar**  
  The **pl** stays together, as specified in rule B. The combination **ns** follows the rule given for the first two consonants in rule D, point 2.

- **sub-s-tr-a-er**  
  The **tr** stays together, as specified in rule B. The combination **bs** follows the rule given for the first two consonants in rule D, point 2.

F. Hiatuses

Vowels that follow each other and are not part of a diphthong or a triphthong are separated as part of other syllables and form a hiatus. For more details, consult Appendix A, under the headings Diphthongs, Triphthongs, and Hiatuses. Some examples are:

- *a·zo·t e*; *c a·dí·a·co*; *le·f a·mos*; *c re·f a s.*

  **NOTE:**

  The vowels that form a diphthong or a triphthong stay together when the word is separated into syllables:

- *cau·sa*; *pia·no*; *a·nun·ci éi s*

G. Word division: single vowels should not stand alone

When it is necessary to separate a word at the end of the line, and the first or the last syllable is a vowel, the vowel should not stand alone, and should be attached to the following or previous syllable, depending on the case:

- *a·con·se·ja·ble* ➔ *acon·sejable* (Not: *a·consejable*)
- *a·sam·ble·a* ➔ *asam·blea* (Not: *asamble·a*)

H. Word division: **nn** and **cc**

In words with the combinations **nn** and **cc**, these letters are separated into different syllables:

- *in·no·va·dor*; *in·no·ble*; *lec·ción*; *re·dac·ción*
I. Word division: foreign words

Foreign words are divided according to the rules in use in the original language, as in *Tennessee*. The user may consult a dictionary of the foreign language in order to divide the word appropriately; otherwise, it is possible to separate the syllables according to the rules in the user's own language.

J. Word division: prefixes

If a word has a prefix, and the word needs to be divided at the end of the line, it is best to separate the prefix from the rest of the word, as in *pre-decir* and *des-unión*.

K. Word division: *h* after a consonant

When a word has an *h* preceded by a consonant, these two letters get divided:

*al-ha-ja, al-he-li, des-hie-lo, des-hi-lar, in-hu-ma-no, in-hôs-pi-to*

L. Word division: the combination *tl*

In words that contain the combination *tl*, which are very few, these letters stay together:

*A-tlán-ti-co, a-tlas, a-tle-ta*
Sample Conjugations with the Pronoun vos

The pronoun *vos* is widely used throughout Latin America. It can be said that at least in some part of each country, *vos* is used by itself or in combination with *tú*. Argentina and Uruguay are two of the countries where it is used the most, while in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic the influence of this pronoun is minimal or nonexistent.

Below are all the conjugations of Spanish verbs in three of the persons: *yo*, *tú*, and *vos*. Just as with any other personal pronoun, the pronoun *vos* itself need not be present when conjugating a verb; its use is optional in both the oral and the written forms.

A. The present indicative tense

1. Regular verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish verb</th>
<th>yo</th>
<th>tú</th>
<th>vos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>hablar</em></td>
<td>hablo</td>
<td>hablas</td>
<td>hablás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>beber</em></td>
<td>bebo</td>
<td>bebes</td>
<td>bebés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vivir</em></td>
<td>vivo</td>
<td>vives</td>
<td>vivís</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Irregular verbs

   (a) Stem-changing verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stem-changing verb</th>
<th>yo</th>
<th>tú</th>
<th>vos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>e ➤ i</em> pedir</td>
<td>pido</td>
<td>pides</td>
<td>pedís</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>e ➤ ie</em> pensar</td>
<td>pienso</td>
<td>piensas</td>
<td>pensás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>i ➤ ie</em> adquirir</td>
<td>adquiero</td>
<td>adquieres</td>
<td>adquirís</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>o ➤ ue</em> poder</td>
<td>puedo</td>
<td>puedes</td>
<td>podés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>oler</em></td>
<td>huelo</td>
<td>hueles</td>
<td>olés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>u ➤ ue</em> jugar</td>
<td>juego</td>
<td>juegas</td>
<td>jugás</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(b) First-person irregular verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
<th>3rd person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>add -g tener</td>
<td>yo tengo</td>
<td>tú tienes</td>
<td>vos tenés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>add -ig caer</td>
<td>yo caigo</td>
<td>tú caes</td>
<td>vos caés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c ➤ g hacer</td>
<td>yo hago</td>
<td>tú haces</td>
<td>vos hacés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g ➤ j dirigir</td>
<td>yo dirijo</td>
<td>tú diriges</td>
<td>vos dirigís</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gu ➤ g conseguir</td>
<td>yo consigo</td>
<td>tú consigues</td>
<td>vos conseguís</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c ➤ z ejercer</td>
<td>yo ejerzo</td>
<td>tú ejerces</td>
<td>vos ejercés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c ➤ zc crecer</td>
<td>yo crezco</td>
<td>tú creces</td>
<td>vos crecés</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Other irregular forms

- Changes in the stem:
  - caber: yo quepo, tú cabes, vos cabés

- Changes in the ending:
  - dar: yo doy, tú das, vos das
  - estar: yo estoy, tú estás, vos estás
  - saber: yo sé, tú sabes, vos sabés
  - ver: yo veo, tú ves, vos ves

(d) Irregular forms in more than one person:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
<th>3rd person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ir</td>
<td>yo voy</td>
<td>tú vas</td>
<td>vos vas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ser</td>
<td>yo soy</td>
<td>tú eres</td>
<td>vos sos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haber</td>
<td>yo he</td>
<td>tú has</td>
<td>vos has*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- add -y:
  - oír: yo oigo, tú oyes, vos oís
  - huir: yo huyo, tú huyes, vos huís

- add an accent on i or u:
  - esquiar: yo esquío, tú esquías, vos esquías
  - continuar: yo continúo, tú continúas, vos continuás

* Although this is the correct form, speakers generally do not use the present perfect, as in vos has hablado. Instead, they use the preterit tense: vos hablaste.
3. Reflexive verbs

(a) Regular verbs:
- lavarse: me lavo, te lavas, (vos) te lavás

(b) Irregular verbs:
- dormirse: me duermo, te duermes, (vos) te dormís
- ponerse: me pongo, te pones, (vos) te ponés

4. The verb *gustar* and similar verbs:
- gustar: me gusta/n, te gusta/n, te gusta/n
- faltar: me falta/n, te falta/n, te falta/n

When the verb form is preceded by *A mí, A tí*, etc., as in *A mí me gusta* and *A tí te gustan*, the *vos* form is *A vos te gusta/n.*

### B. The future tense

1. The informal future

This tense is formed with the present indicative of *ir*, the personal *a*, and the infinitive of the main verb, which is invariable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>yo voy a + infinitive</th>
<th>tú vas a + infinitive</th>
<th>vos vas a + infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cantar</td>
<td>yo voy a cantar</td>
<td>tú vas a cantar</td>
<td>vos vas a cantar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pedir</td>
<td>yo voy a pedir</td>
<td>tú vas a pedir</td>
<td>vos vas a pedir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Direct and indirect object pronouns are used according to the general rules:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vos + object</th>
<th>vos vas a + infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vos lo vas a cantar</td>
<td>vos vas a cantarlo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vos me lo vas a dar</td>
<td>vos vas a dármelo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The simple future

Speakers who use the pronoun *vos* prefer the informal future instead of the simple future.

3. Regular verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>yo + indicative</th>
<th>tú + indicative</th>
<th>vos + indicative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ar</td>
<td>besar</td>
<td>yo besaré</td>
<td>tú besarás</td>
<td>vos besarás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er</td>
<td>comer</td>
<td>yo comeré</td>
<td>tú comerás</td>
<td>vos comerás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ir</td>
<td>escribir</td>
<td>yo escribiré</td>
<td>tú escribirás</td>
<td>vos escribirás</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Irregular verbs:

- **poner**  
  - yo pondré  
  - tú pondrás  
  - vos pondrás  

- **decir**  
  - yo diré  
  - tú dirás  
  - vos dirás  

C. The future perfect tense

This form uses the future of the auxiliary verb *haber* and the past participle of the main verb. The *vos* form follows the normal pattern:

- **restar**  
  - yo habré restado  
  - tú habrás restado  
  - vos habrás restado  

- **perder**  
  - yo habré perdido  
  - tú habrás perdido  
  - vos habrás perdido  

- **salir**  
  - yo habré salido  
  - tú habrás salido  
  - vos habrás salido

D. The imperfect indicative tense

1. Regular verbs:

- **-ar**  
  - andar  
  - yo andaba  
  - tú andabas  
  - vos andabas  

- **-er**  
  - volver  
  - yo volvía  
  - tú volvías  
  - vos volvías  

- **-ir**  
  - vivir  
  - yo vivía  
  - tú vivías  
  - vos vivías

2. Irregular verbs:

- **ser**  
  - yo era  
  - tú eras  
  - vos eras  

- **ir**  
  - yo iba  
  - tú ibas  
  - vos ibas  

- **ver**  
  - yo veía  
  - tú veías  
  - vos veías

E. The preterit tense

1. Regular verbs:

- **-ar**  
  - bailar  
  - yo bailé  
  - tú bailaste  
  - vos bailaste  

- **-er**  
  - barrer  
  - yo barrí  
  - tú barriste  
  - vos barriste  

- **-ir**  
  - abrir  
  - yo abrí  
  - tú abriste  
  - vos abriste

2. Irregular verbs

(a) Irregular in all the forms

- **ser**  
  - yo fui  
  - tú fuiste  
  - vos fuiste  

- **ir**  
  - yo fui  
  - tú fuiste  
  - vos fuiste
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>yo</th>
<th>tú</th>
<th>vos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dar</td>
<td>di</td>
<td>diste</td>
<td>diste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>andar</td>
<td>anduve</td>
<td>anduviste</td>
<td>anduviste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacer</td>
<td>hice</td>
<td>hiciste</td>
<td>hiciste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saber</td>
<td>cupe</td>
<td>cupiste</td>
<td>cupiste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) First-person irregular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buscar</td>
<td>busqué</td>
<td>buscaste</td>
<td>buscaste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pagar</td>
<td>pagué</td>
<td>pagaste</td>
<td>pagaste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Stem-changing verbs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>almorzar</td>
<td>almorcé</td>
<td>almorzaste</td>
<td>almorzaste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volver</td>
<td>volví</td>
<td>volviste</td>
<td>volviste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pedir</td>
<td>pedí</td>
<td>pediste</td>
<td>pediste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preferir</td>
<td>preferí</td>
<td>preferiste</td>
<td>preferiste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dormir</td>
<td>dormí</td>
<td>dormiste</td>
<td>dormiste</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**F. The conditional tense**

1. Regular verbs:
   - **-ar**
     - besar: yo besaría, tú besarías, vos besarías
   - **-er**
     - comer: yo comería, tú comerías, vos comerías
   - **-ir**
     - escribir: yo escribiría, tú escribirías, vos escribirías

2. Irregular verbs:
   - tener: yo tendría, tú tendrías, vos tendrías
   - salir: yo saldría, tú saldrías, vos saldrías

**G. The conditional perfect tense**

This tense uses the conditional of the auxiliary verb *haber* and the past participle of the main verb, which is invariable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>yo habría</th>
<th>tú habrías</th>
<th>vos habrías</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pensar</td>
<td>habría pensado</td>
<td>habrías pensado</td>
<td>habrías pensado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tender</td>
<td>habría tendido</td>
<td>habrías tendido</td>
<td>habrías tendido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ir</td>
<td>habría ido</td>
<td>habrías ido</td>
<td>habrías ido</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**H. The progressive tenses (using the present participle)**

1. **The present progressive**

This tense uses the present indicative of the verb *estar* and the present participle (gerund) of the main verb, which is invariable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>yo estoy cocinando</th>
<th>tú estás cocinando</th>
<th>vos estás cocinando</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cocinar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **The past progressive**

This tense uses the imperfect indicative of *estar* and the present participle (gerund) of the main verb, which is invariable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>yo estaba andando</th>
<th>tú estabas andando</th>
<th>vos estabas andando</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>andar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coser</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**I. The present perfect indicative**

This tense uses the present tense of the auxiliary verb *haber* and the past participle of the main verb, which is invariable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>yo he avisado</th>
<th>tú has avisado</th>
<th>vos has avisado*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>avisar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abrir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**J. The past perfect indicative**

This tense uses the imperfect indicative of the auxiliary verb *haber* and the past participle of the main verb, which is invariable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>yo había mirado</th>
<th>tú había mirado</th>
<th>vos habías mirado</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mirar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reñir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Although this is the correct form, according to the informal rule speakers generally use the preterit tense instead of the present perfect: *vos avisaste*. 
K. The subjunctive

1. The present subjunctive

This tense is derived from the _yo_ form of the present indicative:

- _-ar_  
  - usar  
  - yo use  
  - tú uses  
  - vos uses

- _-er_  
  - vender  
  - yo venda  
  - tú vendas  
  - vos vendas

- _-ir_  
  - venir  
  - yo venga  
  - tú vengas  
  - vos vengas

2. The imperfect subjunctive

This tense is derived from the _ellos_ form of the preterit tense:

- _-ar_  
  - mostrar  
  - yo mostrara  
  - tú mostraras  
  - vos mostraras

- _-er_  
  - hacer  
  - yo hiciera  
  - tú hicieras  
  - vos hicieras

- _-ir_  
  - ir  
  - yo fuera  
  - tú fueras  
  - vos fueras

3. The present perfect subjunctive

This tense uses the present subjunctive form of the auxiliary verb _haber_ and the past participle of the main verb, which is invariable:

- _dibujar_  
  - yo haya dibujado  
  - tú hayas dibujado  
  - vos hayas dibujado

- _tener_  
  - yo haya tenido  
  - tú hayas tenido  
  - vos hayas tenido

- _escribir_  
  - yo haya escrito  
  - tú hayas escrito  
  - vos hayas escrito

4. The pluperfect (or past) subjunctive

This tense uses the imperfect subjunctive form of the auxiliary verb _haber_ and the past participle of the main verb, which is invariable:

- _atar_  
  - yo hubiera atado  
  - tú hubieras atado  
  - vos hubieras atado

- _mover_  
  - yo hubiera movido  
  - tú hubieras movido  
  - vos hubieras movido

- _morir_  
  - yo hubiera muerto  
  - tú hubieras muerto  
  - vos hubieras muerto

L. The imperative (commands)

1. Affirmative commands

The final _d_ of the _vosotros_ form is dropped. An accent mark is used in the three conjugations:

- _vosotros:_  
  - ¡Sacad!  
  - ¡Recorred!  
  - ¡Permitid!

- _vos:_  
  - ¡Sacá!  
  - ¡Recorré!  
  - ¡Permití!
2. Negative commands

The letter *i* of the *vosotros* form of the present subjunctive is dropped:

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{vosotros:} & ¡No saquéis! & ¡No recorráis! & ¡No permitáis! \\
vos: & ¡No saques! & ¡No recorras! & ¡No permitas!* \\
\end{array}
\]

**NOTE:**

Pronouns are attached to affirmative commands: ¡Sacálo! In negative commands, *no* and the pronoun are placed before the verb: ¡*No lo saques*!

When pronouns are attached to the irregular, affirmative, short command forms, such as *di*, *pon*, *haz*, and *ten*, the whole word is used: *decime* (tell me) instead of *dime*; *decímelo* (say it to me) instead of *dímelo*; *ponelo* (put it) instead of *ponlo*; *ponéselo* (put it on him) instead of *pónselo*; *hacelo* (do it) instead of *hazlo*; *tenelo* (have it, hold it) instead of *tenlo*; etc.

* In the lyrics of some Argentine tangos, the negative command carries an accent mark, as in ¡No saqués!, ¡No recorrás!, ¡No permitás!
Punctuation

A. The period (el punto)

1. At the end of a complete sentence, the period in Spanish is called punto. If the sentence is followed by another sentence, it is no longer called just punto, but rather punto y seguido. At the end of a paragraph, it becomes punto y aparte if the paragraph is followed by another paragraph. The final period in a text is called punto final. In the example that follows, the name of each mark is spelled out for clarification purposes:

   Con el Neoclasicismo no había tantos temas religiosos (punto y seguido). Los españoles estaban interesados en sus retratos y en su inmortalidad (punto y seguido). Había muchos encargos de la nueva burguesía (punto y aparte).

   La escultura española no produjo escultores buenos como los franceses (punto y seguido). José Álvarez Cubero se destacó como escultor (punto y seguido). Estudió en la Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (punto y seguido). Una de sus obras más conocidas es «La defensa de Zaragoza» (punto final).

2. To express thousands and millions, the period is used in Spanish; however, decimals are separated by a comma:

   7.345        22.972       667.009       1.447.723       567,98

3. Abbreviations are followed by a period (punto):

   Ud.        Sr.        prov. (province)        p. ej. (for example)

B. The comma (la coma)

The comma is used in Spanish in the following contexts.

1. The comma is used with vocatives, to address someone:

   Mire, María, aquí están las tazas. Look, María, here are the cups.
2. The comma is used with appositives, to identify a noun:

La Sra. Velez, maestra de primer grado, ganó el premio.  
Mrs. Velez, the first grade teacher, won the prize.

3. The comma is used to separate nouns in a series; however, no comma is placed before the *y (and)*:

Compré lápices, cuadernos, etiquetas y lapiceras.  
I bought pencils, notebooks, labels, and pens.

4. The comma is used when a subordinate sentence precedes the main sentence:

Pensando que Juan iba a venir, preparé una ensalada.  
Thinking that Juan was coming, I prepared a salad.

5. The comma is used after expressions such as *sin embargo, no obstante, por ejemplo, es decir*:

Vendimos la casa, es decir, nos vamos a mudar.  
We sold the house, that is to say, we are moving.

C. The colon (*los dos puntos*)

The colon is used in Spanish in the following contexts.

1. The colon is used before a literal reproduction of a text:

Carlos respondió: «Más vale tarde que nunca».  
Carlos answered, “Better late than never.”

2. The colon is used to introduce a list:

Debes recordar tres cosas: salud, dinero y amor.  
You must remember three things: health, money, and love.

3. The colon is used after a salutation in letters:

Estimado Sr. Ruiz:  
Dear Mr. Ruiz:

Querido Pedro:  
Dear Pedro,
4. The colon is used to introduce a clause that explains the one before it:

Los celulares han cambiado el mundo: ahora no se puede vivir sin un teléfono celular. Cellular phones have changed the world: now nobody can live without one.

**D. The semicolon (el punto y coma)**

The semicolon is used in Spanish in the following contexts.

1. The semicolon is used to connect two sentences that are related to each other:

Ayer me llamó Carmen; las cosas andan muy bien ahora. Carmen called me yesterday; things are going well now.

2. The semicolon is used to connect a series of sentences that contain commas:

El Sr. Gómez dijo que no hicieran el trabajo, pues ya lo tenía terminado; que no se olvidaran de echar las cartas, porque hoy se vencía el plazo; que no faltaran a la reunión, porque el asunto era importante.

Mr. Gómez said not to do the work, since he had already finished it; not to forget to mail the letters, because today was the expiration date; not to miss the meeting, because the subject was important.

3. The semicolon is used before conjunctions such as sin embargo, aunque, pero, mas, etc., if there is already a comma in the sentence:

Los aficionados, que estaban juntos en una sección del estadio, mostraban pancartas; sin embargo, se quedaron tristes cuando perdió el equipo.

The fans, who were together in one section of the stadium, were showing banners; however, they became sad when the team lost.

**E. Ellipsis points (los puntos suspensivos)**

Ellipsis points in Spanish are represented by three periods without spaces in between. No period is added to the ellipsis points at the end of the sentence. They are used as follows.

1. Ellipsis points to indicate an omission, which does not change the meaning of the sentence, and intends to make the reader think or imagine the scene. The first example that follows shows a complete sentence; however, no period is used after the ellipsis points:

El jardín estaba precioso... Había rosas y jazmines. The garden was beautiful . . . . There were roses and jasmine.
In the next example, the ellipsis points are inserted in the middle of the sentence. They indicate a hesitation by the speaker:

Empezó diciendo que... el viaje será en junio. She began saying that... the trip will be in June.

2. Ellipsis points to indicate an omission within material that has been reproduced literally:

«Durante la sesión del jurado (...) se notificó de la nueva fecha».  
“During the session of the jury... they were notified of the new date.”

«El presidente anunció [...] la reforma de la constitución».  
“The president announced... the amendment of the constitution.”

Notice in the preceding examples that the ellipsis points may be placed between either parentheses or brackets (corchetes).

3. Ellipsis points to indicate feelings of doubt or surprise:

Ellos vinieron a las... 5 de la tarde, más o menos. They came at around... 5 in the afternoon.

Abrí el sobre... ¡y encontré un cheque adentro! I opened the envelope... and I found a check inside!

4. Ellipsis points to leave open an enumeration:

En la feria había peras, manzanas, naranjas... In the market, there were pears, apples, oranges... .

F. Quotation marks (las comillas)

Quotation marks are used in Spanish as follows.

1. Quotation marks before and after a literal quote:

El senador se lamentó: “La crisis económica produce caos y violencia”. The senator lamented: “The economic crisis is producing chaos and violence.”

2. Quotation marks to emphasize a word that is used with a different meaning:

Felipe era un “león” cuando se trataba de defender a sus hijos. Felipe was a “lion” when it came to defending his children.

3. The English quotation marks (“ ”) can also be used in Spanish.
4. Single quotation marks are used, for any of the previous reasons given, in a sentence that is already within (double) quotation marks:

Raúl asintió: “Creo que todos los ‘menores’ deben asistir”.  
Raúl agreed: “I believe that all the ‘minors’ have to attend.”

G. The dash (el guión, la raya)

There are two types of dashes in Spanish.

1. The short dash, or hyphen, called guión, is used to separate syllables of a word at the end of a line.

2. The long dash, called raya, is used to introduce the speakers in a dialogue:

—Juan, ¿cuándo van a entregarte el documento?  
—No lo sé. Posiblemente mañana.  
—¿Crees que de veras lo tendrás?  
—¡Ya te lo dije! ¡No lo sé!

—Juan, when are they going to give you the document?”  
“I don’t know. Possibly tomorrow.”  
“Do you think that you will have it for sure?”  
“I already told you! I don’t know!”

3. The raya is also used to show direct speech:

—Juan, ¿cuándo van a entregarte el documento? —dijo Alberto— ¿mañana?  
“Juan, when are they going to give you the document?”—Alberto said—“tomorrow?”

4. The raya is also used to insert text to clarify or to give emphasis:

El salón principal—alfombrado en rojo—mostraba el carácter de su dueña.  
The main room—covered with red carpet—showed its owner’s character.

H. Parentheses

Parentheses are used in Spanish to clarify a statement:

La calle Florida (la más tradicional) está llena de tiendas lindas.  
Florida Street (the most traditional) is full of pretty stores.

I. The apostrophe (el apóstrofe)

Apostrophes are not used in modern Spanish. In the oldest literary works, an apostrophe was sometimes used instead of a letter, but this is no longer the case nowadays.
J. Question marks and exclamation points (*signos de interrogación y de admiración*)

All questions and exclamatory sentences in Spanish begin with upside-down marks and end with normal punctuation marks:

- **¿Cuántas materias vas a tomar el semestre próximo?** How many subjects are you going to take next semester?
- **¡Qué buena era la clase de anatomía!** How good the anatomy class was!
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