

SPANISH GRAMMAR UNLOCKED

The Complete Beginner Course

From "Hola" to Conversations in 14 Chapters

Level: Absolute Beginner (A1) to Low Intermediate (A2)

Spanish Grammar Unlocked

First Edition

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GETTING STARTED

HOW TO SPEAK SPANISH

The Golden Rules of Pronunciation

Spanish is beautifully consistent. Unlike English, where "Read" and "Read" sound different, Spanish letters rarely change their sound. If you can spell it, you can say it.

1. The Five Vowels

Vowels are short and sharp. Never "drag" them out like we do in English.

LETTER	SOUND	EXAMPLE	PHONETIC
A	Ah (Father)	Casa	(KAH-sah)
E	Eh (Bet)	Tres	(Treh-s)
I	Ee (See)	Si	(See)
O	Oh (Go - but short)	Hola	(OH-lah)
U	Oo (Moon)	Uno	(OO-no)

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DIAGNOSTIC QUIZ

Where do you stand?

Instructions: Circle the correct answer. This establishes your baseline before we begin.

1. "The House" (Casa is Feminine):

- a) El casa b) La casa c) Un casa
-

2. "I am" (Permanent/Identity):

- a) Yo soy b) Yo estoy c) Yo tengo
-

3. "We speak":

- a) Hablo b) Hablamos c) Hablan
-

4. "I don't eat":

- a) Yo no como b) Yo como no c) Yo no comes
-

5. "The red cars":

- a) Los rojos carros b) Los carros rojos c) El carros rojos
-

6. Ser or Estar? "I am in Madrid" (Location):

- a) Soy en Madrid b) Estoy en Madrid

CHAPTER 1

THE GENDER LOGIC

Nouns, Articles & Plurals

WHAT YOU ARE LEARNING

In English, a table is "it". In Spanish, a table is "she" (la mesa) and a telephone is "he" (el teléfono). This concept is called Gender. You cannot speak Spanish without mastering this first step.

1. The Golden Rule of O and A

Spanish makes this easier than French. You can usually tell the gender just by looking at the last letter.

ENDING	GENDER	ARTICLE (THE)	EXAMPLE
-O	Masculine	El	El chico (The boy)
-A	Feminine	La	La chica (The girl)

2. The Articles (The / A / Some)


You must match the article to the noun. Memorize this grid.

DEFINITE ARTICLES (THE)

GENDER	SINGULAR	PLURAL
Masculine	El libro	Los libros
Feminine	La casa	Las casas

INDEFINITE ARTICLES (A / SOME)

GENDER	SINGULAR	PLURAL
Masculine	Un amigo	Unos amigos
Feminine	Una amiga	Unas amigas

 **Spoken Tip:** When saying "El agua" (The water), we use "El" even though water is feminine. Why? Because "La agua" sounds weird with two 'a's together. But plural is normal: "Las aguas".

3. Making Things Plural

Unlike English, you sometimes add more than just an 's'.

Rule 1: Ends in Vowel -> Add S

El gato -> Los gatos

La casa -> Las casas

Rule 2: Ends in Consonant -> Add ES

El doctor -> Los doctores

La ciudad -> Las ciudades

Rule 3: Ends in Z -> Change to CES

La luz (light) -> Las luces

El pez (fish) -> Los peces

4. Chapter 1 Practice

A. EL OR LA? Look at the ending.

1. _____ gato

2. _____ universidad (-dad is feminine!)

3. _____ problema (Careful! -ma is tricky)

4. _____ nación

5. _____ teléfono

B. MAKE IT PLURAL (Remember: El -> Los, La -> Las)

6. La chica -> _____

7. El papel -> _____ (Ends in consonant!)

CHAPTER 2

THE TWO "TO BE" VERBS

Introduction to Ser and Estar

THE CHALLENGE

In English, we have one verb: "To Be". I am happy, I am tall, I am here. It's all the same.

In Spanish, this splits into two distinct verbs: *Ser* and *Estar*. Using the wrong one can completely change the meaning of your sentence. "Soy aburrido" means "I am a boring person." "Estoy aburrido" means "I am bored right now."

1. Ser (The Essence)

Use *Ser* for things that define who or what something is. These are permanent attributes, professions, and origins.

Memory Hook: DOCTOR

Description

Occupation

Characteristic

2. Estar (The State)

Use *Estar* for temporary states, emotions, and location.

Memory Hook: PLACE

Position

Location

Action

Condition

Emotion

CONJUGATION OF ESTAR (IRREGULAR)

PRONOUN	VERB	PRONUNCIATION	ENGLISH
Yo	Estoy	(eh-STOY)	I am
Tú	Estás	(eh-STAHHS)	You are
Él/Ella/Usted	Está	(eh-STAH)	He/She is
Nosotros	Estamos	(eh-STAH-mohs)	We are
Ellos/Ellas	Están	(eh-STAHN)	They are

3. Guided Examples: The Contrast

Ella es profesora.

She is a teacher. (Occupation -> Ser)

Ella está cansada.

She is tired. (Condition -> Estar)

Nosotros somos de España.

We are from Spain. (Origin -> Ser)

Nosotros estamos en México.

We are in Mexico. (Location -> Estar)

4. Chapter 2 Practice