

Collins easy learning

Complete Spanish

Grammar + Verbs + Vocabulary

Es más alto
que mi hermano.

*¿Dónde está
mi cartera?*

una autopista

3 books in 1

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Foreword for language teachers

The *Easy Learning Complete Spanish* is designed to be used with both young and adult learners, as a group reference book to complement your course book during classes, or as a recommended text for self-study and homework/coursework.

The text specifically targets learners from beginner to intermediate or GCSE level, and therefore its structural content and vocabulary have been matched to the relevant specifications up to and including Higher GCSE.

The approach aims to develop knowledge and understanding of grammar and your learners' ability to apply it by:

- defining parts of speech at the start of each major section with examples in English to clarify concepts
- minimizing the use of grammar terminology and providing clear explanations of terms both within the text and in the **Glossary**
- illustrating points with examples (and their translations) based on topics and contexts which are relevant to beginner and intermediate course content

The text helps you develop positive attitudes to grammar learning in your classes by:

- giving clear, easy-to-follow explanations
- prioritizing content according to relevant specifications for the levels
- sequencing points to reflect course content, e.g. verb tenses
- highlighting useful **Tips** to deal with common difficulties
- summarizing **Key points** at the end of sections to consolidate learning

In addition to fostering success and building a thorough foundation in Spanish grammar, the optional **Grammar Extra** sections will encourage and challenge your learners to further their studies to higher and advanced levels.

The blue pages in the middle section of the book contain **Verb Tables** and a **Verb Index** which students can use as a reference in their work.

Finally the **Vocabulary** section in the last part of the book provides thematic vocabulary lists which can either be used for self-study or as an additional teaching resource.

Introduction for students

Whether you are starting to learn Spanish for the very first time, brushing up on topics you have studied in class, or revising for your GCSE exams, the *Easy Learning Complete Spanish* is here to help. This easy-to-use guide takes you through all the basics you will need to speak and understand modern, everyday Spanish.

Newcomers can sometimes struggle with the technical terms they come across when they start to explore the grammar of a new language. The *Easy Learning Complete Spanish* explains how to get to grips with all the parts of speech you will need to know, using simple language and cutting out jargon.

The text is divided into sections, each dealing with a particular area of grammar. Each section can be studied individually, as numerous cross-references in the text guide you to relevant points in other sections of the book for further information.

Every major section begins with an explanation of the area of grammar covered on the following pages. For quick reference, these definitions are also collected together on pages viii–xii in a glossary of essential grammar terms.

What is a verb?

A **verb** is a 'doing' word which describes what someone or something does, what someone or something is, or what happens to them, for example, *be, sing, live*.

Each grammar point in the text is followed by simple examples of real Spanish, complete with English translations, helping you understand the rules. Underlining has been used in examples throughout the text to highlight the grammatical point being explained.

- In orders and instructions telling someone TO DO something, the pronoun joins onto the end of the verb to form one word.

Ayúdame.

Help me.

Acompáñanos.

Come with us.

In Spanish, as with any foreign language, there are certain pitfalls which have to be avoided. **Tips** and **Information** notes throughout the text are useful reminders of the things that often trip learners up.

Tip

Don't forget to use personal **a** before indefinite pronouns referring to people when they are the object of a verb.

¿Viste **a** alguien?

Did you see anybody?

No vi **a** nadie.

I didn't see anybody.



Key points sum up all the important facts about a particular area of grammar, to save you time when you are revising and help you focus on the main grammatical points.

Key points

- ✓ Like other adjectives, Spanish indefinite adjectives (such as **otro** and **todo**), must agree with what they describe.
- ✓ They go before the noun to which they relate.

If you think you would like to continue with your Spanish studies to a higher level, check out the **Grammar Extra** sections. These are intended for advanced students who are interested in knowing a little more about the structures they will come across beyond GCSE.

Grammar Extra!

por is often combined with other Spanish prepositions and words, usually to show movement.

Saltó por encima de la mesa.

She jumped over the table.

Nadamos por debajo del puente.

We swam under the bridge.

Pasaron por delante de Correos.

They went past the post office.

The blue pages in the middle of the book contain **Verb Tables**, where 120 important Spanish verbs (both regular and irregular) are conjugated in full. Examples show you how to use these verbs in a sentence. You can look up any common verbs in the **Verb Index** on pages 460–464 to find a cross-reference to a model verb.

Finally the **Vocabulary** section at the end of the book is divided into 50 topics, followed by a list of **supplementary vocabulary**.

Glossary of Grammar Terms

ABSTRACT NOUN a word used to refer to a quality, idea, feeling or experience, rather than a physical object, for example, *size, reason, happiness*. Compare with **concrete noun**.

ACTIVE a form of the verb that is used when the subject of the verb is the person or thing doing the action, for example, *I wrote a letter*. Compare with **passive**.

ADJECTIVE a 'describing' word that tells you more about a person or thing, such as their appearance, colour, size or other qualities, for example, *pretty, blue, big*.

ADVERB a word usually used with verbs, adjectives or other adverbs that gives more information about when, where, how or in what circumstances something happens or to what degree something is true, for example, *quickly, happily, now, extremely, very*.

AGREE (to) in the case of adjectives and pronouns, to have the correct word ending or form according to whether what is referred to is masculine, feminine, singular or plural; in the case of verbs, to have the form which goes with the person or thing carrying out the action.

APOSTROPHE s an ending ('s) added to a noun to show who or what someone or something belongs to, for example, *Danielle's dog, the doctor's wife, the book's cover*.

ARTICLE a word like *the, a* and *an*, which is used in front of a noun. See also **definite article, indefinite article**.

AUXILIARY VERB a verb such as *be, have* or *do* used with a main verb to form tenses, negatives and questions.

BASE FORM the form of the verb without any endings added to it, for example, *walk, have, be, go*.

CARDINAL NUMBER a number used in counting, for example, *one, seven, ninety*. Compare with **ordinal number**.

CLAUSE a group of words containing a verb.

COMPARATIVE an adjective or adverb with *-er* on the end of it or *more* or *less* in front of it that is used to compare people, things or actions, for example, *slower, less important, more carefully*.

COMPOUND NOUN a word for a living being, thing or idea, which is made up of two or more words, for example, *tin-opener, railway station*.

CONCRETE NOUN a word that refers to an object you can touch with your hand, rather than to a quality or idea, for example, *ball, map, apples*. Compare with **abstract noun**.

CONDITIONAL a verb form used to talk about things that would happen or would be true under certain conditions, for example, *I would help you if I could*. It is also used to say what you would like or need, for example, *Could you give me the bill?*

CONJUGATE (to) to give a verb different endings according to whether you are referring to *I, you, they* and so on, and according to whether you are referring to the present, past or future, for example, *I have, she had, they will have*.

CONJUGATION a group of verbs which have the same endings as each other or change according to the same pattern.

CONJUNCTION a word such as *and, because* or *but* that links two words or

phrases of a similar type or two parts of a sentence, for example, *Diane and I have been friends for years; I left because I was bored.*

CONSONANT a letter that isn't a vowel, for example, *b, f, m, s, v* and so on. Compare with **vowel**.

CONTINUOUS TENSE a verb tense formed using *to be* and the *-ing* form of the main verb, for example, *They're swimming* (present continuous); *He was eating* (past continuous).

DEFINITE ARTICLE the word *the*. Compare with **indefinite article**.

DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVE one of the words *this, that, these* and *those* used with a noun to refer to particular people or things, for example, *this woman, that dog*.

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN one of the words *this, that, these* and *those* used instead of a noun to point out people or things, for example, *That looks fun*.

DIRECT OBJECT a noun or pronoun used with verbs to show who or what is acted on by the verb. For example, in *He wrote a letter* and *He wrote me a letter*, *letter* is the direct object. Compare **indirect object**.

DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN a word such as *me, him, us* and *them* which is used instead of a noun to stand in for the person or thing most directly affected by the action expressed by the verb. Compare with **indirect object pronoun**.

ENDING a form added to a verb, for example, *go* → *goes*, and to adjectives and nouns depending on whether they refer to masculine, feminine, singular or plural things.

EXCLAMATION a word, phrase or sentence that you use to show you are surprised, shocked, angry and so on,

for example, *Wow!*; *How dare you!*; *What a surprise!*

FEMININE a form of noun, pronoun or adjective that is used to refer to a living being, thing or idea that is not classed as masculine.

FUTURE a verb tense used to talk about something that will happen or will be true.

GENDER whether a noun, pronoun or adjective is feminine or masculine.

GERUND a verb form in English ending in *-ing*, for example, *eating, sleeping*.

IMPERATIVE the form of a verb used when giving orders and instructions, for example, *Shut the door!*; *Sit down!*; *Don't go!*; *Let's eat*.

IMPERFECT one of the verb tenses used to talk about the past, especially in descriptions, and to say what was happening or used to happen, for example, *It was sunny at the weekend*; *We were living in Spain at the time*; *I used to walk to school*. Compare to **preterite**.

IMPERSONAL VERB a verb whose subject is *it*, but where the *it* does not refer to any specific thing, for example, *It's raining*; *It's 10 o'clock*.

INDEFINITE ADJECTIVE one of a small group of adjectives used to talk about people or things in a general way, without saying who or what they are, for example, *several, all, every*.

INDEFINITE ARTICLE the words *a* and *an*. Compare with **definite article**.

INDICATIVE ordinary verb forms that aren't subjunctive, such as the present, preterite or future. Compare with **subjunctive**.

INDEFINITE PRONOUN a small group of pronouns such as *everything, nobody* and *something*, which are used to refer

to people or things in a general way, without saying exactly who or what they are.

INDIRECT OBJECT a noun or pronoun used with verbs to show who benefits or is harmed by an action. For example, in *I gave the carrot to the rabbit*, *the rabbit* is the indirect object and *the carrot* is the direct object. Compare with **direct object**.

INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN a pronoun used with verbs to show who benefits or is harmed by an action. For example, in *I gave him the carrot* and *I gave it to him*, *him* is the indirect object and the *carrot* and *it* are the direct objects. Compare with **direct object pronoun**.

INDIRECT QUESTION a question that is embedded in another question or instruction such as *Can you tell me what time it is?*; *Tell me why you did it.* Also used for reported speech such as *He asked me why I did it.*

INDIRECT SPEECH the words you use to report what someone has said when you aren't using their actual words, for example, *He said that he was going out.* Also called **reported speech**.

INFINITIVE a form of the verb that hasn't any endings added to it and doesn't relate to any particular tense. In English the infinitive is usually shown with *to*, as in *to speak*, *to eat*.

INTERROGATIVE ADJECTIVE a question word used with a noun, for example, *What instruments do you play?*; *Which shoes do you like?*

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUN one of the words *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *what* and *which* when they are used instead of a noun to ask questions, for example, *What's that?*; *Who's coming?*

INTRANSITIVE VERB a type of verb that does not take a direct object,

for example, *to sleep*, *to rise*, *to swim*. Compare with **transitive verb**.

INVARIABLE used to describe a form which does not change.

IRREGULAR VERB a verb whose forms do not follow a general pattern. Compare with **regular verb**.

MASCULINE a form of noun, pronoun or adjective that is used to refer to a living being, thing or idea that is not classed as feminine.

NEGATIVE a question or statement which contains a word such as *not*, *never* or *nothing*, and is used to say that something is not happening, is not true or is absent, for example, *I never eat meat*; *Don't you love me?* Compare with **positive**.

NOUN a 'naming' word for a living being, thing or idea, for example, *woman*, *desk*, *happiness*, *Andrew*.

NOUN GROUP, NOUN PHRASE a word or group of words that acts as the subject or object of a verb, or as the object of a preposition, for example, *my older sister*; *the man next door*; *that big house on the corner*.

NUMBER used to say how many things you are referring to or where something comes in a sequence. See also **ordinal number** and **cardinal number**. Also the condition of being singular or plural.

OBJECT a noun or pronoun which refers to a person or thing that is affected by the action described by the verb. Compare with **direct object**, **indirect object** and **subject**.

OBJECT PRONOUN one of the set of pronouns including *me*, *him* and *them*, which are used instead of the noun as the object of a verb or preposition. Compare with **subject pronoun**.

ORDINAL NUMBER a number used to indicate where something comes in an order or sequence, for example, *first*, *fifth*, *sixteenth*. Compare with **cardinal number**.

PART OF SPEECH a word class, for example, *noun*, *verb*, *adjective*, *preposition*, *pronoun*.

PASSIVE a form of the verb that is used when the subject of the verb is the person or thing that is affected by the action, for example, *we were told*.

PAST PARTICIPLE a verb form which is used to form perfect and pluperfect tenses and passives, for example, *watched*, *swum*. Some past participles are also used as adjectives, for example, *a broken watch*.

PAST PERFECT see **pluperfect**.

PERFECT a verb form used to talk about what has or hasn't happened, for example, *I've broken my glasses*; *We haven't spoken about it*.

PERSON one of the three classes: the first person (*I*, *we*), the second person (*you* singular and *you* plural), and the third person (*he*, *she*, *it* and *they*).

PERSONAL PRONOUN one of the group of words including *I*, *you* and *they* which are used to refer to you, the people you are talking to, or the people or things you are talking about.

PLUPERFECT one of the verb tenses used to describe something that had happened or had been true at a point in the past, for example, *I'd forgotten to finish my homework*. Also called **past perfect**.

PLURAL the form of a word which is used to refer to more than one person or thing. Compare with **singular**.

POSITIVE a positive sentence or instruction is one that does not contain a negative word such as *not*. Compare with **negative**.

POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE one of the words *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our* or *their*, used with a noun to show who it belongs to.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUN one of the words *mine*, *yours*, *hers*, *his*, *ours* or *theirs*, used instead of a noun to show who something belongs to.

PREPOSITION is a word such as *at*, *for*, *with*, *into* or *from*, which is usually followed by a noun, pronoun or, in English, a word ending in *-ing*. Prepositions show how people and things relate to the rest of the sentence, for example, *She's at home*; *a tool for cutting grass*; *It's from David*.

PRESENT a verb form used to talk about what is true at the moment, what happens regularly, and what is happening now, for example, *I'm a student*; *I travel to college by train*; *I'm studying languages*.

PRESENT PARTICIPLE a verb form in English ending in *-ing*, for example, *eating*, *sleeping*.

PRETERITE a verb form used to talk about actions that were completed in the past in Spanish. It often corresponds to the ordinary past tense in English, for example, *I bought a new bike*; *Mary went to the shops on Friday*; *I typed two reports yesterday*.

PRONOUN a word which you use instead of a noun, when you do not need or want to name someone or something directly, for example, *it*, *you*, *none*.

PROPER NOUN the name of a person, place, organization or thing. Proper nouns are always written with a capital letter, for example, *Kevin*, *Glasgow*, *Europe*, *London Eye*.

QUESTION WORD a word such as *why*, *where*, *who*, *which* or *how* which is used to ask a question.

RADICAL-CHANGING VERBS in Spanish, verbs which change their stem or root in certain tenses and in certain persons.

REFLEXIVE PRONOUN a word ending in *-self* or *-selves*, such as *myself* or *themselves*, which refers back to the subject, for example, *He hurt himself*; *Take care of yourself*.

REFLEXIVE VERB a verb where the subject and object are the same, and where the action 'reflects back' on the subject. A reflexive verb is used with a reflexive pronoun such as *myself*, *yourself*, *herself*, for example, *I washed myself*; *He shaved himself*.

REGULAR VERB a verb whose forms follow a general pattern or the normal rules. Compare with **irregular verb**.

RELATIVE PRONOUN a word such as *that*, *who* or *which*, when it is used to link two parts of a sentence together.

REPORTED SPEECH see **indirect speech**.

SENTENCE a group of words which usually has a verb and a subject. In writing, a sentence begins with a capital and ends with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

SIMPLE TENSE a verb tense in which the verb form is made up of one word, rather than being formed from *to have* and a past participle or *to be* and an *-ing* form; for example, *She plays tennis*; *He wrote a book*.

SINGULAR the form of a word which is used to refer to one person or thing. Compare with **plural**.

STEM the main part of a verb to which endings are added.

SUBJECT a noun or pronoun that refers to the person or thing doing the action or being in the state described by the

verb, for example, *My cat doesn't drink milk*. Compare with **object**.

SUBJECT PRONOUN a word such as *I*, *he*, *she* and *they* which carries out the action described by the verb. Pronouns stand in for nouns when it is clear who is being talked about, for example, *My brother isn't here at the moment*. *He'll be back in an hour*. Compare with **object pronoun**.

SUBJUNCTIVE a verb form used in certain circumstances to indicate some sort of feeling, or to show doubt about whether something will happen or whether something is true. It is only used occasionally in modern English, for example, *If I were you, I wouldn't bother*; *So be it*.

SUPERLATIVE an adjective or adverb with *-est* on the end of it or *most* or *least* in front of it that is used to compare people, things or actions, for example, *thinnest*, *most quickly*, *least interesting*.

SYLLABLE consonant+vowel units that make up the sounds of a word, for example, *ca-the-dral* (3 syllables), *im-po-ssi-ble* (4 syllables).

TENSE the form of a verb which shows whether you are referring to the past, present or future.

TRANSITIVE VERB a type of verb that takes a direct object, for example, *to spend*, *to raise*, *to waste*. Compare with **intransitive verb**.

VERB a 'doing' word which describes what someone or something does, is, or what happens to them, for example, *be*, *sing*, *live*.

VOWEL one of the letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o* or *u*. Compare with **consonant**.

Nouns

What is a noun?

A **noun** is a 'naming' word for a living being, thing or idea, for example, *woman, desk, happiness, Andrew*.

Using nouns

- In Spanish, all nouns are either masculine or feminine. This is called their gender. Even words for things have a gender.
- Whenever you are using a noun, you need to know whether it is masculine or feminine as this affects the form of other words used with it, such as:
 - adjectives that describe it
 - articles (such as **el** or **una**) that go before it
- ⇒ *For more information on **Articles** and **Adjectives**, see pages 10 and 19.*
- You can find information about gender by looking the word up in a dictionary. When you come across a new noun, always learn the word for *the* or *a* that goes with it to help you remember its gender.
 - **el** or **un** before a noun usually tells you it is masculine
 - **la** or **una** before a noun tells you it is feminine
- ⇒ *For exceptions to these rules, see **Articles**, page 11.*
- We refer to something as singular when we are talking about just one of them, and as plural when we are talking about more than one. The singular is the form of the noun you will usually find when you look a noun up in the dictionary. As in English, nouns in Spanish change their form in the plural.
- Adjectives, articles and pronouns are also affected by whether a noun is singular or plural.

Tip

Remember that you have to use the right word for *the*, *a* and so on according to the gender of the Spanish noun.



2 Nouns

Gender

1 Nouns referring to people

- Most nouns referring to men and boys are masculine.

el hombre the man

el rey the king

- Most nouns referring to women and girls are feminine.

la mujer the woman

la reina the queen

- When the same word is used to refer to either men/boys or women/girls, its gender usually changes depending on the sex of the person it refers to.

el estudiante the (male) student

la estudiante the (female) student

el belga the Belgian (man)

la belga the Belgian (woman)

Grammar Extra!

Some words for people have only one possible gender, whether they refer to a male or a female.

la persona the (male or female) person

la víctima the (male or female) victim

- In English, we can sometimes make a word masculine or feminine by changing the ending, for example, *Englishman* and *Englishwoman* or *prince* and *princess*. In Spanish, very often the ending of a noun changes depending on whether it refers to a man or a woman.

el camarero the waiter

la camarera the waitress

el empleado the employee (*male*)

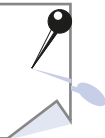
la empleada the employee (*female*)

el inglés the Englishman

la inglesa the Englishwoman

Típ

Note that a noun ending in **-o** is usually masculine, and a noun ending in **-a** is usually feminine.



- ➔ For more information on **Masculine and feminine forms of words**, see page 5.

2 Nouns referring to animals

- In English we can choose between words like *bull* or *cow*, depending on the sex of the animal. In Spanish too there are sometimes separate words for male and female animals.

el toro the bull

la vaca the cow

- Sometimes, the same word with different endings is used for male and female animals.

el perro the (male) dog

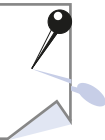
la perra the (female) dog, bitch

el gato the (male) cat

la gata the (female) cat

Típ

When you do not know or care what sex the animal is, you can usually use the masculine form as a general word.



- Words for other animals don't change according to the sex of the animal. Just learn the Spanish word with its gender, which is always the same.

el sapo the toad

el hámster the hamster

la cobaya the guinea pig

la tortuga the tortoise

3 Nouns referring to things

- In English, we call all things – for example, *table*, *car*, *book*, *apple* – 'it'. In Spanish, however, things are either masculine or feminine. As things don't divide into sexes the way humans and animals do, there are no physical clues to help you with their gender in Spanish. Try to learn the gender as you learn the word.
- There are lots of rules to help you. Certain endings are usually found on masculine nouns, while other endings are usually found on feminine nouns.

4 Nouns

► The following ending is usually found on masculine nouns.

Masculine ending	Examples
-o	<u>el libro</u> the book <u>el periódico</u> the newspaper BUT: <u>la mano</u> the hand <u>la foto</u> the photo <u>la moto</u> the motorbike <u>la radio</u> the radio (<i>although in parts of Latin America, it is <u>el radio</u></i>)

► The following types of word are also masculine.

- names of the days of the week and the months of the year
Te veré el lunes. I'll see you on Monday.
- the names of languages
el inglés English
el español Spanish
Estudio el español. I'm studying Spanish.
- the names of rivers, mountains and seas
el Ebro the Ebro
el Everest Everest
el Atlántico the Atlantic

► The following endings are usually found on feminine nouns.

Feminine ending	Examples
-a	<u>la casa</u> the house <u>la cara</u> the face BUT: <u>el día</u> the day <u>el mapa</u> the map <u>el planeta</u> the planet <u>el tranvía</u> the tram and many words ending in -ma (<u>el problema</u> the problem, <u>el programa</u> the programme, <u>el sistema</u> the system, <u>el clima</u> the climate)
-ción -sión	<u>la lección</u> the lesson <u>la estación</u> the station <u>la expresión</u> the expression
-dad -tad -tud	<u>la ciudad</u> the city <u>la libertad</u> freedom <u>la multitud</u> the crowd

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages viii-xii.

Grammar Extra!

Some words have different meanings depending on whether they are masculine or feminine.

Masculine	Meaning	Feminine	Meaning
el capital	the capital (meaning <i>money</i>)	la capital	the capital (meaning <i>city</i>)
el cometa	the comet	la cometa	the kite
el cura	the priest	la cura	the cure
el guía	the guide (<i>man</i>)	la guía	the guidebook; the guide (<i>woman</i>)

Invirtieron mucho capital.
Viven en la capital.

They invested a lot of capital.
They live in the capital.

4 Masculine and feminine forms of words

- Like English, Spanish sometimes has very different words for males and females.

el hombre	the man
la mujer	the woman
el rey	the king
la reina	the queen

- Many Spanish words can be used to talk about men or women simply by changing the ending. For example, if the word for the male ends in **-o**, you can almost always make it feminine by changing the **-o** to **-a**.

el amigo	the (male) friend
la amiga	the (female) friend
el hermano	the brother
la hermana	the sister
el empleado	the (male) employee
la empleada	the (female) employee
el viudo	the widower
la viuda	the widow

- 📌 Note that some words referring to people end in **-a** in the masculine as well as in the feminine. Only the article (**el** or **la**, **un** or **una**) can tell you what gender the noun is.

el dentista	the (male) dentist
la dentista	the (female) dentist
el deportista	the sportsman
la deportista	the sportswoman

6 Nouns

- Many masculine nouns ending in a consonant (any letter other than a vowel) become feminine by adding an **-a**.

<u>el español</u>	the Spanish man
<u>la española</u>	the Spanish woman
<u>el profesor</u>	the (male) teacher
<u>la profesora</u>	the (female) teacher

Tip

If the last vowel of the masculine word has an accent, this is dropped in the feminine form.

<u>un inglés</u>	an Englishman
<u>una inglesa</u>	an Englishwoman
<u>un francés</u>	a Frenchman
<u>una francesa</u>	a Frenchwoman

⇒ For more information about **Spelling and Stress**, see pages 196 and 200.

Key points

- ✓ The ending of a Spanish word often helps you work out its gender: for instance, if a word ends in **-o**, it is probably masculine; if it ends in **-a**, it is probably feminine.
- ✓ These endings generally mean that the noun is feminine: **-ción, -sión, -dad, -tad, -tud**
- ✓ Days of the week and months of the year are masculine. So are languages, mountains and seas.
- ✓ You can change the ending of some nouns from **-o** to **-a** to make a masculine noun feminine.

Forming plurals

1 Plurals ending in **-s** and **-es**

- In English we usually make nouns plural by adding an **-s** to the end (*garden* → *gardens*; *house* → *houses*), although we do have some nouns which are irregular and do not follow this pattern (*mouse* → *mice*; *child* → *children*).

Tip

Remember that you have to use **los** (for masculine nouns) or **las** (for feminine nouns) with plural nouns in Spanish. Any adjective that goes with the noun also has to agree with it, as does any pronoun that replaces it.

⇒ For more information on **Articles, Adjectives and Pronouns**, see pages 10, 19 and 41.

- To form the plural in Spanish, add **-s** to most nouns ending in a vowel (*a, e, i, o* or *u*) which doesn't have an accent.

el libro	the book
los libros	the books
el hombre	the man
los hombres	the men
la profesora	the (female) teacher
las profesoras	the (female) teachers

- Add **-es** to singular nouns ending in a consonant (any letter other than a vowel).

el profesor	the (male) teacher
los profesores	the (male/male and female) teachers
la ciudad	the town/city
las ciudades	the towns/cities

- ❓ Note that some foreign words (that is, words which have come from another language, such as English) ending in a consonant just add **-s**.

el disc-jockey	the DJ
los disc-jockeys	the DJs

8 Nouns

- Words ending in **-s** which have an unstressed final vowel do not change in the plural.

el paraguas	the umbrella
los paraguas	the umbrellas
el lunes	(on) Monday
los lunes	(on) Mondays

➡ For more information on **Stress**, see page 200.

- Most singular nouns ending in an accented vowel add **-s** in the plural, but those ending in **í** (and sometimes **ú**) usually have two possible plurals: with **-es** or **-s**.

el café	the café
los cafés	the cafés
el sofá	the sofa
los sofás	the sofas
el jabalí	the boar
los jabalíes or jabalís	the boars

Grammar Extra!

When nouns are made up of two separate words, they are called compound nouns, for example, **el abrelatas** (meaning *the tin-opener*) and **el hombre rana** (meaning *the frogman*). Some of these nouns don't change in the plural, for example, **los abrelatas**, while others do, for example, **los hombres rana**. It is always best to check in a dictionary to see what the plural is.

2 Spelling changes with plurals ending in -es

- Singular nouns which end in an accented vowel and either **-n** or **-s** drop the accent in the plural.

la canción	the song
las canciones	the songs
el autobús	the bus
los autobuses	the buses

- Singular nouns of more than one syllable which end in **-en** and don't already have an accent, add one in the plural.

el examen	the exam
los exámenes	the exams

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages viii-xii.

el joven	the youth
los jóvenes	young people

- Singular nouns ending in **-z** change to **-c** in the plural.

la luz	the light
las luces	the lights

la vez	the times
las veces	the times

- ⇒ For further information on **Spelling** and **Stress**, see pages 196 and 200.

3 **Plural versus singular**

- A few words relating to clothing that are plural in English can be singular in Spanish.

una braga	(a pair of) knickers
un slip	(a pair of) underpants
un pantalón	(a pair of) trousers

- A few common words behave differently in Spanish from the way they behave in English.

un mueble	a piece of furniture
unos muebles	some furniture
una noticia	a piece of news
unas noticias	some news
un consejo	a piece of advice
unos consejos	some advice

Key points

- ✓ Add **-s** to form the plural of a noun ending in an unaccented vowel.
- ✓ Add **-es** to form the plural of most nouns ending in a consonant.
- ✓ Drop the accent when adding plural **-es** to nouns ending in an accented vowel + **-n** or **-s**.
- ✓ Add an accent when adding plural **-es** to words of more than one syllable ending in **-en**.
- ✓ Change **-z** to **-c** when forming the plural of words like **luz**.
- ✓ A few common words are plural in English but not in Spanish.

Articles

What is an article?

In English, an **article** is one of the words *the*, *a*, and *an* which is given in front of a noun.

Different types of article

➤ There are two types of article:

- the definite article: *the* in English. This is used to identify a particular thing or person.

I'm going to the supermarket.

That's the woman I was talking to.

- the indefinite article: *a* or *an* in English, whose plural is *some* or *any* (or no word at all). This is used to refer to something unspecific, or that you do not really know about.

Is there a supermarket near here?

I need a day off.

The definite article: **el, la, los** and **las**

1 The basic rules

- ▶ In English, there is only one definite article: *the*. In Spanish, you have to choose between four definite articles: **el, la, los** and **las**. Which one you choose depends on the noun which follows.
 - ▶ In Spanish, all nouns (including words for things) are either masculine or feminine – this is called their gender. And just as in English they can also be either singular or plural. You must bear this in mind when deciding which Spanish word to use for *the*.
- ⇒ For more information on **Nouns**, see page 1.

- ▶ **el** is used before masculine singular nouns.


el niño	the boy
el periódico	the newspaper

- ▶ **la** is used before feminine singular nouns.

la niña	the girl
la revista	the magazine

Típ

To help you speak and write correct Spanish, always learn the article or the gender together with the noun when learning vocabulary. A good dictionary will also give you this information.



- ▶ **los** and **las** are used before plural nouns. **los** is used with masculine plural words, and **las** is used with feminine plural words.

los niños	the boys
las niñas	the girls
los periódicos	the newspapers
las revistas	the magazines

- ❗ Note that you use **el** instead of **la** immediately before a feminine singular word beginning with **a** or **ha** when the stress falls on the beginning of the word. This is because **la** sounds wrong before the 'a' sound. **BUT** if you add an adjective in front of the noun, you use **la** instead, since the two 'a' sounds do not come next to each other.

el agua helada	the icy water
el hacha afilada	the sharp axe
la misma agua	the same water
la mejor hacha	the best axe

12 Articles

2 **a** and **de** with the definite article

► If **a** is followed by **el**, the two words become **al**.

al cine	to the cinema
al empleado	to the employee
al hospital	to the hospital
Vio al camarero	He saw the waiter.

► If **de** is followed by **el**, the two words become **del**.

del departamento	of/from the department
del autor	of/from the author
del presidente	of/from the president

3 Using the definite article

► **el**, **la**, **los** and **las** are often used in Spanish in the same way as *the* is used in English. However, there are some cases where the article is used in Spanish but not in English.


► The definite article **is** used in Spanish:

- when talking about people, animals and things in a general way

Me gustan los animales.	I like animals.
Están subiendo los precios.	Prices are going up.
Me gusta el chocolate.	I like chocolate.
No me gusta el café.	I don't like coffee.
El azúcar es dulce.	Sugar is sweet.

- when talking about abstract qualities, for example, *time*, *hope*, *darkness*, *violence*

El tiempo es oro.	Time is money.
Admiro la sinceridad en la gente.	I admire honesty in people.

 Note that the definite article is **NOT** used in certain set phrases consisting of **tener** and a noun or after certain prepositions.

tener hambre	to be hungry	(literally: to have hunger)
sin duda	no doubt	(literally: without doubt)
con cuidado	carefully	(literally: with care)

➡ For more information on **Prepositions**, see page 178.

- when talking about colours
El azul es mi color favorito. Blue is my favourite colour.
- when talking about parts of the body – you do not use *my, your, his* and so on as you would in English

Tiene los ojos verdes. He's got green eyes.
No puedo mover las piernas. I can't move my legs.

 Note that possession is often shown by a personal pronoun in Spanish.

La cabeza me da vueltas. My head is spinning.
Lávate las manos. Wash your hands.

 For more information on **Personal pronouns**, see page 42.

- when using someone's title – for example, *Doctor, Mr* – but talking **ABOUT** someone rather than to them

El doctor Vidal no está. Dr Vidal isn't here.
El señor Pelayo vive aquí. Mr Pelayo lives here.

- when talking about institutions, such as school or church

en el colegio at school
en la universidad at university
en la iglesia at church
en el hospital in hospital
en la cárcel in prison

- when talking about meals, games or sports

La cena es a las nueve. Dinner is at nine o'clock.
Me gusta el tenis. I like tennis.
No me gusta el ajedrez. I don't like chess.

- when talking about days of the week and dates, where we use the preposition *on* in English

Te veo el lunes. I'll see you on Monday.
Los lunes tenemos muchos deberes. We have a lot of homework on Mondays.
Nací el 17 de marzo. I was born on 17 March.

- when talking about the time

Es la una. It's one o'clock.
Son las tres. It's three o'clock.
Son las cuatro y media. It's half past four.

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- when talking about prices and rates

**Cuesta dos euros el kilo.
20 euros la hora**

It costs two euros a kilo.
20 euros an hour

- with an adjective on its own to specify which one or ones

**A él le gustan estas cortinas
pero yo voy a comprar las rojas.**

He likes these curtains but I'm
going to buy the red ones.

 The adjective must agree with the noun it refers to.

Key points

- ✓ Before masculine singular nouns → use **el**.
- ✓ Before feminine singular nouns → use **la**.
- ✓ Before feminine singular nouns starting with stressed **a** or **ha** → use **el**.
- ✓ Before masculine plural nouns → use **los**.
- ✓ Before feminine plural nouns → use **las**.
- ✓ **a + el** → **al**
- ✓ **de + el** → **del**
- ✓ There are some important cases when you would use a definite article in Spanish when you wouldn't in English; for example, when talking about:
 - things in a general way
 - abstract qualities
 - colours
 - parts of the body
 - someone with a title in front of their name
 - institutions
 - meals, games or sports
 - the time, days of the week and dates (*using the preposition on in English*)
 - prices and rates
 - with an adjective on its own to mean *the red one, the thick ones* and so on

The indefinite article: **un, una, unos** and **unas**

1 The basic rules

- ▶ In English, the indefinite article is *a*, which changes to *an* when it comes before a vowel or a vowel sound, for example, *an apple*. In the plural, we use *some* or *any*.
- ▶ In Spanish, you have to choose between four indefinite articles: **un, una, unos** and **unas**. Which one you choose depends on the noun that follows.
- ▶ In Spanish, all nouns (including words for things) are either masculine or feminine – this is called their gender. And, just as in English, they can also be either singular or plural. You must bear this in mind when deciding which Spanish word to use for *a*.

➡ For more information on **Nouns**, see page 1.

- ▶ **un** is used before masculine singular nouns.

un niño a boy

un periódico a newspaper

- ▶ **una** is used before feminine singular nouns.

una niña a girl

una revista a magazine

- ▶ **unos** is used before masculine plural nouns.

unos niños some boys

unos periódicos some newspapers

- ▶ **unas** is used before feminine plural nouns.

unas niñas some girls

unas revistas some magazines

- ⓘ Note that you use **un** instead of **una** immediately before a feminine singular word beginning with **a** or **ha** when the stress falls on the beginning of the word. This is because **una** sounds wrong before the 'a' sound. **BUT** if you add an adjective in front of the noun, you use **una** instead, since the two 'a' sounds do not come next to each other.

un ave migratoria a migratory bird

una extensa área a wide area

2 Using the indefinite article

- ▶ The indefinite article is often used in Spanish in the same way as it is in English. However, there are some cases where the article is not used in Spanish but is in English, and vice versa.

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► The indefinite article is NOT used in Spanish:

- when you say what someone's job is
Es profesor. He's a teacher.
Mi madre es enfermera. My mother is a nurse.
- after **tener**, **buscar**, or **llevar (puesto)** when you are only likely to *have*, *be looking for* or *be wearing* one of the items in question
No tengo coche. I haven't got a car.
¿Llevaba sombrero? Was he wearing a hat?

[i] Note that when you use an adjective to describe the noun, you DO use an article in Spanish too.

Es un buen médico. He's a good doctor.
Tiene una novia española. He has a Spanish girlfriend.
Busca un piso pequeño. He's looking for a little flat.

► The indefinite article is NOT used in Spanish with the words **otro**, **cierto**, **cien**, **mil**, **sin**, and **qué**.

otro libro another book
cierta calle a certain street
cien soldados a hundred soldiers
mil años a thousand years
sin casa without a house
¡Qué sorpresa! What a surprise!

► The indefinite article IS used in Spanish but NOT in English when an abstract noun, such as **inteligencia** (meaning *intelligence*) or **tiempo** (meaning *time*) has an adjective with it.

Posee una gran inteligencia. He possesses great intelligence.

Key points

- ✓ Before masculine singular nouns → use **un**.
- ✓ Before feminine singular nouns → use **una**.
- ✓ Before feminine singular nouns starting with stressed **a** or **ha** → use **un**.
- ✓ Before masculine plural nouns → use **unos**.
- ✓ Before feminine plural nouns → use **unas**.
- ✓ You do not use an indefinite article in Spanish for saying what someone's job is.
- ✓ You do not use an indefinite article in Spanish with the words **otro**, **cierto**, **cien**, **mil**, **sin**, and **qué**.

The article **lo**

► Unlike the other Spanish articles, and articles in English, **lo** is NOT used with a noun.

► **lo** can be used with a masculine singular adjective or past participle (the **-ado** and **-ido** forms of regular verbs) to form a noun.

Lo único que no me gusta ...

The only thing I don't like ...

Esto es lo importante.

That's the important thing.

Lo bueno de eso es que ...

The good thing about it is that ...

Sentimos mucho lo ocurrido.

We are very sorry about what happened.

➡ For more information on the **Past participle**, see page 115.

► **lo** is also used in a number of very common phrases:

● **a lo mejor**

maybe, perhaps

A lo mejor ha salido.

Perhaps he's gone out.

● **por lo menos**

at least

Hubo por lo menos cincuenta heridos.

At least fifty people were injured.

● **por lo general**

generally

Por lo general me acuesto temprano.

I generally go to bed early.

► **lo** can also be used with **que** to make **lo que** (meaning *what*).

Vi lo que pasó.

I saw what happened.

Lo que más me gusta es nadar.

What I like best is swimming.

Grammar Extra!

lo can be used with **de** followed by a noun phrase to refer back to something the speaker and listener both know about.

Lo de tu hermano me preocupa mucho.

That business with your brother worries me a lot.

Lo de ayer es mejor que lo olvides.

It would be best to forget what happened yesterday.