

***A Very Condensed Course
in Very Basic
Spoken & Written Spanish***

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DarwinSys.com/spanishez
(formerly SpanishEZ.com)

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How to use

- This course offers a *very condensed* mixture of details and example
- To save bandwidth, we don't include practice pauses or repetitions (unlike most courses)
- Play it twice, once just listening and again with your finger on the pause button; practice what we say until it sounds the way we say it
- To hear how it sounds with more repetition, visit the full course at darwinsys.com/spanishez and download the free sample sections (MP3) (not available currently, sorry)

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Spanish Words

- Lots of Spanish words are the same or similar to those of English:
información, teléfono, autobús, presidente
- Many English words come from Spanish:
Florida, Colorado, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, El Niño, macho
- Lots of international words mean the same:
cafe

Gender

- All nouns in Spanish are either masculine or feminine
- Most make sense but some you just have to learn
- Nouns ending in -o or -e are masculine
- Most nouns ending in -a are feminine
- Masculine: el coche, el hombre, el niño
- Feminine: la casa, la dama, la niña
- Note the article agrees ('the' → 'el' or 'la')

Plural

- If the noun ends in a vowel, just add 's'!
- los coches, las damas
- Else it ends in a consonant, so add 'es'
- los colores, los coloneles
- Note how the definite article agrees both in gender and in plural ('the' → 'los' or 'las')

Endings

- Nouns referring to actual people change ending:
- El niño, la niña, los niños, las niñas.
- What if it's a mixed group? This rule was made in male-dominated society: Any group with at least one male takes the masculine form. Sorry, ladies.
- Adjectives change to agree with the noun:
- Los pasos perdidos; las niñas lindas

The Spanish Alphabet

- The same letters as English with a few extras:
a b c ch d e f g h i j k l ll m n ñ o p q r rr s t u v
w x y z (ñ, ll and rr are distinct letters)
- Vowel sounds are simple, and rarely change:

a	ahh
e	ay
i	ee
o	ohh
u	ooo

- Consonants...

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Consonants

- b, v -same but less distinct
- c, z – 's' ('th' in parts of Spain)
- ch – separate letter, pronounced 'ch'
- d – smoother 'dth'
- f, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, x – same
- g – hard ('g') before a, o; soft (like English 'h') before e, i
- h – always silent!!
- j – pronounce like 'h'
- ll – separate letter; pronounce 'lyuh' ('zhyuh' parts of Spain)
- ñ – called “enye”, pronounced “ny” as in English “canyon”
- rr – separate letter; rolled like Scottish accented 'r'
- w – called “doble v”; only used in imported words

Syllables

- Each strong vowel makes a syllable
- Syllable starts at the beginning of a word, or a consonant
a-gen-da, col-or, al-ter-a-do
- Two vowels together usually a diphthong
Die-go, tie-nes
- Between words, vowels slur together
Ten-go ham-bre - pronounced as 3 syllables, not four

Stressed/Emphasized Syllable

- If a vowel has an acute accent, emphasize that syllable
Córdoba, Hispánoamerica
- If the word ends in a vowel, or n, or s, emphasize the second last syllable
panorama, diccionario, infantes
- Else, the last syllable is emphasized
color, buscar, colonel

Common Phrases

- Buenas dias. Buenas tardes. Buenas noches.
- Hola!
- Cómo estás?
- Muy bien, gracias.
- No mal del todas, gracias!

Simple Words 1

English	Spanish
In	en
On	sobre
Left/right	La izquierda / la derecha (both directions and politics)
For	Por para
To (towards)	Hacia

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Simple Words 2

English	Spanish
Who?	¿Quiene?
What?	¿Que?
When?	¿Cuando?
Why?	¿Porque? (lit: for what)
Where?	¿Donde?
How?	¿Como?

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Pronouns

English	Spanish
I, me	Yo, mi
You (singular, familiar)	Tu
He, she	El, ella
We, us	Nosotros
You (plural or formal)	Ustedes (abbr. ud)
They	Ellos, ellas

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Numbers

1 – uno	2 - dos
3 - tres	4 - quatro
5 - cinco	6 - seis
7 - siete	8 - ocho
9 - nueve	10 - diez
11 once	12 doce
13 tres	14 quatorce
15 - quince	16 diez y seis

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Phrases - Location

- Estoy perdido
- ¿Donde hay ...? or ¿Donde se encuentra...?
 - el baño
 - el banque
 - el autobus para...
- Vase a la derecha | a la izquierda

Verbs

- Spanish verbs are *conjugated*, as are those in English
- Most verbs end in ar, ir, or re
buscar, venir, entender
- As in English, most verbs are regular, but the most important-common verbs are irregular
- Ser / Estar are both to be
 - Ser for permanent state: Soy hombre
 - Estar for transient state: Estoy perdido.
- See the book *1001 Spanish Verbs Conjugated*

A Few Confusing Words

- Some words that look like they should mean the same as in English, actually don't! Embarazada means pregnant, not embarrassed!
- These are called “false friends” (falsos amigos)
- See the list of these on our resources page at darwinsys.com/spanishez
- Omitting an accent can be embarrassing: al año vs el ano (which is why a lot of US crossword puzzles really blow).

• *Beyond the very basics*

- Take the full PC/Mac-based training course at <https://darwinsys.com/spanishez>
- Listen to Hispanic radio, TV, music
- Vacation in an Hispanic country
- Buy a Spanish-English dictionary
- Take college or University course(s)
- Move to a Spanish-speaking country!