

- » Meeting others
- » Identifying the subject
- » Learning the basics: numbers, dates, and telling time

Chapter 1

Getting a Jump Start in Spanish

Whether you're a student, a traveler, a businessperson, or simply someone who wants to learn another language, you'll need and, indeed, *want* to know certain foreign language basics for most everyday situations. For example, it's essential that you address your peers, acquaintances, as well as total strangers in a socially acceptable manner. Can you greet those around you in a casual manner, or is being more formal the appropriate way to proceed? Some social interactions require that you arrange appointments and meetings, plan trips, consult schedules, or discuss financial transactions where numbers, dates, and telling time are crucial basics to know.

This chapter provides you not only with those Spanish basics but also with communicative exercises that will enable you to confidently express greetings and salutations, numbers, days of the week, months of the year, seasons, dates, and time for speaking and writing in Spanish.

Expressing Greetings and Salutations

The Spanish language clearly recognizes and requires that you use different levels of formality depending on whom you're addressing. You certainly wouldn't speak or write to a stranger, teacher, business acquaintance, customer, boss, or any person in a position of authority in the same way as you would to a family member, friend, or child. It's not just your tone of voice

that matters; it's the words you use that make the difference. And in today's rapidly changing world, being inclusive and respectful of others is of paramount importance.

Use the following formal phrases when you want to meet and greet a stranger, someone you don't know very well, someone in a position of authority, or someone to whom you should show respect.

Buenos días.	<i>Hello. Good morning.</i>
Buenas tardes.	<i>Good afternoon.</i>
Buenas noches	<i>Good evening.</i>
Señor	<i>Mister, sir.</i>
Señorita	<i>Miss, young woman.</i>
Señora	<i>Mrs. (or older unmarried woman)</i>
Me llamo . . .	<i>My name is . . .</i>
¿Cómo se llama?	<i>What is your name?</i>
¿Cómo está?	<i>How are you?</i>
Muy bien.	<i>Very well.</i>
Así así.	<i>So-so.</i>
Regular.	<i>Fair.</i>
Mucho gusto.	<i>Nice to meet you.</i>
Es un placer.	<i>It's a pleasure.</i>
El gusto es mío.	<i>The pleasure is mine.</i>
Adiós.	<i>Goodbye.</i>
Hasta luego.	<i>See you later.</i>
Hasta mañana.	<i>See you tomorrow.</i>

Use the following informal phrases when you want to meet and greet a single friend, relative, child, and, of course, your beloved pet.

¡Hola!	<i>Hi.</i>
Me llamo . . .	<i>My name is . . .</i>
¿Cómo te llamas?	<i>What's your name?</i>
¿Cómo estás?	<i>How are you?</i>
¿Cómo te va?	<i>How's it going?</i>
¿Qué tal?	<i>How are things?</i>
¿Qué pasa?	<i>What's going on?</i>
¿Qué hay de nuevo?	<i>What's new?</i>
Nada de particular.	<i>Nothing much.</i>
Nos vemos.	<i>See you later.</i>
Hasta (muy) pronto.	<i>See you (very) soon.</i>
Hasta la vista.	<i>Till the next time.</i>
Que te vaya bien.	<i>Have a good day.</i>
Que tengas un buen día.	<i>Have a good day.</i>
Adiós./Chau.	<i>Bye.</i>



PRACTICE

Should you be formal or more informal? Express what you would say to the people in the following circumstances. Sometimes, more than one response may be correct.

Q. You are walking home from school and meet a friend you haven't seen in a while. You greet this friend by saying . . .

A. ¿Cómo te va? or ¿Qué tal? or ¿Qué pasa? or ¿Qué hay de nuevo? These particular friendly questions (all four of them) inquire about what your friend has been up to lately.

Now try the following, remembering to be polite or casual depending on whom you're addressing.

1 There's a new student in your class whom you want to get to know better. But first you have to find out more information, such as the person's name. You would ask . . .

2 A new neighbor has moved in across the street. When you see him leaving for work in the morning, you would greet him by saying . . .

3 You just came back from a long day away from home and your dog comes to greet you at the door. You would respond to her by saying . . .

4 You are the new person on a job and you want to introduce yourself to your coworkers. You would say . . .

5 You have an afternoon appointment at the doctor. When you enter the office, you would say . . .

6 Recently, life has been pretty boring. When a friend asks you what's new, you would answer . . .

7 It's the end of the workday and you see your boss, Mr. López, as you are leaving. As you walk out the door, you would say . . .

- 8 Your friend has been sneezing and coughing. You would say . . .
-
- 9 After meeting a new colleague and exchanging initial pleasantries, you would say . . .
-
- 10 You want to express to a certain friend that you are looking forward to seeing them again soon. You would say . . .
-

Referring to Others Using Subject Pronouns

A pronoun is a part of speech used in place of a noun. Subject pronouns are followed by the verb expressing the main action in the sentence. (See Chapter 6 for more on verb conjugation.)

In English, you use subject pronouns all the time in place of, or to avoid, repeating subject nouns. It's much simpler to write, "They left," rather than "Mr. Anthony Bolavolunta and Miss Cleopatra Johnson left." The subject pronouns *I, you, he, she, we, and they* enable you to write clear, concise sentences. Subject nouns and pronouns alike are followed by the appropriate forms of the verbs expressing particular actions.



TIP

You don't use Spanish subject pronouns as frequently as their English counterparts, because a Spanish verb ending generally indicates the subject. You use Spanish subject pronouns, therefore, mainly to be polite, to emphasize or stress the subject, or to be perfectly clear as to who (or what) is acting as the subject of the sentence.

Meeting the subject pronouns

Just like in English, Spanish subject pronouns have a person (first, second, or third) and a number (singular or plural), as you can see in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1 Spanish Subject Pronouns

Person	Singular	Meaning	Plural	Meaning
1st person	yo	<i>I</i>	nosotros (nosotras)	<i>we</i>
2nd person informal (familiar)	tú	<i>you</i>	vosotros (vosotras)	<i>you</i>
2nd person formal (polite)	usted (Ud.)	<i>you</i>	ustedes (Uds.)	<i>you</i>
3rd person	él	<i>he</i>	ellos	<i>they</i>
	ella	<i>she</i>	ellas	<i>they</i>



WARNING

You don't express the English pronoun *it* as a subject in Spanish; it can be understood from the meaning of the sentence:

¿Qué es? (*What is it?*)

Es una herramienta. (*It's a tool.*)

Unlike the English subject pronoun *I*, which is always capitalized, the Spanish pronoun **yo** is capitalized only at the beginning of a sentence. You always write the abbreviations **Ud.** and **Uds.** with capital letters, even though you write the English equivalent *you* with a lowercase letter, unless it appears at the beginning of a sentence. When **usted** and **ustedes** aren't abbreviated, they're capitalized only at the beginning of a sentence. Here are some examples:

Yo me voy. (*I'm leaving.*)

Eduardo y yo salimos. (*Edward and I are going out.*)

¿Busca Ud. (usted) algo? (*Are you looking for something?*)

¿Uds. (Ustedes) necesitan ayuda? (*Do you need help?*)

Applying subject pronouns

The use of certain subject pronouns can be confusing because two different Spanish pronouns may have the same English meaning. Other Spanish subject pronouns are used either primarily in Spain or in Latin America. Finally, some Spanish subject pronouns refer only to females while others refer to males or to a mixed group of males and females. The following section helps you select the correct subject pronoun for all circumstances in all parts of the Spanish-speaking world.

Tú versus Ud.

You use the informal (familiar) subject pronoun **tú** to address one friend, relative, child, or pet, because it is the informal, singular form of *you*. You use **tú** to express *you* when you enjoy a close relationship with a person, when you are in a familiar or informal situation, or when you are speaking to a pet:

Tú eres mi mejor amigo. (*You're my best friend.*)

You use **Ud.** to show respect to an older person or when speaking to a stranger or someone you don't know well, because **Ud.** is the formal, singular form of *you*. You may also use **Ud.** when you want to get to know the person better:

¿Es Ud. español? (*Are you Spanish?*)

Vosotros (Vosotras) versus Uds.

Vosotros and **vosotras** are informal (familiar) plural subject pronouns expressing *you*. The **vosotros** (**vosotras**) form is used primarily in Spain to address more than one friend, relative, child, or pet — the informal, plural form of *you*. You use **vosotros** when speaking to a group

of males or to a combined group of males and females. You use **vosotras** only when speaking to a group of females. You use **vosotros (vosotras)** only in Spain when speaking to a group of people in a familiar or informal situation.

¿Vosotros me comprendéis? (*Do you understand me?*)

Uds. is a plural subject pronoun that also expresses *you*. **Uds.** is used throughout the Spanish-speaking world to show respect to more than one older person or when speaking to multiple strangers or people you don't know well. **Uds.** is the formal, plural form of *you* (but is also used as the informal plural) and is used instead of **vosotros (vosotras)** in Latin American countries. You're playing it safe if you use **Uds.** when speaking to a group of people:

Uds. son muy simpáticos. (*You are very nice.*)

Él versus ella

Él refers to one male person (*he*); **ella** (*she*) refers to one female person:

Él toca la guitarra mientras ella baila. (*He plays the guitar while she dances.*)

Ellos versus ellas

Ellos (they) refers to more than one male or to a combined group of males and females, no matter the number of each gender present. **Ellas** refers to a group of females only:

Juan y Jorge (Ellos) escuchan. (*Juan and Jorge [They] listen.*)

Luz y Susana (Ellas) escuchan. (*Luz and Susana [They] listen.*)

Juan y Luz (Ellos) escuchan. (*Juan and Luz [They] listen.*)

El niño y mil niñas (Ellos) escuchan. (*The boy and 1,000 girls [They] listen.*)

Nosotros (Nosotras)

When you're talking about someone else and yourself at the same time, you must use the *we* form (**nosotros/nosotras**) of the verb. **Nosotros** refers to more than one male or to a combined group of males and females, no matter the number of each gender present. **Nosotras** refers to a group of females only:

Jorge y yo (Nosotros) jugamos al tenis. (*George and I [We] play tennis.*)

Luz y yo (Nosotras) jugamos al tenis. (*Luz and I [We] play tennis.*)

Gender neutral pronoun

Although not readily used in everyday Spanish conversation, and not included in the dictionary of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (Real Academia Española), the gender neutral pronouns **elle** (instead of **él** or **ella**) and **elles** (instead of **ellos** or **ellas**) are being used in progressive and academic circles as an option for trans and nonbinary individuals in Spanish-speaking countries. The English equivalent of **elle** (EH-jeh) and **elles** (EH-jehs) is *they* or *their*.

Elle habla español. (*They speak Spanish.*)

Elles trabajan bien. (*They work well.*)



If you choose to use a pronoun when forming a sentence, which would you use to speak about the following people?

PRACTICE

Q. Roberto and yourself? _____

Two female friends? _____

You (a person you know well) _____

A. **nosotros.** Use **nosotros** (*we*) when the subject is you and another person.

ellas. Use **ellas** (*they*) when referring to two females.

tú. Use **tu** (*you*) when referring to someone you know well.

Now that you've had some practice, select the pronoun you'd use to address the following people:

11 you (your doctor) _____

12 you and your best (male) friend _____

13 Alicia _____

14 the girls and the boys _____

15 yourself _____

16 you (an unfamiliar group of people) _____

17 Miguel _____

18 your pet _____

Focusing on Numbers

You need numbers to express dates and tell time. And when I talk numbers, I'm talking cardinal and ordinal numbers. You use *cardinal numbers* (the more popular of the two) to count, to bargain with a merchant about a price, to express the temperature, or to write a check. You use *ordinal numbers* to express the number of a floor, the act of a play, or the order of a person in a race or competition.

Cardinal numbers

You use cardinal numbers many times during the average day, probably without even realizing it. As a matter of fact, you probably use them at least once an hour in the course of normal conversation or in writing. The Spanish cardinal numbers are as follows:

Number	Spanish	Number	Spanish
0	cero	24	veinticuatro
1	uno	25	veinticinco
2	dos	26	veintiséis
3	tres	27	veintisiete
4	cuatro	28	veintiocho
5	cinco	29	veintinueve
6	seis	30	treinta
7	siete	40	cuarenta
8	ocho	50	cincuenta
9	nueve	60	sesenta
10	diez	70	setenta
11	once	80	ochenta
12	doce	90	noventa
13	trece	100	cien
14	catorce	101	ciento uno
15	quince	200	doscientos
16	dieciséis	500	quinientos
17	diecisiete	1.000	mil
18	dieciocho	2.000	dos mil
19	diecinueve	100.000	cien mil
20	veinte	1.000.000	un millón
21	veintiuno	2.000.000	dos millones
22	veintidós	1.000.000.000	mil millones
23	veintitrés	2.000.000.000	dos mil millones

In most instances, people simply write numerals when they need to express numbers. However, when you write checks, the transactions won't take place unless you write out the amounts of the checks in words.



For this exercise, fill in the incomplete checks with the written Spanish numbers:

PRACTICE

Juan Gómez 1000 Calle Cruz Madrid, España	Banco Nacional de España 1111 Avenida Cristóbal Colón Madrid, España	101 00-000/000 (Fecha) _____ 20 ____
Páguese a la orden de <u>Geraldo Nuñez</u> <u>79</u> €		
_____ EUROS		
MEMORÁNDUM _____	FIRMA AUTORIZADA _____	

A. setenta y nueve. The numbers for *70* and *nine* are written separately and are joined by *y* (*and*).

Now try your hand at filling in the incomplete checks with the written Spanish numbers.

19

Juan Gómez 1000 Calle Cruz Madrid, España	Banco Nacional de España 1111 Avenida Cristóbal Colón Madrid, España	102 00-000/000 (Fecha) _____ 20 ____
Páguese a la orden de <u>José Martín</u> <u>621</u> €		
_____ EUROS		
MEMORÁNDUM _____	FIRMA AUTORIZADA _____	

20

Juan Gómez 1000 Calle Cruz Madrid, España	Banco Nacional de España 1111 Avenida Cristóbal Colón Madrid, España	103 00-000/000 (Fecha) _____ 20 ____
Páguese a la orden de <u>Julia López</u> <u>1,595</u> €		
_____ EUROS		
MEMORÁNDUM _____	FIRMA AUTORIZADA _____	

21

Juan Gómez 1000 Calle Cruz Madrid, España	Banco Nacional de España 1111 Avenida Cristóbal Colón Madrid, España	104 00-000/000 (Fecha) _____ 20 ____
Páguese a la orden de <u>Luz Cabral</u>		<u>42,717</u> €
MEMORÁNDUM _____		_____ EUROS
FIRMA AUTORIZADA _____		

22

Juan Gómez 1000 Calle Cruz Madrid, España	Banco Nacional de España 1111 Avenida Cristóbal Colón Madrid, España	105 00-000/000 (Fecha) _____ 20 ____
Páguese a la orden de <u>Roberto Cádiz</u>		<u>170,733</u> €
MEMORÁNDUM _____		_____ EUROS
FIRMA AUTORIZADA _____		

23

Juan Gómez 1000 Calle Cruz Madrid, España	Banco Nacional de España 1111 Avenida Cristóbal Colón Madrid, España	106 00-000/000 (Fecha) _____ 20 ____
Páguese a la orden de <u>Roberto Cádiz</u>		<u>416,149</u> €
MEMORÁNDUM _____		_____ EUROS
FIRMA AUTORIZADA _____		



TIP

English speakers generally write the number 1 in one short, downward stroke. In the Spanish-speaking world, however, the number 1 has a little hook on top, which makes it look like a 7. So to distinguish a 1 from a 7, you put a line through the 7, which makes it look like this: 1.

**REMEMBER**

Keep the following rules in mind when using cardinal numbers in Spanish:

- » **Uno** (*one*), used only when counting, becomes **un** before a masculine noun and **una** before a feminine noun, whether the noun is singular or plural:
 - **uno, dos, tres** (*one, two, three*)
 - **un niño y una niña** (*a boy and a girl*)
 - **sesenta y un dólares** (*61 dollars*)
 - **veintiuna personas** (*21 people*)
- » You use the conjunction **y** (*and*) only for numbers between 31 and 99. You don't use it directly after hundreds:
 - **ochenta y ocho** (*88*)
 - **doscientos treinta y siete** (*237*)
- » You generally write the numbers 16–19 and 21–29 as one word. The numbers 16, 22, 23, and 26 have accents on the last syllable:
 - 16: **dieciséis**
 - 22: **veintidós**
 - 23: **veintitrés**
 - 26: **veintiséis**
- » When used before a masculine noun, **veintiún** (*21*) has an accent on the last syllable:
 - **veintiún días** (*21 days*)
 - **veintiuna semanas** (*21 weeks*) **Veintiún** (*21*) becomes **veintiuna** (note the dropped accent) before a feminine noun.
- » **Cien** (*100*) is used before nouns of either gender and before the numbers **mil** and **millones**. **Cien** becomes **ciento** between 100–199. **Un** is not used before **cien** or **mil** but precedes **millón**. When a noun follows **millón**, you put the preposition **de** between **millón** and the noun:
 - **cien sombreros** (*100 hats*)
 - **cien blusas** (*100 blouses*)
 - **cien mil millas** (*100,000 miles*)
 - **cien millones de euros** (*100 million euros*)
 - **ciento noventa acres** (*190 acres*)
 - **mil posibilidades** (*1,000 possibilities*)
 - **un millón de razones** (*1,000,000 reasons*)
- » In compounds of **ciento** (**doscientos**, **trescientos**), there must be agreement with a feminine noun:
 - **cuatrocientos pesos** (*400 pesos*)
 - **seiscientas pesetas** (*600 pesetas*)



WARNING

When it comes to numerals and decimals, Spanish uses commas where English uses periods, and vice versa:

English	Spanish
6,000	6.000
0.75	0,75
\$14.99	\$14,99



PRACTICE

Imagine that you are doing a report on Mexico and have to give its population.

Q How would you write 129 million people?

A. **ciento veintinueve millones de personas.** **Ciento** is the number for one hundred before another number. You generally write 29 as one number — the final **-e** of **veinte** becomes an **-i** before **nueve**. The word **millón** must be made plural by adding **-es**. Because **millón** ends in a consonant, the accent is dropped to maintain the proper stress in the plural. Add **de** after **millones** when it's followed by a noun, in this case, **personas**.

Now use the situations that follow to give yourself additional practice in using Spanish numbers.

- 24 You are in a bank in Spain and would like to change your dollars into euros. Say that you would like to change \$575 dollars.

Quisiera cambiar _____ dólares a euros.

- 25 You are looking for your room in a Colombian hotel. Ask for room 1782.

¿Dónde está la habitación _____?

- 26 You make a new acquaintance who asks for your cell number. Express that your number is (813) 555-1161.

Mi número de móvil es _____.

- 27 You are doing a math problem in Spanish. Express the following: $219 + 392 = 611$.

_____ y _____ son _____.

- 28 A Spanish-speaking friend asks you for the population of the United States. Give the approximate answer: 332 million.

Hay _____ de personas.

Ordinal numbers

You use *ordinal numbers* — those used to express numbers in a series — far less frequently than cardinal numbers, but they still have some very important applications in everyday life. Perhaps when you go to work, you must ask for your floor in an elevator. During a job interview or on a college application, you may have to express where you placed in your class standings. The following chart presents the Spanish ordinal numbers:

Ordinal	Spanish
1st	primero
2nd	segundo
3rd	tercero
4th	cuarto
5th	quinto
6th	sexto
7th	séptimo
8th	octavo
9th	noveno
10th	décimo



REMEMBER

The following list outlines everything you need to know when using ordinal numbers in Spanish:

» Spanish speakers rarely use ordinal numbers after 10th. After that, they usually use cardinal numbers in both the spoken and written language:

- **el séptimo mes** (*the seventh month*)
- **el siglo quince** (*the 15th century*)

» Ordinal numbers must agree in gender (masculine or feminine) with the nouns they modify. You can make ordinal numbers feminine by changing the final **-o** of the masculine form to **-a**:

- **el cuarto día** (*the fourth day*)
- **la cuarta vez** (*the fourth time*)

» **Primero** and **tercero** drop the final **-o** before a masculine singular noun:

- **el primer muchacho** (*the first boy*)
- **el tercer hombre** (*the third man*)

» A cardinal number that replaces an ordinal number above 10th is always masculine, because the masculine word **número** (*number*) is understood:

- **la calle (número) doscientos dos** (*202nd Street*)



REMEMBER

» In dates, **primero** is the only ordinal number you use. All other dates call for the cardinal numbers:

- **el primero de mayo** (*May 1st*)
- **el doce de enero** (*January 12th*)

» In Spanish, cardinal numbers precede ordinal numbers:

- **las dos primeras escenas** (*the first two scenes*)

» You use cardinal numbers when expressing the first part of an address:

- **mil seiscientos Avenida Pennsylvania** (*1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*)



You are taking a friend to a restaurant you like.

PRACTICE

Q He asks how many times you've eaten there. Tell him it's the fifth time.

Es la _____ vez.

A. **quinta.** The word for *the time*, **la vez**, is singular and feminine. Change the **-o** for the masculine form of **quinto**, to **-a** to get the feminine form of *fifth*, **quinta**.

Your friend is visiting from Spain and needs some help. Respond to her email by telling her which floor of the building she can get the assistance she may need. Write out the ordinal numbers in the email you write after consulting the following directory of offices:

Edificio Cabeza de Vaca	
Restaurante El Marino	10
Banco de Madrid	9
Juan López, Doctor	8
Nina Hernández, Dentista	7
Santiago López, reparaciones de computadoras	6
Cibercafé de la Ciudad	5
Cine Rodrigo	4
María Rodrigo, salón de belleza	3
Farmacia	2
Supermercado	1


New Message

File
Edit
View
Insert
Format
Tools
Message
Help


Send


Cut


Copy


Paste


Undo

abc✓
Check

From:

To:

Cc:

Subject

Querido Martín,

¿Puede Ud. ayudarme? Tengo estos problemas:

- 29. Necesito euros.
- 30. Quiero comprar (to buy) frutas.
- 31. ¿Dónde puedo (can I) comer (eat)?
- 32. Quiero ver una película (film) con mis amigo.
- 33. Necesito medicina.
- 34. Tengo un dolor de diente (toothache).
- 35. Voy (I'm going) a una fiesta.
- 36. Tengo náuseas..
- 37. Quiero (I want) conectarme a internet.
- 38. Mi computadora no funciona.

¿Adónde puedo ir?

Marina

New Message

File
Edit
View
Insert
Format
Tools
Message
Help

Send

Cut

Copy

Paste

Undo

abc✓
Check

From:

To:

Cc:

Subject

Querida Marina,

29. Vaya al _____ piso.

30. Vaya al _____ piso.

31. Vaya al _____ piso.

32. Vaya al _____ piso.

33. Vaya al _____ piso.

34. Vaya al _____ piso.

35. Vaya al _____ piso.

36. Vaya al _____ piso.

37. Vaya al _____ piso.

38. Vaya al _____ piso.

Making Dates

Dates are important parts of everyday life (in more ways than one!). If you're writing a paper with a strict due date, leaving on vacation and need flight confirmations, or scheduling appointments for your clients and customers, you need to know how to express dates. To write out dates in Spanish, you have to practice the days of the week, the months of the year, and numbers (see the previous section).

Days

If you hear **¿Qué día es hoy?** someone must have forgotten what day of the week it is. You should respond with **Hoy es . . .** (*Today is . . .*) and then provide the name of one of the days listed here:

English	Spanish
Monday	lunes
Tuesday	martes
Wednesday	miércoles
Thursday	jueves
Friday	viernes
Saturday	sábado
Sunday	domingo



Unlike the English calendar, the Spanish calendar starts with Monday.

REMEMBER Here are two more guidelines for talking about days of the week in Spanish:

» Unless you use them at the beginning of a sentence, you don't capitalize the days of the week in Spanish:

- **Lunes es un día de vacaciones.** (*Monday is a vacation day.*)
- **Lunes y martes son días de vacaciones.** (*Monday and Tuesday are vacation days.*)

» You use **el** when referring to a single instance of a particular day of the week and **los** to get the idea across that an action repeats every week:

- **No trabajo el sábado.** (*I'm not working on Saturday.*)
- **No trabajo los sábados.** (*I don't work on Saturdays.*)



With the exception of **sábado** and **domingo**, the plural forms of the days of the week are the same as the singular forms:

REMEMBER

Singular	Plural
lunes	lunes
martes	martes
miércoles	miércoles
jueves	jueves
viernes	viernes
sábado	sábados
domingo	domingos

Months

If you hear **¿En qué mes . . . ?** someone is asking you in what month a certain event takes place. Maybe they want to know when the school year begins or ends, when a special holiday celebration occurs, when the next business meeting will take place, or when you're planning to take your next family vacation. Here are the names of the months so that you can stay on top of all those important social and business obligations:

English	Spanish
January	enero
February	febrero
March	marzo
April	abril
May	mayo
June	junio
July	julio
August	agosto
September	septiembre (or setiembre)
October	octubre
November	noviembre
December	diciembre



REMEMBER

Like days of the week, the months aren't capitalized in Spanish.

Junio es un mes agradable. (*June is a nice month.*)

Junio y julio son meses agradables. (*June and July are nice months.*)

In Spanish, the seasons are masculine except for **la primavera** (*the spring*):

el invierno (*the winter*)

la primavera (*the spring*)

el verano (*the summer*)

el otoño (*the autumn [fall]*)

Writing dates

If you want to ask a passerby or an acquaintance about the date, politely inquire **¿Cuál es la fecha de hoy?** (*What is today's date?*) The person should respond with **Hoy es . . .** (*Today is . . .*) and then use the following formula to express the correct date:

day + (**el**) + cardinal number (except for **primero**) + **de** + month + **de** + year

The following is an example translation, using this formula:

Sunday, April 15, 2021: **Hoy es domingo, el quince de abril de dos mil veintiuno.**

Now that you have a handy formula, you need to know a few more details about writing dates in Spanish:

» You express the first day of each month with **primero**. You use cardinal numbers for all other days:

- **el primero de enero** (*January 1st*)

- **el treinta y uno de diciembre** (*December 31st*)

» Use **el** to express *on* with Spanish dates:

- **Partimos el once de octubre.** (*We are leaving on October 11th.*)

» In Spanish, you express years in thousands and hundreds:

- **mil cuatrocientos noventa y dos** (*1492: fourteen hundred ninety-two*)



WARNING

In Spanish, when dates are written as numbers, they follow the sequence *day/month/year*, which may prove confusing to English speakers — especially for dates below the 12th of the month:

You write February 9th as 2/9 in English, but in Spanish it's 9/2.

When speaking of dates in everyday language, the words and expressions that follow may come in handy:

English	Spanish
<i>a day</i>	un día
<i>a month</i>	un mes
<i>a week</i>	una semana
<i>a year</i>	un año
<i>ago</i>	hace
<i>day after tomorrow</i>	pasado mañana
<i>day before yesterday</i>	anteayer
<i>during</i>	durante
<i>from</i>	desde
<i>in</i>	en
<i>last (in a series)</i>	último (-a)
<i>last</i>	pasado (-a)
<i>next</i>	próximo (-a)
<i>today</i>	hoy
<i>tomorrow afternoon</i>	mañana por la tarde
<i>tomorrow morning</i>	mañana por la mañana
<i>tomorrow night</i>	mañana por la noche
<i>tomorrow</i>	mañana
<i>yesterday</i>	ayer



PRACTICE

You're writing a paper for your Spanish class on famous Hispanic men who fought for the independence of their country.

Q. Fill in the dates in Spanish for the birth and death of Bernardo O'Higgins:

(August 20, 1778_____–October 24, 1842_____)
Bernardo O'Higgins, hombre que luchó (*fought*) **por la independencia de Chile, nació**
y murió _____.

- A.** el veinte de agosto de mil setecientos setenta y ocho; el veinticuatro de octubre de mil ochocientos cuarenta y dos. For the date of birth, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 20, **veinte**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not be used to express the date, start with **mil**. Use the irregular form, **setecientos** to express 700. Join **setenta** (70) and **ocho** (8) with **y**.

Then for the date of death, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 24, **veinticuatro**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not be used to express the date, start with **mil**. Combine **ocho y cientos** to express 800. Join **cuarenta** (40) and **dos** (2) with **y**.

Now fill in the dates for the following:

39 (May 8, 1753 _____ – July 30, 1811 _____)
Miguel Hidalgo, iniciador de la revolución mexicana, nació _____ y
murió _____.

40 (July 24, 1783 _____ – December 17, 1830 _____)
Simón Bolívar, libertador y figura destacada(leading) de la independencia de
Sudamérica nació _____ y murió _____.

41 (January 28, 1853 _____ – May 19, 1895 _____)
José Martí, espíritu de la lucha (fight) por la independencia de Cuba, nació
_____ y murió _____.

Telling Time

If you're anything like me, you consult your watch or a clock on a nearby wall several times a day. Knowing how to understand, speak, and write time-related words and phrases is a must for anyone who's studying a foreign language and planning to put their studies to use (to do some traveling one day, for instance).

If you hear **¿Qué hora es?** someone wants to know the time. You should start by responding with the following:

Es la una or **Son las** + any time after 1

To express the time after the hour (but before half past the hour), use **y** (*and*) and the number of minutes. Use **menos** (*less*) + the number of the following hour to express the time before the next hour (after half past the hour).

You can also express time numerically (as shown in the third example below):

Es la una y media. (*It's 1:30.*)

Son las cinco menos veinte. (*It's 4:40.*)

Son las cuatro y cuarenta. (*It's 4:40.*)

If you want to discuss “at” what time a particular event will occur, you can use a question — **¿A qué hora . . . ?** — or answer with **A la una** or **A las** + any time after 1:

¿A qué hora vienen? (*At what time are they coming?*)

A la una. (*At 1.*)

A las tres y cuarto. (*At 3:15.*)

The following chart puts the previous information to use by presenting many different ways to discuss time:

Time	Spanish
1:00	la una
2:05	las dos y cinco
3:10	las tres y diez
4:15	las cuatro y cuarto or las cuatro y quince
5:20	las cinco y veinte
6:25	las seis y veinticinco
7:30	las siete y media or las siete y treinta
7:35	las ocho menos veinticinco or las siete y treinta y cinco
8:40	las nueve menos veinte or las ocho y cuarenta
9:45	las diez menos cuarto or las nueve y cuarenta y cinco
10:50	las once menos diez or las diez y cincuenta
11:55	las doce menos cinco or las once y cincuenta y cinco
noon	el mediodía
midnight	la medianoche

When expressing time, the words and expressions below may come in handy:

English Phrase	Spanish Equivalent	English Phrase	Spanish Equivalent
<i>a second</i>	un segundo	<i>in an hour</i>	en una hora
<i>a minute</i>	un minuto	<i>in a while</i>	dentro de un rato
<i>a quarter of an hour</i>	un cuarto de hora	<i>until ten o'clock</i>	hasta las diez
<i>an hour</i>	una hora	<i>before nine o'clock</i>	antes de las nueve
<i>a half hour</i>	una media hora	<i>after seven o'clock</i>	después de las siete
<i>in the morning (a.m.)</i>	por la mañana	<i>since what time?</i>	¿desde qué hora?
<i>in the afternoon (p.m.)</i>	por la tarde	<i>since eight o'clock</i>	desde las ocho
<i>in the evening (p.m.)</i>	por la noche	<i>one hour ago</i>	hace una hora
<i>at what time?</i>	¿a qué hora?	<i>early</i>	temprano
<i>at exactly nine o'clock</i>	a las nueve en punto	<i>late</i>	tarde
<i>at about two o'clock</i>	a eso de las dos	<i>late (in arriving)</i>	de retraso



You are in Spain and you want to see a classic Spanish movie, one that one prizes and that critics acclaimed as excellent. You call your Spanish-speaking friend to tell at what times the films start. Give him the information.

Q. Ciné Doré – Y tu mamá también – 2:15, 5:20, 8:50

A. Y tu mamá también empieza a las dos y cuarto (quince), a las cinco y veinte, y a las nueve menos diez.

Use the preposition **a** + the definite article **las** before each time after 1 o'clock to express "at." Use **las dos** to express 2 o'clock. Use **y** to join the hour and time expression or the number of minutes, **cuarto** (quince). Use **cinco** to express 5 o'clock. After **y** add **veinte** to express 20 minutes after the hour. Use **nueve** to express 9 o'clock. Use **menos** to express before the hour and **diez** to express 10 minutes before the hour.

42 Cine Capitol – Roma – 1:10, 4:35, 7:40

43 Teatro Español – Volver – 1:50, 3:30, 6:05

44 Sala Triángulo – Los lunes al sol – 11:15, 3:20, 6:40

Answers to “Getting a Jump Start”

Practice Questions

The following are the answers to the practice questions presented in this chapter.

- 1 **¿Cómo te llamas?** This is the informal question used to ask a person’s name.
- 2 **Buenos días.** You want to be friendly but polite, and **buenos días** is used during the day, especially the early hours of the day.
- 3 **¡Hola!** Your dog is your friend! So, say “hi.”
- 4 **Me llamo . . .** (Literally, “I call myself . . .”) followed by your name.
- 5 **Buenas tardes** is used to greet people in the afternoon.
- 6 **Nada de particular** if nothing very exciting has happened.
- 7 **Buenas noches** is said in the evening and is a very polite way of speaking.
- 8 **¿Cómo estás?** is the friendly way of asking someone how they are feeling.
- 9 **Mucho gusto** or **Es un placer** to indicate that you are happy to make that person’s acquaintance.
- 10 **Hasta la vista** or **Hasta muy pronto** to show that you anticipate seeing your friend again soon.
- 11 **Ud.** is the formal pronoun used to express *you*.
- 12 **Nosotros** is the pronoun to use to express *we* when at least one person is male.
- 13 **Ella** is the pronoun used to express *she*.
- 14 **Ellos** is the pronoun used to express *they* when there is at least one male.
- 15 Use the pronoun **yo** (*I*) when speaking about yourself.
- 16 **Uds.** is the pronoun used to express the plural *you*, especially when the people are unfamiliar.
- 17 **Él** is the pronoun used to express *he*.
- 18 Use the familiar **tú** when speaking to your pet, who is, after all, your friend.
- 19 **seiscientos veintiuno.** Use **seiscientos** to express 600, remembering to add **-s** to show that 600 is plural. Immediately follow **seiscientos** with **veintiuno** (21).
- 20 **mil quinientos noventa y cinco.** **Mil** (1,000) doesn’t need to be pluralized. Add the irregular form **quinientos** to express 500. The word for 90 is **noventa**, to which you must add **cinco** (5). The two numbers are joined by **y**.
- 21 **cuarenta y dos mil setecientos diecisiete.** Use **cuarenta y dos** (42) before **mil** (1,000), which doesn’t need to be pluralized. Add the irregular form **setecientos** to express 700. Use **diecisiete** to express 17.

- 22 **ciento setenta mil setecientos treinta y tres.** Use **ciento** to express 100 before **setenta** (70) and then add the word **mil** (1,000). Add the irregular form **setecientos** to express 700. The word for 30 is **treinta**. Join it to **tres** (3) with **y**.
- 23 **cuatrocientos dieciséis mil ciento cuarenta y nueve.** Use **cuatrocientos** to express 400 and **dieciséis** to express 16, remembering to put an accent on the final **-e**. Then add the word **mil** (1,000). Use **ciento** to express 100, **cuarenta** to express 40, and join it to **nueve** (9) by adding **y**.
- 24 **quinientos setenta y cinco.** Use the irregular form **quinientos** to express 500. Use **setenta** to express 70, and join it to **cinco** (5) with **y**.
- 25 **mil setecientos ochenta y dos.** Use **mil** to express 1,000 and the irregular form **setecientos** to express 700. Use **ochenta** to express 80, and join it to **dos** (2) with **y**.
- 26 **ochocientos trece, quinientos cincuenta y cinco, mil novecientos sesenta y cinco.** Use **ochocientos** to express 800, remembering to add **-s** to **ciento** to show the plural. Use **trece** to express 13. Use the irregular form **quinientos** to express 500. Use **cincuenta** for 50 and join it to **cinco** using **y**. Use **mil** to express 1,000 and **ciento** to express 100. Use **sesenta** to express 60 and join it to **uno** (1) with **y**.
- 27 **doscientos diecisiete y trescientos noventa y dos son seiscientos nueve.** Use **doscientos** to express 200 and **diecinueve** to express 19. Use **trescientos** to express 300. Join it with **noventa** for 90 that is attached to **dos** with **y**. Use **seiscientos** to express 600 and once to express 11.
- 28 **trescientos treinta y dos millones.** Use **trescientos** to express 300. Add **treinta** (30) that is joined to **dos** (2) with **y**. Drop the accent on **millón** and add **-es** to form the plural **millones**.
- 29 **noveno.** The bank is on the ninth floor.
- 30 **primer.** Drop the final **-o** from **primero** before the noun, **piso**. You would buy fruit in the supermarket on the first floor.
- 31 **decimo.** You would eat in the restaurant on the tenth floor.
- 32 **cuarto.** You would see a film in the movie theater on the fourth floor.
- 33 **segundo.** You would go to the pharmacy to buy medicine on the second floor.
- 34 **séptimo.** You would go to the dentist on the seventh floor if you had a toothache.
- 35 **tercer.** You would go to a beauty salon on the third floor if you were going to a party. Drop the final **-o** from **tercero** before a noun.
- 36 **octavo.** You would go to the doctor on the eighth floor if you were nauseous.
- 37 **quinto.** You would go to a cybercafe on the fifth floor if you wanted to connect to the internet.
- 38 **sexto.** You would go to the sixth floor if your computer was broken.
- 39 **el ocho de mayo de mil setecientos cincuenta y tres; el treinta de julio de mil ochocientos once.** For the date of birth, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 8, **ocho**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not

used to express the date, start with **mil**. Use the irregular form, **setecientos** to express 700. Join **cincuenta** (50) and **tres** (3) with **y**.

For the date of death, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 30, **treinta**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not used to express the date, start with **mil**. Use **ochocientos** to express 800. Use **once** to express 11.

- 40 **el veinticuatro de julio de mil setecientos ochenta y tres; el diecisiete de diciembre de mil ochocientos treinta.** For the first date, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 24, **veinticuatro**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not used to express the date, start with **mil**. Use the irregular form, **setecientos** to express 700. Join **ochenta** (80) and **tres** (3) with **y**.

For the second date, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 17, **diecisiete**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not used to express the date, start with **mil**. Use **ochocientos** to express 800. Use **treinta** to express 30.

- 41 **el veintiocho de enero de mil ochocientos cincuenta y tres; el diecinueve de mayo de mil ochocientos noventa y cinco.** For the date of birth, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 28, **veintiocho**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not used to express the date, start with **mil**. Use **ochocientos** to express 800. Join **cincuenta** (50) and **tres** (3) with **y**.

For the date of death, use the definite article before the cardinal number for 19, **diecinueve**. Use the preposition **de** to express *of*. Write the name of the month, remembering to use lowercase for the first letter. Use **de** before the number of the year. Because hundreds are not used to express the date, start with **mil**. Use **ochocientos** to express 800. Join **noventa** (90) and **cinco** (5) with **y**.

- 42 **Roma empieza a la una y diez, a las cinco menos veinticinco, y a las ocho menos veinte.** Use the preposition **a** + the definite article **la** before 1 o'clock to express "at." Use **una** to express 1 o'clock. Use **y** to join the hour and the number of minutes, **diez** (10). Use **cinco** to express 5 o'clock. Use **menos** to express before the hour and **veinticinco** to express 25 minutes before the hour. Use **ocho** to express 8 o'clock. Use **menos** to express before the hour and **veinte** to express 20 minutes before the hour.

- 43 **Volver empieza a las dos menos diez, a las tres y media, y a las seis y cinco.** Use the preposition **a** + the definite article **las** before 2 o'clock. Use **dos** to express 2 o'clock. Use **menos** to express before the hour and **diez** to express 10 minutes before the hour. Use the preposition **a** + the definite article **las** before 3 o'clock. Use **y** to join the hour and the time expression **media** (half past). Use the preposition **a** + the definite article **las** to express "at." Use **seis** to express 6 o'clock. After **y** add **cinco** to express 5 minutes after the hour.

- 44 **Los lunes al sol empieza a las once y cuarto, a las tres y veinte y a las siete menos veinte.** Use the preposition **a** + the definite article **las** before 11 o'clock. Use **once** to express 11 o'clock. Use **y** to join the hour and the time expression **cuarto** (a quarter). Use **a** + the definite article **las** to express 3 o'clock. Use **y** to join the hour and the number of minutes **veinte** (20). Use the preposition **a** + the definite article **las** to express "at." Use **siete** to express 7 o'clock. Use **menos** to express before the hour and **veinte** to express 20 minutes before the hour.

