

Workbook



# Spanish

False beginners



170  
exercises  
+  
answer  
key

Workbook



# Spanish

**False beginners**

A decorative graphic consisting of a horizontal line with a series of downward-pointing triangles or spikes below it, positioned under the text 'False beginners'.

Belén Ausejo – Juan Córdoba

Adapted for English speakers  
by Paul Gerard Pickering

# Letters, sounds & punctuation

## About this workbook

The 16 lessons in this workbook, which contain some 170 exercises, will allow you to progressively review and practice the fundamentals of Castilian Spanish (i.e. the Spanish spoken in Spain), from pronunciation and vocabulary through to simple and more complex sentence construction.

One of the trickier aspects of Spanish is the conjugation and usage of verb tenses. As a result, this is given particular emphasis in this workbook. The verb conjugation tables at the end give both regular and common irregular conjugations.

To complement the exercises, three sections devoted to vocabulary and reading comprehension are interspersed among the lessons. These allow active and contextual reinforcement of new words and expressions. We hope you will find that this workbook provides a fun and systematic way to consolidate your Spanish skills.

As you work through the lessons, you can self-assess your results by selecting the appropriate icon after each exercise (😊 if the majority of your answers were correct, 😊 if half your answers were correct, or 😞 if less than half were correct). After a lesson, enter the number of icons of each type you received in the exercises, and then enter these totals into the final score table at the end of the workbook so you can tally your overall score after completing all the exercises.

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## Alphabet and pronunciation

- The Spanish alphabet contains 27 letters, one more than in the English alphabet. The extra letter is ñ, which corresponds to the sound [ny], as in *canyon*.

a (a)	f (efe)	k (ka)	o (o)	t (te)	y (i griega)
b (be)	g (ge)	l (ele)	p (pe)	u (u)	z (zeta)
c (ce)	h (hache)	m (eme)	q (cu)	v (uve)	
d (de)	i (i)	n (ene)	r (erre)	w (uve doble)	
e (e)	j (jota)	ñ (eñe)	s (ese)	x (equis)	

- On the whole, Spanish words are pronounced very much as they are written. Here are the main pronunciation differences with English:

- a is pronounced like the [ah] in *father*
- e is pronounced like the [ay] in *they* or the [e] in *bet*; i is like the [ee] in *bee*
- o is pronounced like the [o] in *no*; u is like the [oo] in *food*
- c is pronounced as [k] in **ca, co, cu**, but as [th] in **ce** and **ci**
- g is pronounced as a hard [g] in **ga, go, gu**, but like the Spanish **j** in **ge** and **gi**
- h is always silent
- j (**la jota**) is a guttural [kh] as in the Scottish word *loch*
- ll is pronounced more or less like the [y] in *yes*
- r is rolled, by trilling the tip of the tongue against the roof of the mouth
- v is pronounced almost like a [b]
- z is pronounced like the [th] in *think*

**I** Acronyms are quite common in Spanish. Have a look at the names of the letters above and then write the acronyms for the terms below followed by the letter names (as if you were pronouncing them out loud). E.g. Compact Disc: CD (ce de)

- Disco Versátil Digital: .....
- Global Positioning System: .....
- Documento Nacional de Identidad: .....
- World Wide Web: .....
- Organización No Gubernamental: .....
- HyperText Transfer Protocol: .....

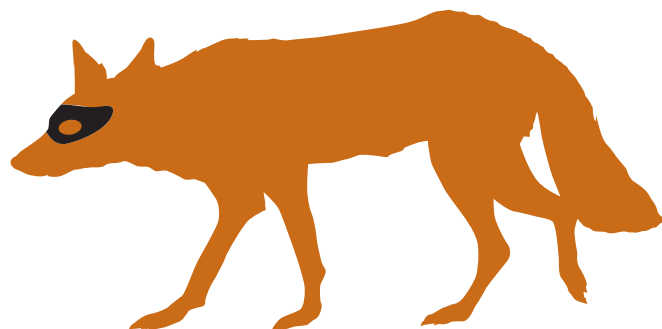
**2** After reviewing the rules on page 3, put each of the following words into the table below according to the pronunciation of its first letter. Try to do it without looking back at the rules!

calor *heat*  
 camino *path*  
 cero *zero*  
 ciruela *plum*  
 colega *colleague*  
 cumpleaños *birthday*  
 gafas *glasses/spectacles*  
 gato *cat*  
 gel *gel*  
 girasol *sunflower*  
 gitano *gypsy*  
 golondrina *swallow (bird)*

gorra *cap*  
 guerra *war*  
 guitarra *guitar*  
 hasta *until*  
 hay *there is/are*  
 helado *ice cream*

hija *daughter*  
 hola *hello*  
 huevo *egg*  
 jamón *ham*  
 jirafa *giraffe*  
 julio *July*

queso *cheese*  
 quizás *perhaps*  
 zapato *shoe*  
 zoológico *zoo*  
 zorro *fox*  
 zumo *juice*



SILENT	LIKE [TH] IN ENGLISH	LIKE THE SPANISH JOTA	LIKE A HARD [G] IN ENGLISH	LIKE [K] IN ENGLISH

**Word stress**

- To avoid sounding like a **gui**ri *foreign tourist*, try to accentuate the right syllable in words – it's fairly straightforward in Spanish!
- In words ending in a vowel, an **-n** or an **-s**, the next-to-last syllable is stressed when speaking: **España**, **Carmen**, **Honduras**.
- In words ending in a consonant other than **-n** or **-s** the final syllable is stressed: **Madrid**, **amor**, **abril**.
- If a written accent appears over a vowel (which is the case if there is an exception to these rules), that syllable is stressed: **Panamá**, **crédito**, **agitación**.

**3** As in the example (Francia), indicate where the stress falls in the name of each country by ticking the corresponding column: the orange bar at the top indicates which syllable is stressed.

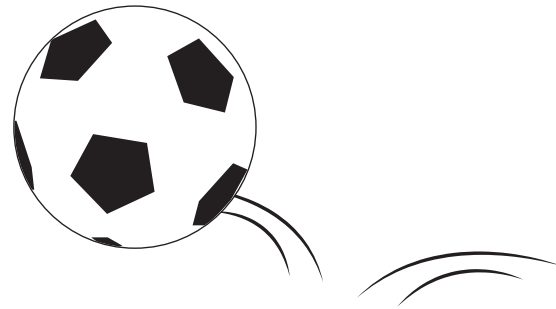
a. Francia					✓
b. México					
c. España					
d. Portugal					
e. Perú					
f. Bélgica					
g. Canadá					
h. Holanda					
i. Suiza					
j. Brasil					

**4** The words below follow the normal rules for where the stress falls. Mark the syllable where each word should be stressed.

- |            |     |             |     |               |      |
|------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|------|
| a. paella  | ○○○ | e. mujer    | ○○  | i. estadio    | ○○○  |
| b. gambas  | ○○  | f. salud    | ○○  | j. pasaporte  | ○○○○ |
| c. arroz   | ○○  | g. voleibol | ○○○ | k. Valladolid | ○○○○ |
| d. cerveza | ○○○ | h. Esteban  | ○○○ | l. martes     | ○○   |

**5** The following words are exceptions to the normal rules for word stress. Rewrite each word, placing an accent on the vowel where the stress falls.

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| a. frances ..... | i. sandwich ..... |
| b. Cadiz .....   | j. modem .....    |
| c. futbol .....  | k. vater .....    |
| d. cafe .....    | l. jamon .....    |
| e. Paris .....   |                   |
| f. dolar .....   |                   |
| g. menu .....    |                   |
| h. sofa .....    |                   |



**Word stress 2**

**A spelling tip**

Typically, a word's spoken stress remains the same even if the word is changed – for example, if a syllable is added to form the plural. But although the spoken stress does not change, a written accent may either appear or disappear:

- **un inglés** *an Englishman*, but **dos ingleses** *two Englishmen* (the written accent disappears in the plural)
- **un joven** *a young man*, but **dos jóvenes** *two young men* (a written accent appears in the plural)

**6** Add a written accent to the plural forms if necessary.

- un árbol *a tree* → dos arboles
- un inglés *an Englishman* → dos ingleses
- un balón *a ball* → dos balones
- un andén *a platform* → dos andenes
- un móvil *a mobile phone* → dos moviles

**7** Add a written accent to the singular forms if necessary.

- dos alemanes *two Germans* → un aleman
- dos portátiles *two laptops* → un portatil
- dos papeles *two papers* → un papel
- dos daneses *two Danes* → un danes
- dos mítines *two meetings* → un mitin

**Punctuation**

- In Spanish, exclamation marks (**los signos de admiración**) and question marks (**los signos de interrogación**) come at the beginning and end of a sentence: the one at the beginning of the sentence is upside down: ¡...! ¿...?
- When using the Internet, you may need to know the names of various punctuation marks: **el punto** *dot, full stop, period*; **dos puntos** *colon*; **el guión** *hyphen, dash*; **el guión bajo** *underscore*; **la barra** *forward slash*; **la barra doble** *double forward slash*, and last but not least, **la arroba**, the name of the @ symbol.

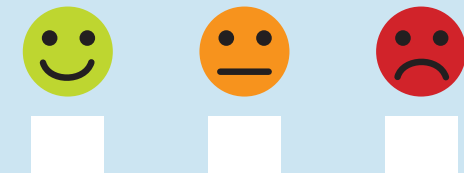
**8** Question or exclamation? Punctuate the bubbles!



**9** Write these Internet addresses as if you were saying them out loud, including the name of each type of punctuation.

- http://www.assimil.com/ → .....
- belen\_ausejo@hotmail.com → .....
- juan-cordoba@gmail.com → .....

Well done! You've reached the end of Lesson 1. It's time to count up how many of each type of icon you received. Then record your results in the final self-assessment table on page 128.



# Articles, nouns, adjectives & numbers

## Articles and nouns

- Spanish has four forms of the definite article (*the*), which depend on a noun's gender and number: **el** (masculine singular), **la** (feminine singular), **los** (masculine plural) and **las** (feminine plural). Certain articles contract after certain prepositions: **a + el → al** *to the*    **de + el → del** *of the*

Note: Only the singular articles contract, never the plural.

- To form the plural of nouns (and most adjectives), **-s** is added to words ending in a vowel, and **-es** to words ending in a consonant or a **-y**:

**el hombre alto** *the tall man* → **los hombres altos** *the tall men*

**la mujer actual** *the modern woman* → **las mujeres actuales** *the modern women*

**la ley nacional** *the national law* → **las leyes nacionales** *the national laws*

Note: Unlike in English, descriptive adjectives usually follow the noun in Spanish.

- There are two forms of singular indefinite article (*a/an*): **un huevo** *an egg* (masculine), **una manzana** *an apple* (feminine).
- The plural indefinite article (*some/any*) is usually omitted when talking about something generally. Otherwise, **unos** (masculine), **unas** (feminine) can be used:

¿Hay manzanas? → *Are there any apples?*

Quiero pan. → *I want some bread.*

Tengo unos calcetines nuevos. → *I have some new socks.*

**1** Here are the titles of six famous films with the articles (or contracted article + preposition) missing. Insert the articles on the clapperboard into the correct places in the film titles.

- Mujeres ..... borde de un ataque de nervios
- ..... cabaña ..... tío Tom
- ..... señor ..... anillos
- ..... guerra ..... galaxias
- Blancanieves y ..... siete enanitos
- ..... libro ..... selva



**2** Fill in the blanks to complete these phrases in Spanish.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. The price of the Spanish omelette.<br>El precio ..... | e. The price of the eggs.<br>El precio ..... |
| b. I want some Spanish omelette.<br>Quiero .....         | f. I want some eggs.<br>Quiero .....         |
| c. I want a Spanish omelette.<br>Quiero .....            | g. I want some wine.<br>Quiero .....         |
| d. I want some apples.<br>Quiero .....                   | h. I want a [loaf of] bread.<br>Quiero ..... |

**3** Put these noun phrases into the singular.

- Los productos de los mercados → .....
- Las imágenes de las ciudades → .....
- Las leyes de los países → .....

## Masculine and feminine

- In general, most nouns ending in **-o** are masculine, and most ending in **-a** are feminine. However, there are exceptions, some of which are frequently used words: **la mano** *hand*; **la modelo** *fashion model*; **el día** *day*; **el idioma** *language*; **el problema** *problem*, etc.
- Nouns ending in **-ista** and **-ante** are the same for both genders: **el/la cantante** *the singer* (m./f.); **el/la deportista** *the athlete* (m./f.).
- When describing people, masculine nouns ending in **-o** change to **-a** in the feminine: **el hijo** *son*, **la hija** *daughter*. Those ending in **-or** change to **-ora** in the feminine: **el profesor** / **la profesora** *the teacher* (m./f.).
- Adjectives ending in **-o** change to **-a** in the feminine, but if they end in any other vowel or a consonant, the ending doesn't change for gender: **un chico alegre** *a happy boy*; **una chica alegre** *a happy girl*.

**4** Complete the following table with the correct forms for gender and number.



FEMININE SINGULAR	MASCULINE SINGULAR	FEMININE PLURAL	MASCULINE PLURAL
	el estudiante serio		
la directora alegre			
		las tenistas tristes	
			los chicos simpáticos
la pianista famosa			
	el escritor interesante		
			los amigos fieles
		las cantantes actuales	

**5** Complete these phrases with the right colour, making sure the adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number.



- a. La sangre es .....
- b. Los troncos de los árboles son .....
- c. La leche es .....
- d. Tus ojos son ..... como el cielo.
- e. La hierba es .....
- f. Las panteras son .....
- g. El jamón de york es .....
- h. Los limones son .....



Workbook

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# Spanish

False beginners

This workbook is aimed at Spanish false beginners. The 170 stimulating exercises include word puzzles, reasoning games, translation activities and more. Fun and challenging, the exercises are designed not only to review your skills, but extend them. The answer key allows you to check how you did in each exercise and assess your level in different areas. Every aspect of the language is covered – grammar, verb conjugation and usage, spelling, vocabulary and expressions, sentence structure, pronunciation, etc. – with helpful tips given throughout.

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