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Spanish

With Ease Series

by **Juan Córdoba**

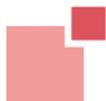
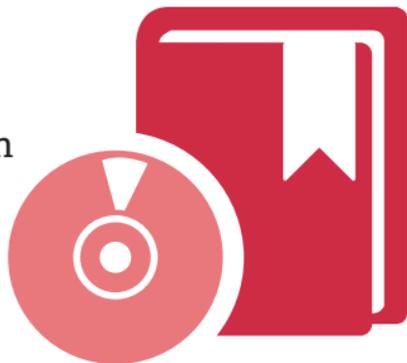
Adapted for English-speaking learners by
Paul Sutton

Illustrated by J.-L. Goussé



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Contents

Introduction	VII
Practicalities	X
Pronunciation	XII

Lessons 1 to 100.....

1	¡Qué sorpresa!.....	1
2	¿Dónde vives?	5
3	¡Bienvenida!.....	7
4	Presentaciones	11
5	Entrevista de trabajo	13
6	A las siete... ¡de la mañana!	17
7	Repaso– Revision	19
8	¡Feliz cumpleaños, abuela!	23
9	El desayuno	27
10	¿Cuándo duermen?	31
11	Pelando patatas	33
12	De tapas.....	37
13	Fin de semana	41
14	Repaso– Revision	45
15	¡Taxi!	51
16	Una pareja feliz	55
17	Comprando zapatos (1.ª parte).....	59
18	Comprando zapatos (2.ª parte).....	63
19	Buscando el Prado.....	67
20	La compra	69
21	Repaso– Revision	75
22	¿Estás enferma?	81
23	Deporte es salud	85
24	Vacaciones de verano	89
25	Vacaciones de invierno.....	93
26	Mi perro es buenísimo	97
27	Alquilando un piso	101
28	Repaso– Revision	105
29	Quisiera un billete para... ..	109

30	¡Felices fiestas!	115
31	La prima guapa	119
32	La llamada telefónica	125
33	Una cena ligera	129
34	Un viaje en avión	135
35	Repaso–Revision	139
36	No tengo nada que hacer	147
37	Vengo por el anuncio (1.ª parte)	151
38	Vengo por el anuncio (2.ª parte)	157
39	Ven conmigo a Santiago (1.ª parte)	161
40	Ven conmigo a Santiago (2.ª parte)	165
41	Viaje al norte	169
42	Repaso–Revision	173
43	Redes sociales	181
44	Chistes de Lepe	185
45	En el ciber	189
46	¡Policía!	193
47	Tortilla deconstruida	197
48	Adictos a la pantalla	201
49	Repaso–Revision	207
50	Haciendo cola	215
51	¡Viva México!	221
52	La cocina mexicana	227
53	El Nuevo Mundo	231
54	Un buen candidato	237
55	¿Una ganga?	243
56	Repaso–Revision	247
57	¿Sueño o pesadilla?	255
58	Una mala novela	259
59	¿Quién elige la peli?	265
60	Carta a un hijo (1.ª parte)	271
61	Carta a un hijo (2.ª parte)	277
62	Animales...	283
63	Repaso–Revision	289
64	El carné de conducir	295
65	Refranes	301
66	Por ser tú	307
67	Siempre es culpa mía	313
68	Mañana empiezo	317

69	Cría cuervos.....	323
70	Repaso– Revision.....	327
71	Como a un santo dos pistolas.....	333
72	Ya que estoy... ..	339
73	¡A la basura!.....	345
74	Cuando las ranas críen pelo	351
75	Hoteles con encanto.....	357
76	¡A quién se le ocurre!	361
77	Repaso– Revision.....	367
78	El paraíso en la tierra	373
79	Recuerdos de infancia	379
80	Costumbres... ..	383
81	¿A favor o en contra?	389
82	La víspera de San Juan	395
83	¡Aúpa Atleti!	401
84	Repaso– Revision.....	407
85	¡Pérez presidente!.....	415
86	Cotilleos.....	421
87	Averías y accidentes	427
88	Como Tina no hay otra	431
89	Que aproveche.....	437
90	La casa de Tócame Roque	441
91	Repaso– Revision.....	449
92	La vuelta a España (en sueños).....	457
93	La ruta de don Quijote	463
94	Misterios mayas.....	469
95	El águila y la serpiente	475
96	Érase una vez... Argentina.....	479
97	Buen viaje (1.ª parte).....	485
98	Repaso– Revision.....	491
99	Buen viaje (2.ª parte).....	499
100	Continuará... ..	505
	Grammar notes.....	512
	Glossary.....	562
	Spanish-English glossary	562
	English-Spanish glossary.....	612

Foreword

Welcome to this new-edition *Spanish* course in the *Assimil With Ease* collection. Though the content is new, the Assimil method is the same. It boasts more than 80 years of successful results, and efficacy confirmed by findings in cognitive science. The focus is on intuitive language acquisition rather than formal grammatical analysis, using dialogues typical of real-life conversations in everyday situations in the countries and cultures where the languages are spoken.

In any culture, such situations undergo subtle but certain change over time, as indeed does the spoken language itself. The hundred lessons in this new course offer learners an invaluable toolkit and a cultural passport to the Spain of today, a culture that blends timeless personality with creative adaptability to a fast-changing world.

Introduction

Why Spanish?

Spanish is a worldwide language. Like English, it has an immense geographical and cultural scope, stretching way beyond its country of origin. It is the official language in 19 Latin American countries, plus Equatorial Guinea. In 2016, it was the mother tongue of 472 million people around the world (second only to Mandarin). Counting non-native speakers and students, there are some 567 million active Spanish speakers in the world today.

The map speaks even louder than the figures: you can go from Tijuana in the north of Mexico down to Ushuaia in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, speaking nothing but Spanish: 11,000 kilometres, the equivalent of Lisbon to Tokyo. And that's just the official picture, because there are also large Spanish-speaking communities across the United States. Spanish is omnipresent in North America, and the mother tongue of 40 million US citizens. But if Spanish is widely spoken in North America, English is less current in South America. So a command of Spanish is a must if you want to discover Latin America at more than the most superficial of levels.

Which Spanish?

As you might expect of a language with such a wide geographical span, Spanish worldwide forms a rich tapestry of accents and dialects. And even within Spain itself, regional accents vary considerably. Though the Spanish of the Americas does have its lexical singularities, Spanish syntax is pretty much consistent worldwide, and the Castilian Spanish spoken in Spain will get you by anywhere in the Spanish-speaking world.

This is the Spanish you'll be learning here, but that doesn't imply any manner of Euro-centrism. We will be pointing out pronunciation differences and the few grammatical specificities of Latin American Spanish as you come across them in the lessons. Because Castilian Spanish was the original source of the language, this makes it the best starting point for examining subsequent regional variations. If we had chosen the Spanish of Mexico, the Caribbean or Argentina as a starting point, this would have been more arbitrary, as would any attempt to teach some form of "global Spanish", since no such thing is actually spoken anywhere.

Another advantage is that Spanish people do actually talk fast; this is not just an impression! In contrast, phrasing in Latin America tends to be more relaxed. In addition, there's an important phonetic distinction (between the z and the s sound) specific to the Spanish spoken in Spain. So on a couple of counts, you'll be learning the most difficult of the variants. This means you should have no difficulty understanding the easier Latin American variants later, whereas the opposite would not necessarily be true.

CEFR level B2

This course will take you to level B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This is termed "upper intermediate" level, which in practical terms comes down to confident command of the language in real-life situations. But what does command of a language mean exactly? Obviously, you need the words: as a complete beginner you can walk into a café and order a coffee with very few words, using gestures as required. But that involves no actual language interaction. To go a step further you need to recognize the words that other people say, and have some idea of how the

words are put together, so you can construct intelligible sentences yourself and understand speech when you hear it.

A step further toward confident command of the language involves knowing how to adapt the words and structures to different situations, and respond appropriately to the unexpected, in order to get your message across, to request clarification when needed, to clear up possible misunderstanding, and to use the register (formal, casual, etc.) appropriate to the situation. In both directions—speaking and listening—this requires regular exposure and regular practice to develop familiarity, so that little by little it all comes naturally. To build this kind of capability it's not enough to learn by heart a list of words and standard phrases from a phrasebook. What you need is carefully calibrated step-by-step exposure to the language as it is spoken in real-life situations. Plus practice in adapting what you are learning—words, structures, registers—to situations as they change. That is and always has been the principle behind the Assimil method.

Everyday life, culture and civilization

Many of the lessons in the course end with a brief section on the cultural backdrop behind the language you're learning: history, geography, customs, etc. And along with the gradual build-up in vocabulary and syntax, the dialogues in the lessons also depict situations typical of everyday life in Spain: snapshots of conversation in a country where the capacity for imaginative reinvention is refreshingly compatible with attachment to a distinctive traditional lifestyle.

So you'll be getting some idea of the country's rich local and regional diversity (which even extends to language itself, since Spain recognizes Catalan, Basque and Galician as joint official languages in their respective regions). As the lessons go by you'll be seeing historical sites, major cities, traditional villages, spectacular scenery, plus music and gastronomy, from Galicia across to the Canary Islands and Andalusia up to Catalonia, stopping off in the Basque country, Barcelona and Madrid along the way.

The scenarios cover a cross-section of everyday life in Spain: shopping, outings, family relations, differences of opinion, friendships, student life, work, etc. And in all these situations, the language you'll be hearing and using is the lively, authentic language that Spanish people actually speak. Obviously, the Spanish you'll be learning obeys all grammar and spelling rules, but little by little

you'll also be discovering many of the colourful idiomatic expressions that punctuate everyday Spanish conversation, and which will make your Spanish sound more natural. Indeed, one of things language learners find so refreshing with Spanish is that the frontier between the rigidly correct and the comfortably casual is much more permeable than in many other languages, English included. So that's what you have in store. At one lesson a day it'll take you 150 days to complete the course. Half an hour a day over half a year, and the door opens wide onto a whole new world: untold journeys discovering new places and new people. **¿Vamos?** *Let's go!*

Practicalities

Useful tips

- **Start by resolving to do a little Spanish every day.** A lesson usually takes about thirty minutes. If one day you don't have this time to spare, instead of dropping it till the next day, take a little time, even if it's just five minutes, to at least listen to a dialogue or revise an exercise. But there's no point in going too fast either. Regularity is an important factor in the natural assimilation practised in the Assimil method.
- **Be confident.** Our method is about language acquisition, a natural process, rather than formal study. Among other things this means you might come across a particular expression or grammatical feature once or twice before you get an actual explanation for it. And in some cases, we'll go back over a point several times, to make sure the idea is getting across.
- **Speak the dialogues aloud.** Imitate the speech you hear in the audio. This is very important, and even more so in the early days. Let go of any inhibitions you might have. Picture yourself on stage!
- **Revise regularly.** Continuous revision is an integral part of the course structure, with exercises and notes featuring things you've seen before, and phase two taking you back through previous lessons. If a particular word or point of grammar takes time getting through, don't worry: this is perfectly normal! Take the time you need, and advance at your own speed, without letting these minor and inevitable setbacks discourage you. Just keep going: solutions will emerge naturally, in exactly the same way as they do for children learning their mother tongues. Learning a language is not like learning mathematics:

however detailed, explanations alone are not enough. Regular practice is essential, and nobody ever learns a language all at once!

– **Seek immersion.** Take every opportunity for exposure to Spanish (websites, social networks, blogs, films, newspapers, etc.). Sure, you won't understand that much to start with, but you'll be surprised by how much you do understand, and by how quickly that understanding expands.

– **Have fun!** That's another feature of the Assimil method: humour, anecdotes, cartoons and more. Learning a language can be as enjoyable as it is useful.

Phase one

The first of the two phases in the Assimil learning process is termed "**receptive**", for the simple reason that you won't yet be constructing sentences yourself. In each lesson, start by listening to the text (usually a dialogue). This will help you build an intuitive familiarity with the music of the language, which is as important as the syntax. You could follow the course without listening to the audio, but this would be a little like reading the lyrics of a song without the tune.

The next step is to read the dialogue as you listen to it sentence by sentence, checking it against the English translation. The notes after the text give explanations on words, points of grammar, and specific difficulties. Some lessons conclude with cultural notes or advice on how to proceed through the course.

Then you repeat the Spanish text aloud, sentence by sentence, copying what you hear in the audio. Speak at normal speed, paying attention to which syllables are stressed, and to the intonation of the sentence as a whole. In the early lessons, the dialogues are repeated twice and spoken more slowly than normal. Little by little, this speed increases, to approach that of usual conversational Spanish by around the end of the course. You should be comfortable with this if you're following the lesson-a-day pace.

Each lesson finishes with exercises for putting into practice the new words and structures you've just seen.

Every seventh lesson takes the form of a revision session going back methodically over what you've seen in the previous six. You should give these revision lessons as much time as the others.

If you need to look up details on a specific point of grammar, there's a full grammar appendix at the end of the book, along with

Spanish-English and English-Spanish glossaries listing the vocabulary seen in the lessons.

Phase two

At lesson fifty, you enter phase two of the course, termed the "productive" phase. As well as working through the new lessons in the same way as during phase one, you'll also work back through the previous lessons, again one per day, starting from lesson one. But this time you'll be translating the English texts of each lesson back into Spanish. As well as giving you a good idea of the progress you're making, this is important for ensuring that the material in the lessons takes firm root.

Don't forget the numbers, ordinal and cardinal, which appear at the start of each lesson and at the bottom of each page. During phase two, spend 30 seconds each day reading these numbers aloud.

The Assimil method is based on a meticulously staged progression of enjoyable lessons. By working through them at a consistently even pace you will acquire a good command of Spanish under conditions as close as possible to the way native speakers acquire it.

Pronunciation

1 Pronouncing words and saying sentences

This section outlines the basics on pronouncing letters and combinations of letters in Spanish. This is just a brief rundown: full explanations are given lesson by lesson, as the instances arise.

As we mentioned, intonation is a very important aspect of pronunciation in Spanish. Simplifying matters somewhat, this comes down to word and sentence stress. If you focus on word stress alone, by marking the stressed syllable in each word with the same emphasis, the resulting sentence will inevitably sound unnatural, because in everyday speech at normal speed, some words stand out from others, conveying differences in nuance, intention and meaning. The best way to understand this is by thinking of music. And just as music defies strict rules, so it would be illusory to attempt precise instructions here, not least because different speakers have their own individual ways of expressing themselves. To start with, sure,

you'll be focusing on correctly pronouncing each word, with the stress on the right syllable. But pretty soon you'll also begin to realize the need for emphasizing particular parts of a sentence, to produce the required rhythm. The best way to assimilate this is by imitation: listen to the recordings, imitate them, talk along with them. As many times as you need to. Little by little your own individual phrasing will emerge.

We've already mentioned how Spanish accents vary across the Atlantic, but they also vary from one end of Spain to the other. For example, you'll often hear the final **-s** in plurals becoming all but inaudible, or the **-d** between vowels in adjectives and participles (**-ado**, **-ido**) disappearing completely (to become **-ao**, **-fo**). Such variations are commonplace, but you'll find it more prudent to stick to the official pronunciation!

Lesson-by-lesson pronunciation guidance takes several forms:

- The stressed syllable in each word is shown in bold type.
- Phonetic transcriptions (see explanations below) are given after each dialogue in the early lessons.
- Pronunciation notes on specific points appear after each dialogue where necessary.
- The recordings are invaluable for hearing Spanish as it is spoken, and for copying this.

2 Transcriptions

Phonetic transcriptions appear in italics after each dialogue (in full up to lesson 20, then for new words). These transcriptions are approximate, because for a phonetically accurate transcription we'd need to use the International Phonetic Alphabet, which would require considerable prior study from the learner. You should find these transcriptions useful despite their shortcomings, though the most reliable guidance will always come from the recordings.

3 Vowels

Whereas English vowels can have different pronunciations in different combinations of letters, Spanish vowels always have the same pronunciation. It can be useful to bear in mind that Spanish vowel sounds are usually shorter than the English.

Letter	Transcription	Pronunciation
a	[a]	like the English <i>a</i> in <i>band</i> , and never like the <i>a</i> in <i>bake</i> .
i	[ee]	like the English <i>ee</i> in <i>eel</i> (though shorter), and never like the <i>i</i> in <i>find</i> .
o	[o]	like the English <i>o</i> in <i>cot</i> , and never like the <i>o</i> in <i>mole</i> .
e	[eh] or [e]	like the English <i>e</i> in <i>bed</i> , and never like the muffled <i>e</i> in <i>the</i> , the long <i>e</i> in <i>edict</i> , or the silent <i>e</i> in <i>maze</i> .
u	[oo]	like the English <i>oo</i> in <i>poodle</i> (though shorter), and never like the <i>u</i> in <i>puddle</i> . In the syllables gue and gui , it is silent unless marked: -ü.
y	[ee]	Though y is not really a vowel, it behaves very much like <i>i</i> .

Sometimes, two vowels go together in a single "diphthong" syllable. When the diphthong combines a "strong" vowel (**a**, **e**, **o**) and a "weak" (**i**, **u**), the strong one predominates: **ai** [a-ee], **ia** [ee-a], **ei** [eh-ee], **ie** [ee-eh], etc. This stress is underlined in the transcriptions. When the diphthong combines two weak vowels (**iu** or **ui**), the stress is on the second. This is not marked in the transcriptions. When two consecutive vowels form distinct syllables rather than a diphthong, the stressed vowel is marked by a written accent, and thus appears in the bold type that marks all stressed syllables in the transcriptions: **ía** [eeá], **aí** [aee], **ío** [eeo], **oí** [oeé], etc.

Diphthong	Transcription	Examples in some Spanish names
au	[aoo]	Laura [laooa]
ai	[aee]	Ainoha [aeehoa]
ei	[eh-ee]	Leire [leh-eeeh]
eu	[eh-oo]	Eusebio [eh-oossehbeeo]
oi	[oeé]	Moisés [moeeessess]

4 Consonants

Letter	Transcription	Pronunciation
b	[b]	like the English <i>b</i> in <i>back</i> , but softer, tending toward <i>v</i> (more fricative, meaning the lips don't close tightly).
c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [c] or [k] before -a, -o or -u • [th] before -e or -i 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like the English <i>c</i> in <i>cake</i> before -a, -o or -u. • like the English hard <i>th</i> in <i>thing</i> before -e or -i (though in South America and southern Spain, the pronunciation is closer to [s]).
ch	[ch]	used to be considered a letter in itself in Spanish. It is always pronounced like the <i>ch</i> in <i>chocolate</i> , and never like the <i>ch</i> in <i>architect</i> .
d	[d] or [th]	like the English <i>d</i> in <i>dog</i> , but between vowels this becomes more fricative to sound like the English soft <i>th</i> as in <i>though</i> , and at the end of a word the sound can almost disappear.
f	[f]	like the English <i>f</i> in <i>fog</i> .
g	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [g] before -a, -o or -u • [kh] before -e or -i 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like the English <i>g</i> in <i>go</i> before -a, -o or -u, but becoming fricative between vowels. • like the guttural Scottish <i>ch</i> in <i>loch</i> before -e or -i (the same as the Spanish <i>j</i>).
h		always silent.
j	[kh]	like the guttural Scottish <i>ch</i> in <i>loch</i> (the same as the Spanish - <i>g</i> before an - <i>e</i> or - <i>i</i>).
k	[k]	like the English <i>k</i> in <i>kin</i> .
l	[l]	like the English <i>l</i> in <i>linen</i> .
ll	[y]	used to be considered a letter in itself in Spanish. It is pronounced a little like the English <i>y</i> in <i>yes</i> , but with a tinge of an English <i>j</i> sound, more marked in some accents than others.

m	[m]	like the English <i>m</i> in <i>milk</i> .
n	[n]	like the English <i>n</i> in <i>nine</i> .
ñ	[ny]	a letter in itself in the Spanish alphabet (which thus has 27 letters in all). It is pronounced like the English <i>ny</i> in <i>canyon</i> .
p	[p]	like the English <i>p</i> in <i>piano</i> .
q	[k]	always followed by a -u , together sounding like the English <i>k</i> in <i>kin</i> .
r	[r] or [rr]	rolled (by vibrating the tongue against the roof of the mouth). The roll is more pronounced (transcribed [rr]) with a double rr , and when a single r is the first letter in a word or follows -n , -l or -s .
s	[s] or [ss]	like the hard English <i>s</i> in <i>soap</i> , and never like the soft <i>s</i> in <i>hose</i> .
t	[t]	like the English <i>t</i> in <i>tin</i> .
v	[b]	virtually indistinguishable from the Spanish -b , and therefore transcribed the same.
w	[oo]	only appears in loan words, and pronounced the same as the Spanish -u .
x	[x]	like the English <i>x</i> in <i>extra</i> and never like the soft <i>x</i> in <i>example</i> .
z	[th]	like the English hard <i>th</i> in <i>thing</i> (though in South America and southern Spain, the pronunciation is closer to [s]). Before an -i or an -e , we very rarely find the letter -z , but rather a -c , which has the same sound before these letters.

5 Possible confusions

Pronunciation is one of the easiest things in Spanish, because with very few exceptions, what you see is what you say. Here, though, is a short reminder on the few things that learners might find confusing:

- Spanish speakers rarely make any distinction between the pronunciations of **-b** and **-v**, so you shouldn't either. The sound is more fricative (closer to the English *v*) between vowels.

- The **-d** and the **-g** also become more fricative between vowels. Here, the **-d** sounds more like the soft English *th* in *this*, and almost disappears at the end of a word. In becoming fricative, the **-g** also verges on disappearing between vowels.

- When followed by **-e** or **-i**, **-g** is pronounced the same as **-j**, so:

Syllable	Transcription	Examples in some Spanish names
ja	[kha]	Jaime [khaeemeh]
jo	[kho]	José [khosseh]
ju	[khoo]	Julia [khooleea]
ge	[kheh]	Gerardo [khehrardo]
gi	[khee]	Gilberto [kheelberto]

- When followed by **-e** or **-i**, **-c** is pronounced the same as **-z**, so:

Syllable	Transcription	Examples in some Spanish city names
za	[tha]	Zaragoza [tharagotha]
ce	[theh]	Cáceres [cathehress]
ci	[thee]	Valencia [balehntheea]
zu	[thoo]	Zumárraga [thoomarraga]

- The **-u** is not pronounced in the syllables **gue** and **gui**, so **Miguel** is pronounced [meegehl] and not [meegooehl], and **guitarra** [geetarra] rather than [gooeetarra]. In the few words in which the **-u** is audible, it is marked: **pingüino** [peengooeeno].

- And remember that the **-r** is rolled!

That's about it: you're ready to take up Spanish, the language of Cervantes. Have fun!

Before starting the lessons, it's important to read the introduction, even if you already have some grounding in Spanish.

In the English translations of the dialogues, additional text appears in two types of brackets: English words and expressions that do not cross over directly from the Spanish appear in square brackets [], and word-for-word translations appear in italics between round brackets () where this might prove useful.

Before starting out, please be sure to read the introduction and pronunciation guide – even if you already studied Spanish before. This will help you understand how the Assimil method works.

1

Lección primera [lektheegn preemehra]



¡Qué sorpresa!

- 1 – ¡Hola ¹, Laura!
- 2 – ¡Hola, Paco, qué sorpresa! ²
- 3 – ¿Cómo estás ³, guapa?
- 4 – ¡Bien, gracias! ¿Y tú, qué tal? ⁴
- 5 – Estoy ³ pachucho... □



Pronunciation

keh sorprehssa 1 ola laora 2 ola paco keh sorprehssa 3 como estass goopa 4 beehnn gratheess ee too keh tal 5 estoy pachoocho



Notes

- 1 **Hola** is the classic universal greeting in informal situations, corresponding quite closely to *hi* or *hello* in English.
- 2 In written Spanish, an inverted exclamation mark or question mark announces a question or exclamation from the start, with the right-way-up mark closing it. You might even find this in the middle of a sentence, if the intonation calls for it, in which case there won't be a capital letter after the closing mark.
- 3 One important difference between Spanish and English verbs is that the subject pronoun (I, you, he, she, etc.) is not usually needed, because the verb form itself makes the subject clear: in **estoy pachucho**, **estoy** means *I am* (as in line 5). When the pronoun does appear, this usually implies some kind of emphasis: **estás pachucho** translates as *you're under the weather*, whereas if the pronoun is specified, as in **tú estás pachucho**, this might mean *you're really under the weather*, or imply that you are under the weather, as opposed to someone else who is not.

In the English translation of the dialogues, we use parentheses [] to indicate words that are necessary in English but omitted in Spanish, while italicised words in brackets () give a literal word-for-word translation to help you understand the mechanics of the language.

1

First lesson

What a surprise!

- 1 – Hi, Laura!
- 2 – Hi there, Paco. What [a] surprise!
- 3 – How's it going (*how are-you*) love (*beautiful*)?
- 4 – Fine (*Well*), thanks! (*And you*) How are things [with you]?
- 5 – I'm a little under the weather (*feeble*)...

Pronunciation notes

The numbers indicate the line in the conversation the pronunciation note refers to.

(1) Here's your first reminder, with the **au** in **Laura** [**la**oora], that you pronounce (almost) every letter in Spanish.

(1), (2) And we have two cases of the Spanish rolling r: **Laura** and **sorpresa** [**sorpre**hssa]. One key to pronouncing the Spanish r is to realize that the r sound in English is actually what we call a semi-vowel, whereas the Spanish r is a real consonant, pronounced by vibrating the tongue against the palate, rather than just gliding the tongue towards it as in English.

(4) In most regions of Spain, the letter c when followed by an i, as in **gracias** [**grathe**eass], is pronounced like the English *th* in *think*. In some parts of southern Spain and most of Latin America, the pronunciation is closer to s.

- 4 ¿Qué tal? is a very frequent question that corresponds quite closely to *How's it going?* or *How are things?* in English, in which *things* can be just about anything: a person, a situation, whatever. Here, you can think of it as an abbreviated form of a question with the verb **estar** to be – ¿Qué tal **estás**?, which would correspond to *How are you?* In line 5, we see the first-person present tense form of **estar**: **estoy** / *am*. Again, to emphasize 'I', the subject pronoun could be included: **yo estoy**.

▶ Ejercicio 1 – Traduzca

Exercise 1 – Translate

- 1 ¿Qué tal?
- 2 ¿Cómo estás?
- 3 ¡Hola, guapa, qué sorpresa!
- 4 ¿Estás pachucho?
- 5 Estoy bien, gracias.

Ejercicio 2 – Complete

*Exercise 2 – Complete the following phrases
(each dot represents a letter).*

- 1 How are you?
¿Cómo?
- 2 I'm fine, thanks.
..... bien,
- 3 And you?
¿ ...?
- 4 Hi! How's it going love?
¡! ¿, guapa?
- 5 I'm a little under the weather.
Estoy

*The Spanish love diminutive forms of first names. There are dozens of these pet names, some of them quite obvious abbreviations (such as **Tere** for **Teresa**), and others less so: **Lola** for **Dolores**, **Charo** for **Rosario**, etc. Some common diminutives for men are **Paco** for **Francisco**, and **Pepe** for **José**. (Popular legend has it that this corresponds to the initials PP, for **padre putativo** (putative father), referring to **Joseph**, father of Christ).*



Answers to exercise 1

❶ How are things? ❷ How are you? ❸ Hi, love. What a surprise! ❹ Are you feeling under the weather? ❺ I'm fine, thanks.

Answers to exercise 2

❶ – estás ❷ Estoy – gracias ❸ – Y tú ❹ – Hola – Qué tal – ❺ – pachucho



Although **guapa** in Spanish usually translates as beautiful, and the masculine form **guapo** as handsome, both terms are frequently used in informal greetings with no other implication than that of simple, friendly attention (a little like the warm expressions "sweetheart" or "my beauty" found in some UK regions). So **¿Qué tal, guapa?** is equivalent to How's it going, love? Spanish abounds in this kind of expression, which speakers of other languages often find endearing, or even effusive.



Lección cien



Continuará ¹...

- 1 – Y colorín colorado, este cuento se ha acabado. ²
- 2 Así terminan los cuentos en España, y también nosotros hemos llegado a la última lección.
- 3 Pero, ¡ajo! ³, esto no hace más que empezar.
- 4 – Primero y ante todo, ahora hay que volver a la lección cincuenta y uno y traducir al español las frases de tu idioma, y así una lección cada día hasta el final del libro.
- 5 Ha habido la mar de situaciones y palabras nuevas, muchos giros y reglas gramaticales.
- 6 Si consigues dominarlo todo podrás desenvolverte sin problemas en la vida cotidiana.
- 7 Ahora bien ⁴, como dice el refrán, no se ganó Zamora en una hora ⁵,



Pronunciation

conteenoora 1 ... coloreen colorado ... 5 ... kheeross ...
 rehglass gramateecaless 6 ... dominarlo ... dessehnbolberteh
 ... coteedeeana



Notes

- 1 The third-person future of the verb **continuar** is the standard way to close a chapter or an episode of an ongoing series: **continuará** *to be continued*.
- 2 If fairy tales start with **Érase una vez** *Once upon a time*, they end in Spanish with **colorín colorado, este cuento se ha acabado**, which is just there for the rhyme, since the literal meaning makes no real sense. Just note that the adjective **colorado** (literally “coloured”) can be used as a synonym for **rojo** *red*, and **ponerse colorado** means *to blush*. The US state of Colorado owes its Spanish-derived name to the colour of its soil.

Lesson one hundred

To be continued... (*It-will-continue*)

- 1 – And they all lived happily ever after. (*Goldfinch reddish, this story has ended.*)
 - 2 That's how stories end in Spain, and we have indeed reached the last lesson.
 - 3 But watch out (*eye*): this [one] is [actually] just beginning!
 - 4 – First and foremost, you now have to go back to lesson 51 and translate the text from your language into Spanish, and so on: a lesson each day up to the end of the book.
 - 5 There have been loads (*the sea*) of situations and new words, and many expressions (*turns*) and grammatical rules.
 - 6 If you manage to master all that, you'll have no difficulty getting by in everyday life.
 - 7 That said (*Now well*), as the proverb goes, Rome wasn't built (*Zamora wasn't won*) in a day (*hour*),
- 3 The noun **ojo** *eye* can be used on its own or with the preposition **con** as an exclamation of warning: ¡Ojo! *Watch out!* Ojo con la pintura. *Mind the paint.*
 - 4 Whether you're writing or talking, it's a good idea to make use of linking words and expressions whenever what you're saying gets a bit complex. For example, **ahora bien** is a useful way of switching to a contrasting perspective: **He estudiado español y tengo buenas bases; ahora bien, me falta un poco de soltura al hablar.** *I've studied Spanish and know the basics; that said, I feel a bit awkward speaking it.*
 - 5 The town of Zamora was besieged for months during the wars between rival royal siblings in the second half of the 11th century. This historical event has been handed down through the ages in the form of a proverb that today promotes the virtues of patience. Above all, it illustrates a poetic fondness for rhyme: **Zamora / hora**. You saw the same thing with **colorado / acabado**, and in line 13, **boca / equivoca**.

- 8 y no bastan unos meses de dedicación para expresarse con perfecta soltura en un idioma.
- 9 – Ahora te toca a ti.
- 10 De aquí en adelante, aunque sea un poquito, ¡ni un día sin español!
- 11 Practica el idioma a diario, donde y como sea ⁶: lee la prensa, escucha la radio, ve programas de tele en español, o canta una canción mientras lavas los platos.
- 12 Navega en Internet, claro: ahora tienes las bases para aprovechar todos los contenidos y recursos digitales.
- 13 – Y recuerda otro refrán: el que tiene boca, se equivoca.
- 14 – Dicho de otro modo, ¡tienes derecho a cometer errores!
- 15 Lo importante es tirarse al ruedo y hacer como muchos españoles, ¡hablar hasta por los codos! ⁷
- 16 Bueno, que se hace tarde, es hora de despedirse...
- 17 Fue un verdadero placer acompañarte. ¡Buen viaje... y hasta pronto! □

 8 ... *dehdeecatheegn* ... *ekspressarseh* ... *soltoora* ... 12 *nabehga* ... *deekheetales* 14 ... *comehter ehrrorress* 15 ... *rrooehdo* ... 16 ... *despehdeersseh* 17 ... *plather* ...

Notes

- 6 The expressions **como sea** and **donde sea**, using the present subjunctive of **ser**, are very frequent in conversation, often translatable as *any way* or *anywhere*: **Déjalo donde sea.** *Leave it anywhere you want.* There may be an idea of firm insistence on the action regardless of the actual where or how: **Hazlo como sea.** *Do it any way you like.* Or with exclamation marks, *Whatever it takes, just do it!*

- 8 and a few months of perseverance are not enough for expressing yourself with ease in a language.
- 9 – Now it's up to you.
- 10 From now on, even if it's just a little, not a single day without Spanish!
- 11 Practise the language every day (*at daily*), wherever and however: read the press, listen to the radio, watch television programmes in Spanish, or sing songs while you're doing the dishes.
- 12 Surf (*navigate in*) the web, of course: you now have the basics for making the most of digital content and resources.
- 13 – And keep in mind (*remember*) another saying: we all make mistakes (*he who has mouth makes mistakes*).
- 14 – In other words (*Said of another way*), you have the right to be wrong (*commit errors*)!
- 15 What matters (*The important*) is to take the plunge (*throw-yourself in-the ring*) and do what a lot of Spanish people do: be a chatterbox (*talk up-to by the elbows*)!
- 16 Well, it's getting late – it's time to say goodbye...
- 17 It's been a real pleasure being by your side (*to accompany you*). Have a good trip... and see you soon!

7 A chatterbox in Spanish is someone who “talks up to the elbows”: **habla hasta por los codos**. Parts of the body feature in many expressions in Spanish. Something that *costs an arm and a leg costs* “an eye from the face”: **cuesta un ojo de la cara**. If you find something scandalous, you might “throw your hands up to your head”: **echarse las manos a la cabeza**. To persuade someone to tell you something they might prefer to keep to themselves, you might “pull their tongue”: **tirar de la lengua**. Instead of betting your bottom dollar on something, you “bet your neck”: **apostar el cuello**. *To chat, or chew the fat*, you “shake the no-bone” (i.e. the tongue): **darle a la sin hueso**. And if you have itchy feet, or ants in your pants, you're doubtless a “badly seated bottom”: **culo de mal asiento**.

▶ Ejercicio 1 – Traduzca

❶ No basta con conocer muchos giros y muchas palabras para dominar un idioma. ❷ Dicho de otro modo, hay que tirarse al ruedo y no tener miedo a cometer errores. ❸ Aunque no sea más que un poquito cada día, navega en internet y busca contenidos digitales en español. ❹ ¡Ojo! No olvides repasar la segunda parte de este libro si quieres desenvolverte sin problemas en la vida cotidiana. ❺ El que tiene boca, se equivoca.

Ejercicio 2 – Complete

❶ To express yourself (*informal sing.*) with ease, you have to practise Spanish every day, wherever and however.

Para, tienes que el español .
.....

❷ First and foremost, don't blush if you (*informal sing.*) make a mistake. You have the right not to know all the grammatical rules, man!

....., no Tienes
..... no conocer todas las, ¡hombre!

❸ You have the basics: congratulations for your perseverance. That said, Rome wasn't built in a day.

Tienes las: por tu, no se
.....

You never actually finish learning a language, but you've definitely reached an important milestone. You've done the rounds of the Spanish verb system, delved into the intricacies of complex sentence structures, and read, understood and used more than 2,500 words in no fewer than a hundred situations representative of everyday Spanish life. What happens next is up to you, and will depend on what you aim for with your Spanish skills.

Bear in mind that talking to people is more than just a simple exchange of information. It's about getting through to them, understanding where they're at, and ensuring that they understand where you're at. It's about convincing people, agreeing with them, or contradicting them. It's about surprising them, and being surprised. It's about making people smile, and smiling your-

Answers to exercise 1

① It's not enough to know many expressions and many words to master a language. ② In other words, you have to take the plunge and not be afraid to make mistakes. ③ Even if it's no more than a little every day, surf the web and find digital content in Spanish. ④ Watch out: don't forget to revise the second part of this book if you want to get by with no problems in everyday life. ⑤ We all make mistakes.

- ④ From now on, do like the Spanish do: be a chatterbox!
 , haz como los españoles: ¡
!
- ⑤ We've reached the last lesson, and it's time to say goodbye. But this book is just a start, so we say: to be continued...
 a la última lección y , pero
 este libro y te decimos:

Answers to exercise 2

① – expresarte con soltura – practicar – a diario – donde y como sea
 ② Primero y ante todo – te pongas colorado si te equivocas – derecho a – reglas gramaticales – ③ – bases – enhorabuena – dedicación – Ahora bien ganó Zamora en una hora ④ De aquí en adelante – habla hasta por los codos ⑤ Hemos llegado – es hora de despedirse – no es más que un principio – continuará

*self. This means building familiarity, and feeling at ease, with an ever-wider range of the language's expressive resources. From lesson to lesson, you've picked up more and more instances of the colourful, and doubtless curious at first sight, informal expressions that give everyday Spanish its distinctive charm and flavour. Pay special attention to these, use them, and don't hesitate to ask about expressions you haven't quite grasped yet. Soon, if not already, you'll notice people smiling with surprise at hearing such authentic-sounding talk on the lips of a student of the language. One last piece of advice: don't forget to continue through **phase two**, the **productive phase**, right through to the last lesson. ¡Adelante!*

Phase 2: Lesson fifty-one

Spanish

español

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