



LEARN SPANISH

BEGINNER LEVEL

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A2

hola

**TARGET:
LANGUAGES**

**LEARN
SPANISH**
Beginner level
A2

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Adapted for English speakers
by Elise Bradbury



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I

MEETING

PEOPLE

1. HELLO

BUENOS DÍAS

AIMS

- GREETING PEOPLE AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF THE DAY
- ASKING SOMEONE THEIR NAME AND WHERE THEY'RE FROM
- GIVING YOUR NAME AND SAYING WHERE YOU'RE FROM
- SAYING WHAT YOU DO AND WHICH LANGUAGES YOU SPEAK
- SAYING YES OR NO AND AGREEING OR DISAGREEING

TOPICS

- PUNCTUATION OF QUESTIONS AND EXCLAMATIONS
- NEGATIVE STATEMENTS
- PRESENT TENSE OF THE VERB *SER* (1ST 2ND 3RD PERSON SING.)
- PRESENT TENSE OF -AR VERBS (*HABLAR, ESTUDIAR, TRABAJAR*) AND THE REFLEXIVE (*LLAMARSE*) (1ST 2ND 3RD PERSON SING.)
- GENDER OF NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

- Hello, beautiful.
- Hello (*good days*).
- I'm Paco. And you, what's your name (*how yourself you-call*)?
- I'm Laura (*myself I-call Laura*).
- Laura, that's a pretty name ... And where are you from (*of where you-are*), Laura?
- I'm French (f.).
- French? But you speak Spanish very well!
- Yes, I speak French and also Spanish.
- How nice it is to speak [several] languages.
- I was born in Paris, but my mother is Spanish (f.).
- Ah, Paris, what [a] lovely city ... Tell me, Laura, are you studying or do you work?
- I work. I'm [a] teacher (f.). It's [a] nice profession, don't you think (*true*)?

03

¿CÓMO TE LLAMAS?

- Hola, guapa.
- Buenos días.
- Yo soy Paco. Y tú, ¿cómo te llamas?
- Me llamo Laura.
- Laura, qué bonito nombre... ¿Y de dónde eres, Laura?
- Soy francesa.
- ¿Francesa? Pero... ¡hablas muy bien español!
- Sí, hablo francés y también español.
- Qué bonito es hablar idiomas...
- Nací en París pero mi madre es española.
- Ah, París, qué bonita ciudad... Dime, Laura, ¿estudias o trabajas?
- Trabajo. Soy profesora. Qué bonita profesión, ¿verdad?

■ UNDERSTANDING THE DIALOGUE

GREETINGS

- **Hola** *hello, hi* can be used in any situation. It is informal, but not impolite.
- **Buenos días** *good morning* can be used until around midday.
- **Buenas tardes** *good afternoon* is used until sundown.
- **Buenas noches** *good night* is used both to greet someone in the evening or to wish them a good night as they depart.

These basic greetings can be intensified or shortened depending on the context:

Standard	Intensified	Shortened
¡Hola!		
¡Hola, buenos días!	¡Muy buenos días!	
¡Hola, buenas tardes!	¡Muy buenas tardes!	¡Buenas! or ¡Muy buenas! (tardes or noches is understood)
¡Hola, buenas noches!	¡Muy buenas noches!	

PUNCTUATION

You may have noticed the double-ended punctuation in questions ¿...? and in exclamations ¡...! At the beginning of the question or exclamation, the punctuation mark is upside down. **Dime, Laura, ¿estudias o trabajas?**

GENDER OF NOUNS (AND ADJECTIVES)

In Spanish, all nouns are either masculine or feminine, even those that refer to inanimate objects: for example, **la ciudad** *city* is feminine. This is important because other words that describe the noun change form to agree with its gender. So **bonito** *nice, pretty* in the masculine becomes **bonita** in the feminine. When an adjective describes a person, it needs to agree with the person's gender: Laura is **francesa** *French* (**frances** [m.]) and her mother is **española** *Spanish* (**español** [m.]).

'YES' AND 'NO'

The basic terms are **sí** *yes* and **no** *no*. To make a verb negative, **no** *not* is simply placed before the verb: **No soy español.** *I'm not Spanish* (m.).

Some other ways of agreeing or disagreeing are **es verdad** *it's true*; **es mentira** *it's a lie*; **bueno, de acuerdo** *fine, okay*.

CULTURAL NOTE

While Spanish has a form of address that is more formal (more on this later), in Spain today the informal is used in most contexts. To greet acquaintances and friends, women will kiss each other's cheeks (once on each side), and men might shake hands, pat each other's shoulders (**una palmada**) or give close friends **un abrazo** *a hug*. Spanish speakers also use a lot of affectionate or complimentary terms in friendly conversations: **guapo** *handsome* (or **guapa** for a female), **hermoso/a** *beautiful*, **precioso/a** *precious*, **cariño** *darling* or even **mi alma** *my soul*. Affectionately shortening names is also very common: e.g. **Francisco** → **Paco** (or **Pancho** in Mexico), **José** → **Pepe**, **Dolores** → **Lola** and **Ignacio** → **Nacho**.

◆ GRAMMAR

THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

un (m.) and **una** (f.) are the equivalents of *a/an*: **una ciudad** *a city* (because the noun is feminine). In Spanish, the plural *some* is often left out. Equally, there is no article used before a profession: **Soy profesor.** *I'm a teacher* (m.).

FORMS OF NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES

- One rule for working out the gender of a Spanish noun is if the word ends in **-o** it is usually masculine, and if it ends in **-a** it is usually feminine. However, there are some exceptions! For example, **un día** *day* and **un idioma** *language* are masculine.
- Professions ending in **-or** add an **-a** in the feminine: **un profesor / una profesora**.
- Adjectives ending in **-o** replace this with **-a** in the feminine: **bonito / bonita**.
- For words ending in a vowel, the plural is formed by adding **-s**: **día / días**; **idioma / idiomas**.

NATIONALITIES

- Adjectives describing nationality that end in **-o** replace this with **-a** in the feminine: **chino / china** *Chinese* (m./f.); **italiano / italiana** *Italian* (m./f.).
- If the nationality ends in a vowel other than **-o** it doesn't change for gender: **belga** *Belgian* (m./f.); **estadounidense** *American* (m./f.), literally *from the United States*.

- If it ends in a consonant, an **-a** is added in the feminine: **español / española**.
- Certain nationalities lose their written accent in the feminine: **inglés / inglesa** *English* (m./f.); **alemán / alemana** *German* (m./f.); **francés / francesa** *French* (m./f.).
- Note that nationality is not capitalized in Spanish: **un español** *a Spaniard*.

▲ CONJUGATION PERSONAL PRONOUNS

The subject pronouns in the singular are: **yo** *I*, **tú** *you*, **él / ella** *he/she*. They are often left out before a verb, unless you need to emphasize who the subject is: **Soy inglesa**. *I'm British*. **Yo soy canadiense y tú eres español**. *I'm Canadian and you are Spanish*. In the dialogue, we also see examples of the reflexive pronouns **me** *myself* and **te** *yourself*. Spanish has many reflexive verbs: these are verbs that include a pronoun to indicate that someone or something is performing the action on itself.


SOME COMMON VERBS

So far we've seen **ser** *to be*; **hablar** *to speak*; **estudiar** *to study*; **trabajar** *to work* and **llamarse** *to be called* (this is a reflexive verb). Here are the conjugations of three of these frequent verbs in the first three persons of the present tense.

hablar <i>to speak</i>	llamarse <i>to be called</i>	ser <i>to be</i> (irregular)
hablo <i>I speak</i>	me llamo <i>I am called</i>	soy <i>I am</i>
hablas <i>you speak</i>	te llamas <i>you are called</i>	eres <i>you are</i>
habla <i>he/she speaks</i>	se llama <i>he/she/it is called</i>	es <i>he/she/it is</i>

The verb **nací** *I was born*, is in the past tense (for this tense, see chapter 19).

◆ EXERCISES

The exercises accompanied by audio are indicated with a speaker icon.  First listen to the recording, then answer the exercise questions. The transcripts of the Spanish exercise recordings can be found in the 'Exercise answers' section at the end of the book.

If you need to – especially at the beginning of the course – you can read along with the transcripts to help make sure you understand the audio.

● VOCABULARY

guapo/a *handsome, beautiful*
¡qué...! *What a ...! How ...!*
bonito/a *pretty*
el nombre *name*
y *and*
¿de dónde...? *Where ... from?*
el inglés *English*
hablar *to speak, to talk*
muy *very*
bien *well*
el español *Spanish*
también *also, too*
el idioma *language*
pero *but*
la madre *mother*
la ciudad *city*
dime *tell me*
estudiar *to study*
trabajar *to work*
el profesor / la profesora *teacher*
¿verdad? *Isn't that right?*

🔊 1. LISTEN TO THE SENTENCES AND SELECT THE CORRECT MEANING.

03

- Is she Spanish? Are you Spanish?
- You are German. He is German.
- I (f.) am French. I (m.) am French.
- I don't speak English. You don't speak English.
- I speak Italian. He/she speaks Italian.

2. TRUE OR FALSE? LISTEN TO THE RECORDING AND TICK VERDAD OR MENTIRA.

03 The transcripts of the exercise dialogues can be found in the 'Exercise answers' section at the back of the book.

	verdad (V)	mentira (M)
a. Ella se llama Lola.		
b. Es inglesa.		
c. Es francesa.		
d. Él se llama Pedro.		
e. Es inglés.		
f. Es de Nueva York.		
g. Es español.		
h. Es profesor de español.		
i. Habla chino.		

3. REWRITE THESE SENTENCES IN THE FEMININE.

- a. El profesor es guapo. →
- b. Es alemán. →
- c. No soy estadounidense. →
- d. ¿Eres chino o belga? →

4. ASK THE QUESTION THAT GOES WITH EACH RESPONSE.

- a. Soy de Madrid. →
- b. Me llamo Pepe. →
- c. Sí, hablo español. →
- d. No, no trabajo en España. →

5. TRANSLATE THESE SENTENCES.

- a. Hello, my name is Pedro and I'm a Spanish teacher. →
- b. Good night, beautiful (f.). →
- c. I (f.) was born in Paris, but I'm Spanish. →
- d. I speak French and also German very well. →
- e. I'm Lola, and you? →

2. WHO AM I? ¿QUIÉN SOY?

AIMS

- ASKING SIMPLE QUESTIONS ABOUT ORIGIN, RESIDENCE, FAMILY, WORK, AGE, ETC.
- REPLYING TO THESE QUESTIONS
- GIVING ONE'S NAME
- COUNTING TO 100

TOPICS

- QUESTIONS
- WORD STRESS / ACCENTUATION
- INTRODUCING *SER* AND *ESTAR*
- PRESENT TENSE OF -IR VERBS (*VIVIR*) (1ST 2ND 3RD PERSON SING.)
- PRESENT TENSE OF THE IRREGULAR VERBS *TENER*, *ESTAR*, *HACER*, *VER* (1ST 2ND 3RD PERSON SING.)
- THE SINGULAR DEFINITE AND INDEFINITE ARTICLE

RIDDLE

- Guess who I am! You have [the] right to [ask] six questions.
- Are you a woman?
- Yes, my character is a woman: [she's] Spanish, like me.
- Where do you live?
- I live in Madrid, but I have several houses in Spain.
- Congratulations! Are you married (f.)?
- Yes, I'm married.
- Tell me, how old are you (*what age you-have*)?
- I am forty-four (*I-have forty and four years*).
- Let's see ... (*to see...*) How many children do you have?
- I have two daughters, [they are] 11 and 9 years [old].
- And what do you do (*to what yourself you-devote*)?
- I'm [a] journalist, but for (*it-makes*) a few years I haven't worked (*not I-have work*).
- That's a shame ... so you're unemployed (*the unemployment*)?
- No, not exactly.
- Of course! Your husband has a good job and you are [a] housewife, is that it?
- In truth, that's not it, but you only have [the] right to six questions!
- I give up (*I-abandon*)...
- I am ... Letizia Ortiz Rocasolano, the Queen of Spain!

04

ADIVINANZA

- ¡Adivina quién soy! Tienes derecho a seis preguntas.
- ¿Eres una mujer?
- Sí, mi personaje es una mujer, española como yo.
- ¿Dónde vives?
- Vivo en Madrid, pero tengo varias casas en España.
- ¡Enhorabuena! ¿Estás casada?
- Sí, estoy casada.
- Dime, ¿qué edad tienes?
- Tengo cuarenta y cuatro años.
- A ver... ¿Cuántos hijos tienes?
- Tengo dos hijas, de once y nueve años.
- ¿Y a qué te dedicas?
- Soy periodista, pero hace varios años que... no tengo trabajo.
- Qué lástima... El desempleo, ¿no?
- No, no exactamente.
- ¡Claro! Tu marido tiene un buen empleo y tú eres ama de casa, ¿es eso?
- En verdad, no es eso, pero ¡solo tienes derecho a seis preguntas!
- Abandono...
- Soy... ¡Letizia Ortiz Rocasolano, la reina de España!

■ UNDERSTANDING THE DIALOGUE

JOBS AND WORK

- **¿A qué te dedicas?** ('To what yourself you-devote?') (note the reflexive verb **dedicarse**) is the most common way to ask what someone does. Another option is **¿En qué trabajas?** ('In what you-work?').
- The reply might be: **Soy...** *I am (a/an)...* **agricultor/a** farmer; **funcionario/a** civil servant; **empleado/a** employee, etc. (remember that the article **un/una** is not used before a profession). Or you could say: **Trabajo en...** *I work in ...* **la enseñanza** teaching; **el comercio** business, etc.
- Professions that end in **-ista** are the same for a man or a woman: **periodista** a journalist (m./f.). And note a term that unfortunately concerns a lot of Spaniards, especially young people: **el desempleo** unemployment: **Estoy desempleado/a.** *I am unemployed (m./f.).*

AGE

In the dialogue, we see **¿Qué edad tienes?** ('What age you-have?') but you might also hear **¿Cuántos años tienes?** ('How-many years you-have?') *How old are you?* Note that in Spanish, the verb **tener** *to have* is used to give an age rather than **ser** *to be*. The numbers to help you reply are below. If you're writing them, note that from 0 to 29, the numbers are written as a single word, while from 30 up, each word is written separately with the construction **ten + y and + unit**.

0 cero	10 diez	20 veinte	30 treinta
1 uno	11 once	21 veintiuno	31 treinta y uno
2 dos	12 doce	22 veintidós	32 treinta y dos ...
3 tres	13 trece	23 veintitrés	40 cuarenta
4 cuatro	14 catorce	24 veinticuatro	50 cincuenta
5 cinco	15 quince	25 veinticinco	60 sesenta
6 seis	16 dieciséis	26 veintiséis	70 setenta
7 siete	17 diecisiete	27 veintisiete	80 ochenta
8 ocho	18 dieciocho	28 veintiocho	90 noventa
9 nueve	19 diecinueve	29 veintinueve	100 cien

CULTURAL NOTE

You may have heard the well-known Spanish joke: *Knock knock*. 'Who's there?' 'Antonio de Todos los Santos Fernandez Gutierrez.' 'You can all come in, but the last one should close the door!'. So why do Spaniards have such long names? In fact, **el apellido** *the family name*, is officially a double name consisting of the father's last name followed by the mother's last name. So the Queen of Spain's father's surname is Ortiz and her mother's surname is Rocasolano. Often only one of the two is used on a daily basis – usually the father's, but not always! Some choose to opt for the second if it is less common. For example, Pablo Picasso went by his mother's surname (Picasso). But his full name is far too long to include here!

◆ GRAMMAR

ASKING QUESTIONS

In Spanish there is no equivalent of *Do you ...?* etc. A statement is turned into a question simply with intonation (or punctuation in writing): **Eres una mujer.** *You are a woman.* **¿Eres una mujer?** *Are you a woman?* Some specific question words include: **¿Dónde vives?** *Where do you live?* **¿De dónde eres?** *Where are you from?* **¿Quién eres?** *Who are you?* **¿Qué edad tienes?** *How old are you?* ('What age do you have?') **¿A qué te dedicas?** *What do you do?* **¿Cuántos hijos tienes?** *How many children do you have?* **¿Cuántas hijas tienes?** *How many daughters do you have?* Note that **cuánto** changes form to agree with number and gender.

WORD STRESS AND WRITTEN ACCENTS

In the introduction, we mentioned that the word stress is placed on a certain syllable in a Spanish word. There are some basic rules regarding which syllable to accentuate:

- the last syllable in words ending with a consonant (except for **n** and **s**): **hablar**, **español**, **ciudad**.
- the second-to-last syllable for words ending in a vowel, an **n** or an **s**: **reina**, **idiomas**, **Carmen**.
- A written accent is used in cases that are exceptions to the usual rules: **París**, **francés**, **alemán**, **Ángela**.

A written accent is also used in two cases seen in this lesson:

- in question words: **¿Quién...?** **¿Dónde...?** **¿Qué...?**
- to distinguish homonyms: **tu** *marido* your husband; **tú** *eres* you are.

THE SINGULAR INDEFINITE AND DEFINITE ARTICLE

Note the four forms of the singular articles *a/an* and *the*:

un empleo *a job, an employment* **el empleado** *the employee (m.)*
una mujer *a woman* **la reina** *the queen*

TWO VERBS FOR 'TO BE'

There are two verbs for *to be* in Spanish: **ser** and **estar**. We'll go into more detail about the usage differences between these verbs in later lessons; for the moment, let's look at some basic rules.

- **ser** is always used before a noun: **Soy Paco.** *I am Paco.* **Es una pregunta.** *It's a question.* **Es periodista.** *She is a journalist.*
- **ser** is used before an adjective to describe essential, inherent characteristics, for example, someone's nationality: **Soy español.** *I (m.) am Spanish.*
- **ser de** is used to express origin: **Eres de Sevilla.** *You are from Seville.*
- **estar** is used before an adjective to express someone's current state in time or space or a condition bound by circumstances: **Estoy desempleado.** *I'm (m.) unemployed.* **Estoy casada.** *I'm (f.) married.*

▲ CONJUGATION -IR VERBS

In the last lesson, we saw some examples of infinitives that end in **-ar**. The regular verbs in this group all conjugate in the same way. Another group of infinitives end in **-ir**. Here is the singular present tense conjugation of regular **-ir** verbs:

vivir <i>to live</i>
vivo <i>I live</i>
vives <i>you live</i>
vive <i>he/she/it lives</i>

SOME COMMON IRREGULAR VERBS

Unfortunately, there are a number of irregular verbs in Spanish, and some are very common. At least seeing them a lot will help you get used to them quickly!

estar <i>to be</i>	tener <i>to have</i>	hacer <i>to do/make</i>	ver <i>to see</i>
estoy <i>I am</i>	tengo <i>I have</i>	hago <i>I do/make</i>	veo <i>I see</i>
estás <i>you are</i>	 tienes <i>you have</i>	haces <i>you do/make</i>	ves <i>you see</i>
está <i>he/she/it is</i>	tiene <i>he/she/it has</i>	hace <i>he/she/it does/makes</i>	ve <i>he/she/it sees</i>

● VOCABULARY

la adivinanza *riddle*
adivinar *to guess*
¿quién? *Who?*
¿qué? *What? Which?*
¿cuánto/a/os/as? *How many? How much?*
el derecho *right*
la pregunta *question*
el personaje *character*
la mujer *woman, wife*
el marido *husband*
como *like, as*
vivir *to live*
tener *to have*
varios, varias *several, some*
la casa *house, home*
¡Enhorabuena! *Congratulations!*
estar *to be*

casado/a *married (m./f.)*
la edad *age*
el año *year*
a ver... *let's see ...*
ver *to see*
el hijo *child, son*
la hija *daughter*
dedicarse a *to work as*
el/la periodista *journalist*
hacer *to do, to make*
el trabajo *work, job*
el empleo *employment, job*
el desempleo *unemployment*
la lástima *pity, shame*
exactamente *exactly*
claro (adv.) *of course, certainly*
eso *that*
solo *only*
abandonar *to abandon, to give up*
la reina *queen*

◆ EXERCISES

1. LISTEN TO THE RECORDING AND SELECT THE NUMBER YOU HEAR.

- 04 a. 33 36 d. 2 12
b. 6 10 e. 18 80
c. 61 71

2. LISTEN TO THE RECORDING AND SELECT THE RIGHT ANSWER.

- 04 a. La mujer que habla se llama Carmen y el hombre se llama...
 Paco
 Luis
 Antonio
- b. El apellido del hombre es...
 Fernández Ruiz
 Ruiz Ortiz
 Fernández Ortiz
- c. Carmen tiene...
 dos hijos
 tres hijos
 cuatro hijos
- d. El marido de Carmen...
 es profesor de español
 es profesor de inglés
 está desempleado

3. LISTEN TO THE RECORDING AGAIN AND ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS.

- 04 a. ¿Cómo se llama la hija del hombre? →
b. ¿Qué edad tiene? →
c. ¿A qué se dedica? →
d. ¿Dónde vive? →

4. THE FOLLOWING WORDS FOLLOW THE RULES OF ACCENTUATION: UNDERLINE THE SYLLABLE THAT IS STRESSED.

- a. Brasil
b. Ecuador
c. Cuba
d. Buenos Aires
e. voleibol
f. Beatriz

5. THE FOLLOWING WORDS DON'T FOLLOW THE RULES OF ACCENTUATION: ADD A WRITTEN ACCENT TO THE VOWEL THAT IS STRESSED.

- a. cafe
b. futbol
c. menu
d. dolar
e. balon
f. Peru

6. FILL IN EACH SENTENCE WITH THE CORRECT CONJUGATION OF *SER* OR *ESTAR*.

- a. Madrid una ciudad muy bonita.
b. Felipe VI casado con Letizia Ortiz.
c. No tengo trabajo: desempleado.
d. No funcionario: trabajo en el comercio.
e. Dime, Laura, ¿ de Sevilla?

7. TRANSLATE THE FOLLOWING.

- a. What does your wife do? →
b. How old is the Queen of Spain? →
c. She lives in Madrid but she has several homes. →
d. Let's see ... How many questions do I have the right to ask? →
e. Guess who my husband is. →

3. HOW ARE YOU?

¿QUÉ TAL?

AIMS

- SAYING AND ASKING HOW THINGS ARE
- SHOWING POLITENESS
- ADDRESSING SOMEONE INFORMALLY AND FORMALLY

TOPICS

- FORMAL ADDRESS
- ARTICLES, NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES IN THE SINGULAR AND PLURAL
- THE SUBJECT PRONOUN AND THE POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE
- CONJUGATION IN THE PRESENT TENSE OF -AR VERBS AND THE IRREGULAR VERBS *SER*, *ESTAR*, *TENER*



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