

In this unit, you will be learning the basic tools required to understand the Spanish language. There are 4 parts to this unit:

- 1. The Spanish Alphabet Learn how to pronounce Spanish words
- 2. Conjugations in Spanish Get the crux of Spanish grammer
- 3. Six important verbs Start talking with these six irregular verbs
- 4. Useful phrases Find out how to ask your teacher questions!

1.1 The Spanish Alphabet

The Spanish alphabet contains 27 letters, one more than the English alphabet. Although most of the letters are written the same way, they are pronounced differently.

The following table has the Spanish alphabet on the top, and its respective sound/pronunciation below it.



As you practice it with your teacher, write your own pronunciations in the empty boxes below!

Α	В	С	D	E	F	G	Н	I	J
а	be	ce	de	е	efe	ge	hache	i	jota
K	L	M	N	Ñ	0	Р	Q	R	(RR)
ca	ele	eme	ene	eñe	0	pe	cu	ere	erre
S	Т	U	٧	W	X	Υ	Z		
ese	te	u	ve	doble ve	equis	i griega	zeta		



2.2 Conjugations in Spanish

Conjugating (varying) a verb in Spanish means altering the base verb to reflect who you are referring to. The base verb is known as the infinite verb, or *verbo infinito* in Spanish.

There are 6 types of conjugations (variations) in Spanish - I, you, he/she/it, we, you all and they. This means that you have to alter the infinite verb according to each situation.

Example:

In Spanish, the infinite verb 'to speak' is **Hablar**. Depending on who is speaking, hablar is changed, reflecting the speaker.

Verbo infinitivo: Hablar

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Speaker	Conjugation	Translation	
I	Habl o	I speak	
You	Habl as	You speak	
He/She/It	Habl a	He/She/ It speaks	
We	Habl amos	We speak	
You all	Habl áis	You all speak	
They	Hab lan	They Speak	

'I speak Spanish' is translated to 'Hablo Español'.
'We don't speak Spanish' is translated to 'No hablamos Español'.



Try telling your teacher the different languages that you speak! E.g English: Inglés, French: Francés, Mandarin: Mandarin

To make this a wee-bit harder, we are going to start using the Spanish equivalent of each of the following words.

English	Spanish	English	Spanish
I	Yo	We	Nosotros
You	Tú	You all	Vosotros
He/She/It	Él/Ella/Usted	They	Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes



Spanish might seem complicated this moment - Imagine having to conjugate all your verbs! The good thing is that we can group all Spanish verbs into 3 categories. There are verbs that end with -ar, -er, -ir. The conjugations in each category follow a rule, making it easier to work with.

To conjugate, remove the last 2 letters of each infinite verb (-ar, -er, -ir), and replace them according to their rules. We will use Estudiar, Comer and Vivir as examples.

Verbo infinitivo ->	<i>Estudi<u>ar</u> -</i> T	o Study	Com <u>er</u> -	To Eat	<i>Viv<u>ir</u> -</i> T	o Live
Yo	Estudi o	0	Com o	0	Vivo	0
Tú	Estudi as	as	Comes	es	Vives	es
ÉI/Ella/Usted	Estudi a	а	Com e	Φ	Vive	Φ
Nosotros	Estudi amos	amos	Com emos	emos	Viv imos	imos
Vosotros	Estudi ás	ás	Com éis	éis	Vi vís	ÍS
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes	Estudi an	an	Com en	en	Vi ven	en

'She studies Spanish' is translated to 'Estudia Español.

'He eats meat' is translated to 'Come carne'.

'I live in Singapore' is translated to 'Vivo en Singapur'



Try conjugating the following verbs and forming your own sentences! Check your answers with your teacher.

Verbo infinitivo ->	Cocinar - To cook	Leer - To read	Decidir - To decide
Yo			
Tú			
Él/Ella/Usted			
Nosotros			
Vosotros			
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes			

Note: The conjugation rules we have just covered are for the Spanish present tense. In future units, you will be learning the different conjugations for the other tenses - Past, Continuous, Future etc. Yes, they are all different!



1.3 Six important verbs

Sadly, the Spanish decided to make our lives harder by having irregular verbs, verbs that do not follow the main -ar, -er, -ir rule. These 'verbos irregulars' have their own rules and we will start with the six most important ones.

a. Ser - To be (permanent)

Ser is used to describe states of being that are permanent, like your nationality, hair color, gender etc.

	Conjugation	Sentence
Yo	Soy	Soy de Singapur. (I am from Singapore)
Tú	Eres	
ÉI/Ella/Usted	Es	
Nosotros	Somos	
Vosotros	Soís	
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes	Son	

b. Estar - To be (impermanent)

Estar is used to describe states that are impermanent, like the weather, mood, location etc.

	Conjugation	Sentence
Yo	Estoy	
Tú	Estás	¿Estás cansado? (Are you tired?)
Él/Ella/Usted	Está	
Nosotros	Estamos	
Vosotros	Estáis	
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes	Están	

c. Querer - To want

	Conjugation	Sentence
Yo	Quiero	
Tú	Quieres	
Él/Ella/Usted	Quiere	Quiere comer ahora. (He wants to eat now)
Nosotros	Queremos	
Vosotros	Quereís	
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes	Quieren	



d. Hacer - To do, make, prepare

Hacer is used to describe actions of doing, making or preparing something

	Conjugation	Sentence
Yo	Hago	
Tú	Haces	
ÉI/Ella/Usted	Насе	
Nosotros	Hacemos	¿Hacemos la compra juntos? (Let's do the
		shopping together?)
Vosotros	Hacéis	
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes	Hacen	

e. Tener - To have

Tener is used to describe the action of having something. In Spanish, it is also used to describe being hungry (Tengo hambre - I am hungry), illness (Tengo fiebre - I have a fever) and body states (Tengo frio - I am cold).

	Conjugation	Sentence
Yo	Tengo	
Tú	Tienes	
Él/Ella/Usted	Tiene	
Nosotros	Tenemos	
Vosotros	Tenéis	Tenéis el mejor cuarto. (You all have the
		better room)
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes	Tienen	

f. Ir - To go

Ir is used to describe the action of going somewhere.

	Conjugation	Sentence
Yo	Voy	
Tú	Vas	
Él/Ella/Usted	Va	
Nosotros	Vamos	
Vosotros	Vaís	
Ellos/Ellas/Ustedes	Van	Van a la playa. (They go to the beach)



Make up your own sentences in the blanks provided and check it with your teacher!



1.4 <u>Useful phrases</u>

Every student has an array of useful phrases that can help them communicate with their teachers when they first start learning a language from scratch. Here are a few of them to start you off:

English	Spanish
What does it mean?	¿Qué significa ?
Why?	¿Por qué?
I don't understand	No entiendo
I understand!	įEntiendo!
Another time?	¿Otra vez?
Can you explain ?	¿Me podrías explicar?
How much?	¿Cuánto?
When?	¿Cuándo?
When is the next class?	¿Cuándo es la próxima clase?



Practice saying these phrases with your teacher! Add more phrases to the list to help you in your study.

Numbers

1:uno	2:dos	3:tres	4:cuatro	5:cinco	6:seis	7:siete	8:ocho	9:nueve	10:diez
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Days of the week

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Domingo	Lunes	Martes	Miércoles	Jueves	Viernes	Sábado

Months

January	Febuary	March	April	May	June
Enero	Febrero	Marzo	Abril	Mayo	Junio
July	August	September	October	November	December
Julio	Agosto	Septiembre	Octubre	Noviembre	Diciembre