Noun

A noun is a word that identifies a person, place, or thing. In Spanish, nouns have a gender and a number. Gender means masculine and feminine. Masculine words typically end in o, while feminine words usually end in a. Number means how many: singular or plural. Words that are plural will have an s at the end. If there is not a vowel at the end of a word, add es to make it plural.

*ex:* The word *cielo (sky)* is masculine and singular.

*ex:* The word *chica (girl)* is feminine and singular.

*ex:* The word *burros (donkeys)* is masculine and plural.

*ex:* The word *uvas (grapes)* is feminine and singular.

*ex:* To change *reloj* (*clock,* masculine) to plural, you must add es: *relojes* (*clocks*).

Some nouns’ gender is not always clear. In dictionaries, there will be a note telling the gender of the word, or some books use the definite article to show what gender a noun is. Below, you can find a list of types of words not ending in o or a that tend to be a certain gender.

Always masculine (Spinelli 8)

Words ending in:

* -l
* -n
* -r
* words of Greek origin, ending in -ma

Always feminine (Spinelli 7)

Words ending in:

* -tad
* -dad
* -umbre
* -ie
* -ción

Pronouns

Just as in English, in Spanish pronouns are used to replace nouns. For instance, we say “she” instead of Maya every time we want to talk about her. There are different types of pronouns, and you can find them listed below.

1. Subject Pronouns

These pronouns are the ones that are subjects of sentences and are crucial in conjugating verbs. Many of them are just as they are in English; however, there are some familiar and formal forms as well as gender based forms.

1. First Person

Singular: I = yo

Plural: we (all males or males and females) = nosotros

we (all females) = nosotras

1. Second Person

Singular: you (familiar) = tú

you (formal) = usted (Ud.)

Plural: you all/you guys (familiar, all males or both genders) = vosotros

you all/you guys (familiar, all females) = vosotras

you all/you guys (formal) = ustedes (Uds.)

1. Third Person

Singular: he = él

she= ella

Plural: they (all males or both genders) = ellos

they (all females) = ellas

1. Object Pronouns
2. Direct object

me nos

te os

lo, la los, las

1. Indirect object

me nos

te os

le les

1. Reflexive Pronouns

me nos

te os

se se

1. Prepositional pronouns (Used after prepositions)

mí nosotros

ti vosotros

sí sí

1. Possessive Pronouns

To show possession in Spanish, you cannot use ‘s. Instead, you say the \_\_ of \_\_.

*ex: el libro de Miguel* (Miguel’s book) *la muñeca de Isabel* (Isabel’s book)

Alternatively, as we do in English, you can use pronouns. Possesive pronouns follow the gender and number of the noun that is in possession. The list below is used normally, in front of the noun.

*ex: mis gatos* (my cats) *vuestras toallas* (your guys’ towels)

mi, mis nuestro, nuestra, nuestros, nuestras

tu, tus vuestro, vuestra, vuestros, vuestras

su, sus su, sus

Alternatively, you can use the pronouns below in a different structure: the article, the noun, and then the pronoun, for extra emphasis. As always, the pronoun matches the gender and number of the noun.

*ex: el libro tuyo* (*your* book) *las vacas mías* (*my* cows)

mío, mía, míos, mías nuestro, nuestra, nuestros, nuestras

tuyo, tuya, tuyos, tuyas vuestro, vuestra, vuestros, vuestras

suyo, suya, suyos, suyas suyo, suya, suyos, suyas

Adjectives

As in English, adjectives describe nouns. In Spanish, adjectives must match the noun it is describing in both gender and number. Furthermore, adjectives are placed after the noun as opposed to in front of the noun as in it is in English.

*ex: un chico guapo* (a handsome boy) *unos bolsos pequeños* (some small purses)

*ex: una manzana roja* (a red apple) *unas papas rojas* (some red potatoes)

Adverbs

Adverbs modify verbs, other adverbs, and adjectives; furthermore, they indicate quantity, time, place, intensity and manner (Spinelli 99). They do not change in gender or number.

1. Quantity/degree adverbs answer the question how much (Spinelli 99).

She runs **a** **lot**. *Ella corre* ***mucho****.*

She runs **badly**. *Ella corre* ***mal****.*

1. Time adverbs answer the question “when” (Spinelli 100).

I am **late**. *Llego* ***tarde****.*

She will come **soon.** Llegar*á* **pronto.**

1. Place adverbs answer the question “where” (Spinelli 100).

We looked **there**. *Vemos* ***allí****.*

We looked **over** there. *Vemos* ***acá****.*

1. Intensity adverbs are used for emphasis (Spinelli 100).

She **seriously** wants to learn another language.

*Quiere aprender otra lengua* ***en serio.***

1. Manner adverbs answer the question “how” (Spinelli 100).

She speaks **quickly.** *Habla* ***rápidamente.***

Prepositions

Prepositions link nouns to other words in sentences, and indicate position, direction or time (Spinelli 96). These words will often appear in your vocabulary sets, and that is the best way to learn them and how to use them, a few at a time. However, there are a few things that prepositions in Spanish will have in common:

1. They are invariable, meaning that they do not change with gender or number (Spinelli 96).
2. They are used differently in all languages, so do not assume you can use them in Spanish exactly the way you would in English, as a general rule (Spinelli 96).

Here are few Spanish prepositions:

a = to

de = of, in, by

debajo de = underneath of

en = at, on, in

encima de = on top of

lejos de = far away from

cerca de = close to

Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary verbs play a special part in both English and Spanish grammar. They are sometimes known as “helping verbs” because you can’t use them by themselves; they are meant to help the main verb.

1. **IN ENGLISH**, we have lots of auxiliary verbs, and they serve two main purposes (Spinelli 18):
2. to help formulate questions (Spinelli 18)

*ex:* You have a hat. (Have is the main verb)

Do you have a hat? (Do is the auxiliary verb, have is the main verb)

*ex:* You had a hat. (Had is the main verb)

Did you have a hat? (did is the auxiliary verb, have is the main verb)

1. to indicate the tense of the main verb (Spinelli 18)

*ex:* He **is** walking.

He **was** walking.

He **will** walk.

He **would** walk.

He **has** walked.

He **had** walked.

He **would have** walked.

He **will have** walked.

1. **IN SPANISH** there are three verbs that are used as auxiliary verbs: haber, estar, and ser (Spinelli 18).
2. haber

The verb haber is used to form the 7 perfect tenses in Spanish. Haber is conjugated in the 7 simple tenses, and then followed by the main verb in a past participle form.

Present Perfect: *he salido* (I have left)

Preterite Anterior: *hube salido* (I had left)

Pluperfect: ***había*** *salido* (I **had** left)

Future Perfect: ***habré*** *salido* (I **will have** left)

Conditional Perfect: ***habría*** *salido* (I **would have** left)

Present Perfect Subjunctive: ***haya*** *salido* (I **have** left)

Pluperfect Subjunctive: ***hubiera****/****hubiese*** *salido* (I **had** left)

1. estar

Estar acts as an auxiliary verb in the progressive tenses, the present and past progressive. This is when estar is conjugated in either the present or imperfect and followed by the present participle, aka gerund, of the main verb in the sentence. The present progressive is used to express that something is happening in this very moment, emphasizing the idea that the action is occurring “right now”. Similarly, the past progressive is used to emphasize that something was occurring in the past at a certain moment.

Present progressive: *Está comiendo (ahorita).* He is eating (right now).

Past progressive: *Estaba comiendo (en ese momento).* He was eating (at that time).

1. ser

When you pair conjugations of ser with the past participle, you create what is known as the true passive voice (Spinelli 19). This means that the subject has a passive relationship to the verb, instead of an active one. In other words, the sentence is structured in a way that the one doing the action is not the actual subject of the sentence in Spanish. Using ser in this way is one form of passive voice in Spanish, and ser acts as an auxiliary verb.

*ex: El diseño fue creado por mi padre.* The design was created by my dad.

*ex: Las flores fueron escogidos por el niño.* The flowers were chosen by the boy.

Articles

Just as in English, the language Spanish uses definite and indefinite articles. As always, these articles must agree in gender and number with the noun.

1. Definite articles

There is only one definite article in English: the. In Spanish there are four, to account for gender and number agreement: *el, la, los, las*.

1. *el* is used for singular, masculine nouns
2. *la* is used for singular, feminine nouns
3. *los* is used for plural, masculine nouns
4. *las* is used for plural, feminine nouns
5. Indefinite articles

There are only two indefinite articles in English, one for singular nouns, a ( or an), and one for plural nouns, some. In Spanish there are four, to account for gender and number agreement: *un, una, unos, unas*.

1. *un* is used for singular, masculine nouns
2. *una* is used for singular, feminine nouns
3. *unos* is used for plural, masculine nouns
4. *unas* is used for plural, feminine nouns

Object

1. Direct object

Direct objects answer the question of “whom?” or “what?”. They describe the recipient of the action.

*ex:* I make **cakes.** *Hago* ***pasteles.***

Often, the direct object is not stated as a noun, but as a pronoun, using direct object pronouns. These pronouns are placed before the first conjugated verb, or attached to infinitives or gerunds (present participles).

*ex:* I make **them. *Los*** *hago*.

I am making **them.** *Estoy haciéndo****los\*****/****Los*** *estoy haciendo.*

I want to make **them**. ***Los*** *quiero hacer/Quiero hacer****los.***

**\*** When attaching, one must add accent to keep the original stressed syllable if the extra syllable will cause the stressed syllable to change

1. Indirect object

Indirect objects answer the question “to whom?” or “to what?”. They describe the recipient of the action.

*ex:* I talk to **Isabel and Ana.** *Hablo a* ***Isabel y Ana.***

Often, the direct object is not stated as a noun, but as a pronoun, using indirect object pronouns. These pronouns are placed before the first conjugated verb, or attached to infinitives or gerunds (present participles).

*ex:* I talk to **them. *Les*** *hablo*.

I am talking to **them.** *Estoy hablándo****les\*****/****Les*** *estoy hablando.*

I want to talk to **them**. ***Les*** *quiero hablar/Quiero hablar****les.***

**\*** When attaching, one must add accent to keep the original stressed syllable if the extra syllable will cause the stressed syllable to change

Verbs

Verbs are used to describe actions. The infinitive is the original form of a verb, often phrased as “to \_\_\_\_\_” in English. You conjugate infinitives to give a verb a subject, tense, and mood.

In Spanish, there are three types of infinitives. In English, you know a verb is in its infinitive form because it begins with “to” such as *to eat.* In Spanish, the ending of an infinitive will be -ar, -er, or -ir. These groups are important to know because you conjugate verbs of each group similarly. To conjugate verbs, according to each group, you drop the infinitive endings and add new ones, based on which tense and mood you’re using, that match the subject. For the future and conditional tenses, you simply add their endings to the end of the infinitives.

First Conjugation (-ar verbs)

*ex: pagar –* to pay *nadar –* to swim *preparar* – to prepare

Second Conjugation (-er verbs)

*ex: creer –* to think *beber –* to drink *vender* – to sell

Third Conjugation (-ir verbs)

*ex: vivir –* to live *decir –* to tell, say *pedir*– to ask for

Infinitives also have other uses.

1. They are to be placed after a conjugated verb.

*ex:* I want **to go.** *Quiero* ***ir****.*Weshould**eat***. Debemos* ***comer.***

*ex:* She can **sing**. *Puede* ***cantar.*** He knows how **to cook**. *Sabe* ***cocinar.***

1. In Spanish the infinitive is used, with or without the masculine article “el”, as a subject, predicate, or complement in a sentence where in English, gerunds are used instead (Salazar 111).

*ex: (El) caminar contigo es un pasatiempo favorito para mí.*

Walking with you is a favorite pastime of mine.

*ex: Leer es aprender.* Reading is learning.

1. In Spanish, infinitives come after prepositions, not gerunds (Salazar 111).

*ex: Antes de caminar contigo, estaba en class.*

Before walking with you, I was in clase.

*ex: Para alcanzar tus metas, tienes que trabajar mucho.*

In order to reach your goals, you have to work a lot.

1. The infinitive is used as a command on many posters of warning and signs displaying rules or regulations.

*ex: No* ***correr*** *cerca de la piscina.* No **running** near the pool.

*ex: Por favor* ***salir*** *por la puerta roja.* Please **leave** through the red door.

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