

Direct and Indirect Object Pronouns Used Together

Here are the direct object pronouns and the indirect object pronouns side by side:

DO PRONOUNS	IO PRONOUNS	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT
me	me	me
te	te	you (familiar)
lo, la	le	him, her, it, you (formal)
nos	nos	us
os	os	you-all (familiar)
los, las	les	them, you-all (formal)

When you have both a direct object pronoun and an indirect object pronoun in the same sentence, the indirect object pronoun comes first.

Ellos **me los** dan.
They give them to me.
IO pronoun: me
DO pronoun: los

Ella **te la** vende.
She sells it to you.
IO pronoun: te
DO pronoun: la

Whenever both pronouns begin with the letter "l" change the first pronoun to "se."

le lo = se lo
le la = se la
le los = se los
le las = se las
les lo = se lo
les la = se la
les los = se los
les las = se las

The reason for changing "le lo" to "se lo" is merely to avoid the tongue-twisting effect of two short consecutive words that begin with the letter "l". To demonstrate this, first quickly say "les las" and then quickly say "se las." See how much easier it is to say "se las?"

In negative sentences, the negative word comes directly before the first pronoun.

No se lo tengo I don't have it for you.
Nunca se los compro I never buy them for her.

Because the pronoun *se* can have so many meanings, it is often helpful to clarify it by using a prepositional phrase.

Él se lo dice Ambiguous. He tells it to (whom?).

Él se lo dice a Juan He tells it to him. (to Juan)

Él se lo dice a María He tells it to her. (to María)

Él se lo dice a ella He tells it to her.

In sentences with two verbs, there are two options regarding the placement of the pronouns. Place them immediately before the conjugated verb or attach them directly to the infinitive.

She should explain it to me.

Ella me lo debe explicar.

Ella debe explicármelo.

I want to tell it to you.

Te lo quiero decir.

Quiero decírtelo.

You need to send it to them.

Se la necesitas enviar a ellos.

Necesitas enviársela a ellos.

Note that when attaching the pronouns to the infinitive, a written accent is also added to the final syllable of the infinitive. This preserves the sound of the infinitive.

When the pronouns are attached to the infinitive, make the sentence negative by placing the negative word directly before the conjugated verb.

Ella debe explicármelo.

Ella no debe explicármelo.

Quiero decírtelo.

No quiero decírtelo.

Necesitas enviársela a ellos.

No necesitas enviársela a ellos.

When the pronouns come before the conjugated verb, make the sentence negative by placing the negative word directly before the pronouns.

Ella me lo debe explicar.

Ella no me lo debe explicar.

Te lo quiero decir.

No te lo quiero decir.

Se la necesitas enviar a ellos.

No se la necesitas enviar a ellos.