

Title:

Spanishexperto - A guide to learning Spanish - Part 1 - Anybody can learn a new language

Word Count:

731

Summary:

A series of articles that explore the way we learn new languages. Nick explains how he became a fluent speaker and competent user of the Spanish language.

Keywords:

Spanish, Spanish lessons, Online Spanish lessons, Spanish words, Spanish nouns, Spanish verbs, Spanish grammar, Spanish language, Reading Spanish, Listening to Spanish, Spanish pronunciation

Article Body:

There are many reasons why someone might want to learn Spanish. Perhaps you are planning a holiday or business trip to a Spanish speaking country or maybe you are thinking of emigrating. It could be that you don't really need to speak Spanish at all but you just want to say that you can. Being able to communicate in another language certainly gives you a great sense of achievement.

My reasons were a little mixed. For a long time I had wanted to learn another language, and for some reason I was always drawn to Spanish. I am not entirely sure why this was. I think one reason was because the little I knew about Spain at the time somehow appealed to my sense of good living. Sun, sand, siestas, late night dinner parties and dark skinned beautiful women! Of course there is far more to Spain than this, but for me, Spain and the Spanish language held more appeal than say French or German did.

Although I had wanted to learn Spanish for a long time I guess the main reason why I finally decided to do something about it was because I was planning a long trip to Central and South America. I was about to pass through as many as 19 different countries where the official national language was Spanish. Well that was a back in 2002. Since then Spanish and all things Spanish both in Spain and in Latin America have literally taken me over. I wouldn't have believed it then but now Spanish is a part of my every day life. I can speak, read and understand Spanish to the point where I don't have to think about it too much.

When people ask me if I can speak Spanish fluently I am always a little hesitant

to say yes. The truth is that even though I can communicate in Spanish with relative ease I still don't feel that I know enough. I am not really sure if I ever will! There are always new words and phrases to learn for example and of course these vary from country to country.

I think one of the biggest tests for me is being able to sit in front of the TV with una cerveza (a beer) and watch a Spanish soap opera (una telenovela) or a Spanish movie and completely understand everything that is going on. After all, if I can do that in English why shouldn't I be able to do the same in Spanish? Well I have to say I am definitely not there yet but almost! I highly recommend 'Pasion de Gavilanes'. It's a hugely popular telenovela from Columbia. I'll talk more that this and others in later articles.

So, how did I get from not knowing a single word of Spanish (apart from - gracias and amigo), to being able to read a Spanish book, speak to a Spanish-speaking friend or watch a Spanish telenovel? Well the answer to that is what I intend to write about in the coming articles. I am not going to lie to you and say that the journey was an easy one. The truth is that learning a new language takes time and requires a great deal of patience and commitment. However what I really want to convey at this point is that anybody can do it if they rally want to.

In the next article I intend to write about preparation. By that I mean thinking about what it is you want to achieve and how you intend to go about achieving it. You are not going to learn Spanish overnight then I think it makes sense to prepare yourself for the challenges ahead. Learning a new language should be fun and there is no reason why it shouldn't be as long as you realise your limitations.

By no means do I consider myself to be someone that has a natural flare for languages. When I went to school (all those years ago!) the only subject I failed in was French. For some reason I just couldn't get my head round it. Before I started learning Spanish I knew nothing of other languages. I started right from the beginning. I guess what I'm trying to say is, is that if I can do it then believe me anybody can.