

Spanish Grammar: (level 4)

This section is a reference for people who already know some Spanish. The following notes are my attempt to present basic information on Spanish language as spoken in Mexico. Much of the information was gleaned from 501 Spanish verbs (by Christopher Kendris), but has been rephrased in my own words. These notes are arranged for reference or memorization.

ADJECTIVES: An English adjective is a descriptive word, which modifies a noun, and normally is **before** the noun. (a happy camper, a partial sandwich, a red truck)

A Spanish adjective is **normally is after** the noun. (un campista feliz, la mitad de una torta, la comioneta roja) <---note the adjective "rojo" has to change its ending to match the noun "comioneta."

ADVERBS: An English adverb is a word that modifies a verb and ends in "ly". (the sandwich fell quickly, camper ate happily) A Spanish adverb normally ends in "mente." (la torta se cae rapidamente, campista come felizmente)

INFINITIVES: An English infinitive is a conjunction of the word "to" with a verb. (to sleep, to eat.) A Spanish infinitive is a verb form that ends in "IR", "AR", or "ER".

PRESENT PARTICIPLES: An English present participle is a verb that ends in "ING" such as swimming, cleaning, etc.

A Spanish present participle is a word that **usually** ends in: (AR verbs = "ando"), (ER & IR verbs = "iendo")

GERUNDS: An English gerund is a present participle used as a noun, such as a subject or direct object (Sleeping is necessary.) In Spanish the gerundio is the same as the present participle of the verb **but with one important exception**--do not use the present participle for the subject, use the infinitive form: (Dormir es necesario)

PAST PARTICIPLE: An English past participle is a verb form that usually ends in "ED" as in "cleaned, washed, pushed, hidden." A Spanish past participle is a verb form that usually ends in: (AR verbs = ado), (ER & IR verbs = ido.) An irregular example is the verb "abierto" (opened).

Spanish Verbs, 14 tenses, 5 moods...

An English verb normally is expressed in 3 basic tenses (past, present, future) or in the 3 compound / perfect tenses. A Spanish verb may be expressed in the 7 simple Spanish tenses or as a compound of them, for a total of 14 tenses. Some of the English verbs may map to more than one Spanish tense, and which one should be used depends on the intention of the whole sentence.

Verbs in the infinitive form normally end in the letters "ar", "er", or "ir". These endings are important because they determine how to form the other verb tenses. Therefore, if you want to express (conjugate) a verb in another tense, you must memorize the infinitive form of the verb.

For regular verbs, the table on the following page details how to form the seven simple tenses by listing the base verb form to use, which letters should be dropped, and which letters need to be added.

1. Present Indicative tense Basically is present tense.
EXAMPLE: (I / you) walk, etc...

2. Imperfect Indicative tense Basically is past incomplete action tense.
EXAMPLE: (I / you) (was walking / used to walk / walked) (*I was walking and John was trying to follow.*) (*Caminaba, y Juan trataba de seguir.*)

3. Past tense (Preterit.) Basically is past completed action tense.
EXAMPLE: (I / you) (walked / did walk).

4. Future tense (Futuro.) Future tense action or future tense state.
EXAMPLE: (I / you) (will / shall) walk. RULE: verb tenses is not used after "si" when "si" signifies "if" ... (¿Si muriera hoy, a donde vas?)

5. Conditional tense (Potencial Simple.) Basically is conditional actions, quotations, conjecture, and probabilities.

EXAMPLE: (I / you) would walk on water, if (I / you) had faith in Jesus..
6. Present Subjunctive tense (Presente de Subjunctivo.) Basically is used for some types of commands, desires, emotions, and after some types of adverbs / adjective clauses. RULE 1: If the main verb is in the present ind., future, present per indic., or imperative, you may use this tense. RULE 2: The present subjunctive tense is not used when the verb is preceded by "si", where "si" means "if".

7. Imperfect Subjunctive tense (Imperfecto Subjunctivo.) Similar to tense #6.

RULE: If the main verb is in the imperfect ind., preterit, present per indic., or conditional, you may use this tense in sentences that require the subjunctive.

Examples of changing the verb endings for the verb "caminar" (To walk):

1. **Present indicative:** Yo camino. (I do walk / am walking.)

2. **Past incomplete:** Yo caminaba. (I always walked.)

3. **Past (preterit):** Yo caminé al parque. (I walked to the park.)

4. **Future:** Yo caminaré. (I will be walking.)

5. **Conditional:** Creo que caminaría. (I think I will be walking.)

6. **Present Subjunct:** Yo queré camine al... (I will want to walk to...)

7. **Imperf. Subjunct:** Yo quero caminra al... (I wanted to walk to...)

Verb tense	Base verb	Verb ending	dropSingular....			... Plural...	
				I	you	he, she, it	we	
	Yo	Tu	El, ella	Nosotros	Ellos			
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	3 rd			
1. Present indicative	Infinitive	ar	er	o	as	a	amos	an
		er	ir	o	es	e	emos	en
		ir		o	es	e	imos	en
2. Past incomp (Imperf. ind.)	Infinitive	ar	er	aba	abas	aba	ábamos	aban
		er	ir	ía	ías	ía	íbamos	ían
3. Past (Preterit)	Infinitive	ar	er	é	aste	ó	amos	on
		er	ir	í	iste	ió	imos	ieron
4. Future	Infinitive	ar	er	é	ás	á	emos	án
5. Conditional tense	Infinitive	ar	er	ía	ías	ía	famos	ían
6. Present Subjunctive	1 st person singular pres. Indic.	ar	er	e	es	e	emos	en
7. Imperfect Subjunctive	3 rd person plurtl preter	er	ir	a	as	a	amos	an
		er	ir	ra	ras	ra	ramos	ran
		er	ir	se	ses	se	semos	sen

