



# WorldsAcross

How will pronunciation help us to be conversational?

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### **How will pronunciation help us to be conversational?**

- Even when it is not the idea for you to speak Spanish as a native speaker. Pronunciation will help you to gain confidence to start getting into the acquisition process of the language

### **What are the most common phonemes in Spanish?**

- In the Spanish language, there are 24 phonemes, which are individual sounds that distinguish one word from another. These phonemes are: /a/ /b/ /k/ /d/ /e/ /f/ /g/ /h/ /i/ /x/ /l/ /m/ /n/ /ɲ/ /o/ /p/ /k/ /r/ /s/ /t/ /u/ /b/ /x/ /j/.

### **What are the most useful techniques to practice articulation and pronunciation in Spanish?**

- Pay attention to vowel sounds: In Spanish, the five vowels have a very consistent sound, so it's important to get them right. Make sure to pronounce them clearly and distinctly.
- Use the tip of your tongue: When pronouncing the "r" sound in Spanish, use the tip of your tongue to tap the roof of your mouth just behind your upper front teeth. This is called the alveolar tap or flap.
- Keep your mouth relaxed: Spanish pronunciation requires a relaxed mouth, so make sure you're not clenching your jaw or teeth. Keep your lips relaxed and slightly apart.
- Practice the "d" sound: In Spanish, the "d" sound is pronounced with the tongue touching the back of the upper teeth. Make sure you're not using your lips to create the "d" sound.
- Use your lips: When pronouncing certain consonants, such as "p" and "b," make sure to use your lips to create a clear and distinct sound.
- Focus on intonation: Spanish has a distinctive intonation pattern, with stressed and unstressed syllables. Practice stressing the correct syllables in words and sentences to improve your overall pronunciation.

### **What does it take to be conversational as a beginner?**

One of the most important things you should always keep in mind to be conversational in Spanish, even if you are a beginner, is being confident in speaking.

From this moment on, you must bear in mind that -in order to be conversational- you must dare to speak, no matter if you make mistakes.

Normally, being a conversational Spanish speaker is related to fluency, and this has to do with your ability to sound natural in everyday situations. Now, most organizations measure fluency in terms of academic achievement or certification, and there's nothing wrong with trying to learn Spanish for academic reasons. The thing is that there are many people who have passed a test or been certified to speak Spanish, who can't really speak with confidence.

The scoop is, most people want to learn Spanish for real situations. So they do not want to fill in the blanks on a test, but they just want to speak to and understand the people they're in contact with. There is a huge disconnect between how languages are taught and the results people seek when they decide to learn Spanish -in your case.

## The verbs SER and ESTAR

In Spanish, the verb **To Be** is divided into two verbs. The verb **Ser** refers to permanent features of people, things or situations, while the verb **Estar** is used to talk about temporary conditions. In English, we use the verb **To Be** for both cases, but in Spanish both verbs have different meanings.

### Situations in which we use the verb **ser**:

- To identify something or someone.
- To describe qualities and fundamental characteristics.
- To talk about nationality or place of origin.
- To talk about professions or trades.
- To share a religious or political affiliation.
- To tell the time, day or date.
- To indicate possession.
- To describe the material something is made of.
- To know the relationship between one person and another.

### Situations in which we use the verb **estar**:

- To indicate location and time.
- To express conditions and states.
- To use progressive tenses (-ing).
- To use certain idiomatic expressions.

## Using affective verbs

When it comes to expressing feelings or emotions in Spanish conversation, many students feel limited in the beginning stages. Often, it is due to a lack of vocabulary and verbs related to that end.

Now, just as in English, when you express emotions in Spanish, there are usually two main elements that you should take into account:

- The subject (i.e., person) who has a liking or dislike for something.
- The object or stimulus that causes the emotion (e.g., a situation, an object, an animal, a person, or a certain context).

So when you say "I love your cat,"

- 1) The subject is me
- 2) The emotion is caused by your cat.

So we are left with "me encanta tu gato", which means "I love your cat".

Now let's see some more examples.

I love your cats - Me encantan tus gatos.  
I hate these pants - Yo odio estos pantalones.  
I hate cold coffee - Yo odio el café frío.  
I don't like onions - No me gustan las cebollas.

As you may have noticed, it's useful to know a list of essential verbs to help you express love, like, joy, happiness, hate, get angry, get frustrated, and more. But until you put these verbs into practice in real situations related to your daily life, they won't work as you expect.

### Near future - IR A

If you want to say what's going to happen in Spanish, you can say it using the **near future** with the construction *ir a + infinitive*, which is the Spanish equivalent of "to be going to do".

To use *el futuro próximo*, all you have to do is conjugate *ir* in the present tense, in accordance with the subject. After that, simply add *a* and the infinitive of the action verb

#### Examples:

<i>El avión va a aterrizar en 20 minutos.</i>	The plane is going to land in 20 minutes.
<i>Voy a llamarte esta noche.</i>	I'm going to call you tonight.
<i>Juan y yo vamos a ir a la montaña.</i>	Juan and I are going to go to the mountain.
<i>Virginia va a enseñar español</i>	Virginia is going to teach Spanish

Note that in the near future structure, the preposition "a" must follow the verb in order for the rest of the sentence to make sense.

The near future is actually a structure that is commonly used when speaking Spanish, so combining it with everyday situations will make you sound natural in any conversation.

### Using present progressive to be conversational

What in English is called the "present progressive", in Spanish is made up of the verb "estar" and a verb that ends in "ando" or "iendo". The good thing about it is that this "verb phrase" works very much like the present progressive you know in English.

As stated before, this structure is formed with the simple present tense of the verb *estar* ("to be") + *gerundio* ("gerund" or the -ing form of a verb)

Examples:

<i>Yo estoy durmiendo.</i>	"I am sleeping."
<i>Tu estás trotando.</i>	"You are jogging."

The Presente Progresivo talks about things you're doing or about to do, and once you master it, the following progressive tenses you'll learn in the future will be easier.

Let's agree that the Present Progressive is a useful tool to be able to converse in a day to day dialogue. This is because, in most real-life situations, you are usually telling or describing the actions you are carrying out. With this in mind, it's essential that you practice this structure as much as possible, and there is no more effective way to learn it, than by relating this verb tense to the activities you do each day at home, at work or in your free time.

## Useful verbs

Every language has a group of essential verbs that help you express yourself in simple conversations and more complex dialogues.

Although some of the most useful verbs in Spanish can be a little tricky to conjugate, when you learn to use them in common situations, you can be sure that you have come a long way in your Spanish learning process.

Let's take a look at some of handy verbs in Spanish:

- haber - have (to do something, auxiliary verb)
- tener - have
- hacer - do/make
- poder - to be able/can
- decir - say/tell
- ir - go
- leer - read
- volver - return
- salir - leave
- recibir - receive
- comprar - buy

- escribir - write
- cambiar - change
- ayudar - help
- llegar - arrive/come/reach
- pasar - pass/spend (time)/happen
- deber - must/should/ought to
- poner - put, place, set
- ver - see
- dar - give
- saber - know (information)
- querer - want/love
- necesitar - need
- gustar - like/please
- esperar - hope/expect/wait
- pensar - think
- comprender - understand
- decidir - decide
- oír - hear

It's at this point that WorldsAcross becomes a decisive player in your ability to speak Spanish fluently for your everyday situations, because it has been proven that there is no more effective method, than devoting as much time as possible to learning through real human interaction. Besides, if you make the effort to relate every element of your life to your Spanish learning process, you will not only put words in a sentence correctly, but you will also begin to see and think about the world in a language other than your own.

In other words, you will speak faster and better the more you link your Spanish to the things you do every day at home, at work or in your free time.

At this wonderful moment, you can say that you're really learning Spanish for life!