

TOP 8 MISTAKES THAT SPANISH NATIVE SPEAKERS WILL NEVER MAKE



YOUR
SPANISH HUB
yourspanishhub.com

Online Spanish Lessons
with Native Teachers

IDEAL FOR NEW LEARNERS & EXPERIENCED SPEAKERS

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TOP 8 MISTAKES THAT SPANISH NATIVE SPEAKERS WILL NEVER MAKE

Whether you want to learn Spanish for beginners or you are an intermediate or advanced level Spanish speaker, you'll find the definitive advice to boost your Spanish, right here!



DEAR STUDENT,

We are Gloria and Maya, co-founders of Your Spanish Hub and Spanish teachers accredited by the Cervantes Institute.

Since 2020, at Your Spanish Hub we have been teaching Spanish to international students, adults and those interested in online classes to start or continue learning Spanish.

Our students form a community of enthusiasts who enjoy and share their enthusiasm for the Spanish language and culture through our platforms.

We look forward to accompanying you on the incredible journey of learning one of the most spoken languages in the world, Spanish!



Gloria & Maya
Co-founders of *Your Spanish Hub*

Accredited Teaching
Qualification



Since

2020
Developing Online
Education

Nationalities

+15
Our Students

Spanish Assessment
Specialists



OUR CORE VALUES

Our mission is to give you the opportunity to discover and learn the Spanish language and at the same time get to know the Hispanic culture.



Honesty



Professionalism



Corporate
Responsibility



Enthusiasm



Innovation



Excellency



Respect

A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES...



Learning Spanish gives you the chance to get to know the incredible Hispanic culture and make friends all over the world.

Reading Don Quixote, walking the Camino de Santiago or visiting Chilean Patagonia are just some of the wonders that await you.

- 00** — **The Spanish language in the world**
- 01** — **Pronounce vowels correctly**
- 02** — **Use of "ser / estar + adjective"**
- 03** — **Over-use of subject pronouns**
- 04** — **Use of colloquial words**
- 05** — **"Qué" or "Cuál"**
- 06** — **Use prepositions correctly**
- 07** — **Learn how to use filler words**
- 08** — **Use idioms**

THE SPANISH LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD

Did you know that Spanish is the second most spoken mother tongue in the world after Mandarin Chinese and the third most spoken language in the world, behind only Mandarin Chinese and English?



591 MIO

Spanish speakers around the world



24 MIO

People learning Spanish

SPANISH SPEAKERS

There are some 591 million Spanish speakers in the world, of which almost 493 million are native speakers. This represents 7.5% of the world's population.

In fact, Spanish is the second most widely spoken mother tongue in the world and the third most spoken language, behind Mandarin Chinese and English.

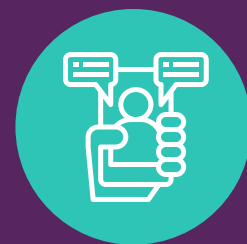
SPANISH STUDENTS

More than 24 million students globally study Spanish as a foreign language.

SPANISH ON THE INTERNET

Spanish is the third most used language on the internet, after English and Mandarin Chinese, and the second most used language on digital platforms: Youtube, Facebook, Netflix, Linkedin, Wikipedia, Instagram, etc.

Almost 8% of all internet users communicate in Spanish.



TOP 3

3rd more used language on the internet

*Source Instituto Cervantes. (2021). El español en el mundo. Anuario del Instituto Cervantes 2021. Madrid.

LET'S START

Discover 4 tips to start
improving your Spanish

TIP #1

PRONOUNCE VOWELS CORRECTLY

If you want to speak like a native Spanish speaker, start with the vowels.

In Spanish, vowels are fundamental to forming words and are present in almost every word.

One of the first things we can put into practice immediately to make our Spanish sound like that of a native speaker is the pronunciation of vowels.



Apply this tip and you will improve your pronunciation in almost all words.

1

VOWELS

Spanish has 5 vowels:

A E I O U

2

SOUND

The position of the vowel in the word does not matter. Nor does it matter whether the vowel has an accent or not. In Spanish, each vowel has only one sound.

3

DURATION

The vowels are always the same length and in general the sound is short.

4

PRONUNCIATION

For good pronunciation, pay attention to the shape and position of the elements of the mouth. Especially the position of the lips and tongue.

TIP #1

PRONOUNCE VOWELS CORRECTLY

If you want to speak like a native Spanish speaker, start with the vowels.

A Pronunciation of /a/

With the lips parted and the mouth forming a wide open circle. The tongue rests extended and relaxed in the lower part of the mouth. We let the air out through the throat and vibrate the vocal cords.

E Pronunciation of /e/

With the lips slightly parted, placed almost parallel so that both rows of teeth are slightly parted. The tip of the tongue rests on the inside of the lower teeth. We let the air out of the throat and make the vocal cords vibrate.

I Pronunciation of /i/

Lips slightly open as if we were smiling. The tongue arches and touches the back of the palate. We let the air out through the throat and make the vocal cords vibrate.

O Pronunciation of /o/

The lips are parted in a small forward circle. The tongue rests extended and relaxed in the lower part of the mouth. We let the air out of the throat and vibrate the vocal cords.

U Pronunciation of /u/

The lips are brought forward together, leaving a very small opening. We bring the tongue slightly backwards, separating it from the lower teeth. We let the air out through the throat and make the vocal cords vibrate.

TIP #2

USE OF "SER / ESTAR + ADJECTIVE"

The origin of this mistake is that in most languages a single verb is used, but in Spanish we use two verbs that are in fact not interchangeable.

SER

WHEN IS IT USED

"Ser + adjective" is used to describe qualities or characteristics that define things or people.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. David **es** joven.
2. Paloma **es** bastante alta.
3. El coche **es** rojo y nuevo.
4. La profesora **es** agradable y paciente.

ESTAR

WHEN IS IT USED

"Estar + adjective" is used to describe states, conditions or situations of things or people.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. Carmen **está** contenta.
2. Alejandro **está** triste y cansado.
3. La sopa **está** muy caliente.
4. Velázquez **está** muerto.

REMEMBER:

- The qualities that define a thing or a person are not always permanent: *David es joven.*
- The states of a thing or person are not always temporary: *Velázquez está muerto.*



TIP #2

USE OF "SER / ESTAR + ADJECTIVE"

1 To talk about emotions

- ✓ Estoy triste / Estoy emocionado / Estoy estresado
- ✗ Soy triste / Soy emocionado / Soy estresado

We use the verb "estar + adjective" because we talk about the emotional state of a person.



2 To talk about physical state of people or things

- ✓ El futbolista está en buena forma / El jarrón está roto / La camiseta está sucia / La sopa está caliente
- ✗ El futbolista es en buena forma / El jarrón es roto / La camiseta es sucia / La sopa es caliente

We use the verb "estar + adjective" because we talk about the physical state of a person or thing.



3 To talk about marital status

- ✓ Lucas está divorciado / Teresa y Carlos están casados
- ✗ Lucas es divorciado / Teresa y Carlos son casados

We use the verb "estar + adjective" because we are talking about the marital status of one or more people.



TIP #3

OVER-USE OF SUBJECT PRONOUNS

If you want to sound like a native Spanish speaker, don't always repeat the subject at the beginning of a sentence.

In Spanish, the conjugations of the verbs include the tense and the person in their different endings.

That is why Spanish native speakers do not always repeat the personal pronouns of the subject at the beginning of the sentence.

1

SUBJECT PRONOUNS

	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1 st Person	yo	nosotros/-as
2 nd Person	tú	vosotros/-as
3 rd Person	él, ella	ellos/-as

2

"USTED / USTEDES"

In Spanish, **tú** and **tú/vosotras** are used in informal or close relationships.

Usted and **ustedes** are used in formal or very respectful relationships.

3

VERBS CONJUGATION

In Spanish, for each verb tense, each subject pronoun has a different conjugation:

- Yo bebo, tú bebes, él/ella/usted bebe, nosotros/-as bebemos, vosotros/-as bebéis, ellos/-as/ustedes beben

4

USE OF THE PRONOUN

You need to use pronouns when you want to distinguish the person or persons you identify as the subject versus other people:



Yo soy Daniel y **él** es Juan.
[There is contrast: yo/él]

REMEMBER:

You don't need to repeat the subject pronoun at the beginning of each sentence because the conjugated verb already has this information.



TIP #3

OVER-USE OF SUBJECT PRONOUNS

Learn how to use subject pronouns correctly with these examples.

1 YO, YO, YO

- ✔ Por las mañanas, primero me ducho, después desayuno. Un poco más tarde, paseo con mi perro y después, voy a trabajar.
- ✘ Por las mañanas, primero yo me ducho, después yo desayuno. Un poco más tarde yo paseo con mi perro y después, yo voy a trabajar.

The use of the subject pronoun "yo" at the beginning of every sentence is not correct because the information that the subject is the first person singular is already included in the conjugation of all verbs in present tense in the sentences.



2 ÉL, ÉL, ÉL

- ✔ Cristóbal Colón fue un importante explorador europeo. Atravesó el océano Atlántico y volvió a España con la noticia del descubrimiento del Nuevo Mundo. Viajó en total cuatro veces al nuevo continente.
- ✘ Cristóbal Colón fue un importante explorador europeo. Él atravesó el océano Atlántico y él volvió a España con la noticia del descubrimiento del Nuevo Mundo. Él viajó en total cuatro veces al nuevo continente.

The use of the subject pronoun "él" at the beginning of every sentence is not correct because the information that the subject is the third person singular is already included in the conjugation of all verbs in past tense in the sentences.



TIP #4

USE COLLOQUIAL WORDS

If you want to talk like a native Spanish speaker, use colloquial words.

Colloquial words are words that native speakers use in informal, relaxed conversation.

Using these words, we approach the language in a way that people use to communicate with each other.

GUIRI

MEANING

"Guiri" means foreign tourist, especially European or North American. We hardly ever use this word for foreigners from other parts of the world. We can use this word in the masculine "el guiri" or in the feminine "la guiri".

USE

We use the word "guiri" in conversations with close friends or relatives, to talk about foreign tourists visiting Spain.

WHO USES IT

The word "guiri" is mainly used in Spain. This word is used by young and middle-aged people.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. *Los guiris siempre piden sangría en el bar.*
2. *Ayer ligué con una guiri en la discoteca.*
3. *Mira a los guiris en la playa. Están todos rojos por el sol.*

TIP #4

USE COLLOQUIAL WORDS

If you want to talk like a native Spanish speaker, use colloquial words.

Colloquial words are words that have a common, frequent and direct use.

The use of colloquial words is generally associated with a specific region.

CURRO

MEANING

"Curro" means work. It is a masculine word: "el curro".

USE

We use the word "curro" in conversations with friends, close family members and co-workers.

WHO USES IT

The word "curro" is mainly used in Spain. This word is used by all people who engage in work.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. *Lo siento, no puedo tomar un café porque tengo **mucho curro**.*
2. *¿Sabes que Ana se ha cambiado **de curro**?*
3. *Yo voy siempre en coche **al curro**.*

TIP #4

USE COLLOQUIAL WORDS

If you want to talk like a native Spanish speaker, use colloquial words.

To use a colloquial word well, you must know its meaning and the context in which you can use it.

In addition, the use of colloquial words is often associated with a particular group of the population: young people, children, etc.

BIRRA

MEANING

"Birra" means beer. It is a feminine word: "la birra".

USE

We use the word "birra" in conversations with friends or colleagues when we are at the bar.

WHO USES IT

The word "birra" is mainly used in Spain. This word is used by younger people.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. *Si vienes a mi casa, trae **unas birras**.*
2. *Pídele al camarero **dos birras** y unas aceitunas.*
3. *¿Pedimos unas pizzas y **unas birras** para comer en casa?*

TIP #4

USE COLLOQUIAL WORDS

If you want to talk like a native Spanish speaker, use colloquial words.

Knowing colloquial words is important not only when speaking. It is also important when listening.

Native speakers use these words all the time and it is good to know them in order to understand them.

GUAY

MEANING

"Guay" means very good or very well.

So it works as an adjective or as an adverb. When it functions as an adjective we use the singular word "guay" or the plural "guays".

USE

We use the word "guay" in regular conversations when something is very good or very well.

WHO USES IT

The word "guay" is mainly used in Spain.

This word is mainly used by children.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. *Este videojuego es guay.*
2. *Mi amigo Carlos tiene unas zapatillas nuevas guays.*
3. *Me parece guay no tener deberes después de clase.*

CONTINUE...

**Discover 4 tips to
continue improving
your Spanish**

TIP #5

"QUÉ" OR "CUÁL"?

Use these two interrogative adverbs correctly to ask like a native.

"¿Cuál es tu color favorito? El verde."

"¿Qué color es tu favorito? El verde."

Different questions, same answer.

Pay attention to the grammar structures that native speakers use with these two interrogative adverbs.

1

"QUÉ" AND "CUÁL"

They are two interrogatives. The plural of "cuál" is "cuáles". They are written with accent marks, because in this case, we use them as part of a direct or indirect question.

2

PERSONAL INFORMATION

We use "qué" and "cuál" to ask for personal information:

- ¿A **qué** te dedicas?
- ¿En **qué** trabajas?
- ¿**Cuál** es tu número de teléfono?
- ¿**Cuál** es tu correo electrónico?

3

"QUÉ + NOUN"

We use "qué + noun" to ask about personal preferences:

- ¿Qué **deporte** te gusta más?
- ¿Qué **series** son tus favoritas?
- ¿Qué **comida** prefieres?
- ¿Qué **libros** te gustan?

4

"CUÁL/ES + ES/SON"

We use "cuál/es + es/son" to ask about personal preferences:

- ¿**Cuál es** tu deporte preferido?
- ¿**Cuáles son** tus series favoritas?
- ¿**Cuál es** tu comida favorita?
- ¿**Cuáles son** tus libros preferidos?

REMEMBER:

When you ask about personal preferences, just pay attention to the word you use after "qué" and "cuál".



TIP #6

USE PREPOSITIONS CORRECTLY

When we learn a new language, one of the main challenges is that the same prepositions are used differently in each language.

In addition, a preposition in your native language can be equivalent to several different prepositions in Spanish.

POR

USE

1. To indicate the parts of the day.
2. To indicate how often you do something (frequency).
3. To indicate movement in a space, more or less large, without saying exactly where.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. Estudio español *por la tarde* y me ducho *por la noche*.
2. Hago pilates tres días *por semana*.
3. Carlos viaja *por Europa* todos los veranos.

PARA

USE

1. To indicate a purpose or an objective.
2. To indicate the recipient of an action.
3. To indicate the deadline to do a task.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. Estudio español *para vivir en México*.
2. El regalo es *para Alberto*.
3. Mis actividades de español son *para el lunes*.

DURANTE

USE

1. To introduce a noun that indicates a period of time.

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

1. Estuve de vacaciones en México *durante tres semanas*.

TIP #6

USE PREPOSITIONS CORRECTLY

1 "POR" vs "DURANTE"

- ✓ He estudiado español durante tres años.
- ✓ Me encanta salir con mis amigos durante el fin de semana.
- ✗ He estudiado español por tres años.
- ✗ Me encanta salir con mis amigos por el fin de semana.

The use of the preposition "por" is incorrect because it introduces a noun that indicates a period of time: "tres años" and "el fin de semana". The correct preposition in this case is "durante".



2 "POR" vs "EN"

- ✓ Me ducho por la mañana o por la noche.
- ✓ Tengo clases de español por la tarde.
- ✗ Me ducho en la mañana o en la noche.
- ✗ Tengo clases de español en la tarde.

The use of the preposition "en" is incorrect because it introduces a noun that indicates the parts of the day: "la noche" and "la tarde". The correct preposition in this case is "por".



TIP #6

USE PREPOSITIONS CORRECTLY

3 "POR" vs "EN"

- ✓ Tengo dos clases de español por semana.
- ✓ Hago deporte cuatro veces por semana.
- ✗ Tengo dos clases de español en semana.
- ✗ Hago deporte cuatro veces en semana.

The use of the preposition "en" is incorrect because we are talking about the frequency of my Spanish classes or the frequency of my weekly work out. The correct preposition in this case is "por".



4 "POR" vs "EN"

- ✓ Mis amigos viajan por Italia.
- ✓ Doy un paseo por el parque.
- ✗ Mis amigos viajan en Italia.
- ✗ Doy un paseo en la ciudad.

The use of the preposition "en" is incorrect because we are talking about movement in a non-specific location (we do not say exactly where). The correct preposition in this case is "por".



TIP #6

USE PREPOSITIONS CORRECTLY

5 "POR" vs "PARA"

✓ Hago yoga para relajarme.

✗ Hago yoga por relajarme.

The use of the preposition "por" is not correct because we are talking about an objective, "relajarme". The correct preposition in this case is "para".



6 "POR" vs "PARA"

✓ Mi tarea de español es para el lunes.

✗ Mi tarea de español es por el lunes.

The use of the preposition "por" is not correct because we are talking about the deadline to do a task, "el lunes". The correct preposition in this case is "para".



7 "POR" vs "PARA"

✓ Este regalo es para Clara.

✗ Este regalo es por Clara.

The use of the preposition "por" is incorrect because we are talking about the recipient of an action, "Clara". The correct preposition in this case is "para".



TIP #7

LEARN HOW TO USE FILLER WORDS

Filler words are words or phrases that we repeat a lot out of habit or routine, especially when we speak in Spanish.

They are called "muletillas" (Spanish for "little crutches") because they serve as "crutches", that is, as a support or help to express our ideas and intentions when we speak.

Generally, filler words do not provide necessary information to understand what we are saying, but they help to maintain interest, controlling conversations, seek complicity or clarify something.



Filler Word	Meaning	Examples in context
Hombre, ...	Hey, man!	Hombre, Paco ¡Cuánto tiempo sin verte!
..., ¿verdad?	Do you agree?	Aprender un idioma es divertido, ¿verdad?
Escucha, ...	Let me speak	Escucha, ¿te has enterado de la última noticia?
..., ¿vale?	Is that Ok with you?	Vamos el sábado al cine, ¿vale?
¡Vaya...!	What a... !	¡Vaya suerte! La primera vez que juega y gana el premio.

TIP #7

LEARN HOW TO USE FILLER WORDS

Hombre, Paco ¡cuánto tiempo sin verte!
 ¿Qué tal estás?
 A ver si quedamos un día para tomar algo y nos ponemos al día.

Hola, Antonio.
 Todo bien, gracias.
 Podemos quedar el sábado para tomar el aperitivo en el bar de la plaza, ¿vale?

Escucha Teresa, ¿te has enterado de lo que le ha pasado a Carmen?
 Se fue a esquiar y se rompió la pierna el primer día.

¡**Vaya** mala suerte!
 La pobre siempre tiene problemas, ¿verdad?
 Espero que se recupere pronto.

TIP #8

USE IDIOMS

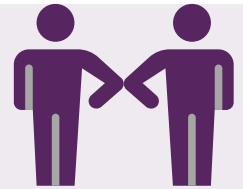
An idiom is an expression that has a fixed form, a meaning different from that of the words that make it up, and is commonly used, especially in spoken language.

Spanish is a language full of idioms, which enrich the language.

There are about 25,000 registered expressions, so let's learn some of the most frequent ones.

1 "hablar por los codos"

We use this expression when someone talks too much.
 The equivalent expression in English: to talk someone's head off (UK) / to talk someone's ear off (US).



- ✓ *Mi vecina de arriba no para de hablar, **ella habla por los codos**.*
- ✓ *Mi madre **habla por los codos**, cuando la llamo por teléfono se pasa dos horas hablando.*

2 "no tener pelos en la lengua"

We use this expression when someone does not mince words and speaks the truth even if it hurts or upsets.
 The equivalent expression in English: not to mince one's words.



- ✓ *Tomás **no tiene pelos en la lengua**. ¡Me dijo que mi lasaña era horrible!*
- ✓ *Los niños pequeños siempre dicen lo que piensan. Está claro que ellos **no tienen pelos en la lengua**.*

TIP #8

USE IDIOMS

3 "ser pan comido"

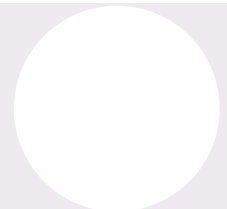
We use this expression when something is very easy to do and does not require much effort. The equivalent expression in English: to be a piece of cake.



- ✓ El examen **fue pan comido**, pensaba que sería mucho más difícil.
- ✓ El próximo partido de fútbol **va a ser pan comido**, porque el otro equipo no juega muy bien.

4 "estar sin blanca"

We use this expression when someone has little or no money. The equivalent expression in English: to be broke / to be skint.



- ✓ *Estoy sin blanca*, así que no puedo ir de vacaciones con vosotros.
- ✓ Yo tengo que vender mi coche porque **estoy sin blanca**.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



“Before I started my lessons with Your Spanish Hub, I didn’t understand any Spanish. I learned how to read, write, listen, and pronounce in a proper way thanks to my native Spanish teacher. I really enjoy the units and activities because Gloria is really encouraging and entertaining. Now I can introduce myself, have basic conversations, more understanding of grammar, and read & write in Spanish”.

Thanittha Srisurapol (Kam) Thailand

“As a total beginner I wanted to learn Spanish because I thought that it would be a good workout for my mature brain. And it has been! Because of the way that the course is designed I have enjoyed learning progressively along with my teacher Gloria. She is very patient, explains the lessons clearly and has helped me to grow in confidence as the weeks went by”.



Ann Wilkinson Scotland, UK



“If you are searching for an excellent Spanish-learning experience, look no further! I have been studying with Your Spanish Hub for many months and my Spanish has improved immensely. Maya is a natural teacher: patient, thorough, and well-prepared with her lessons. I have been able to take my Spanish to another level with Maya’s help”.

Andy Matzner United States

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